



Saint Paul
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Facilities Department

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1930 Como Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55108-2778

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April 27, 2022

Mr. Bill Dermody
City of St. Paul
Planning & Economic Development
25 W. 4th St, 14th Floor
St. Paul, MN 55102

Re: Hillcrest / The Heights Development Master Plan

Mr. Dermody,

Thank you for our discussions of the The Heights (FKA: Hillcrest) development's master plan. Saint Paul Public Schools appreciates being a collaborative partner with the City on planning efforts throughout our coterminous boundaries and to be consistently provided with information and asked for feedback through our Facilities Department.

We recognize that the level of detail in the development plan is preliminary and, accordingly, any analysis of the impact of the proposed development on the school district is equally or more preliminary and is solely meant as a starting point to understand the large-scale impacts and opportunities it represents. As the development plan gets finalized and greater detail surrounding the total number of housing units and, more importantly, the mix of housing types in that quantity, is understood, greater levels of detail and analysis will be possible.

As part of the District's [Envision SPPS](#) process, which sought to align all school buildings in SPPS with a sustainable well-rounded education, the District undertook a rough order of magnitude analysis about the impact of The Heights development in terms of school-age children and potential enrollment changes to the school district. In short, we anticipate that the District's existing portfolio of buildings and programs should be able to accommodate the increases in school-age children this development may entail. This conclusion is based on comparing average numbers of children per housing unit both on the Eastside of St. Paul and nationally, which provides a rough estimate of school-age children for the new development (a range of approximately 585 to 640 children, or 45-50 per K-12 grade) and then aligning those estimates with the capacity of the district's existing buildings.

Much can change both in terms of the profile of the development and in the programmatic offerings of the school district in the years before any housing units are built and occupied, but this is a reasonable assessment given the current understanding of the proposed development and the current profile of the school district's offerings.

One component that warrants particular focus and discussion as the development of the site continues is the opportunity for potential early learning opportunities, inclusive of birth to PreKindergarten programming. As we monitor the ever-evolving local, statewide, and national conversation around the importance (and funding) of early learning opportunities, there may come a time when the District may want to have a footprint in The Heights development to offer that type of programming for residents and the adjacent community. The District's creation of an early learning hub at the campus that has historically housed the L'Etoile du Nord Lower Campus (and Prosperity Heights Elementary before that) could be seen as a potential precedent for that type of offering, but again, much will change over the coming years as the development takes shape.

Thank you again for your continued collaboration as this development progresses. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me if you have any questions or would like to discuss any part of the information shared in this letter.

Sincerely,

Tom Parent, AIA, LEED AP
Facilities Director, SPPS



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