

**Council Member Cam Gordon's
Report to the Seward Neighborhood Group
November, 9, 2016**

Cam Gordon

City Council Member
Second Ward

**Cam's Next Seward/Westbank Office Hours:
Thursday, December 8th, 9:30-11:00am
Nabo Café, 2211 Riverside Avenue**

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<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ward2>
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*Working for a Minneapolis
where each of us has the
freedom and opportunity to
reach our individual
potentials while caring for
one another, improving our
environment and promoting
social well-being.*

*Focused not only on our
immediate needs, but also on
the future we want for
ourselves, our children and
for generations to come.*

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Election 2017. I will admit that I am deeply disappointed, somewhat devastated and very worried by many of the results of this year's election, especially at the federal level. It is hard not to see this as a setback to so much progress we have been making on so many issues in recent years. It is a source of comfort to live in a city, community and neighborhood filled with caring, open-minded, accepting, supportive, and engaged people who share a commitment to making this a more just, inclusive, open, peaceful, loving and environmentally sustainable place for everyone. It is more important than ever that we commit to continuing to make progress where we can, at the local level. I sincerely thank everyone for voting on November 8th and to everyone who ran for office, volunteered to support candidates and got involved in campaigns of all kinds. Your participation in our democracy is both inspiring and vital to the health of our city, state and country. I offer special gratitude to our elections staff. This year we saw many improvements to our voting processes. I commend our elections department, the many election judges and all elections professionals who worked hard not only on Election Day, but also throughout the early-voting period leading up to the election to ensure the best election possible. While numbers are still coming in, turnout in the second ward was very high as usually. I congratulate all those who ran for office and especially those who won. I look forward to continuing working with Congressman Keith Ellison, State Senators Patricia Torres Ray and Kari Dzedzic and State Representative Jim Davnie. I also look forward to working with the newly elected and returning school board members and with newly elected State Representative Ilhan Omar, whose historic victory as the first Somali-American elected to the state house is one uplifting and inspiring bright spot in this dark election. Another bright spot is the passage of the Vote Yes for Kids ballot initiative, which will help ensure that our schools have the resources they need. I will do whatever I can to assist all of those elected yesterday in serving you and work cooperatively with them to make sure we are all doing everything we can to benefit the city and the communities we represent. Clearly we have a great deal of work ahead of us. I am committed to work harder than ever to make this a better, more loving, peaceful, just and sustainable city for everyone.

2017 Budget. The budget process for this year is well underway and now the proposed budget is available online in an interactive format at <https://minneapolismn.opengov.com/transparency>. Some of the most significant changes to this year's proposed budget include \$1.3 million for 15 new police officers, including three for a new mental health co-responder program; nearly \$1 million for community-based strategies to improve public safety, including \$500,000 for community-driven strategies in two locations with high levels of youth violence; \$400,000 for five additional firefighters, and \$14.5 million to support affordable housing development. There will be two public comment hearings on the budget: at **6:05 pm November 30th and 6:05 pm December 7th** both in Room 317, City Hall. Visit www.minneapolismn.gov/budget for more information on the budget proposal and process.

New Police Offices. I thank, welcome and congratulate the latest 25 new Minneapolis police officers who have graduated in early November from the police academy and have since started working in our neighborhoods. Of the 25 officers who successfully completed the 32-week long training program, 7 are women, 7 are people of color, 7 are fluent in languages other than English, one holds a Ph.D., and 4 have master's degrees. We are very fortunate to have these diverse, well-qualified, well-trained, new officers committed to serving the people of Minneapolis and joining the police department. I wish them all long, safe and fulfilling careers working for the people Minneapolis. This brings the total size of the police force to 845.

Youth Outreach Workers. I was happy to see coverage of the Youth Coordinating Board's Youth Outreach Worker program featured in a local newspaper this month (<http://www.citypages.com/news/straight-talking-youth-workers-save-lives-keep-peace-in-streets-and-classrooms/399543511>). This is a program that I have followed, supported, and helped guide since my first term in office. Now, as chair of the Youth Coordinating Board, it has been gratifying to see it expand from street outreach in downtown, into some of our schools and neighborhoods. In October the Youth Coordinating Board reviewed the results of an evaluation of the School Outreach program done by an outside agency, Rainbow Research. While we still don't have clear data about changes in school metrics like truancy and suspensions, it generally received very positive reviews from students, teachers and administrators alike. We will be working with the schools to collect more data from the three schools that are using youth workers this year: Edison, Henry and Northeast Middle School. You can find the recent evaluation report and more information here <http://www.ycb.org/schooloutreachteam>

Group Violence Intervention Grant. The City has been awarded a two year grant of \$325,000 to help us develop and begin implementation of a Minneapolis version of the National Network for Safe Communities' Group Violence Intervention (GVI) program to reduce group involved homicide and gun violence. This program has been widely implemented across the county and is recognized as a best practice by both public safety and public health professionals. This funding will help jump start the City's effort that is also funded in the Mayor's proposed budget. It is a promising, proven, holistic public health approach to addressing violence that the Youth Violence Prevention committee has been working on for years. It relies on a partnership between the Health Department, the Police Department, community members and social service providers and includes bringing social support, case management and other resources to help youth who may be at a higher than normal risk for violence. You can learn more about the model here <https://nnscommunities.org/our-work/strategy/group-violence-intervention>.

Jamar Clark Killing Internal Investigation. On October 21st, the police department announced that they had completed their internal investigation into the police officer killing on November 15th, 2015 of Jamar Clark and that the chief has determined that there were no violations of City policy and that the officers will not receive any discipline. Although this is not surprising, given the long history of not disciplining officers involved in police killings and the County Attorney's similar determination, the result was a shock and disappointment to many, including me. While I have confidence in the Chief and have not been given the same access as others to the evidence, I remain deeply concerned by a number of things about this case. These concerns include: 1) the failure of the officers to record anything despite squad cameras and audio being available; 2) the very, very short time that passed between the officers arriving at the scene and when they choose to escalate to physical violence against Mr. Clark; 3) the failure on the officers' part to employ de-escalation techniques despite the fact that Mr. Clark was not threatening to harm anyone and was not armed; 4) the specific way that Mr. Clark was "taken down" and the fact that the technique that was used and the way it was apparently used provided Mr. Clark easy access to an officer's firearm, dramatically increasing the risk inherent in the situation; and, 5) the fact that he was shot in the head and that other less lethal use-of-force techniques were not used. As an elected official and not a trained police officer, I do not possess the same degree of training in law enforcement that our professional police staff do, and perhaps the officers in this case acted according to national best practices, best training and in compliance with all city and police department policies. I am not necessarily disputing that. But after days of reflection on this, I have concluded this: if the officers followed our policies in this incident, then something is deeply wrong with those policies. If their actions represented the best training we have available, then that training is (or was) grossly inadequate. If this exemplifies national best practices, then those best practices are fundamentally flawed. Mr. Clark did not need to be killed and should not have been killed. The officers' actions in this case resulted in a preventable, avoidable, and tragic death. We need to learn from this incident, and other similar instances, to ensure that this never happens again.

Energy Efficient Commercial Buildings. In 2013 the City passed a Commercial Building Benchmarking and Transparency ordinance that requires large buildings to track and disclose their energy consumption. It is intended to promote reductions greenhouse gas emissions and is being phased in over several years with larger public buildings reporting the first year and larger commercial building reporting the second. By now, the majority of commercial buildings larger than 50,000 square feet have submitted their energy use to the City. The commercial-industrial sector contributed almost half of the total citywide greenhouse gas emissions in 2014. An analysis released earlier this year of the energy use of 429 public and commercial buildings in Minneapolis revealed that those buildings have the combined potential to save \$24 million in energy costs per year and avoid more than 120,000 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions by increasing their energy efficiency to reduce consumption by 15 percent. On November 2 the city held a Building Energy Challenge Awards ceremony to celebrate the efforts of building owners and managers who have made noteworthy progress reducing in greenhouse gas emissions. This kind of recognition is

called out in the City's Clean Energy Partnership's 2015-2016 work plan and supports the city goals of a 30% greenhouse gas reduction in the city by 2025 and 80 percent or more by 2050. Learn more at <http://www.minneapolisenergybenchmarking.org/>

Recycling Chute Resolution The resolution I authored with Council Member Palmisano that establishes a recycling chute requirement for new apartment and condominium buildings was approved by the City Council in October. It supports mandating that, when a garbage chute is installed in new construction or major renovations, a recycling chute will also be installed in such a way as to provide equivalent access at all floors served by the garbage chute, as required by the State Building Code. In the process of working on this we learned that there also may be opportunities in the future to get more apartment buildings to provide organics recycling service and we encouraged them to do so in the resolution. Any building that wants organics service now can choose between several different haulers (around 10) in Minneapolis who already take organics as part of their service. Additionally, there are multiple larger and midsized apartment buildings that currently offer organics service to their residents. Some of these buildings (including 7 West Apartments, Solhavn Apartments, and Soltva Apartments) were built with three chutes to accommodate organics as well recycling and trash.

Intentional Communities. The first public hearing for the Intentional Community ordinance I'm authoring with my colleague Council Member Goodman was held on November 1, where it was unanimously recommended for approval by the planning commission. The ordinance would allow people who register as an intentional community to have the number of people who can safely share a home, regardless of their relatedness. You can read a draft of the amendments and find more information under "Current Projects" at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/ward2/index.htm>. Because we are also changing the housing maintenance code (in addition to the zoning code), there will be another public hearing at the Council's Community Development and Regulatory Services committee on **November 29th at 1:30 pm.**

Neighborhoods 2020 Engagement Plan. The current funding source used to support community engagement and neighborhood organizations is scheduled to end in 2020. To help us better prepare for the changes ahead and develop future funding options, the Council approved an engagement plan to help identify and develop recommendations by March 30, 2018. The purpose of the plan is to: 1) ensure participation of neighborhood organization leaders, cultural community leaders, City leadership and other stakeholders in the process; 2) provide clear and ongoing communication with neighborhood organizations, residents, and City leadership on the development of Neighborhoods 2020 recommendations and how these tie into the Blueprint for Equitable Engagement and Neighborhood and Community Relations department plans; 3) develop consensus around recommendations for roles and responsibilities of funded neighborhood organizations, and the roles and responsibilities of the City in responding to and working with neighborhood organizations; and, 4) ensure a smooth transition of Community Participation Program funding after 2020. To read about the plan and learn more see <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-188366>

Neighborhood Community Engagement Commission Report. On November 7 the Health Environment and Community Engagement Committee will receive the 2015-16 annual report of the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission. To learn more about the accomplishment of this hard working group over the past year see the report at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-189204>

American with Disabilities Act Implementation Plan. The City Council is poised to approve a revamped ADA implementation plan by the end of the year. The draft plan (you can find here <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/ncr/services/WCMSP-183897>) is currently being reviewed by our advisory committees and community members. I expect it to come forward to a council committee at the end of November with some modifications based on this input.

Greens Zones Update. The Green Zones workgroup, established by resolution passed last spring, will be providing an update to the Health Environment and Community Engagement Committee on November 28th. To support their work, a Green Zones mapping tool has been created. The tool shows data by census tract for each of the eight priority issues selected by the Green Zones Workgroup: 1) equity, 2) displacement, 3) air quality, 4) brownfields and soil contamination, 5) housing, 6) green jobs, 7) food access, and 8) greening. The mapping tool offers a variety of ways to look at and consider cumulative burden. You find more about the Green Zones, the work group and the mapping tool at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/policies/green-zones>

Community Action Partnership of Suburban Hennepin. In November the City Council approved me and Council Member Warsame to be the City Council representatives on the Community Action Partnership of Suburban Hennepin (CAPSH) board. The agency is in the process of forming a reformed board and considering a name change, now that it is the federally designated Community Action Program agency for Minneapolis. They are also seeking 4 additional new members from Minneapolis. Two of these board seats are specifically reserved for people who are eligible for energy assistance; subsidized housing; WIC, food stamps or other supplemental assistance; or meet income qualifications (up to 125 percent of the federal poverty level). The board of directors provides strategic direction, fiscal oversight and general policy guidance to the organization. Applications must be in by November 27. For more information or to apply, visit www.capsh.org

2016 Homegrown Minneapolis Open House. Please join the Homegrown Minneapolis Food Council in celebrating another year of promoting healthy, sustainable, locally grown foods on Thursday, December 1st from 6:00 – 8:00 pm, at Seward Montessori, 2309 28th Ave South. The event will feature a brief program including remarks from local notables, the 2016 Homegrown Heroes awards and a "State of the Plate" and 2016 Homegrown Highlights presentations from the Food Council. It will begin with an information fair and reception, including opportunities to provide feedback to the Food Council on local food policy priorities. You can also register to be part of the information fair component of our annual open house. For more information visit http://www.minneapolismn.gov/sustainability/homegrown/WCMSP-187360?utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_name=&utm_source=govdelivery&utm_term.

Coldwater Springs Resolution. I was proud to support and co-author Council Member Andrew Johnson's resolution that recognizes Coldwater as a sacred site, reminds all government agencies to respect the 1805 treaty and honor both the spirit and the letter of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act of 1978 and the 2001 state law relating to protection and preservation of Coldwater Springs and declared October 10, 2016 to be "Coldwater Springs Protection and Preservation Day" in the City of Minneapolis.

Affordable Housing. This Month the City Council approved more than \$9 million in affordable housing investments throughout Minneapolis. We approved \$7.9 million in direct investment and \$1.2 million in 10-year federal tax credits to create or preserve 686 units of affordable multifamily rental housing in 10 projects located throughout the city. This includes the **Minnehaha Commons** that the Council has approved using \$925,000 in Affordable Housing Trust Fund money to help fund a new 41 unit senior housing project at 3001 East Lake Street. Alliance Housing, Inc. has partnered with the Touchstone Mental Health to create Minnehaha Commons, a supportive service project for extremely low income seniors who have experienced homelessness. The project will consist of a 31,500 sq. ft. three-story building with 41 studio apartments. The property will have a community room, service provider space/office, property management office, laundry room and front desk on the first floor. There will be a tenant lounge area on the second and third floors and an outdoor patio for informal gatherings. A front desk will be staffed throughout the evenings and weekends to provide support to tenants and ensure safety.

Franklin Bridge Bike/Ped counter. As part of the Franklin Avenue Bridge reconstruction, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MDOT) has supplied a bicycle counter pole device that will track the number of cyclists who use the bridge. The device displays both daily and annual trips and can be viewed from the sidewalk on the north east end of the bridge.

The Bessemer at Seward. The Council has approved moving forward with two grant requests to support the Seward Redesign project at 2200/2206/2210/2214/2218 Snelling Avenue. One is from the Department of Employment and Economic Development for \$501,500 and one is from Hennepin County for \$110,000. Seward Redesign intends to demolish four vacant buildings and construct 121 units of market rate rental housing as part of the continuing redevelopment of the former Bystrom Brothers site, located near the Franklin Avenue Blue Line Station. The site plan includes green space and a new public bicycle/pedestrian access to the LRT trail. The total projected development cost is \$23,800,000. Grant funds, if awarded, will be used primarily for demolition and soil remediation, along with the abatement of asbestos and/or lead based paint in the existing building prior to demolition.

Openings on Boards and Commissions. 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.