

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to Prospect Park, 9-24-18

**Cam's next Prospect Park Office Hours:
T Rex Cookie Café 3338 University Ave SE
Monday, October 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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an alternative format, please contact
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3737 (673-2157 TTY/VOICE)

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-
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Para asistencia 612-673-2700

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612-673-3500.

Items:

- 1) 2019 Budget
- 2) Hiawatha Encampment
- 3) Victim Advocate
- 4) Regional Parks Plan & the Grand Rounds Missing Link
- 5) Vermillion Project
- 6) Motley Development
- 7) Open Streets
- 8) Openings on Boards and Commissions

1) The Council is now deliberating on the Mayor's proposed 2019 budget of \$1.6 billion, which is \$139.1 million (or 9.8%) more than this year's budget. This includes an increase of 5.63% in the property tax levy, raising the total amount levied by \$18.7 million, to \$349.9 million in 2019. This levy increase will not mean a tax increase for everyone because the total tax base increased by more than 10%. The budget is available online at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/budget/>. You can see the full calendar at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/budget/budget-calendar> and make comments online at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/budget/budget-comments>. The times for public comment before the City Council will be on November 1 at 9:00 am, November 28 at 6:05 pm; and, the final Public Hearing before the Council on December 5 at 6:05 pm. All the budget meetings and hearings will take place in the City Council Chambers, room 317, in City Hall, 350 So 5th Street.

2) As you may know, there is a growing encampment of people near along the freeway wall at Hiawatha and Franklin. The City has been working to assist these families and I have very involved as chair of our Housing Committee. The City Council is currently looking at a number of locations in the area to establish a Navigation Center where people experiencing homelessness who are currently living at the encampment could go to get help. The Navigation Center would provide emergency services to address immediate needs including low-barrier access to shelter, beds, basic health services, and other resources likely provided by the County. Because of the impending cold weather this urgent emergency response is needed to give individuals, community stakeholders and government agencies more time to find more stable housing options for the residents of the camp. So far, the City Council has seriously considered two sites and delayed a decision in order to explore additional options. The City Council is set to re-consider the location of a Navigation Center on Wednesday afternoon. To learn more and discuss the situation, you are invited to a community meeting with me at Matthews Park on **Tuesday, September 25** at 7:00pm. For more information see <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/news/special/index.htm>. To watch testimony from the Housing Committee meeting see item 4. <https://lims.minneapolismn.gov/MarkedAgenda/HPD/597>.

- 3) I support the decision by the Police Chief to hire a full-time victim advocate to work with sex crime investigators. The advocate from the Sexual Violence Center will be embedded in the Sex Crimes Unit, which investigates accusations of abuse and assault. The advocate will accompany sex assault victims as they bring their cases to police, as the department already does with victims of domestic abuse.
- 4) The Metropolitan Council has released an update to its 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan. It generally matches the 2015 draft but includes more details about how the Equity Toolkit is used and adds a new regional park and 11 new regional trails to the system plan. Of particular interest to me is the Grand Round Missing link that would help connect Ward 2 neighborhoods to the River and the entire system of the Grand Rounds. For regional trails to be eligible for Met Council funding for acquisition and development, the Council must first approve a master plan for them. There are 48 proposed regional trails without approved master plans. The only Minneapolis Regional Trail proposed without an approved master plan is the 3.5-mile-long Grand Rounds Missing Link. I plan to submit comments calling for the Council to approve a master plan (that the Minneapolis Park Board will first need to submit to them) and funding for this critical piece of infrastructure. The update is now available for public comment and comments will be accepted through Thursday, September 27 at 5 pm by mail to Metropolitan Council Public Information, 390 Robert St. N., St. Paul, MN 55101, or by E-mail to public.info@metc.state.mn.us. For more information see <https://metro council.org/News-Events/Parks/Parks-News-Articles/2040-REGIONAL-PARKS-POLICY-PLAN-UPDATE-RELEASED-FO.aspx>
- 5) I am looking forward to the last Ward 2 Open Streets event of the season. The University of Minnesota + Motley Open Streets event will be held on **Sunday, September 30th** from 11am - 5pm along 14th Ave SE, University Ave SE, and Oak St SE. To learn more and see all the scheduled events visit www.openstreetsmpls.org.
- 6) After I moved a two-week delay to help address the concerns of nearby neighbors, I recommended, and the Council voted to approve, the Art and Architecture Vermillion project near Bedford and University Ave SE with 5 additional conditions. The approved project will preserve the Art and Architecture building and include a parking garage, commercial space, 136 apartments and 70 condominium units housed in a 14 story (147' tall) tower. The new conditions focused on addressing concerns about traffic on Prospect Terrace as well as impacts from the garage and building being constructed so close to back yards along Clarence Avenue. While the project will move forward I have also set in motion a City effort to find a way to better regulate building height near the historic Witch's Hat Tower. I also was able to pass a direction to City staff to work with the Historic Preservation Commission to review how this and future development in the area may impact the viewshed from and to the Prospect Park Witch's Hat Tower, and to determine if such viewsheds are worthy of protection and how that might be accomplished. I am hopeful they will help us develop guidelines, or perhaps a change to our Historic Preservation ordinance, that would better protect the viewshed from and to the Tower. I know that this process has sparked some very strong reactions in people, and strong opinions. I know that many are not satisfied with the outcome. I will admit that this project has been challenging for me but I believe that the outcome balanced the rights of the property owner, considered the recommendations coming from the neighborhood organization, the planning staff and planning commission and from the neighbors who were most impacted. In the end I hope I was able to meet my obligations to the law and to my constituents, while respecting the neighborhood process, and reducing the negative impacts of this project on neighboring properties and the nearby historic resources.
- 7) A new partnership has formed to lead redevelopment near the eastern edge of the University of Minnesota's East Bank Campus. It is being spearheaded by the University of Minnesota Foundation Real Estate Advisors (UMFREA), who owns several properties adjacent to the University's East Bank and UMarq Investments, a Pohlad-owned entity. They are forming an Advisory Council open to community member. If you have interest in this see: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSf3iNDQiDeizRHtwGAU656-bIRlcFBDjszfPrhKEcx6xev6vQ/viewform> . You can also learn more at <https://www.facebook.com/motleympls/> <https://twitter.com/motleympls> <https://motleympls.com/2018/07/05/step-1-be-inspired-3/>
- 8) Several board and commission positions are open for City Council and mayor appointments. Visit <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> for more information and to apply.