

April 12, 2022

Mr. Michael Wade
City of Saint Paul
Department of Planning and Economic Development
1400 City Hall Annex, 25 West Fourth Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

RE: Rezoning of 150 Water Street

Dear Mr. Wade:

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the Port Authority's position on the proposed rezoning of 150 Water Street.

The Saint Paul Port Authority supports business growth primarily in the industrial sector. Our mission is to create job opportunities, expand the tax base, advance equitable and sustainable development, and support commerce on the Mississippi River. As part of that mission the Port Authority's Strategic Plan calls for the protection of industrial zoned property. If industrial property is to be rezoned, we request the project developer and the City work together to identify alternative sites for conversion to industrial zoning. The Port Authority believes industrial property is key to a thriving local economy and we aim to create an explicit No Net Loss Industrial Zone land policy.

Saint Paul has lost significant industrial land over the past two decades due to conversion to open space and other non-industrial/jobs-creating uses. It is incredibly important for the Port Authority, stakeholders, and policy makers to understand the impact of these land conversions. Industrially-zoned land is our most consistent provider of development resulting in a broadened tax base and good-paying jobs with easy access points for Saint Paul residents. It will take an explicit policy stand to protect our industrial land for businesses growth and job creation.

In this specific case, the subject parcel lies within an existing functioning industrial node that was only recently rezoned to IT (Industrial Transition), with numerous nearby parcels rezoned to T3, which would allow for this type of redevelopment for residential uses. These IT parcels were not rezoned to T3, in a conscious effort to reinforce their continued use for job production commercial/industrial uses. This application states a clear intention to convert the adjacent parcel at 150 Plato.

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While market and neighborhood forces may push towards higher density residential uses over industrial, we must ask, “where will the City then compensate for the loss of land for industrial job opportunities with low barriers to entry, and the loss of net positive tax base?”. Please consider requesting that the development provide off-setting land to convert to industrial zoning to keep Saint Paul’s economy operating in balance.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposal.

Sincerely,



Kathryn Sarnecki
SVP of Real Estate and Development

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