

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Seward Neighborhood Group January 25, 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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Ogow. Haddii aad dooneyso in lagaa kaalmeeyo tarjamadda macluumaadkani oo lacag la' aan wac 612- 673-3737.

**Cam's Next Office Hours:
Thursday, February 2nd, 9:30-11:00am
Nabo Café, 2211 Riverside Avenue**

- 1) Sick and Safe Time Lawsuit
- 2) Minimum Wage Listening Sessions
- 3) Public Health Advisory Committee Appointee
- 4) Financial Services and Divestment
- 5) Participatory Budgeting
- 6) Air Quality Study
- 7) Minneapolis for a Lifetime
- 8) Hiawatha Academies
- 9) Seward Bicycle Boulevards
- 10) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) I was heartened to see the courts side with the City in the Earned Sick and Safe Time ordinance lawsuit that was brought by the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, and others. The judge's ruling makes clear that the City does have the legal authority to adopt ordinances that bear on topics the state has also regulated, when we are not explicitly preempted. This is great news for the workers who will now get the sort of workplace protections that many of us take for granted. It is also good news for the City as we consider adopting a local minimum wage.
- 2) The City is holding a series of nine listening sessions across the city on the proposed raise in the minimum wage. You can find the full list of all of the listening sessions here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/minimumwage/MINIMUM-HOME>. All meetings are open to the public, though each will have a specific focus. Questions and feedback about the minimum wage can also be sent to MinWage@minneapolismn.gov.
- 3) This month I learned that my outstanding appointee to the City's Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC), Laurel Nightingale, had to resign. I thank Laurel for her commitment and service to the City. Now, I am looking for someone who lives or works in Ward 2 with experience, expertise and/or a strong interest in public health to serve on this committee. The committee has a long track record of providing valuable advice on health policy to the City Council, and Minneapolis Health Department. The advisory group reports to the Health, Environment and Community Engagement Committee, which I chair. It also serves as a link between the City and the community in addressing health concerns. I am hoping to get some applications in for review by February 15, 2017. The group meets the fourth Tuesday of the month from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. in City Hall. For information on the application process visit <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/boards/openings/WCMSP-190346>) For more information about the committee feel free to contact me or visit <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/health/phac/index.htm> or contact Margaret Schuster, Sr. Public Health Specialist, at 612-673-2643.
- 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. In this dark time, I think it's time for us to start dreaming about better systems we might be able to create together, like a publicly owned and democratically controlled local bank or credit union organized as a cooperative.

- 5) Building on research our offices had been doing and 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 our contracted lab, PACE 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 possible 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) Minneapolis for a Lifetime: An Age Friendly City Action Plan. The Council is poised to approve the 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 the plan offers clear recommended action steps that we can begin working on this year.
- 8) The Charter School, Hiawatha Academies, has a purchase agreement to buy the former Canada Dry/Shasta building at 3530 E. 28th Street. There, they hope to start construction of a new High School this June for occupancy in June of 2018. They plan to reuse close to half of the existing building, including the iconic entry on 36th Ave and 28th Street. The plans also include new construction, totally 93,800 Square feet on much of the site. In my meeting with school leadership I appreciated learning about the potential for shared gym space, greenway beautification, historic preservation, quality jobs and a well-regarded school in the area. I encouraged them to reach out to the neighborhood groups soon. You can learn more about the school here <http://hiawathaacademies.org/about-hiawatha/>
- 9) The Council has approved the layout and grant acceptance for the Seward Bicycle Boulevards along 24th St E and 29th Ave S to improve access to and from Matthews Park and Seward Montessori School. You can find the layout and more information here <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-190218>. While the layout does not include the treatment at 29th and the Midtown Greenway, I am working hard to see that the pilot closure to motor vehicle traffic at the Greenway is made permanent and see it as a critical element to the success of the bike boulevard. Prior to approving the layout, the committee approved the motion I made to direct Public Works staff to return to the Committee no later than January 31, 2017, with design options for the intersection of 29th and the Greenway, including a design option that will close 29th Ave S both northbound and southbound.
- 10) 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.