

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Prospect Park, 2-27-17

Cam's next Prospect Park Office Hours:
T Rex Cookie Café 3338 University Ave SE
Thursday, March 15, 9:30-11am

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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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an alternative format, please contact
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612-673-3000. TTY users call 612-673-
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612-673-3500.

Items:

- 1) Restoring Funding to Neighborhoods
- 2) Minimum Wage Listening Sessions
- 3) Transgender Equity Council
- 4) Limiting Waste Tires on Playgrounds
- 5) 2016 Resident Survey
- 6) Local Actions on Immigration
- 7) Minimum Wage and Tip Penalty
- 8) Supporting Refugees and Immigrants
- 9) One Minneapolis Fund RFP Open
- 10) Opposing the "Becker Bill"
- 11) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) On February 10 the Council unanimously approved a motion that I have been working on for months to restore \$9,141,951 to Phase II Neighborhood Revitalization (NRP) plans over the next four years. This represents the \$10 million frozen by the City Council in 2010 less the \$858,049 returned to neighborhoods in 2012-2013. This is possible, in part, because the revenue from the specially approved "Common Project" TIF 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. The Prospect Park neighborhood can expect to receive **\$91,225**. You can find the full staff report and payment schedules for all neighborhoods here <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-193147>.
- 2) The City is holding listening sessions on the proposed raise in the minimum wage. You can find details here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/minimumwage/MINIMUM-HOME>. All meetings are open to the public. The last planned meeting will be held on March 3, 11am-noon, at the Harrison Recreation Center, 503 Irving Ave. N. Questions and feedback about the minimum wage can also be sent to MinWage@minneapolismn.gov.
- 3) The Council, with my strong support, has approved the establishment of a permanent Transgender Equity Council to serve as an advisory board to the City Council on matters of importance to the Transgender community. You can find the details at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-193269>
- 4) Today, the Council's Health, Environment and Community Engagement committee unanimously voted for a resolution I authored to curb the use of waste tires on playgrounds. Thank you to Play it Safe Minneapolis for bringing this issue forward, to our Community Environmental Advisory Commission and Public Health Advisory Committee for looking into it and making recommendations, and to our partners at the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and Minneapolis Public Schools for their willingness to engage in this discussion.
- 5) 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>

- 6) The results of the 2016 Resident Survey are available at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/coordinator/rm/Monitoring/ResidentSurvey/index.htm
- 7) This month I was able to join a meeting with Saru Jayaraman, from the Food and Labor Research Center at the University of California, Berkeley, and author of "Forked: A New Standard for American Dining." She made a powerful case for why a tip penalty should not be considered in any minimum wage law, just like it is currently excluded in 7 states that have minimum wage laws, including Minnesota where we have a healthy and thriving restaurant industry. She encourages us to consider the power imbalance between tippers and servers, 70 percent of whom are female, and the fact that the restaurant industry generates five times the average number of sexual harassment claims per worker in places with a tip penalty. It has also made me only more convinced that I cannot support a tip penalty as any part of a City minimum wage ordinance. I do, however, support a gradual phase in, with technical and other supports for smaller businesses. I am committed to finding a solution that will support and lift up all low wage workers while also protecting our independent and small businesses from undue hardship.
- 8) To respond to the disturbing Presidential actions related to immigration and refugee resettlement, the Council took comments and action in February. After hearing 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, The Council passed a resolution condemning the January 2017 Presidential Executive Orders, and approved establishing a Sanctuary City Task Force that will bring forward a set of recommendations by March 31, to strengthen city-level policies, programs, and resources to better protect and defend the rights of refugees, immigrant families, Muslim residents and others from unfair deportation, acts of bigotry and hate, and persecution. We will also begin 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 actions 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>
- 9) The Council has approved issuing a request for proposals for the 2017 One Minneapolis Fund to promote leadership development and civic participation program. The One Minneapolis Fund is a City-funded grant program established in 2013 to support organizations serving under-represented communities in the city. The focus of the program is on leadership development and building civic engagement within those communities. Organizations eligible for the program are those which do not receive funding through the traditional neighborhood funding programs. For 2017, \$157,000 is available for programs that prepare leaders to serve on neighborhood and City boards and commissions and \$25,000 of the funds will be designated for City-initiated projects where organizations are asked to assist with outreach or other similar activities.
- 10) I was very disappointed to learn that Governor Dayton (despite the City Council's formal opposition) has chosen to support the Xcel "Becker bill" that would ignore the Public Utilities Commission's role and invest millions in new fossil fuels. To clarify, when Xcel decided - with the strong and vocal support of the City and environmental advocates - to close the Sherco coal plants that was a big a win for the environment. But, when they approached the Public Utilities Commission to get permission to build a new natural gas plant in Becker, the City, environmental advocates and advocates for low-income people fought this idea. The PUC agreed with us, and ordered Xcel to go through the normal process in which they study alternatives, including renewable sources like solar and wind. Now, for whatever reason, Xcel wants to circumvent that process and appear to have had written a bill to be allowed to go around the normal PUC process and build this new natural gas plant. That bill is moving through the legislature now, and will likely pass both the house and senate. The only way to stop this would have been for Governor Dayton to provide veto the bill. If he doesn't this is a big loss for the environment. It's also bad for ratepayers, because we will bear the costs of this plant - which has not been proven, through the normal process, to be the most cost-effective option in the long term. It's bad for the PUC process, because it's now clear that elected leaders will undermine it even when it provides an effective voice for ratepayers and the environment. It is also, in my opinion, a failure by Xcel to meet its commitments to help the City of Minneapolis reach our climate action goals. If the people of Minneapolis had a democratically controlled electric utility, I'm pretty sure it would not act this way. For more on this, see: <http://cubminnesota.org/provisions-to-protect-ratepayers/>, <http://mn.gov/governor/newsroom/?id=1055-279829>
- 11) Visit the City's website, <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> for a full list of appointment opportunities and position descriptions for City boards and commissions.