

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Southeast Como Neighborhood February 7, 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, February 13th, 9:30-11:00am
Black: Coffee and Waffles, 1500 Como Ave SE**

1. Minimum Wage Community Meetings
2. Fraternity and Sorority Ordinance
3. Restoring NRP Phase 2 Funding
4. Fossil Fuel Divestment.
5. Minneapolis for a Lifetime Action Plan.
6. Federal Restrictions on Refugees and Immigrants
7. Syrian Refugee Resolution
8. Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) The City is holding a series of listening sessions on the proposed raise in the minimum wage. You can find the list of all of sessions here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/minimumwage/MINIMUM-HOME>. All meetings are open to the public. Questions and feedback about the minimum wage can also be sent to MinWage@minneapolismn.gov.
- 2) The ordinance amendment making changes to Fraternity and Sorority regulation, introduced by Council Member Frey in June, was discussed at the Planning Commission Committee of the Whole last month. It would loosen regulations of fraternities and sororities in response to the growing "Greek" community at the University of Minnesota to allow more flexibility and opportunities for existing and new fraternities and sororities. Currently these are a conditional use in the OR2, OR3, R4, R5, and R6 districts. They have a minimum lot area of 10,000 square feet and a minimum lot width of 80 feet. They are limited to 2.5 stories in height and must be located within ½ mile of the college/university campus being served. Specific changes that are being sought include allowing for the use to be established on zoning lots that were not previously used as a fraternity or sorority, removing the limit of thirty-two (32) maximum persons served, and allowing on-site services to be used by all members or guests. You can learn more about this proposal here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcmisp-192027.pdf>
- 3) On January 30th at the Health, Environment and Community Engagement Committee I moved a resolution that I have been working on for several months that, if approved by the full Council on February 10th, will restore full funding to all the neighborhood organizations that lost a portion of their allocated Neighborhood Revitalization Program funding as part of an unexpected budget amendment in December of 2010. This is possible, in part, because the revenue from the specially approved Tax Increment Financing District has been higher than expected, and is expected to be higher than projected for the next few years, before it expires in 2020. In 2016 it yielded over \$10 million more than projected or needed. Southeast Como can expect to get \$122,372 over the next two years with \$61,071 this year and \$61,071 in 2018. You can find the full staff report and payment schedules for all neighborhoods here <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-193147>.

- 4) I was very disappointed to learn that the new president is pushing forward the Keystone and Dakota Access pipelines, selling our children's futures for private gain for a few companies. This makes it even more important that Minneapolis divest not just from direct investments in fossil fuels, but from the financial institutions that underwrite these pipelines and other fossil fuel extractive industries. I'm proud to have coauthored a staff direction as part of the budget adoption in December, for staff to return with a report on practices in other city and further options worth exploring. My goal is for our decisions about our financial services providers to match our values. Better systems might include a publicly owned and democratically controlled local bank or credit union. If you are interested in learning more about this topic, here is a good place to start:
<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/www/groups/public/@council/documents/policydocument/wcmssp-193172.pdf>
- 5) The Council is poised to approve *Minneapolis for a Lifetime: An Age Friendly City Action Plan*. The plan (<http://minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-192521>) identifies the following goals: 1) affirm and improve all housing options for Minneapolis residents as they age; 2) strengthen and promote safe transportation options that meet the needs of Minneapolis residents as they age; 3) partner to expand and promote older adults' participation in health and wellness initiatives throughout the City of Minneapolis; 4) Establish and maintain valued social and civic roles; 5) Contribute to the economic life of the community; and, 6) participate in the social, educational and cultural life of the neighborhood and community. The first three, housing, transportation and health/ wellness are top priorities. I am excited to see this plan coming forward and believe that it offers clear recommended action steps that we can begin working on this year.
http://www.minneapolismn.gov/environment/air/airquality_index
- 6) I am very alarmed by the recent actions by the Trump administration on immigration and refugees. By providing a safe landing place for refugees and immigrants we not only do what we can, as a developed and resource abundant country, to help others in need, but we enrich our own communities. Trump's new policies are tearing and keeping families apart and obstructing the efforts of the University of Minnesota, Augsburg College and to be true international institutions of research and learning. To respond to the disturbing Presidential orders related to immigration and refugee resettlement, the Council's Intergovernmental Relations Committee discussed them at its next meeting on **Tuesday, February 7 at 9:30 am** in the City Council Chambers in City Hall. There, we heard from our City Attorney and community agencies, including Navigate MN, the American Civil Liberties Union, and about how these new rules will impact our City and how we can help respond to better protect our people. Following the presentation the Committee passed a Resolution condemning the January 2017 Presidential Executive Orders on Immigration Enforcement and Refugees, a motion that directing the City Coordinator's Office to establish a Sanctuary City Task Force that will bring forward a set of recommendations by March 31, 2017, to strengthen city-level policies, programs, and resources the City of Minneapolis can offer to better protect and defend the rights of refugees, immigrant families, Muslim residents and other targeted groups from unfair deportation, acts of bigotry and hate, and persecution. The Coordinator's Office was also directed to work to create a local immigration legal defense fund, and review the President's January 2017 Executive Orders for potential litigation and defense strategies to protect the City and our residents. I fully support these action and will continue the fight against what I see as this administration's immoral, cruel, and likely illegal behavior towards some of the most vulnerable people in our communities and our world. For a more of my thoughts on this see:
<https://www.facebook.com/camgordonward2/posts/722858671209828>.
- 7) The resolution that I authored supporting resettlement of Syrian refugees in Minneapolis passed the Council unanimously on January 13, prior to the Presidential action banning Syrian immigration indefinitely. You can find it here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/documents/agenda/wcmssp-191930.pdf>
- 8) Visit <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> for a list of current openings and position descriptions for City boards and commissions.