

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Southeast Como Neighborhood January 10, 2017

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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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**Cam's Next Como Office Hours:
Thursday, January 13th, 9:30-11:00am
Black: Coffee and Waffles, 1500 Como Ave SE**

1. 2017 Budget Approves
2. Parks and Streets
3. Safety Beyond Policing
4. Small Business Support
5. Participatory Budgeting
6. Air Quality Study
7. Syrian Refugee Resolution
8. Intentional Communities
9. Northern Metals
10. Community Solar Gardens
11. Resident Survey
12. Neighborhood Programs Annual Report.
13. Neighborhood Board Diversity
14. Appointed Board and Commission Diversity
15. Impound Lot Survey
16. Open Streets 2017
17. World Expo
18. Tax Increment Districts
19. Openings on Boards and Commissions

1. On December 7, the City Council passed what I believe is a responsible, responsive and future focused budget for next year. It was passed (12-1) with several changes from the budget proposed by Mayor Hodges earlier this year. I thank the Mayor for presenting us with a good proposal, and my colleagues for the thoughtful, cooperative work they did to improve it. The total budget is \$1.3 billion, a 7.7%, or \$94.7 million increase from the 2016 adopted budget of \$1.2 billion. As part of the budget we approved a 5.5% increase in the total amount of property taxes we will collect in 2017. This brings the total property taxes to over \$310 million dollars. This funds 24% of the overall budget. Looking at the big picture, of the total 1.3 billion, roughly 26% goes to Public Works, 14% to capital improvements, 12% to Police, 10% to the City Coordinator (including 311, 911, Human Resources, Property Services, Information Technology, Intergovernmental Relations, Emergency Preparedness and Neighborhood and Community Relations), 10% for debt service, 7% to Community Planning and Economic Development, 5% for Fire, 4% to the Convention Center, 2% for Health, 2% for Regulatory Services, 1% for the City Attorney, 5% divided among general liability and contingency funds and pensions, and 2% for smaller city services and departments (including the Assessor, employee benefits, City Clerk, City Council, Mayor, Civil Rights, Internal Auditor and Workers Compensation). Significant budget items include: \$1.3 million for 15 new police officers, ongoing resources to manage and operate the police body camera program; a new Civil Rights complaint investigator; an additional civilian investigator at the Office of Police Conduct Review; \$400,000 for 5 new firefighters; funding for implicit-bias training for all City staff; \$14.4 million to support affordable housing development; and, a new appraiser in the City Assessor's office. All the details of the 2017 Budget and related materials can be found at: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-184691>

2. Two of the most significant parts of this budget reflect decisions made earlier in the year to invest in neighborhood parks and city streets. As part of this first year of a 20 year investment plan, we approved spending roughly \$10 million to support improvements at neighborhood parks and nearly \$20 million to build and improve local streets. There is also \$3 million (or 1% of the tax levy) going to increase funding for Park operating costs.
3. While we are investing significantly more in policing we are also investing significant dollars in new community and health-based initiatives to prevent crime and violence. These include \$150,000 for programs related to domestic violence prevention, \$600,000 for community-led safety strategies in three locations with high levels of youth violence: West Broadway between Lyndale and Girard, Little Earth, and Chicago and Franklin, \$290,000 for a Group Violence Intervention strategy, a collaboration among the Health Department, the police, and the community that offers support and resources to offenders who leave violence behind, \$62,000 to enhance "Next Step," the hospital-based intervention strategy, to reduce youth violence by offering outreach, evaluation and services for young victims of violent assault injury, and \$200,000 for the mental health co-responders program where mental health professionals are paired with sworn officers to respond together to emergency calls that are likely to include a mental health crisis.
4. The Council also approved a budget amendment to establish a small business support team of 3 staff people to directly help small businesses navigate city processes. This team will identify and implement strategies to make the City friendlier for small businesses. I was happy to support this new office, and to support expanding it, at the request of so many great local businesses
5. Building on a recommendation from our Capital Long-range Improvement Committee (CLIC), my colleague Elizabeth Glidden and I successfully moved to direct the City Coordinator and City Clerk's offices to develop a plan for a participatory budgeting program. They will use input from community stakeholders and City advisory committees such as CLIC, the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission, community and neighborhood organizations, and report back to the Ways & Means Committee no later than June 10, with a plan for a participatory budgeting program. I am very excited about this initiative and expect the report to include best practices from other cities, recommendations for a Minneapolis participatory budgeting process. This should include, among other things, strategies for outreach to the City's 70 neighborhood organizations, cultural and community organizations, and under-represented groups, including youth, and potential funding sources for an annual participatory budgeting process.
6. In January the Health Department presented the results of its nearly 3 yearlong air quality study. The study provides an extensive look at air quality in Minneapolis at the neighborhood level. It was conducted from November 2013 through August 2015 utilizing volunteers across the city. For the duration of the study air samples were collected quarterly, for a total of eight sample collections. At each collection approximately 120 samples were collected from locations across the City. Each sample was analyzed at Pace Analytical Services in Southeast Como, and 61 Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) were reported. In addition, during the seven sampling events between February 2014 and August 2015, approximately 20 sampling devices were placed to analyze formaldehyde along two corridors. The results were compared to the Minnesota Department of Health, Health Risk Values (HRVs) for chemicals in ambient air. Of the 62 VOCs analyzed, five, benzene, formaldehyde, naphthalene, tetrachloroethylene, and trichloroethylene, were found at levels over their defined HRV. Further study will be completed in the next few months to better understand ways to reduce the high levels of these five VOCs. The full report will be available at http://www.minneapolismn.gov/environment/air/airquality_index
7. In light of the war and devastation in Syria, in January I brought forward a resolution, modeled after one recently approved in St. Paul, that will support resettlement of Syrian refugees in Minneapolis and call on other Minnesota communities to support a stronger national effort to resettle the most vulnerable Syrian

refugees. I passed the Intergovernmental Relations Committee and will be considered by the Council on January 13. You can find a draft here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-191919>

8. The Council passed my proposed Intentional Communities ordinance. Before the ordinance passed, it was amended by Council Member Jacob Frey on a 7-6 vote of the Council to remove some of the specific definitions I had developed with staff and the community to identify intentional communities. I opposed this amendment but still feel that this is a strong ordinance because the definition of intentional community still exists in the zoning code, and the other, more important, safeguards in the ordinance remain in place.
9. The Council has approved the City joining with the MPCA in its two lawsuits against Northern Metals. According to the MPCA, Northern Metals is now interested in settling the lawsuits in a way that could be a big victory for cleaner air in Minneapolis. According to the proposed terms the metal shredder facility will be closed and moved to a new, non-metro location; Northern Metals will pay a civil penalty and reimbursement of MPCA costs and pay mitigation money to the communities that have been directly affected by the company's emissions. You can find some more information here <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-180849>
10. In December the Council approved entering into a second Community Solar Garden subscription and beginning work on a third proposal. We will enter into a Community Solar Garden subscription agreement with SunEdison for City of Minneapolis operations for a term of 25 years. Over the 25 year term of the agreement, the subscription should generate savings between \$100,000 and \$160,000. We also directed staff to draft another Community Solar Request for Proposals incorporating availability of subscriptions for Minneapolis residents and businesses and a significant proportion of subscriptions for low- and moderate-income (LMI) customers. We also are including location of the garden within the City and potentially on a City-owned site; and, potential ownership of the garden by Minneapolis residents, businesses, and property owners.
11. The results from this year's survey are in. The full report can be found at www.minneapolismn.gov/residentsurvey. While generally positive, I was concerned about the small sample size (2,320) and to see that fewer residents this year appear to feel that they can influence city decisions. I was also concerned with the notable differences by race and income with regard to experiences of discrimination in Minneapolis. While 93% of white residents said that they had not experienced discrimination, people of color and Native American residents were much more likely to report experiencing discrimination. Of those people reporting discrimination, 44% indicating they were discriminated against while encountering police services.
12. The Council has received the 2015 Neighborhood Programs Report that summarizes the work of the 70 recognized neighborhood organizations funded in 2015. More than seven hundred volunteers serve as volunteer board members on neighborhood organization boards. Thousands of residents participated in neighborhood sponsored events, projects and initiatives throughout the year. In 2015, \$6,842,050 was expended through Community Participation Program (CPP) and Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) contracts to neighborhoods that used the funds to communicate with and organize residents and act on neighborhood identified priorities. Find the report at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/agenda/wcmsp-190350.pdf>
13. I was delighted to see a dramatic increase in the response rate to our second diversity audit of our neighborhood boards and I thank everyone who took the time to complete the survey. One of the things I look for in the surveys is how closely the demographic make-up of the boards matches demographics of the neighborhood and city as a whole. Not surprisingly, the areas that showed the biggest discrepancy were the number of people of color and the number of renters on our neighborhood boards. So, following a review of the results, I moved to direct Neighborhood and Community Relations Department staff to work with the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission to recommend a way to dedicate at least a portion

of future One Minneapolis funding to fund organizations that will work with and support neighborhood organizations to increase the number of potential neighborhood organization board members who are renters and people of color. You can read the report at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/agenda/wcmsp-190871.pdf>

14. Every other year, since 2009 when I first introduced the idea, the City conducts a voluntary survey of seated board members of 18 of the City's development and general advisory boards. This year, for the first time, we saw noticeable progress in seeing more people of color on our boards and commissions. One glaring deficit, however, is youth representatives on our boards and commissions. Because of this, and my long standing concerns about a lack of youth on our advisory groups, I successfully moved to direct Neighborhood and Community Relations Department staff to work with the City Clerk's office, the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission, and the 18 advisory boards and commissions surveyed as part of the 2016 Diversity Survey to develop recommendations for setting aside a seat on these boards and commissions for persons under age 25.
15. The City has launched an online survey to gather feedback for the Impound Lot Facility Improvement Project. Planning is underway so construction can begin in the summer of 2017. It will take about a year to complete. The survey is available in English, Spanish, Hmong and Somali. Take the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MplsImpound>.
16. In the Council has approved 8 routes for Open Streets in 2017: East Franklin, downtown, West Broadway, U of M, East Lake/Minnehaha, Nicollet, Lyndale and Northeast. The U of M route will go along University Ave from Oak to 10 Ave (without cutting through campus) and then crossing the 10th Ave Bridge to go down Cedar Ave. You can see all the routes and more information at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-190276>
17. With full city support (<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcms1p-149823.pdf>) an application has been submitted to have Minneapolis be a host city for a 3 month World Expo in 2023. Large, six-month Expos are organized every five years with one smaller, three-month version held in-between. The location that has been identified includes the University of Minnesota and area known as Prospect North, or Towerside, north of University Avenue in Prospect Park. To learn more about the proposal see <http://expo2023.info/> and <http://www.startribune.com/a-day-of-big-events-and-one-on-which-to-ponder-big-goals/391460041/>
18. In November the Council approved decertifying 11 special tax increment financing districts and two special Hazardous substance subdistricts. Several of these are in Ward 2, four in the Southeast Minneapolis Industrial area (SEMI) that were established in the 1990s and one in Southeast Como called Van Cleve Redevelopment that was established in 2007 for an anticipated development that never occurred.
19. 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.