



June 11, 2020

Downtown Saint Paul property owners,

The number one priority when business leaders are considering a location for their offices and workers is if that place “feels safe.” Several factors contribute to how safe a place feels, and it can be different for everyone, but we know a few things for certain. Keeping a place clean from litter and graffiti improves safety outcomes and perceptions, as does attentive maintenance, having active eyes and ears on the street, and general vitality. To accomplish this at a level that meets the needs and standards of the business community, cities across the country are utilizing downtown improvement districts. Downtowns are currently experiencing unprecedented challenges, and **we need to implement a downtown improvement district in Saint Paul now more than ever before.**

Many of us, along with hundreds of others, were involved in the Downtown Vitality Vision process led by the Riverfront Corporation in 2017. One of the top three strategies included in that report was creating a downtown improvement district, also known as a business improvement district or a special service district per Minnesota state law. For the last several months, business owners and commercial property representatives have been meeting to discuss the opportunity to strengthen Saint Paul’s downtown through a downtown improvement district. **After much research and collaboration, we are proposing a Saint Paul Downtown Improvement District that will be established by business for business, with a clear focus on a safe and clean program.** Fees will be established based on building and property size and the City and County will be required to pay for their buildings as well.

Our Saint Paul model will be based on best practices and will include two primary programs that will be enacted in phases. **The first program to be implemented in 2021 will be the creation of a Safety Communications Center or “Fusion Center.”** This phase will focus on coordinating and leveraging existing safety assets including private security, nonprofit service programming, as well as police and other public safety partners. This program will not only establish and condition collaborative communication amongst those groups, but will also coordinate technology assets including cameras, radio channels and other tools.

The second phase will be the creation of a highly visible ambassador program, to be rolled out in 2022. This phase will add eyes and ears to our streets and public spaces in a very public

manner, creating a welcoming presence for visitors and dramatically improving cleanliness. As both programs are implemented, we will be collecting data, tracking outcomes and communicating this information to you, the rate payers.

The first step towards establishing a downtown improvement district is for property owners to petition the City Council in support to begin the process. There will be a public process and discussion that will follow, but this is a key first step. Enclosed you will find your petition and the management plan for these services. **We, the members of the Steering Committee, would encourage you to join us in signing your petition and returning it by June 30.**

If you have any questions, please feel free to call any of the Steering Committee members or Joe Spencer, president of the Downtown Alliance (mobile – 651-503-3040). We also invite you to join us for a video conference call Thursday, June 25 at 11:00 a.m. to learn more about the proposal and the process ahead. Please email Joe Spencer (joe.spencer@stpdowntownalliance.org) for the link to join the call.

Sincerely,

Saint Paul Downtown Improvement District Development Steering Committee

Clint Blaiser <i>Osborn370</i>	Dean Freeman <i>Infor Commons</i>	Matt Majka <i>Minnesota Wild</i>	Pat Skinner <i>Wells Fargo Place</i>	Kris Taylor <i>Ecolab</i>
Julio Fesser <i>Securian Financial</i>	Todd Geller <i>Grace Building Victory Ramp</i>	Greg Sharpe <i>Travelers</i>	Jim Stolpestad <i>Exeter Group</i>	Pat Wolf <i>The 428 Golden Rule</i>