



**Minneapolis**  
City of Lakes

**Cam Gordon**  
City Council Member  
Second Ward

350 South 5th Street - Room 301M  
Minneapolis MN 55415

Office 612-673-2202  
Fax 612-673-3250  
Cell 612-296-0579

Email: [cam.gordon@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:cam.gordon@minneapolismn.gov)

[www.minneapolismn.gov/ward2](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ward2)

## Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the West Bank, 7-17-13

**Cam's next West Bank Office Hours:**  
**Tuesday, August 6<sup>th</sup>, 9:30-11:00am**  
**Hard Times Café, 1821 Riverside Ave**

- 1) Five15 on the Park Project
- 2) Energy Options Public Hearing
- 3) New Polling Place on West Bank
- 4) Rehabilitation of 10<sup>th</sup> Ave Bridge
- 5) Cedar Avenue Sidewalks, 4-to-3 Conversion
- 6) Bluff Street Trail
- 7) Seventh and Fifth Street Ramps
- 8) Kao Xiong Sentenced
- 9) Climate Action Plan
- 10) Funding for Streetcars
- 11) Neighborhood Policy Amendments
- 12) Voter Ambassadors Needed
- 13) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The Council unanimously voted to approve the Five15 on the Park project on June 28<sup>th</sup>, and not to require a further environmental review. This was the recommendation of the City's Planning staff.
- 2) On June 28, the City Council voted to hold a public hearing on **August 1, 2013**, to discuss placing a question on this fall's general election ballot regarding the City's energy future. If passed by the voters of Minneapolis, this question will authorize the City to form a municipal power utility. I view this as a necessary step to meeting the City's aggressive climate change mitigation goals. Approximately two-thirds of the greenhouse gas emissions in Minneapolis come through our existing electricity and natural gas utilities. A vote to authorize the creation of a municipal utility will not *require* the City to form one, but will give us that option – which I think will help in the ongoing electrical and natural gas franchise negotiations with Xcel and Centerpoint. I will work hard to make sure that Minneapolis will only form a municipal utility after we make certain that we can provide energy services as or more affordably and reliably as the incumbent utilities, and with a greater focus on renewable energy, energy efficiency and local generation. For more information, visit: <http://www.minneapolisenergyoptions.org>.
- 3) The Council has approved changing the polling place for voters who live in precinct 2-9, which includes Middlebrook Hall, Augsburg College and the Riverside Park area. Last year, these folks voted at Seward Tower East. This year they will vote in the Augsburg College Oren Gateway Center.
- 4) The Council has approving moving ahead with hiring SRF Consulting Group, Inc. for Bridge Rehabilitation Engineering Services to rehab the deteriorated 10th Avenue SE River Bridge over the Mississippi River. This link between the west and east banks of the River provides an important connection for motor vehicles, bicyclists, pedestrians, and bus transit. In 2009 Public Works hired a consulting firm to perform a structural evaluation and provide a report detailing the bridge's existing conditions. This report helped Public Works solicit and receive both federal and state funding to assist with the bridge rehabilitation costs of over \$12 million. Design is anticipated to begin in July and is scheduled to be completed early in 2014. Construction will begin in the summer of 2014 is projected to be completed in the summer of 2015.
- 5) City and County staff are working to schedule a public meeting on August 29<sup>th</sup>, from 4-6pm, to discuss the conversion of Cedar Avenue from a four-lane road to a three-lane road and the full reconstruction of the Cedar Avenue sidewalks in 2014. I will share the location once the meeting is set.

If you need this material in an alternative format please call Ahmed Muhumud at 612-673-2162 or email [Ahmed.Muhumud@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:Ahmed.Muhumud@minneapolismn.gov)

Deaf and hard-of-hearing persons may call 311 or 612-673-3000. TTY users may call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

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Hmong - Ceeb toom. Yog koj xav tau kev pab txhais cov xov no rau koj dawb, hu 612-673-2800;

Spanish - Atención. Si desea recibir asistencia gratuita para traducir esta información, llama 612-673-2700;

Somali - Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612-673-3500.

- 6) The Council has approved moving forward with construction of the Bluff Street Trail in August. In 2008 we identified an opportunity to connect the on-street bicycle trail on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street to the off-road trail over Bridge #9 & the Mississippi River by including a pre-cast concrete box culvert under I-35W as part of the new bridge construction. This will provide an off-road trail from Bridge #9 through Bluff St Park, under I-35W and on to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Street S on-street bike lanes. Construction should begin in early August and be completed in October 2013.
- 7) The City has won a \$6.7 million Transportation for Economic Development (TED) grant from the state Department of Transportation to build a new 7th street entrance ramp from I-94 into Downtown Minneapolis. This will improve access to downtown for drivers from the East Metro and improve circulation on the East side of downtown, facilitate Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on the I-94/Gateway corridor, and allow the City to repurpose the existing 5th Street ramp into a needed new street and pedestrian connection between downtown and the West Bank.
- 8) West Bank resident Kao Xiong, the father of 2-year-old Neengco Xiong, who was accidentally killed by his older brother last December with a loaded gun that was left under a pillow, has been sentenced to 10 years' probation, yearly community service, and a condition that he never own a gun again. I think this is the best outcome to a terribly tragic incident, and I thank Mr. Xiong for clearly taking responsibility for his son's death, and Judge Moreno for showing clemency. This case continues to be a clear example of the dangers of having a gun in one's home, and of guns in our society generally. If you have a gun in your home, I hope you will consider getting rid of it. If you choose to keep it, please lock it securely, and keep it unloaded.
- 9) The Council has unanimously passed the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan ([www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/climate](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/climate)). The Plan, subtitled "a roadmap to reducing citywide greenhouse gas emissions," offers goals and potential strategies to help achieve a 15 percent reduction in emissions by 2015 and a 30 percent reduction by 2025 from 2006 levels. The strategies are grouped into four categories: improving the energy efficiency; increasing our use of local, renewable energy; reducing vehicle miles traveled in Minneapolis and reducing waste. The Plan includes many intriguing recommendations for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including the use of property-assessed and on-bill financing to fund energy efficiency and renewable energy retrofits for residential and commercial building; encouraging net zero buildings; creating more walkable "complete neighborhoods;" constructing 30 miles of on street, protected bike facilities by 2020 and identifying products and packaging that are neither recyclable or compostable. This plan is a great step in the right direction and I look forward to helping implement many of its ideas and strategies.
- 10) The Council has voted to establish a Value Capture District to finance our first streetcar line, on the Central Ave-Nicollet Ave route. This was enabled by the legislature's creation of the Value Capture District funding mechanism, which grants authority to the City to establish a project area including one block to either side of a streetcar line, and place certain taxable parcels into the Value Capture District. The future tax revenues from these parcels may be used to fund the construction of the streetcar line. One of the reasons for taking this action at this time was to enable the City to request – and hopefully receive – federal transit funding to help us build this first streetcar line.
- 11) The Department of Neighborhood & Community Relations has recommended adopting a new policy for Preparation and Processing of Neighborhood Priority Plans, and revising the existing NRP Policy on Changing Approved Action Plans. I have some concerns about what the reports considers evidence of broad neighborhood support and also about the provisions that would allow the department director to approve plan changes of up to and over \$100,000 without bringing them to the NRP Policy Board and the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission. Because of these concerns I am considering bring forward amendments when this returns to the Council for final approval on July 19. You can find the full recommendations here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/cow/WCMS1P-101777>.
- 12) The City is looking for volunteers to work in the community to raise awareness and engage voters about the election in November. Voter ambassadors will create a network of community volunteers who will provide resources and information about this year's election directly to their neighborhoods and civic circles. Ambassadors will be trained in election law fundamentals, voting procedures, and how ranked-choice voting works. Each ambassador will be supplied with maps to polling places, pamphlets, sample ranked-choice ballots, and guides to answer frequently asked questions about ranked-choice voting. In addition, ambassadors will have access to videos that show how to vote using a ranked-choice ballot, receive regular updates about the election, and be asked to make presentations within their community about the municipal election. Anyone interested in volunteering for this program should contact the program coordinator, Anissa Hollingshead by at [anissa.hollingshead@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:anissa.hollingshead@minneapolismn.gov).
- 13) Applications are now being accepted for open positions on the following City boards and commissions: Animal Care and Control Advisory Board, Advisory Committee on People with Disabilities, Minneapolis Workforce Council, Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Police Conduct Oversight Commission, Police Conduct Review Panel, Seniors Advisory Committee and Telecommunications Network. For a full list of appointment opportunities and position descriptions, go to [www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings).