

MELISSA MARTINEZ-SONES

394 Herschel Street, Ward 4
Saint Paul, MN
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Rebecca Noecker, Council President
Members of the Saint Paul City Council

March 13, 2025

Dear Members of the Saint Paul City Council,

I am delighted to submit my application for consideration as the Ward 4 Interim City Council Member.

I have proudly called Ward 4 home since 1995, first as a student at Hamline University and living in dorms on campus. Over the years, I have experienced the neighborhood from many different perspectives—as a student renter, a tenant, a homeowner, a work-from-home small business owner, and a parent raising children here. Ward 4 has not only been my address but the headquarters of my entire adult life.

In my professional career I have reviewed hundreds of cover letters in my role leading Executive Searches. Many candidates claim they're the perfect fit for a position. At the risk of being a cliché: I believe I am uniquely suited for this role.

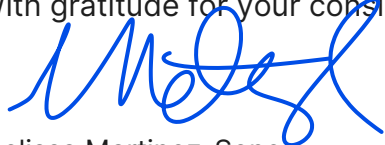
The core of my business, Mighty Consulting, has been providing organizations with interim leadership. Many times I have stepped into nonprofits as an interim Executive Director—quickly assessing, learning, and leading to ensure effective stewardship during periods of transition. I see the opportunity to serve as the Interim City Council Member as an extension of this skill set, allowing me to contribute meaningfully to the community I deeply care about.

Prior to being a consultant I spent a few exciting months in the Ward 4 office, working with council member Russ Stark while his legislative aide was out on a family leave. It was great experience serving the constituents and community in that time-limited role.

I have also served as the Executive Director for two of Saint Paul's district councils: the Macalester-Groveland Community Council and the CapitolRiver Council in downtown. These roles gave me a deep understanding of city processes, programs, and dynamics. And, many years ago in 1999, I began my career as an organizer in Frogtown.

I would be honored to serve in this role, diligently working for the residents of Ward 4, and then ensuring a smooth transition to the elected council member following the special election.

With gratitude for your consideration,



Melissa Martinez-Sones

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PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Owner and Consultant, Mighty Consulting

2014 - Present

- Mighty Consulting supports Minnesota nonprofits, collaboratives, and leaders with a variety of services including Interim Executive Director leadership, Project Management, Strategic Planning, Facilitation, Executive Search
- A full list of clients can be found on page 3 and on the business website

Ward 4 Interim Legislative Aide

April 2014 - July 2014

- Served as the Interim Legislative Aide to Councilmember Stark during parental leave for permanent aide
- Track progress of projects and efforts throughout the ward and generally supported the work of the office
- Constituent communications, relationships, and problem-solving
- Worked with variety of City staff on issues facing the ward

Executive Director, CapitolRiver Council

February 2012 - March 2014

- Directed all community council initiatives, programs, and projects
- Managed relations with the 35-member Board of Directors, community and local government stakeholders
- Collaborated with district council leaders, City staff, and a variety of downtown organizations and institutions
- Partnered with the City of Saint Paul on the Lowertown Ballpark Design and Construction Committee

Graduate Intern, Department of Public Health, City of Minneapolis

July 2010 - July 2011

Food Policy Intern, Statewide Health Improvement Program

- Developed citywide food policy for Minneapolis Researched and synthesized model policies
- Assessed readiness for healthy food policies in contracted community-based organizations

Healthy Housing, Healthy Communities Intern, Statewide Health Improvement Program

- Supervised partner organizations on progress of activities around nutrition, physical activity, and tobacco cessation
- Provided technical assistance on Healthy Housing intervention activities
- Planned and facilitated bi-monthly trainings for partner organizations

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, CONTINUED

Executive Director, Macalester-Groveland Community Council

2004 - 2009

- Directed all community council initiatives, including a strategic planning process
- Managed relations with 25-member Board of Directors and important community and local government stakeholders
- Facilitated relations between community members and governmental bodies around issues and processes impacting the neighborhood, such as zoning, public funding, capital budgeting, and passing local legislation
- Partnered with other district council leaders, City of Saint Paul, Grand Avenue Business Association, local colleges and universities, and other organizations on neighborhood issues

Community Organizer, Seward Neighborhood Group

2000 - 2004

- Organized block clubs and crime prevention activities, community outreach, staffed community building committee
- Worked closely with business associations, other neighborhood organizations, Minneapolis Police Department and the City of Minneapolis

Community Organizer, Frogtown Neighborhood Association

1999-2000

- Organized block clubs, crime prevention strategies, and planned events
- Staffed Social Concerns Committee (license reviews, code enforcement, problem properties)
- Worked closely with other neighborhood organizations and city departments

EDUCATION

Master of Public Affairs

Humphrey School, University of Minnesota

- Relevant coursework in leadership, nonprofit management, and public policy

Bachelor of Arts

Hamline University, Saint Paul, MN

- Urban Studies and Sociology

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CLIENT LIST 2014-2025

Interim Executive Director

Freshwater Society
Portico Healthnet
Shir Tikvah
MoveFwd
RECLAIM
LatinoLEAD
St. Paul Smart Trips
Transit for Livable Communities
Rainbow Health

Collaborative Support and Project Management

Homeownership Opportunity Alliance (present)
Center for Community Health (present)
North Metro Round Table, Suicide Prevention Work Group (present)
Dakota County Community Services

Strategic Planning

Great River Passage Conservancy
Hope Chest Foundation
Midway Chamber of Commerce
Headway Emotional and Behavioral Health
MN State Horticultural Society
Mental Wellness Campaign of Anoka County
Southeast Seniors
Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association
NECHAMA
Minnesota Psychiatry Society
District Councils Collaborative
Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association
Heart-n-Soul Community Cafe
Forecast Public Art

Executive Search

Headwaters Foundation for Justice
Latino Economic Development Center
Energy CENTS Coalition
Exodus Lending
OutFront Minnesota
LatinoLEAD
Minnesota Coalition Against Sexual Assault and Rape
Twin Cities MetroIBA