

## **Neighborhood STAR Board Proposed Appointment – September 2017**

### **David Washington**

Ethnicity: African America  
Occupation: Software Engineering Manager  
Employer: Microsoft

#### **Why are you interested in serving on a board or committee?**

Saint Paul is an incredibly special place. My family and I chose to live here four years ago after living for 10 years in Seattle. Since we have two young kids we wanted a place with great schools, a diverse urban environment, and strong history and culture. Saint Paul combines much of what we loved about Seattle with even more history, economic diversity, and affordability.

In many ways, Saint Paul feels much like Seattle did 10 years ago when I first moved there from Wisconsin. It has a ton of the great qualities that attract families, and is one of the few urban centers that still is affordable to live in. With that desirability comes growth. Growth, when managed well can be great for a city and its residents.

In managing that growth there are two main areas motivate me to join the board:

1) Pedestrian Safety and Priority - Especially in urban centers, creating an environment that is not only safe for pedestrians but truly optimized for pedestrians is essential for sustainable, desirable urban growth. We all know what car-optimized suburbs feel like and we chose to not live there. What sets our urban cores apart is their walkability, their great environment for small businesses to flourish as people walk from shop to shop. I'd love to help find ways to create urban cores throughout the city that work for people coming and going with cars, but are truly exceptional who want to stay a while, grab a bite to eat, walk to do some shopping, or head to a park.

2) Great Schools - We need to maintain excellent schools and invest deeply in our students, not just because it's the right thing to do for the future, but because smart people who have the means to will simply leave, or choose other cities that invest better in their families. As a homeowner, I feel the pressure of property taxes already, but we can't underfund this. Raise taxes if we have to, but we have to fund the schools.

I'd be honored to join the board and I think I'd be an asset with my engineering background and approach that I've learned through formal education and 13 years of experience at Microsoft. While I'm passionate about the above topics, I like to see all perspectives and weigh pros and cons to affect the greatest good for the community.

**What skills/training or experience do you possess for the committee(s) for which you seek appointment?**

Summit Hill Association – Board Member; Microsoft – Technical Leadership and Management role; University of Minnesota – Duluth – Labovitz School of Business Advisory Board Member; Roosevelt Neighborhood Association (Seattle) – Pedestrian Safety Committee