

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Cedar Riverside, 11-15-06

Cam's next Cedar Riverside Office Hours:
Tuesday December 5, 9:30-11:00am
Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave

Items:

- 1) Minneapolis Energy Challenge
- 2) IRV Passes
- 3) Chief Dolan
- 4) Safe City Resolution
- 5) Civilian Review Authority reforms
- 6) Rental Licenses
- 7) Arsenic ordinance
- 8) Library Funding
- 9) Youth Violence Prevention
- 10) Neighborhood Impact Report
- 11) Industrial Land Use and Employment Policy Plan
- 12) Claim It!
- 13) Citizen Engagement Report
- 14) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The **Minneapolis Energy Challenge** is underway. Cedar Riverside is currently coming in 44th out of 69. Go to www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/energychallenge to take the challenge.
- 2) By a staggering margin of 65%, Minneapolis voters have chosen to use Instant Runoff Voting in future elections. I consider this an important victory for our local democracy.
- 3) In October, the City Council voted to confirm Mayor Rybak's nomination of Tim Dolan as Minneapolis's new Chief of Police. He will serve a three year term beginning in January. Initially, I had concerns about his commitment to community policing, ending racial profiling and dealing effectively with police misconduct. But working with the Mayor, other Council Members and through discussions with the Chief, these were addressed to my satisfaction and, in the end I voted for Chief Dolan's appointment. I look forward to working with him to prevent youth violence, improve police community relations, build an effective system of community-centered policing and make this a safer City for everyone.
- 4) With Council Members Glidden and Hodges, I helped craft the Safe City Resolution outlining the Council's expectation for the leadership of the Minneapolis Police Department. It incorporates many of the issues we raised in a memo to Mayor Rybak that has been discussed in the local media. Specifically, it requires the Chief to commit to a goal of 100% MPD discipline for CRA sustained complaints and report back to the Council on the actual level, diversify the force, work to end racial profiling, use more than just crime rate data to discuss the Department's progress, complete the Federal Mediation Agreement, and create a real community policing model for the City. This resolution passed the Council unanimously, sending a clear signal to Chief Dolan that these are policymakers' expectations, and the standards by which his performance will be judged.
- 5) The recommendations of the Civilian Review Authority Work Group that I helped form passed the Council unanimously. In my opinion, every one of these recommendations strengthens civilian oversight of the Police Department and empowers the CRA. I consider this a major victory for police accountability and reform.
- 6) The rental license ordinance I authored passed the Council unanimously. I am optimistic that this will be an important tool that Housing Inspections can use to more effectively

address some of the illegal activities of absentee landlords, protect tenant rights and keep our neighborhoods livable.

- 7) The arsenic right-to-know ordinance that I authored passed the Council unanimously. The new law requires landlords within the South Minneapolis arsenic contamination site to inform their prospective and current tenants about the level of contamination the EPA has found in their soil and home sellers to disclose known soil contamination to home buyers citywide. I will be working with City staff, rental housing associations and environmental organizations to see that it is enforced
- 8) Working with other Council Members and the mayor I was hopeful that we could keep all of our libraries open through 2007, and was disappointed that the Library Board still voted to close the three neighborhood libraries, including Southeast. I find some hope in the fact that they decided not to sell these libraries immediately, and in the change in the Minnesota House, which might mean a reversal of the Local Government Aid cuts. I will continue to work to seek creative solutions and so that we can keep all of our libraries open.
- 9) Working with Council Member Samuels, Health Commissioner Muscant and Chief Dolan, I have co-authored a resolution that recognizes youth violence as a public health problem and creates a steering committee to coordinate City, County, private and nonprofit initiatives to prevent youth violence. The resolution passed the Health, Energy and Environment committee last week, and I am optimistic that it will pass the Council on Friday. I believe that this is an important step towards building a more holistic model of youth violence prevention.
- 10) Many residents as well as the University of Minnesota, the Stadium Area Advisory Group and City staff have been working on the University Neighborhood Impact Report. The report will likely be coming before the City Council in January and go the legislature early next year. The goal is to have a consensus report that will include recommendations about how to improve the neighborhoods adjacent to the U of MN campus. I want to make sure that we have as much participation in this as possible and that every neighborhood organization reviews and approves the final draft.
- 11) In October the Council approved a new Industrial Land Use and Employment Policy Plan that will help protect our diminishing industrial land, clearly define designated employment districts and pursue industrial redevelopment opportunities.
- 12) The Greater Twin Cities United Way is working with the City on a campaign to help increase by 10,000 the number of qualified individuals claiming the earned income tax credit (EITC), by offering free tax preparation services. They are looking for volunteers to help provide these services, and asking that we all encourage those of our neighbors who might qualify to apply for the tax credit. To volunteer or get more information, contact Laura Gutierrez at 612-340-7616 or gutierrezl@unitedwaytwincities.org. I am very interested in working with WBCC to increase the number of people in the Cedar Riverside neighborhood claiming their EITC benefits.
- 13) The City has released a long-awaited Community Engagement report, which summarizes previously documented feedback, reports and recommendations on the City's community engagement system and activities. Please contact my office if you would like a copy.
- 14) There are openings on the Empowerment Zone Governance Board, the Heritage Preservation Commission and the Latino Advisory Council. For more information and for applications, please go here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards-and-commissions/open/>.