



# Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Southeast Como, 12-1-15

Cam's next Como Office Hours: Thursday, 12-10-15  
Black Coffee and Waffles, 1500 Como Ave SE

## Cam Gordon

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### Items:

- 1) Shooting of Jamar Clark.
- 2) Violence at the 4<sup>th</sup> Precinct.
- 3) Rail Safety Resolution
- 4) Neighborhood Revitalization Funds.
- 5) Impound Lot and Service Improvements
- 6) 2015 Budget Approval.
- 7) Homicides up this Year.
- 8) Green Zones.
- 9) 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Redesign.
- 10) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) I am deeply concerned and saddened by the police shooting that occurred in Minneapolis on November 15. In the weeks ahead I will do whatever I can to ensure that justice prevails, that an open and transparent process is followed, that everyone has access to accurate information and that we learn from this to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in our city in the future. I commend the community, the Mayor and the Police Chief for mobilizing and responding to this terrible occurrence quickly. I commend Mayor Hodges for asking the federal Department of Justice to conduct an independent investigation into this incident. Moving forward, as a city government, we need to respond and lead in a thoughtful but decisive way that will earn the confidence of the family, community and all residents of Minneapolis. I encourage all parties with information to come forward and share that information, including video or photographic documentation, with the authorities and with the family and the public. I will always keep in mind that this incident is connected to deeper, long term, structural problems in our society, and I encourage others to do the same. Violence, particularly gun violence, is a deep-rooted and persistent problem in our city and in our country. Police violence is also a national problem and a problem right here in Minneapolis. Here, and throughout the United States, there is an undeniable racial component to the problem of police violence, rooted in institutional racism. This racial inequity goes beyond police culture and practices, pervading our economic, educational and criminal justice systems.
- 2) I was also deeply disturbed by the violence that occurred November 23rd at the 4th precinct where 5 individuals were shot by people not connected with the protesters, possibly opposed to the protesters message. I have heard from the Police Department that three of the people suspected of being responsible are being detained and one has been arrested. This is very good news, and I look forward to the persons responsible being held accountable for their violent actions. I want to express my deepest gratitude to the MPD for working so quickly and effectively to make these arrests and to all the individuals who provided information to them so that these arrests were possible.
- 3) The Council has passed a Rail Safety resolution that I strongly support. It calls on the state and federal governments, as well as the railroads themselves, to do more to protect Minneapolis residents from the serious risks that some rail cargoes (like oil, ethanol and other hazardous materials) represent. I want to thank my colleagues Kevin Reich, Lisa Bender and Linea Palmisano for bringing this important resolution forward, and Mayor Hodges and Representative Frank Hornstein for their help on this critical issue. I continue to be concerned about the autonomy federal law allows the railroads and the obstacles local governments face in trying to regulate them in order to protect our communities.

- 4) After a year-long process of review by staff and neighborhood organizations, the Council has approved a policy change related to unexpended Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) funds. Among other provisions, the new policy will require the city Neighborhood and Community Relations staff to prepare a status report of each neighborhood's Phase I and Phase II Plans in chronological order based on the date of Phase II plan approval. If the neighborhood has not expended at least 85% and contracted at least 95% of the original plan allocation plus program income (for both Phase I and Phase II) by the seven-year anniversary of the Phase II plan's approval by the City Council, the neighborhood must submit a plan for achieving thresholds within one year; or complete a robust neighborhood review process to affirm or revise current strategies; or request a waiver. The full policy is available here <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMS1P-150504>
- 5) The Council has approved a plan that would make significant changes and improvements to the City's impound lot. The approved plan will open a significant (roughly 10 acre ) portion for future private development on the current western half and include the construction of a new up to date more functional service center.
- 6) Prior to final approval of the 2016 budget there will be one last public hearing at City Hall, 350 South 5th Street, in room 317 **Wednesday, December 9** at 6:05 p.m. The Ways and Means Budget Subcommittee budget markup, when Council Members bring forward their amendments, will take place on December 4 and 7 at 1:00 p.m. The one amendment I am working on would be to secure funding (roughly \$20,000 each) for the Southeast Seniors and Seward Longfellow Healthy Seniors program. The final budget adoption will take place on Wednesday, December 9, after the final public hearing. The Mayor's proposed budget is available online. The Mayor's budget address and budget hearings are available on Minneapolis 79 or online at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/budget/index.htm>. For more of my thoughts on the budget see <http://secondward.blogspot.com/2015/11/thoughts-on-mayors-2016-recommended.html>
- 7) I join and commend the Mayor and Police Chief for taking the rise in gun violence and homicides this year in the city very seriously. While this appears to reflect a disturbing national trend and while there has not necessarily been a spike in the second ward, it is something we should all be concerned about. The total number of homicides so far this year is now over 40. This is approaching the highest it has been since 2006 when there were 57 homicides for the whole year. I am especially concerned about the rise in youth homicides. So far this year, of the all homicides, 19 have been people under age 25 and 5 have been 17 or under. These are also at 5 year highs. It is also notable that 15 of those youth were died from being shot with a handgun. This makes the investments in Youth Violence Prevention in this year's budget especially important.
- 8) The Health, Environment and Community Engagement committee has passed a resolution I co-authored with Council members Cano and A. Johnson that directs staff to develop a Green Zone Policy that the City Council could adopt in late 2016 and creates a Green Zone Policy Task Force comprised of community leaders (e.g., residents, businesses, environmental justice advocates, etc.) and City staff to lead this initiative. The Task Force will help facilitate a community-driven process to (1) define Green Zones and identify the Vision and Goals of a city-wide Green Zone Policy, (2) establish screening criteria for identifying areas that will be designated as Green Zones in the city, and (3) enumerate the programs, resources, and activities that will be targeted to designated Green Zones. This is an initiative approved as part of our Climate Action Plan. It is intended to not only address sustainability and greenhouse gas emission reductions, but also to address equity. More details can be found here <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMS1P-151461>.
- 9) I support the planned redesign of 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue in downtown, from 16<sup>th</sup> St S to the river. This redesign will include a protected bikeway and major improvements in greening and for pedestrians – and the costs of the project bear that out, with about half going to greening and half going to bikes. This is being accomplished by a 4 lane to 3 lane conversion on much of the corridor, by repositioning the greenspace on two blocks from a center median to a buffer for pedestrians and bicyclists, and by removing parking on two blocks. This project meets a longstanding need for a good north-south connection for bicyclists through downtown, and literally every other option (Nicollet Mall, Marquette and Second Avenues) has been ruled out. I want to thank Mayor Hodges and Public Works staff for all of their work to tee this up, and look forward to seeing it constructed next year. When this comes before the Transportation and Public Works committee, I will be prepared to make one amendment, if necessary: to increase the sidewalk width, increase greening, and continue the protected bikeway along City Hall, which will necessitate moving the current Police Department parking spaces.
- 10) Visit the City's website for a [full list of appointment opportunities](#) and position descriptions for City boards and commissions. Appointments to boards and commissions are made twice a year — in the spring and fall. This streamlined appointment process makes it easier for folks to learn about volunteer opportunities, ensures a more open and understandable process for residents and staff, and increases the diversity of the applicant pool.