

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Prospect Park, 12-11-17

Cam's next Prospect Park Office Hours:
T Rex Cookie Café 3338 University Ave SE
Thursday, December 28th, 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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612-673-3500.

Items:

- 1) Community Connections Conference
- 2) East of the River Plan Community Meeting
- 3) Zero Waste Plan Passes
- 4) 2018 Budget Passes
- 5) 2018 Budget Amendments
- 6) Clean Energy Funding
- 7) Uplifting Racial Equity Efforts
- 8) Changes at the Park Board
- 9) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) You are invited to the 7th annual Community Connections Conference on Saturday, February 10, 2018. The conference will display and build collaborations between neighborhoods, cultural communities, residents and the City. We are currently looking for exhibitors to sign up by January 5. Exhibitors will receive complimentary breakfast, lunch and beverages, and an exhibitor table with a table skirt and two chairs. For official City-recognized neighborhood organizations, City departments and small nonprofits there is no charge. For more information see <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/ncr/conf/index.htm>
- 2) The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is holding a public meeting on the proposed East of the River Plan on **Tuesday, December 12**, 6:30-8:00 pm, at Van Cleve Park. You can find more information here: https://www.minneapolis.org/park_care_improvements/park_projects/current_projects/east_of_the_river_park_master_plan/
- 3) The Council voted to adopt the proposed Zero Waste Plan in December. I consider this a major step towards a future with less waste, more recycling and composting, and fairer and more transparent waste service for everyone in Minneapolis, including renters and businesses. An implementation plan with next steps will come before the Council early next year. You can find out more here: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/mayor/ZWM/index.htm>.
- 4) I supported the budget and find a great deal to commend about it. This includes the continued implementation of the 20-year plan to fund the infrastructure and operations of neighborhood parks and City streets; over \$5 million in environmental, clean energy and efficiency initiatives; approximately \$24 million in funding for housing, including \$6.5 million in the Affordable Housing Trust Fund, \$750,000 to support construction of 30 new affordable homes, \$500,000 to expand the Homeownership Opportunity Minneapolis program, which will allow up to 15 Minneapolis families to transition into homeownership, \$1.9 million for a Land Banking Pilot to help buy, repair and maintain long-term affordability of properties in areas at risk of displacement, and funding for a new Housing Stability Specialist. I am also glad that the budget included \$150,000 for the Group Violence Intervention strategy, \$350,000 for collaborative, community-driven, public-safety strategies; creation of a centralized Data Practices request system; and the establishment of a new Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs.

- 5) I authored and supported several amendments to the budget before it was passed. I authored or co-authored five amendments. One was to fund two additional inspectors in the Health Department's Food Lodging and Pools division to keep up with growth in the restaurants, food trucks and other food vendors. The second was a staff direction to revisit our fee structures to make sure the fees we charge are covering our costs. My third was to change the Neighborhood and Community Relations department budget by decreasing its appropriation for Collaborative Safety Strategies from \$475,000 to \$435,000, and increasing its funding for Senior Support Services, (like those provided by the Seward Longfellow Healthy Seniors and Southeast Senior organizations), from \$20,000 to \$60,000. The fourth was a directive for staff to begin work on a City Municipal ID program. The last was related to concerns about uses of the franchise fee increase and directs staff to present options in the first quarter of 2018 on how to reduce the use of general fund dollars for the Renewable Connect program which currently seems to be relying on over \$300,000 from the franchise fee. I also supported motions that provided more funding for domestic violence prevention, our Next Step Hospital Based violence intervention program, adding two more housing inspectors, a lead poisoning prevention position that was slated to be cut, and one that re-appropriated \$90,000 to support the Labor Standards Enforcement Division with both enforcement and education.
- 6) Along with the budget, the Council also approved a 0.5% increase to the utility franchise fees we collect from Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy through. The fees, set by ordinance as a percentage of natural gas and electric charges, are currently 4.5 percent for residential customers, 5 percent for commercial customers, and 3 percent for industrial customers. The amount paid on a monthly bill correlates with energy use, which can vary by season. The average residential customer currently pays a franchise fee of about \$5.30 per month (about \$64 a year). The increase to the average residential customer will be about 57 cents more a month for a total franchise fee of less than \$6 a month (about \$71 a year). A report about the energy efficiency and renewable energy programs we might support with this can be found <https://lims.minneapolismn.gov/File/2017-01413>. I believe that a stable, ongoing source of funds to support this work is important. To help ensure this increase will go to clean energy efforts I successfully passed a resolution that commits the City to using the increased revenue from the franchise fees to fund energy efficiency and renewable energy programs, policies and interventions that will serve all groups of users including homeowners, renters and rental property owners, and commercial and industrial businesses of all sizes.
- 7) On December 8 the Council approved three separate and significant actions that will formalize, embed and strengthen the City's ongoing work on racial equity into the next term and beyond. The first is an ordinance that CM Glidden authored that establishes a Division of Race and Equity in the Coordinator's Office and obligates the City to continue this work racial equity indefinitely. The second and third were both resolutions lead on. The first of these establishes a Racial Equity Steering Committee and charges them with creating a Racial Equity Action Plan to be completed and presented to the Council for approval in June of 2018. The last action creates a new Racial Equity Community Advisory Committee to help drive this work and provide guidance on these issues on an ongoing basis. This group of up to 19 community members will be open to all Minneapolis residents and will be central role in shaping and advancing our racial equity work in the future.
- 8) The results of the Park and Recreation Board election will bring significant changes with the election of at-large members Londel French and LaTrisha Vetaw, Chris Meyer for District 1, including the area of Ward 2 east of the River, and AK Hasan for District 3 that includes the area of Ward 2 west of the River. LaTrisha is a fellow Green and also a Ward 2 resident. This election also marks the retirement from the Park Board of two other outstanding Ward 2 residents: John Erwin and Scott Vreeland. They have been valued partners and colleagues for me during my entire time in office and I hope they will continue to offer their insights and advice about park board and other matters, and I wish them both the best in their next endeavors. We also learned after the election that Park Superintendent Jayne Miller will be leaving Minneapolis for a new position she has accepted in Pittsburgh. To honor her, the Council approved and presented a resolution of thanks and appreciation to her on December 8. I have enjoyed working with Jayne since she was first appointed in 2010 and have found her to be responsive, professional and a great partner. I wish her well and the new Park Commissioners the best of luck finding a new superintendent.
- 9) A number of board and commission positions are open for City Council and mayor appointments this fall. Visit <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> for more information and to apply.