

January 3, 2018

Council President Brendmoen and Councilmembers:

I am writing on behalf of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) in support of the creation of Administrative Code Chapter 81- Sustainable Building, and adoption of Ordinance 17-60 by the Saint Paul City Council.

In 2007, the MPCA awarded an Environmental Assistance (EA) Grant of \$36,000 to the City of Saint Paul to create local policies, procedures and regulations that would support and guide green development within the city. Over the past 10 years, Saint Paul has been a leader in sustainable development. The groundbreaking Saint Paul Sustainable Building Policy was first adopted in 2009. The MPCA has been gratified to learn that in the 8 years since its inception, the Sustainable Building Policy has impacted almost 50 public and private projects including single- and multi-family housing, commercial buildings, performing arts and sports venues, community centers, a museum, and municipal buildings including fire and police stations and libraries.

MPCA recognizes climate adaptation and community resilience as important contributors to human health and the sustainability of both the natural and built environments. During 2017, MPCA staff gladly participated in the reassembled Core Team for the Saint Paul Sustainable Building Policy to explore needed updates, including ways to incorporate climate resilience into the requirements. Chapter 81 is the result of that work.

Overall, Chapter 81 with adoption of Ordinance 17-60 will maintain the City in its strong leadership role providing for public health and welfare by increasing the environmental and financial sustainability of future development projects. Application of the updated policy to renovations over 10,000 ft² and inclusion of resilience measures, electric vehicle charging, monitoring of water during operations, and on-site renewable energy generation in the Saint Paul Overlay will better mitigate the impacts of development, and make that development more adapted and resilient for our changing climate.

The Saint Paul Sustainable Building Policy has been promoted as a model by the Minnesota GreenStep Cities Program, and other cities have been inspired to take action. St. Louis Park adopted thresholds for private development similar to Saint Paul's. Maplewood adopted a voluntary code. Golden Valley selected a combination of public amenity options including LEED certification and enhanced stormwater management for a project to be allowed through the planned unit development process. Rochester has been exploring how it might customize the Saint Paul Policy for its local needs.

MPCA applauds the City of Saint Paul for its important and ongoing leadership fostering truly sustainable development by both its public and private sectors.

Sincerely,



David J. Benke

Division Director

Resource Management & Assistance Division