



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

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Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Prospect Park East River Road Neighborhood, 5-24-10

**Cam's next Prospect Park Office Hours:
Pratt School, June 15, 9:30-11am**

Items:

- 1) NCEC Meetings
- 2) Pensions
- 3) Bike Walk Week
- 4) Central Corridor Construction Beginning
- 5) Household Hazardous Waste Collection
- 6) Energy Workshops
- 7) Redistricting
- 8) Civil Rights Director
- 9) Pedestrian Advisory Committee
- 10) Permeable Driveways
- 11) Prospect Park Resurfacing
- 12) East River Road
- 13) Openings on Boards and Commissions

1) Please join me, Marcea Mariani (8th District Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commissioner) and other community leaders, for a roundtable discussion on **Thursday, June 24th** 7–9pm at Matthews Park, 2318 29th Ave S, about the state of neighborhood organizations in Minneapolis today. We will look how changes in neighborhood funding will impact neighborhood work, explore strategies for influencing the development of new policies, and ways to improve and strengthen these critically important organizations through the new Neighborhood Relations Department and Engagement Commission (NCEC). Additionally, over the next several months, the NCEC and the Department of Neighborhood and Community Relations (NCR) are holding their own meetings to gather input before developing policy for future funding of neighborhood organizations. For Second Ward neighborhoods, the nearest meetings are **Thursday, May 27th** from 6-8pm at Van Cleve Park, 901 15th Ave SE; and **Wednesday, June 9th**, from 6-8pm at Powderhorn Park, 3400 14th Ave.

2) The legislature has granted the City's request to fold the Minneapolis Employees Retirement Fund into a larger state pension fund. This means that beneficiaries/pensioners of now have assurance their benefits will continue and the fund will not fail. This is the result of years of work by staff and Council Members. We also won a major victory for Minneapolis taxpayers in Hennepin County Court. Judge Janet Poston has ruled in favor of the City of Minneapolis' position that two closed pension funds, the Minneapolis Police Relief Association (MPRA) and the Minneapolis Firefighters Relief Association (MFRA), must repay over \$52 million in overpayments of benefits that the funds have improperly paid out to members since June of 2000. The Judge has ordered that by early June, the funds must present to the Court and City their plans to pay the City back, and that they must start recovering the overpayments by July 1. This decision will ease a significant financial pressure on the City's budget, and represents the City's commitment both to pensioners and to taxpayers. It should be noted that this decision can be appealed.

3) This year's Bike Walk Week is **June 5-11**. Bike Walk to Work Day is **June 10**. To find a biking or walking convoy, go to <http://bikewalkweek.org>. Later that day, I will be attending the inaugural ride and ribbon cutting for the Nice Ride bike sharing system, which will go live on the West Bank as well. I'm excited to see this system roll out, and hope that it succeeds.

If you need this material in an alternative format, please contact Matt Bower at (612) 673-2188 or Matthew.Bower@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

If you want help translating this call – Hmong– Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2188;

Spanish – Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llame 612-673-2188;

Somali – Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' an wac 612-673-2188.

- 4) Construction is beginning on the Central Corridor LRT line in Minneapolis. In September, the project will begin prep work to retrofit the Washington Avenue bridge to accommodate light-rail trains by reconstructing the bridge piers. They are also beginning work on the “advance traffic improvements” to the area around the campus. These improvements include new traffic signals and turn lanes in and around the University East Bank Campus. In December, they will start work to tie in the Central Corridor line from the Hiawatha LRT line just west of the Cedar-Riverside Station to Pleasant Street on the East Bank. The bulk of the work in Minneapolis will start in spring 2011. If you would like to receive weekly construction updates from the Central Corridor project, go here: <http://tinyurl.com/29kjwm8>.
- 5) Hennepin County has organized a household hazardous waste collection opportunity on Saturday, June 5, from 9am-1pm at the University of Minnesota, Lot C66 Como Ave. SE and 29th Ave SE, and July 31 at Anne Sullivan School. For a list of materials accepted and other venues, visit <http://www.hennepin.us/collectionevents>.
- 6) The University District Alliance has organized a series of FREE workshops where residents of the Alliance neighborhoods (Cedar Riverside, Marcy Holmes, Prospect Park and Southeast Como) can sign up for customized home visits. Two energy experts will spend an hour and a half with interested homeowners, installing energy efficient materials (like weatherstripping) and performing an energy audit. This amounts to a \$400 service, for a co-pay of only \$30. I encourage all interested residents to take advantage of this great opportunity. The dates and locations of the workshops are: **Saturday, June 5th**, 10am-noon at the First Congregational Church of MN, 500 8th Ave SE; and **Monday, June 14th**, 6:30-8:30pm at Van Cleve Park, 901 15th Ave SE.
- 7) The Charter Commission has put forward a proposed change to the redistricting process as laid out in the Minneapolis Charter. I am generally supportive of their proposals, which include a process for allowing minor parties which have elected a candidate to a local office to have representation in the redistricting process, scrapping an old provision under which a map could be drawn at random (in cases where the Redistricting Commission could not agree) and more. I would also support more comprehensive amendments, including reducing the power of all political parties in the redistricting process and requiring that the Charter Commission approve the final plan. The Charter Commission has scheduled two public meetings on this issue that I encourage you to attend: **Tuesday, May 25th**, at 6:30pm at North Regional Library, 1315 Lowry Ave N; and **Thursday, May 27th** at 6:30pm at Washburn Library, 5244 Lyndale Av S.
- 8) The Council has unanimously approved the Mayor’s appointment of Velma Korbel as the City’s new Civil Rights Director. I look forward to working with Director Korbel to increase the effectiveness of the Minneapolis Civil Rights Department, which I think plays a crucial role in making this a fairer and more equitable city for everyone.
- 9) The City is looking for more people to serve on our new and improved Pedestrian Advisory Committee (PAC). The PAC has existed since 2006 and has recently been expanded to include more community members. The committee exists to help make our city more walkable. For more information about this committee or to apply to serve, visit www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards-and-commissions/open/index.asp. For appointments in the summer of 2010, priority will be given to applications received by **May 28**. Please contact Anna Flintoft at 612-673-3885 or Anna.Flintoft@ci.minneapolis.mn.us if you have questions.
- 10) I have introduced an amendment to the Zoning code that will allow residents to use more types of permeable paving for driveways and parking areas. Staff are beginning the process of bringing this through the City’s approval processes, including meeting with our Environmental Advisory Committee and the Planning Commission. I look forward to communicating more specifics on this environmental initiative in the months ahead.
- 11) The Council has unanimously approved the Prospect Park area street resurfacing project. My office received a small number of requests that the project not move forward, but I have heard more complaints about the quality of the streets in the past few years, and I supported the project. Centerpoint Energy has begun work on the gas mains under some Prospect Park streets in conjunction with this project, and my office has been working to help inform residents about their construction schedule.
- 12) The Park Board has voted to hand control of East River Parkway from Delaware to Fulton Streets to the City. This was necessitated by the closure of Washington Avenue for the Central Corridor transit mall, which will likely increase the amount of traffic being carried by that stretch of the parkway. I am supportive of this transfer, which will allow the City to maintain the roadway and install the sort of traffic signals that will keep it functioning. I also supported the Park Board’s decision to make this handover contingent on an agreement that the City will not make any changes to the bike and pedestrian paths without Park Board approval.
- 13) There are openings on the Latino Advisory Committee, Public Health Advisory Committee and Public Health Advisory Committee. All vacancies are open until filled. To apply, call (612) 673-3358 or email cityclerk@ci.minneapolis.mn.us.