

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Prospect Park, 3-27-17

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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People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. TTY users call 612-673-2157 or 612-673-2626.

Para asistencia 612-673-2700

Rau kev pab 612-673-2800

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612-673-3500.

Items:

- 1) Waste Tires
- 2) Section 8 Nondiscrimination Ordinance Passes
- 3) Conditions in Adult Entertainment Establishments
- 4) Fraternity and Sorority Ordinance
- 5) Police Contract
- 6) Community Solar RFP
- 7) Community Connections Conference
- 8) Energy Benchmarking Report
- 9) Bills to Preempt Action on Bags
- 10) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) 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 and athletic fields. The resolution that will be considered by the full Council in April prohibits the use of City funds for the installation or replacement of any facilities using waste tire and encourages others to discontinue the use of waste tire materials in Minneapolis. Since then questions have been raised about whether or not this applies directly to fields owned and managed by the Park Board. Even if the City Council does not have the authority to limit the use of School or Park Board funds, I am hopeful that this action will push both organizations closer to finding alternatives and limit the use of this toxic material in our fields and playgrounds. I also hope that it will encourage other property owners not to use it. An interesting article appeared in the Washington Post about this on March 18, https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/does-playing-on-artificial-turf-pose-a-health-risk-for-your-child/2017/03/17/0c61b7b4-0380-11e7-ad5b-d22680e18d10_story.html?utm_term=.d3cbab0caa9a. You can find the resolution and more information here <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-194284>.
- 2) The Council has unanimously supported an ordinance that prohibits discrimination against Section 8 voucher holders. The ordinance includes an incentive fund for landlords serving Section 8 voucher holders, and support for many changes recommended to the Section 8 program. I supported this proposal because affordable housing choices are limited in our rental market and too many landlords refuse to accept Section 8 voucher holders.
- 3) This month the Health, Environment and Community Engagement committee received two reports about the situation in establishments with adult entertainment licenses. Following complaints about the cleanliness at some of the establishments, the Health Department inspected each of the 17 adult entertainment licensed businesses in the city. They identified and tested "stains of concern" at 14 establishments and confirmed the presence of potentially infectious material in 11 establishments and ordered them to be cleaned up. Today, the committee received a very important follow-up presentation by Dr. Lauren Martin, with the University's UROC center, about the experiences of workers in these establishments. The UROC report surfaces some of the greatest concerns at these establishments, including sexual assault, lack of training and health standards, and expectations by customers that they are paying for sex. The report also gives some clear recommendations for action by the City Council. I will be introducing an ordinance to try to put these recommendations into effect with my colleague Linea Palmisano. You can read the report here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcmsp-196389.pdf>

- 4) I have heard some concerns from southeast residents about Council Member Frey's proposed Fraternity and Sorority ordinance changes. I have reached out to staff to ask questions about the ordinance as currently proposed, and have heard three important points. First, staff are not proposing to change the zoning districts in which Fraternities and Sororities are allowed. Currently they are a conditional use in the R4, R5, R6 districts and the OR2 & OR3 districts. Second, they still have some work to do to figure out how to measure a condition that allows them within ½ mile from campus. Right now they are considering identifying a particular point or intersection on the U of M campus, located somewhere in the original land grant boundary. And third, staff are proposing to remove the occupancy limit, which would place fraternities and sororities under the Housing maintenance code, which restricts the number of people you can house per bedroom based on square footage. I will be tracking this ordinance proposal closely, and will do my best to keep people in southeast informed as it moves forward.
- 5) On March 10 the Council, with my support, approved a new police contract that was already ratified by the police union and had the support of the Police Chief and Director of Human Resources. This is a one of our largest and most significant labor agreements and represents a payroll (in 2014) of \$60,224,000. The agreement actually represents two contracts, one for 2015-2016 and one for 2017-2019. When the 1 to 4% annual salary increase per year is added up, it amounts to a 14.5% increase over the 5 years. This will get our officers in the top 1/3 of other metropolitan area police department salaries, but not at the top. Some of the more interesting changes to the contract include: giving the Chief more authority over administrative leaves during investigations and to make transfers due to performance related issues. Other noteworthy changes will allow officers more frequent opportunities to initiate transfers; modify "compensatory time" rules to reduce overtime; and change health club memberships to a strictly reimbursement program. It also sets in motion the creation of a Critical/Traumatic Incident work group to review best care for officers who experience a critical or traumatic incident. Currently the focus is on short term recovery to determine when officers can return to work, but research indicates that trauma can have long term impacts on officer well-being and job performance, so looking forward we will focus on long term, as well as short term care, with ongoing evaluations and consideration of ongoing impacts from traumatic incidents.
- 6) The Health, Energy, and Community Engagement committee has voted to release a request for proposals for another community solar garden. This RFP is different from the previous ones we have released in that it requires responding solar developers to commit to assigning at least 20% of the garden to low-income customers. In exchange, we are committing the City to act as a "backstop," meaning that we would step forward and purchase electricity if low-income customers leave the garden. This has been widely viewed as an option for bringing community solar services to low-income customers, but to my mind Minneapolis will be the first entity in Minnesota to actually implement it.
- 7) Registration is open for the sixth annual Community Connections Conference – Your Voice, Your City: CommUnity – at the Minneapolis Convention Center **Saturday, April 1**, from 8am-3pm at the Convention Center. The conference is free. All are welcome to make their voices heard; participate in interactive sessions, robust learning and exhibits; and enjoy a delicious cultural lunch. The conference features three tracks: one will feature an opportunity to participate in Minneapolis 2040, the City's Comprehensive Plan update (www.minneapolis2040.com), another will focus on planning for the future of neighborhood organizations and their roles in communities beyond 2020, and the third will focus on ways residents can connect with City leaders, find out how to serve on City boards and commissions, and engage Minneapolis' diverse communities. For more information and to register visit: <http://minneapolismn.gov/ncr/communityconnectionsconference>.
- 8) A new City Health Department report examines the electric, natural gas and water use of 264 commercial and 153 public properties in Minneapolis. This includes 107 million square feet of floor space and accounts for more than 8.1 million British Thermal Units of total energy use per year, which is the equivalent use of roughly 60 percent of the households in the city and represents 15 % of the city's total greenhouse gas emissions. The report estimates potential savings of more than 108,000 metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions annually and \$27 million per year on energy costs if there was a 15 percent reduction in energy consumption. Hospitals, places of worship and offices show the potential for the most savings. You can find the full report here <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@health/documents/images/wcmsp-194743.pdf>
- 9) Some state legislators are also trying to take away our ability to regulate single use carry out bags. Despite my testimony in opposition, bills are moving forward (one in the House, **HF1504**, and one in the Senate, **SF 1196**) out of committee that would prohibit local governments from banning or taxing paper or plastic bags. If signed into law, this would completely negate all the work we did, in the face of fierce industry lobbying, to pass our popular Bring Your Own Bag ordinance that is set to go into effect on June 1 this year. If you support this ordinance, or just the principal of allowing local jurisdictions to have the authority to regulate and manage such things, please let your legislators and governor know. The Governor's number is (651) 201-3400. For more information on why cities should have the right to ban plastic bags – see Eureka's fact sheet at http://media.wix.com/ugd/8468e6_45687b4963974591933c7f0b084f412e.pdf.
- 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.