

**Council Member Cam Gordon's
Report to the Southeast Como Neighborhood
January 9, 2018**

Cam Gordon

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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:
Monday, February 12 9:30-11:00am
Black: Coffee and Waffles, 1500 Como Ave SE**

- 1) New Office Hours
- 2) 2018 Budget
- 3) 7th Annual Community Connections Conference
- 4) New Council Organization
- 5) Council and Mayor Pay Raise
- 6) Como Center for the Arts
- 7) Bunge project
- 8) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) Given the changes to the Council meeting cycle, I have changed my community office hours in the ward to Mondays. The Southeast Como office hours will still be on the second week of the month, in the same location, but will now occur on the Monday of that week. My community office hours are now Mondays from 9:30-11am following this pattern: first Mondays at the Birchwood Café, 3311 E 25th St; Second Mondays at Black: Coffee and Waffles, 1500 Como Ave SE; Third Mondays at T-Rex Cookie Café, 3338 University Ave SE; and Fourth Mondays at the East Lake Library, 2727 E Lake St.
- 2) I worked with my colleagues to make a number of amendments to the mayor's proposed budget that will be considered tomorrow evening when we take the final vote on the budget after our last Public Hearing on the 2018 Budget. One was to fund two additional inspectors in the Health Department's Food Lodging and Pools division. The number of restaurants continues to increase, as does the number of restaurants doing innovative things with fresh ingredients. Those are both really good trends, but they also put a lot of pressure on our staff. My motion dedicates enough funding for two new inspectors just for next year, along with a staff direction to revisit our fee structures to make sure the fees we charge are covering our costs. My second was to change the Neighborhood and Community Relations department budget by decreasing the appropriation for Collaborative Safety Strategies from \$475,000 to \$435,000, and increasing the appropriation for Senior Support Services from \$20,000 to \$60,000.
- 3) Sign up now for the seventh annual Community Connections Conference at the Minneapolis Convention Center Saturday, Feb. 10. The Community Connections Conference is a free event with exciting speakers, exhibitors and learning labs, including topics ranging from immigration to tenant rights. The conference will also feature a Minneapolis neighborhood showcase and delicious food from American Indian, African American and Southeast Asian caterers among others. Come join nonprofits, elected leaders, community organizations and others to learn about civic engagement opportunities, community partnerships, social justice initiatives and ways to shape local government policies. Sign up and find out more here: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ncr/conf/>

- 4) The new City Council has been inaugurated, and has elected a new set of leaders and adopted a new structure. Council Member Lisa Bender was elected Council President, Council Member Andrea Jenkins was elected Vice President, Council Member Andrew Johnson was elected Majority Leader and I was once again, as the sole Green Party member of the Council, elected Minority Leader. A new set of committees was created, including a new Housing Policy and Development committee which I will chair, including all of the housing finance and policy work that used to go through the Community Development committee. In addition, I will vice chair the Health, Environment, Civil Rights and Engagement committee (which is very similar to the Health, Environment and Community Engagement committee I chaired last term). I will also serve on the Transportation and Public Works, Economic Development and Regulatory Services, Zoning and Planning, and Executive committees, in addition to Committee of the Whole and the full Council. I believe that this new leadership and Council structure is a significant step in a more progressive direction, and was proud to support my colleague Lisa Bender to play this role. I also believe that this Council structure will do a lot to broaden power and decision-making to all members of the Council, rather than having too much power concentrated in just a few people, especially on housing and development issues.
- 5) In an unusual and unexpected move, on December 15 at the last meeting of 2017, the City Council voted to increase the salaries of the Mayor and Council by \$10,000 in a one-time adjustment for 2018 and then based on average annual collective bargaining agreements for the rest of the term. This was one of the more disconcerting votes I took in 2017. While I ended up voting for it I was very concerned that it did not follow a healthy, open or transparent process and because of it I will be proposing and pushing for a new ordinance that will require future Council and Mayoral salary increases to go through a formal and public committee process that may include the establishment of an appointed commission, similar to that set up for the state legislature, to make recommendations. I am grateful for the opportunity to do this work and have always felt that my compensation for working as a Council Member has been fair and generous. For a longer explanation of this including the rationale for the raise and my reluctant decision to support it see <http://secondward.blogspot.com/2018/01/unexpected-mayor-and-council-salary.html>
- 6) The building at 1035 14th Ave SE is for sale and there is an interested buyer who wants to share plans to convert it into a Center for the Arts on **Wednesday, January 17**, 6:30 – 8:00 pm at Van Cleve Multi-Purpose Room. Theatre Elision is proposing to renovate the old church building for use as an arts center, tentatively named “Como Arts” This may require re-zoning or other permissions from the City of Minneapolis. Until recently, the building was home to the Como Evangelical Free Church and the Oakeshott Institute, a medieval educational institution. It is now vacant and for sale. Before proceeding, Theatre Elision is seeking input from the community about the proposed plan and use of the property. More information about Theatre Elision can be found at www.elisionproductions.com.
- 7) Project for Pride in Living and Riverton Community Housing have gone through the City’s Preliminary Development Review process for the redevelopment of the Bunge grain elevator site. The project as proposed will include 95 units of affordable student housing in the section being developed by Riverton, and 50 units of affordable housing in the PPL section.
- 8) A number of board and commission positions are open for City Council and mayor appointments this fall. Visit <http://www.minneapolis.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> for more information and to apply.