

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Southeast Como Neighborhood July 5, 2017

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Second Ward

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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 Como Office Hours:
Thursday, July 6th, 9:30-11:00am
Black: Coffee and Waffles, 1500 Como Ave SE**

- 1) Minimum Wage
- 2) 2017 State Capital Investment Bill
- 3) Bring Your Own Bag Ordinance
- 4) 100% Clean Electricity for City Operations
- 5) Namaste Apartments
- 6) Vapor Contamination in Como
- 7) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) On June 30, on an 11 to 1 vote, the City Council approved a new minimum wage ordinance for Minneapolis. It lays out a timeline to get almost all Minneapolis wage earners to \$15/hour indexed to inflation by July 2024 - within 5 years for businesses with over 100 employees and 7 years for smaller businesses. It offers no tip credit but allows a 90-day "training wage" less than the minimum wage for people under 20 who are participating in a city-recognized employment training or apprenticeship program. It does not include school district, state, federal or University of Minnesota workers, because the city has no authority to regulate those employers. Some people may not be fully satisfied with the result, but I am hopeful that everyone will make a good faith effort to implement it as best we can. This will not only keep more money in our local economy and allow more parents to provide food and shelter for themselves and their children, but it will also directly address historic racial economic inequities that continue to plague our city and state. Of the City's 311,000 workers about 71,000 will be positively affected by the increase, and workers of color will disproportionately benefit. Of Latino workers, 54% will benefit from the increased wages. Of black workers, 41% will benefit. Of white workers, 17% will benefit. I see this as a commitment we are making as a community to both our workers and our employers. As we embark on this transition, let's support our local businesses more than ever and let's keep investing in our workforce to make our city one of the best places to do business in in the country. You can find the staff report, final ordinance and a wealth of additional information at <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/minimumwage/MINIMUM-HOME>
- 2) On May 30, the Governor signed a Capital Investment (bonding) bill and I was delighted to see that funding of \$31,875,000 for the 10th Avenue Bridge rehabilitation was included in it. This important and well used Second Ward bridge over the Mississippi needs major rehabilitation to remain safe and sound for the future. Two other City bonding priorities were also fully funded: \$25 million for the 35W/Lake Street Transit/Access project and \$1 million for the Pioneers and Soldiers Cemetery Fence Restoration.

- 3) I was disappointed to learn that the state legislature and Governor approved a new state law preempting Minnesota cities from banning the distribution of single use plastic carry-out retail bags. The new state law preempts “bans” but not “fees.” So the fee section of the City's law remains unaffected and I know that some stores are implementing the portion of the ordinance requiring a fee for paper bags that was not preempted. I commend those establishments and all of you who are already doing more to bring your own bags. I am moving forward with an effort to amend the city ordinance so that a fee will be required for plastic as well as paper carry out bags so that it fits within the constraints imposed by the Governor and state legislative majority. I expect that the public hearing for this will occur in August and that the new ordinance will be approved by October 1st.
- 4) The Council has taken a major step towards getting all of our electricity for City government facilities from clean, renewable sources within five years. This includes all the electricity the city purchases, including for street lights, signal lights, all City-owned buildings as well as our water plant. As part of the approved motion, staff will report back by August 28, with a preliminary analysis and recommendations for how to meet this goal that will look at current and projected usage of electricity over the next 10 years and out best options for getting clean, renewable energy in the short and long term. Options could include larger scale solar photovoltaic arrays on City owned land and structures; participating in more community solar gardens; the purchasing of renewable energy credits; pushing legislation to allow us to purchase power on the wholesale market; and, building our own renewable energy power on property we don't own, including wind and solar power plants located outside the city.
- 5) I met recently to get an update on the progress of the redevelopment of the Bunge site near Van Cleve Park. It includes the construction of two apartment buildings and preservation of the landmark head house tower. I was happy to learn that Project for Pride in Living is now working with Riverton Cooperative Housing as a partner and I am monitoring the process carefully. They have already qualified for Affordable Housing Trust Fund money but there were some concerns that proposed changes to City's affordable housing policies might impact the funding eligibility of the project. Fortunately, the policy proposal in question was not approved, so this project is likely to score well for affordable funding applications in the future.
- 6) The MPCA continues to work on the trichloroethylene (TCE) contamination in the Como neighborhood that was expanded to include a second superfund site last year. The two sites in Como are the General Mills Superfund site and the Southeast Hennepin Superfund site. Work is just beginning in the Southeast Hennepin site and MPCA has requested access to properties in order to do testing and determine mitigation plans for individual properties. This is work that was completed years ago in the General Mills site, but the MPCA has determined that before they move on to the expected next step for the General Mills site, to “create a long-term plan to address the contamination” they want to wait until the needed basic testing and mitigation is done in the Southeast Hennepin area. They believe that “because of the mitigation work already completed, this does not compromise the safety of the neighborhood.” I want to be sure that the mitigation systems are protecting homes and that we are doing all we can to ensure the health and safety of residents are protected and will be pushing for continued careful monitoring. For more on the Southeast Hennepin site see: www.pca.state.mn.us/waste/minneapolis-se-hennepin-area-groundwater-and-vapor-site, and for the General Mills site see : www.pca.state.mn.us/waste/minneapolis-general-millshenkel-corp-site
- 7) 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.