

## **Snelling-Midway Community Advisory Committee**

### **Report to the Saint Paul Planning Commission, Mayor, and City Council on the Snelling-Midway Master Plan and Stadium Site Plan**

**May 26, 2016**

**Background** - A site plan for the Minnesota United FC soccer stadium and a master plan for the 34.5 acre Snelling-Midway redevelopment site will soon be presented to the Saint Paul Planning Commission and Saint Paul City Council for review. The goal of the proposed transit oriented development is to create a new urban village surrounding the stadium that includes retail, office, residential, hotel, entertainment, and public open space uses.

To ensure community input was reflected and included in the plans for the proposed development, a Snelling-Midway Community Advisory Committee (SMCAC) was appointed by the Mayor. Input from the community at large was also gathered at public open house meetings held in November, February, and March. An additional public open house is planned for June 7<sup>th</sup> where people can learn about plans for the development and provide comment on the project's environmental review. Input was also received from Open Saint Paul, the City's on-line public input opportunity. This report highlights the SMCAC's involvement and how its ideas, hopes, and concerns were considered and incorporated into the site plan and master plan. This report also presents community concerns that need to be addressed as the process moves forward and the opportunities that still need championing to be realized as development proceeds.

**About the SMCAC** - Members of the community who have a stake in the Midway area of Saint Paul - live, work or visit there - comprise the SMCAC. The 21 community members, plus representatives of Minnesota United FC, RK Midway, and the Metropolitan Council, were appointed by the Mayor, selected from a list of 210 applicants who requested to serve. The role of the SMCAC was to:

- Help determine the community needs and desires for the project
- Review plan concepts and provide input on major design elements and themes
- Bring suggestions from community, stakeholders, and respective organizations to the attention of City staff and officials
- Help communicate project progress to community members
- Provide guidance to City staff on final recommendations for the redevelopment site
- Ensure that the full range of issues are discussed during the design process

**About the SMCAC Process** - The SMCAC held nine meetings from December 2015 to May 2016. SMCAC conversations included discussions of community needs and desires for the redevelopment. The SMCAC also heard presentations on the project plans, designs, and environmental review process and weighed in on what they saw and heard. This input was conveyed to the architects and planners for consideration and incorporation of ideas into the plans.

## SMCAC Comments

- The stadium presents a unique and real opportunity to transform an underutilized shopping center into the transit oriented urban village envisioned in the Snelling Station Area Plan.
- While the process allowed us to help shape the vision for the redevelopment of the Snelling-Midway area by providing input as the plans were prepared, we were continually frustrated by the slow pace at which information was forthcoming. This “information gap” made it seem as though the SMCAC and the master plan designers, including the shopping center owner, were involved in separate processes since the designers and owner seldom attended the meetings to present information or respond to questions. We expressed frustration and questioned whether the comments and concerns that were conveyed to the designers were even considered by them.
- Our input was informed by what we heard from community members at public open house meetings and through comments on Open Saint Paul. That being said, the SMCAC believes that there was not enough public engagement and that engagement should have happened earlier in the process. Individuals and groups should have been consulted well before “lines were drawn on paper” when they would have had a real chance to “influence the lines”. In addition, the project website should be improved to make it easier to navigate.
- *Uncertainty* abounds. The review process was challenging due to the project’s fast-paced timeline for the project. From the yet-to-be completed transportation study and environmental review to the unknown timing and phasing of development, there seem to be more questions than answers and not enough time to thoughtfully and thoroughly consider and answer the questions. The details regarding implementation of the master plan have been lacking.
- Given the quick pace at which plans are being developed, there does not seem to be adequate time for thoughtful and thorough evaluation of the plans or their impacts. This leads to a profound *sense of urgency* on our part to make sure we convey to the decision makers our concerns about the redevelopment before final decisions are made. Questions about how transportation, neighborhoods, businesses, and employment will be impacted remain, as do questions about phasing of development and the opportunity for some affordable housing options. Table 2 of this report talks about these concerns in greater detail.
- We feel that to be successful redevelopment must strive to meet the needs of the existing economically and ethnically diverse populations in the surrounding neighborhoods. The redevelopment has the potential to be a tremendous benefit to people in the surrounding neighborhoods if done right. ***The SMCAC is deeply concerned about racial equity and social justice and wishes to keep these concerns front and center in the minds of decision makers, developers, and the property owner as proposals for the site come forward.***
- An efficient transportation system, including safe pedestrian and bicycle connections to transit and the surrounding neighborhoods and access to parking, is an important component of success, especially on event days at the stadium.
- Our comments should help guide development on the site and frame future discussions.

The SMCAC members have appreciated the opportunity to serve and many are willing to continue to be involved, at the request of Mayor Coleman, as specific plans for Snelling-Midway redevelopment come forward.

At the beginning of our work, we expressed the following hopes:

- Walkability for all ages with safe connections to transit and crossings at Snelling and University
- Activities for before and after games that can be enjoyed by people of all ages such as restaurants, bars, cultural activities, and a town center area
- Transformative, yet realistic plans for the area
- Connections to the broader community
- Development that promotes diversity and innovation
- Housing that includes affordable options
- A stadium that is used for more than just MLS games

At the beginning of our work, we expressed the following concerns:

- Outreach needs to happen for all parts of the community so that input comes from all and not just those with the loudest voices
- New development needs to serve the existing community
- Existing local businesses will be impacted; need to be sensitive to this
- Lack of understanding by the community of trade-offs of development and how to convey this
- Traffic and parking impacts need to be identified to minimize neighborhood impacts
- Crime and safety concerns for visitors to the site
- Processes/programming should be available during all stages of development

These hopes and concerns continued to be refined as SMCAC discussions continued and as specific plans for the redevelopment were presented. The summary from each of the SMCAC meetings is available on the project webpage at [www.stpaul.gov/midway](http://www.stpaul.gov/midway).

**SMCAC Meetings** - Initial meetings included a review of existing plans and studies for the area and presentations about site conditions, state requirements for environmental review, and the City review and approval process for new development. Key principles for development were generated as well. Subsequent meetings included presentations on the stadium site plan and master plan and many focused discussions about plan details and impacts. Presentations highlighting results from input at public open house meetings, including input from Open Saint Paul, was also a part of the meetings. The Union Park Midway Center Committee Report was presented and discussed. Metro Transit provided information on service in the area. The Capitol Region Watershed District described stormwater management opportunities for the site. The SMCAC learned about the activities of the Snelling-Midway Jobs Workgroup and received details about the agreements approved by the Saint Paul City Council (land lease and development, use, and budget agreements).

The SMCAC members played an important role in bringing suggestions from the community, stakeholders, and their respective organizations to the attention of City staff and officials and helped communicate project progress to community members.

**Additional Outreach** – Beyond the SMCAC meetings, community engagement included three public open houses where information was presented and attendees were invited to provide input at topic break-out tables with “dot-voting” and open-ended questions. More than 300 people attended these meetings. Traffic, parking, noise, light, building heights, building design, and residents and businesses being priced out of the neighborhood were some of the more frequent concerns expressed. A fourth public open house is planned for June 7<sup>th</sup>, details below, and a public hearing at the Saint Paul Planning Commission is scheduled for Friday June 10, 8:30 am in Room 40 City Hall Basement. A public hearing at the City Council is anticipated for early August.

Community input was also received from Open Saint Paul, the City’s online public input opportunity. More than 100 people visited the site or posted comments. Summaries of the input received at the open houses and on Open Saint Paul can also be found at [www.stpaul.gov/midway](http://www.stpaul.gov/midway).

Additional engagement occurred at Gordon Parks High School, Saint Paul Central High School, Skyline Tower apartment building, Union Park District Council, Community Action Partnership of Washington and Ramsey County, and a workshop hosted by Little Africa Business & Cultural District of Minnesota. While attendees tended to express support for the proposed plans, they also voiced concerns and asked questions. Many of the concerns and questions are ones that surfaced during SMCAC discussions and relate to gentrification, affordable housing, livable wages, retaining and attracting small, local, and minority owned businesses, and providing stadium access for non-MLS soccer activities, especially in winter months.

Questions about project costs and how redevelopment will impact property and sales taxes were raised as were questions about project phasing and the compressed timeline for community input and involvement. All were interested in the process for recruiting new businesses and employment to the area and some asked how the community can see halal shops and other ethnic businesses in the development.

A desire was expressed to see Minnesota United support youth soccer development, create practice fields, provide service learning opportunities, and opportunities for youth involvement in the stadium. There was also an interest in improved pedestrian and bicycle access and wondering where visitors would park and whether there would be space to tailgate.

Many attendees expressed frustration with public engagement noting that grass roots door-to-door engagement is the only way to engage people in authentic discussion about the project. Some stated that the proposed redevelopment does not feel like it is for people of color who live in the community. They felt “new urban fabric” and other terms being used to describe the redevelopment are racist code words for getting rid of people of color. They also felt that deficit based language is being used to describe existing conditions. For example, use of the term “underutilized” to describe the current shopping center does not acknowledge that people of color go there to shop every day.

**Environmental Review** - The timeline and process for environmental review (Alternative Urban Areawide Review-AUAR) frustrated the SMCAC members since many of the group's questions and concerns relating to traffic, parking, and pedestrian circulation hinged on the analysis for the AUAR, and specifically, the transportation study. Unfortunately, the draft AUAR and mitigation plan, including the results of the transportation study, were not complete at the time this report was prepared. This presented a great deal of uncertainty for the members. For this reason the SMCAC strongly encourages the Planning Commission and City Council to carefully and thoughtfully review the AUAR analysis and draft mitigation plan to ensure that the outstanding concerns voiced in this report are considered and addressed prior to final approval of the site plan and master plan.

We feel it is important to note that a public open house meeting to review the draft AUAR and mitigation plan during the comment period is planned for June 7, 2016, 7:00 to 8:30 pm, Concordia University – Buenger Education Center, 312 Hamline Ave. N., Saint Paul, MN 55104. The comment period is tentatively scheduled to run from May 30 – June 29. All substantive comments from the public must be responded to as part of this process.

**Snelling-Midway Jobs Strategy Workgroup** – The Workgroup was convened in January 2016. Its mission is to maximize the retention and attraction of jobs and businesses on the Snelling Midway site and in the surrounding area. This economic development partnership from the public and private sectors prepared a report for the Planning Commission as well. The overall themes and recommendations from the Snelling Midway Jobs Strategy Report, May 2016, are attached in Appendix A.

**Master Plan** – The master plan provides guidance for site redevelopment and infrastructure projects, both public and private, so that they contribute to achieving the long-term vision for the Snelling-Midway site. By not being too prescriptive, the master plan allows for flexibility in what the development will look like.

The master plan represents a vision of the type and amount of development the site could accommodate at full build-out based on what is allowed by existing zoning and the comprehensive plan. The master plan specifies where new public open spaces and streets will go and how the street rights-of-way will be designed to serve pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle traffic. The master plan also determines uses, maximum density and scale. The exact density and mix of uses of the private development actually built on the site will be determined by what the master plan allows and what market forces make feasible. Appendix B includes a memo with detailed answers to questions the SMCAC had about the proposed redevelopment and process, particularly related to phasing and scale of future development. Appendix B also includes background information explaining and illustrating density and floor area ratios, including examples of existing properties along University Avenue.

In addition to being consistent with the master plan, all development on the site, including both public facilities and private development must be consistent with T4 (Traditional Neighborhood) zoning. T4 zoning sets general uses, minimum densities, and scale in terms of building heights. Traditional neighborhood zoning districts also include design standards related to: land use diversity; landscaping; entrance locations; door and window openings; materials and detailing; screening; parking location and design; and sidewalks.

All new private development must go through the site plan review process before it is built (in part, to make sure it is consistent with the master plan and zoning). The Planning Commission has the option to hold a public hearing to gather community input on any site plan and is likely to assert its right to do so for future development on the superblock. If plans do not meet requirements of T4 zoning or the master plan a variance of either the zoning requirements or a modification of the master plan would be needed. These processes require a public hearing and provide an opportunity for community input.

As a result of input provided by the SMCAC and the community, the stadium architect and master planner developed the following design principles to guide the site plan and master plan:

- Transit oriented development – pedestrian first walkable neighborhood
- Amending the street grid and urban fabric with walkable block dimensions
- Emphasis on public open spaces, parks, bike path, four season use
- Mixed-use with 24-7 active retail street fronts
- Sustainable storm water management with green infrastructure and sustainable landscape

The architects and planners noted desirable features for the site such as green space adjacent to the stadium, a dynamic and active neighborhood around the stadium, and a partial roof covering for light and noise abatement and weather protection.

The key goals and principles for the development expressed by the SMCAC are identified in Table 1, along with a summary of how the stadium site plan and master plan respond to them.

**Table 1: Key Goals and Principles for Development\***

<b>Key Goals and Principles Expressed by the SMCAC</b>	<b>How the Stadium Site Plan and Master Plan Respond to the Goals and Principles</b>
Vision for the site should be transformative and realistic	Stadium, street and block pattern, green/open space, broadened mix of uses, and increased density are transformative; market forces will determine what is actually built
Create a unique destination for the neighborhood and region that provides activities for visitors before and after games	Stadium, green/open space, shops, restaurants with outdoor dining, and hotels make for a unique destination for everyday use by neighbors and for visitors from the region and beyond
Increase the density of development	Planned density of site development will be increased, including multi-story office and residential buildings atop retail uses at street level; T4 zoning and the master plan will guide development
Broaden the mix of uses	Planned uses include office, retail and restaurant, residential, hotel, cinema, and fitness in addition to the stadium and green/open space
Promote buildings with active uses and transparency at street level	Retail uses planned at street level throughout most of the site

<b>Key Goals and Principles Expressed by the SMCAC</b>	<b>How the Stadium Site Plan and Master Plan Respond to the Goals and Principles</b>
Create an urban street block pattern that is walkable for people of all ages	Superblock broken into smaller city blocks, weaving the new pattern with the existing streets and incorporating wider sidewalks along Snelling and University and internal sidewalks and dedicated bike lane through the site
Connect to the boarder neighborhood and community	Creating smaller block sizes with sidewalks introduces a human scale to the site that makes a connection to the broader neighborhood and broadened mix of uses appeal to wider community
Design to facilitate walking, biking, and transit use; pedestrian access to the site from existing neighborhoods must feel safe and be walkable with pedestrian scale lighting	Sidewalks and an east-west bike lane established within new block pattern aid walking and biking; wider sidewalks on Snelling and University and a plaza at the intersection to enhance access to transit and pedestrian realm; landscaping and lighting is a component
Easy access for shopping	New street pattern with on street parking, underground parking, bike lane, and sidewalks allow for easy access
Develop high quality green/open spaces that serve as community focal points all year round; provide pedestrian only areas	“Midway Square” on the south side of University and “Victory Plaza” internal to the site are anticipated to be community focal points that are active all four seasons and pedestrian only areas
A stadium partially below grade could make the scale of the structure more in keeping with surrounding development; limit light and noise from stadium	Stadium pitch is designed to be about 15 feet below grade; stadium height will be about 70 feet above grade; stadium roof designed to limit noise and ambient light
Building and development design should be unique and urban; a suburban look and feel should be avoided	Stadium is a unique design appropriate for an urban setting; future buildings must meet traditional neighborhood zoning and master plan design and dimensional standards
A variety of parking options is important (on street, underground, and ramps); parking should be integrated into buildings and wrapped with active uses	On-street parking is provided; off-street parking is proposed to be underground or in the upper levels of buildings and designed with exterior wall treatments, detailing, windows, and materials that screen the view of vehicles and relate to existing adjacent buildings

\* The SMCAC met nine times from December 2015 through May 2016. The key goals and principles arose from discussions about a vision for redevelopment and were fine-tuned as details of the site plan and master plan emerged. The SMCAC met twice in 2015, December 3 and 17 and seven times in 2016, January 7, February 4, and 18, March 3 and 31, April 28, and May 26. The meeting summaries can be viewed at [www.stpaul.gov/midway](http://www.stpaul.gov/midway)

Beyond the details of the plans for the built environment noted in the table above, there are many outstanding concerns and questions the SMCAC has about how the development will function and what the impact will be to the surrounding neighborhoods. These are presented in Table 2. **The SMCAC is deeply concerned about racial equity and social justice and wishes to keep these concerns front and center in the minds of decision makers, developers, and the property owner as proposals for the site come forward.**

**Table 2: Outstanding Concerns\*\***

<b>Key Concerns about Site Operation and Implementation Expressed by the SMCAC</b>	<b>What Success Looks Like and How It Will Be Implemented (in italics)</b>
<p>Considering the increased traffic anticipated from the new developments on the superblock, will pedestrians of all ages and abilities be able to cross Snelling and University Avenues and access transit safely?</p>	<p>Success is safe connections to transit and crossings at Snelling and University. The AUAR will analyze pedestrian circulation and the mitigation plan will identify needed improvements to infrastructure or operations. <i>Needed improvements to infrastructure identified in the mitigation plan must be implemented to achieve success.</i></p>
<p>Where will transit users queue on event days and how will they access trains and buses safely?</p>	<p>Success is smooth, safe, and efficient flow of pedestrians to trains, buses, and BRT on event days. The AUAR will analyze pedestrian circulation and queuing needs. The mitigation plan will identify needed traffic control, operations, and infrastructure measures on event days. <i>Needed traffic control, operations, and infrastructure measures on event days, identified in the mitigation plan, must be implemented to achieve success.</i></p>
<p>Traffic congestion is going to be a problem with all the new development at the superblock, especially on event days.</p>	<p>Success is being able to clear the area surrounding the stadium of event traffic within the shortest timeframe possible. The AUAR analyzes vehicular circulation. The mitigation plan will identify needed improvements to infrastructure or operations to maximize clearing event traffic as soon as possible. <i>Needed improvements to infrastructure or operations to maximize clearing event traffic in soon as possible, as identified in the mitigation plan, must be implemented to achieve success.</i></p>



Key Concerns about Site Operation and Implementation Expressed by the SMCAC	What Success Looks Like and How It Will Be Implemented (in italics)
<p>Neighborhood impacts relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Stadium lighting</li> <li>- Stadium noise</li> <li>- Spillover parking into neighborhoods</li> <li>- Building heights and possible shading</li> </ul>	<p>Success is a stadium that does not contribute to noise or light pollution and development that does not result in casting shadows on nearby residential properties. Success is also an ongoing community discussion to identify ways to address spillover parking in neighborhoods on event days. The mitigation plan will discuss how remote parking will be used. The AUAR will analyze stadium light and noise as well as traffic noise. The mitigation plan will identify any needed improvements to design and operations to mitigate adverse effects. The master planners plan to do a shadow study to identify impacts of tall structures on surrounding residential properties. <i>Needed improvement identified in the mitigation plan must be implemented to achieve success.</i></p>
<p>The stadium and nearby development will impact the surrounding neighborhood daily. Litter is anticipated to be an issue. Stray shopping carts in neighborhoods are, and will likely continue to be, a problem. Other neighborhood issues will arise and need to be addressed in a timely fashion.</p>	<p>Success is having the soccer team and shopping center owners responsive to neighborhood issues related to events and site operations. <i>Designate a neighborhood liaison, a point of contact for neighborhood concerns and complaints. A fund to help address these neighborhood issues could be set up by the soccer team and the shopping center.</i></p>
<p>Maximize business retention, especially of locally owned small businesses and minority owned businesses; concern is that some may be priced out of the new development.</p>	<p>Success is having any business that wants to stay to be able to stay. <i>The existing shopping center owner intends to offer space in the new development for any of the existing businesses that would like to locate there; Snelling-Midway Jobs Strategy Workgroup was created to maximize the retention and attraction of jobs and businesses.</i></p>
<p>Maximize business attraction, especially of locally owned small and minority owned businesses; future businesses should serve the needs of existing residents; a variety of commercial space options should be available for a variety of occupants and tenants, with an emphasis on smaller retail spaces to accommodate small local businesses.</p>	<p>Success is a thriving commercial community with a mix of business types and sizes, especially for small, local, and minority owned businesses; the Snelling-Midway Jobs Strategy Workgroup was created to maximize the retention and attraction of jobs and businesses. <i>Its recommendations should be implemented to achieve success.</i></p>
<p>Emphasize employee retention and attraction; provide high-quality (living wage) jobs available to local residents.</p>	<p>Success is a thriving commercial and office community that hires existing employees and attracts high quality jobs (living wage) for local residents; Snelling-Midway Jobs Strategy Workgroup was created to maximize the retention and attraction of jobs and businesses. <i>Its recommendations should be implemented to achieve success.</i></p>

Key Concerns about Site Operation and Implementation Expressed by the SMCAC	What Success Looks Like and How It Will Be Implemented (in italics)
Support residential development that is affordable to a range of incomes.	Success is a mix of housing types, sizes, and price ranges, a portion of which is affordable. <i>Actively encourage developers to build affordable housing units as a component of new residential development on the site, and direct affordable housing public financing as necessary to achieve this.</i>
A stadium that is not just for major league soccer games.	Success is having the stadium available for youth, high school, community, and college soccer matches. <i>The Team offers use of the stadium for important community soccer matches.</i>
Make soccer available to all with affordable ticket prices.	Success is affordable ticket prices (\$10-\$30), youth group sales, and student ticket prices. <i>The Team offers an affordable ticket program enabling community members to attend matches who otherwise could not afford to.</i>
Will the scale of proposed development be supported by the market?	Success is a high density mixed use urban village. <i>The SMCAC supports the density shown in the concept master plan and endorses the target floor area ratios to achieve that level of development.</i>
Outreach needs to happen for all parts of the community so that input comes from all and not just those with the loudest voices; bring the discussion to more people of color (residents of Skyline Towers, Little Africa businesses, church communities).	Success is a process that engages many people, including communities of color; SMCAC members helped to communicate project progress to the community members they represented; a SMCAC member, with City staff, conducted additional outreach to Gordon Parks High School, Central High School, Skyline Tower, Little Africa Business & Cultural District of Minnesota, and Community Action Partnership of Ramsey Washington Counties. <i>Continued community engagement is needed to build on the work done by the SMCAC.</i>
Crime and personal safety should be a priority given the scale of development and the number of people who will be coming to the site.	Success is locating a police annex within the new development. <i>The Police Department actively considers establishing such an office.</i>
Offer more opportunities for questions and answers at open house meetings.	Success is allowing for questions and answers at the next open house meeting on June 7 <sup>th</sup> .
There is the potential that redevelopment of the Midway Shopping Center does not happen and the stadium is surrounded by a sea of surface parking.	Success is development of a vibrant, mixed use urban village around the stadium site that is consistent with the master plan and offers activity all during the year, not just on game days. <i>RK Midway actively solicits development partners and tenants to achieve a mix of uses that results in an area that is vibrant year-round.</i>

<b>Key Concerns about Site Operation and Implementation Expressed by the SMCAC</b>	<b>What Success Looks Like and How It Will Be Implemented (in italics)</b>
What is the timeline for development phases and what will the site look like in the interim after stadium construction but before full master plan build-out?	Success is using the master plan guidelines and zoning standards to shape the scale and look of development as it occurs. Each element of any proposed new development will need to function successfully on its own.
The green space/parkland is planned to be publically owned but privately maintained; this should not impede public access whenever the green space/park land is open.	Success is green space/parkland that is available to the public whenever the green space/parkland is open. <i>The City, Team and RK Midway will work to negotiate agreements that achieve this goal.</i>
Accessibility (complying with specific code requirements) and usability (implementation of accessible features and requirements) for all visitors should be a priority.	Success is ensuring that accessibility standards and usability best practices are employed. <i>Success includes timely snow removal along sidewalks, particularly at corners and curb cuts.</i>

\*\* The SMCAC met nine times from December 2015 through May 2016. The outstanding concerns arose from discussions about a vision for redevelopment and were fine-tuned as details of the site plan and master plan emerged. The SMCAC met twice in 2015, December 3 and 17 and seven times in 2016, January 7, February 4, and 18, March 3 and 31, April 28, and May 26. The meeting summaries can be viewed at [www.stpaul.gov/midway](http://www.stpaul.gov/midway)

### **Snelling-Midway Community Advisory Committee Members**

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## Appendix A

### Snelling Midway Jobs Strategy Report: Overall Themes and Recommendations

#### Snelling Midway Jobs Strategy Report, May 2016

##### Overall Themes and Recommendations

The overall themes and recommendations of the Work Group focused on the following.

##### Overall themes

- Ensure living wage and quality jobs are available on site including good jobs for union workers
- Job and business retention strategies are important to the site today.
- Desire job creation for people who live in the area
- Anchor tenants are key and so are locally owned and minority businesses
- Recruit businesses with a broad spectrum of job classes across sectors with opportunities at all levels
- Grow and attract local entrepreneurs as a job growth strategy
- Support small, minority and ethnically diverse businesses
- Attract a range of employers and jobs on the site to include service (including daycare), entertainment and hospitality, retail and office/professional services such as high tech software, coding, health, medical and clinic, county, state, federal administration offices, professional associations and lobbyists.
- Maintain/grow healthy food and grocery options
- Provide youth employment opportunities
- Balance the desire for local hiring goals with the desire to streamline the development process and eliminate barriers to development
- Create an ad-hoc local hiring committee that serves as a “one-stop-shop” for companies and employers seeking local hiring strategies and resources. Consider establishing a satellite workforce center to include DEED business service specialists on site to facilitate the match between employers seeking local hires and specialized training with people seeking jobs at the site.
- Brand and market the area specifically for opportunities at this location.

##### Provide information and benchmarks

- Establish hiring benchmarks for the larger redevelopment site (i.e. % of local hiring)
- Use local hiring and other compliance requirements when applicable. Use existing local hiring benchmarks, either from Saint Paul Port Authority or Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED.) Local hiring should reflect demographics of the area.

- Track Information on existing businesses throughout the redevelopment. (i.e. in the event an existing business relocates offsite, track the reason for relocation). Keep an updated inventory of vacancies for relocation assistance. Identify a lead organization for this.
- Keep an inventory of zoning classification for larger parcels in the area (4 district council area) as this can help inform what other complementary/competitive uses are in the area.

#### Provide and target employment opportunities for area residents

- Based on the key priority industries GREATER MSP has identified, attract businesses that are the best matches at all skill and income levels.
- Provide opportunities for resource and job fairs and marketing of job opportunities.
- Match identified businesses/industries that need job recruitment assistance with correct training and resources.
- Match residents with job placement and training resources for identified businesses/industries
- Create opportunities for Saint Paul youth employment. Include the Right Track program in this strategy
- Employment transitions and training are available to employees of businesses currently on site and can be industry specific.

#### Support SBE, MBE owned businesses in the area

- Retain and provide opportunities and space for locally-owned, small (SBE) and minority-owned (MBE) and ethnically diverse businesses.
- Pursue affordable rent strategies for small businesses and support community organization efforts to provide alternative commercial real estate models such as co-ops.
- Explore business retention funds, similar to the Ready for Rail forgivable loan program.
- If needed, provide relocation funds via Ward 1's Year Round STAR program
- Investigate Pathways to Prosperity funding
- Support inclusion of business incubator space on site and seek partnerships for this type of space.

#### Assist prospective employers/support job attraction activities

- Identify median wage and define jobs with career pathways for advancement.
- Attract employers that value and demonstrate racial and cultural diversity and inclusion in their daily practices and hiring.
- Use existing and projected occupational industries of residents to attract/target industries.
- Consider rebranding the "Midway" to attract new businesses/employers.
- Use desired mix of jobs types/sectors on site to attract potential employers.
- Use community asset inventory/market study to attract employers.
- Prioritize employers that provide compensation in line with regional median wages.
- Infrastructure on the site is key, including unified storm water and fiber optic high speed internet

## **Appendix B**

Memo to SMCAC and Floor Area Ratio Examples



**CITY OF SAINT PAUL**  
*Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor*

*25 West Fourth Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55102*

*Telephone: 651-266-6700  
Facsimile: 651-266-6549*

Date: May 11, 2016  
To: Snelling-Midway Community Advisory Committee  
From: Donna Drummond, Planning Director, PED  
Subject: Questions about Snelling-Midway Redevelopment

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At the last CAC meeting, there were many questions and concerns about the proposed redevelopment and process. Questions about phasing and scale of future development were prominent. This memo attempts to answer some of those questions and provides background information on the role zoning and the master plan will play in the development process. Marketing the site and the phasing of development is also addressed.

***Q: How can we have confidence that what is proposed is what will be developed? We are concerned that the scale of development presented may not be what is actually built.***

The master plan represents a vision of the type and amount of development the site could accommodate at full build-out based on what is allowed by existing zoning and the comprehensive plan. The master plan specifies where new public open spaces and streets will go and how the street rights-of-way will be designed to serve pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle traffic. The master plan also determines uses, maximum density and scale. The exact density of the private development actually built on the site will be determined by what the master plan allows and what market forces make feasible.

In addition to being consistent with the master plan, all development on the site, including both public facilities and private development must be consistent with T4 (Traditional Neighborhood) zoning. T4 zoning sets general uses, minimum densities, and scale in terms of building heights. Traditional neighborhood zoning districts also include design standards related to: land use diversity; landscaping; building heights; entrance locations; door and window openings; materials and detailing; screening; parking location and design; and sidewalks.

All new private development must go through the site plan review process before it is built (in part, to make sure it is consistent with the master plan and zoning). The Planning Commission has the option to hold a public hearing to gather community input on any site plan and is likely to assert its right to do so for future development on the superblock. If plans do not meet requirements of T4 zoning or the master plan a variance of either the zoning requirements or a modification of the master plan would be needed. These processes require a public hearing and provide an opportunity for community input.

***Q: How is the scale of future development determined?***

The master plan establishes the maximum amount of development that would be allowed on the site and represents a “most dense” scenario. The underlying T4 zoning sets a minimum development threshold with a floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.0. Future development will fall somewhere between the

“most dense” scenario and the 1.0 floor area ratio. In the proposed master plan, the FARs for individual blocks are generally in the 4.0-5.0 range. See the attached information showing how FAR is calculated and the proposed master plan FARs. Also included in the attached are example buildings along the Green Line with their FARs to illustrate what development at various FARs looks like. *Floor area ratio is the total floor area of all buildings or structures on a lot divided by the area of the lot.* A building with a lot of surface parking will generally have a low floor area ratio.

**Q: *Is the site being marketed? How and by whom?***

RK Midway has been actively marketing the site. RK Midway has been working with its existing tenants to find potential locations in the new development. RK Midway has also talked with several potential new tenants and is working with United Properties to market the site to potential office tenants. In addition, the Minnesota United owners have been talking with potential developers and tenants that are compatible uses for the stadium.

New development can be identified at any time. However, new development cannot begin until the master plan and a site plan are approved.

**Q: *Why has it taken so long to get information from the design teams about what development might look like at year of stadium opening or a few years after that?***

Phase 1 scenarios are just beginning to emerge as the exact layout of the stadium site is determined, interest in the site grows, and the potential market created by the new stadium is known. In addition, negotiations between property owners, developers, and potential tenants are typically confidential as the parties do not want to make dealings public until details are worked out. The development process can be unpredictable and is often characterized by uncertainty. Until more information is known, reliable projections about phasing and scale of development will be up in the air. Once the team’s requests from the state legislature relating to the stadium are approved, we expect there will be more certainty surrounding the stadium portion of development, including phase 1 scenarios, and we anticipate subsequent interest in development of the balance of the site will begin to firm up.

**Q: *How has CAC and community input been provided to the design teams? They are seldom present at our meetings.***

From the beginning, the design team used public input to inform plans for the site. The Snelling Station Area Plan first and foremost lays the foundation for the mixed use urban village proposed for the superblock. As part of the Comprehensive Plan, the Station Area Plan is the result of a public process that expresses a community vision for the area. The Snelling station area vision states,

*A vibrant commercial center, both a city-wide destination and local needs hub, that successfully hosts and connects a multitude of uses. These could include corporate headquarters, retail stores, community services, local businesses, residential development, and cultural and entertainment destinations – all structured within a pattern of streets, blocks, and green gathering spaces that promote safer, more active streets and balanced options for movement and increased economic vitality.*

The design principles that guide the design teams’ work are informed by input provided by the Station Area Plan as well as input from the CAC and community members at open house meetings and at Open Saint Paul. City staff assembled notes from each CAC discussion and sent them to the design teams and also had several telephone conversations conveying the information. In addition, a representative from S9 Architecture attended several CAC meetings and one community open house to present information about the master plan, listen to comments and concerns, and answer questions.



**Q: *How much of the existing retail will remain on site in 2018 when the stadium is opened?***

Of the 326,191 square feet of existing retail on site, approximately 125,000-130,000 will remain at the time of stadium opening in March 2018. The exact amount and the extent of business relocations from out buildings (such as McDonald's, Perkins, and Big Top Liquor) that will occur by stadium opening is not yet known and is subject to on-going planning and negotiations. It is unknown exactly how much retail would be included in a first mixed use building on Snelling, but the master plan shows first floor retail square footages that range from 43,700 – 93,000 sq. ft. per block along Snelling. Total retail square footage shown in the master plan equals 421,100 sq. ft., in addition to 1 million sq. ft. of office, 620 residential units, and 400 hotel rooms.

# Floor area ratio (F.A.R) definition and diagrams.

The underlying zoning district of the Snelling Midway Site is T4, traditional neighborhood. The T4 zoning district has a minimum floor area ratio of 1.0 for lots over 25,000 square feet in light rail station areas. Below is the floor area ratio zoning code definition and diagrams illustrating floor area ratios.

## *Floor area ratio Saint Paul zoning code definition:*

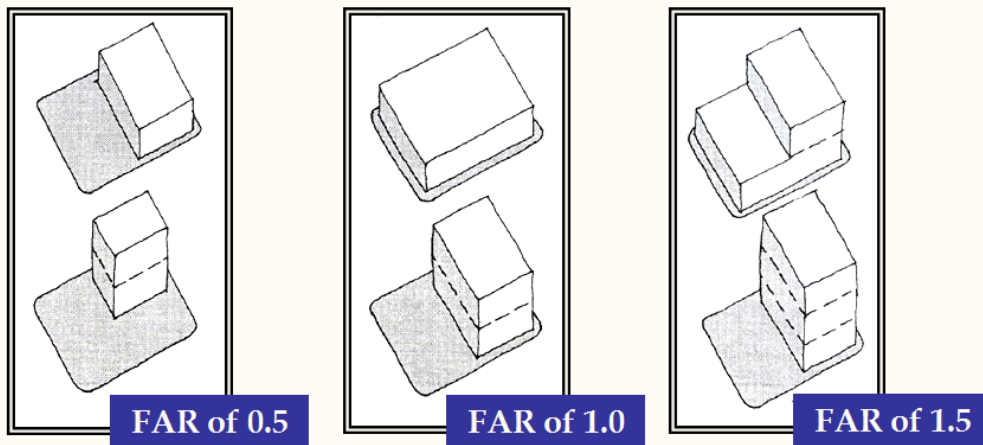
*Floor area ratio (F.A.R.) The total floor area of all buildings or structures on a zoning lot divided by the area of said lot.*

## *F.A.R Diagrams:*

### **FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR): DEFINED**

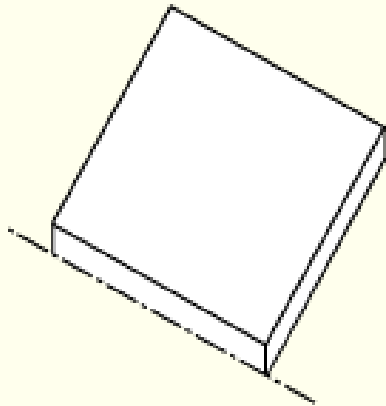
Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is a measure of development density. Higher FARs equate to more dense development of a parcel.

$$\text{Floor Area Ratio} = \frac{\text{Building Space Square Footage}}{\text{Land Square Footage}}$$

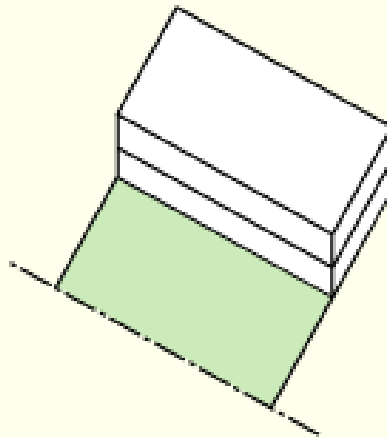


## Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

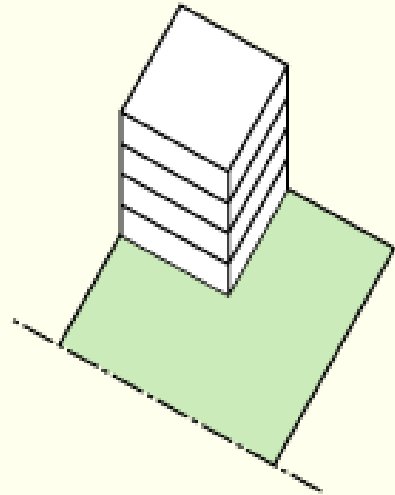
1:1 Ratio



1 story  
(100% lot coverage)



2 stories  
(50% lot coverage)



4 stories  
(25% lot coverage)

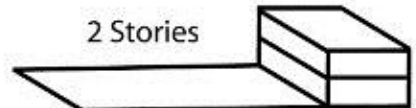
## Exhibit 23.84A.012 A

### Floor Area Ratio

0.5 FAR

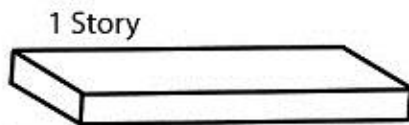


1 Story

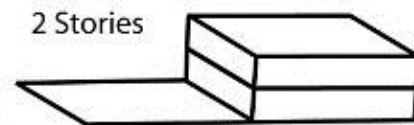


2 Stories

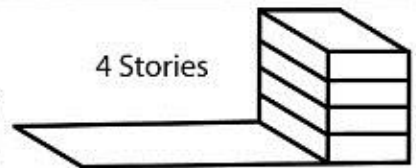
1.0 FAR



1 Story

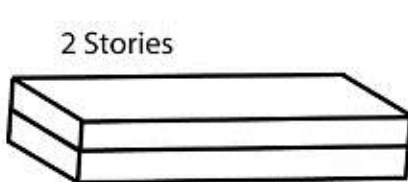


2 Stories

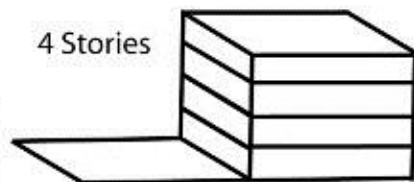


4 Stories

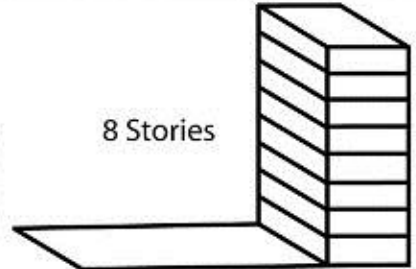
2.0 FAR



2 Stories



4 Stories



8 Stories

Entire Lot Area

Half Lot Area

Quarter Lot Area

# Snelling-Midway F.A.R calculations

## Block A

- Lot area is roughly 81,900 sq. ft.
- 350,000 sq. ft. of office and 79,600 sq. ft. of retail are proposed for this block.
- 429,000 sq. ft. of commercial development / lot area of 81,900 sq. ft. = **5.2 floor area ratio.**

## Block B

- Lot area is roughly 81,900 sq. ft.
- 300,000 sq. ft. of office and 93,000 sq. ft. of retail are proposed for this block.
- 393,000 sq. ft. of commercial development / lot area of 81,900 sq. ft. = **4.7 floor area ratio.**

## Block C

- Lot area is roughly 80,000 sq. ft.
- 350,000 sq. ft. of office and 43,700 sq. ft. of retail are proposed for this block.
- 393,000 sq. ft. of commercial development / lot area of 80,000 sq. ft. = **4.9 floor area ratio.**

## Block E

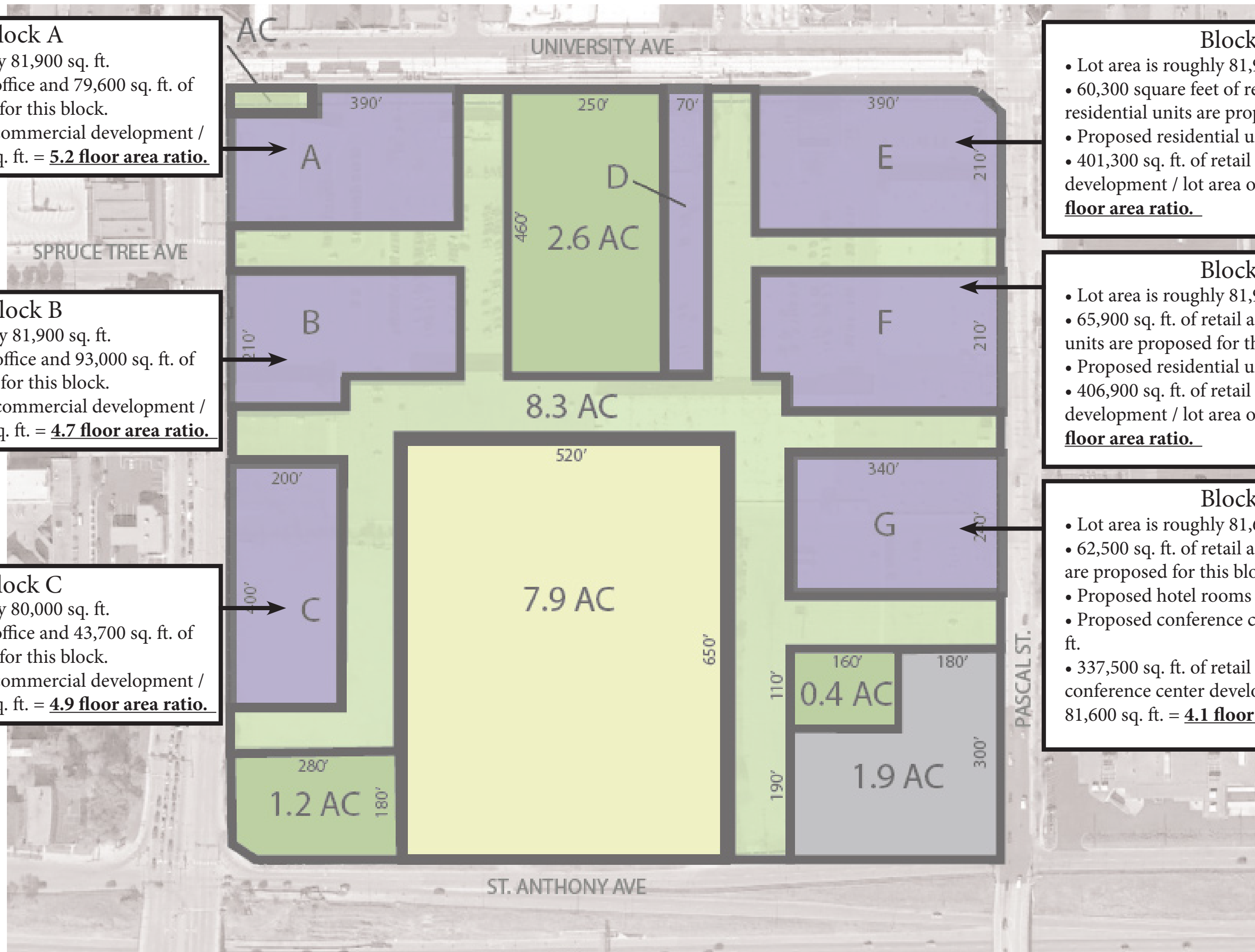
- Lot area is roughly 81,900 sq. ft.
- 60,300 square feet of retail and 310 residential units are proposed for this block.
- Proposed residential units are 1,100 sq. ft.
- 401,300 sq. ft. of retail and residential development / lot area of 81,900 sq. ft. = **4.9 floor area ratio.**

## Block F

- Lot area is roughly 81,900 sq. ft.
- 65,900 sq. ft. of retail and 310 residential units are proposed for this block.
- Proposed residential units are 1,100 sq. ft.
- 406,900 sq. ft. of retail and residential development / lot area of 81,900 sq. ft. = **5.0 floor area ratio.**

## Block G

- Lot area is roughly 81,600 sq. ft.
- 62,500 sq. ft. of retail and 400 hotel rooms are proposed for this block.
- Proposed hotel rooms are 625 sq. ft.
- Proposed conference center is 25,000 sq. ft.
- 337,500 sq. ft. of retail and hotel and conference center development / lot area of 81,600 sq. ft. = **4.1 floor area ratio.**



# FLOOR AREA RATIOS

## Examples of Existing Properties Along University Avenue

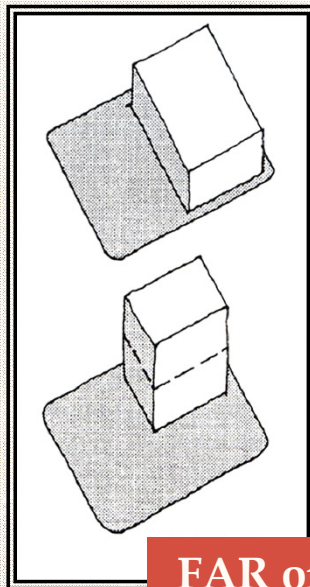




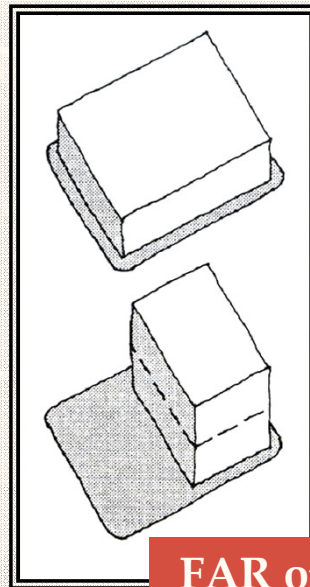
# FLOOR AREA RATIO (FAR): DEFINED

Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is a measure of development density. Higher FARs equate to more dense development of a parcel.

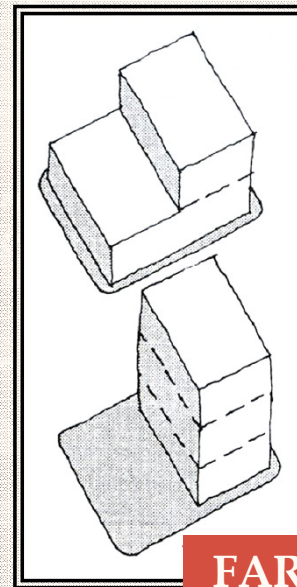
$$\text{Floor Area Ratio} = \frac{\text{Building Space Square Footage}}{\text{Land Square Footage}}$$



FAR of 0.5



FAR of 1.0



FAR of 1.5

Source: Met Council Diagram



## CASE STUDIES



### W. E. MOWREY CO.

*1435 University Avenue*

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR): 2.12**



### MENARD'S

*Prior & University Avenues*

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR): .51**



## CASE STUDIES



### WESTERN BANK

*663 University Avenue*

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR): .38**



### CVS PHARMACY

*Snelling & University Avenues*

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR): .36**



# CASE STUDIES



## AUTO ZONE

*1075 University Avenue*

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR): .19**



## NE BLOCK AT UNIVERSITY & SNELLING

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR): 1.36**



# CASE STUDIES



## MIDWAY BOOKS

*Snelling & University Avenues*

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR): 2.86**



## TARGET

*Hamline & University Avenues*

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR): .37**



## CASE STUDIES



### HAMLIN STATION

*Hamline & University Avenues*

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR): 2.1**



### FROGTOWN SQUARE

*Dale & University Avenues*

**Floor Area Ratio (FAR): 1.0**

## **Appendix C**

Statements of Individual SMCAC Members Who Chose to Submit Personal  
Statements

My name is Adrian Perryman and I am on the Snelling-Midway Community Advisory Committee. I currently live in the Hamline-Midway neighborhood and I have lived in the St Paul all of my life. Growing up in this community was great but there were a lot of things that the area did not offer. As an adult I can go where I need to but as a child all the way up to my college career at Concordia, my ability to get around was limited. I admired the other parts of the twin cities that had easy access to various forms of entertainment, dining, public art, unique park spaces, and more.

My ongoing joke throughout this process is that I am trying to get a chipotle in the Midway. There is some seriousness to that because I would prefer to stay in my neighborhood and walk or bike somewhere versus driving to another neighborhood or city. I would like those in the community to be able to experience things that will enrich their lives. Seeing a movie, going to an athletic event, eating at Chipotle, etc may seem like a common waste of time to most but I have met students who never had the ability to take part in any of these things. That movie may inspire them to be a scientist, that game may give them a relatable story to connect with their classmate, that chipotle may give someone the entrepreneurial spirit or inspire them to pursue the culinary arts.

Ultimately I want this plan to become reality. This location can be so much more than is actually is. Decades of walking, biking, and driving by empty storefronts, empty parking spaces, and completely unused land gets old. We have someone seriously willing to invest in this space and who knows when we will have an opportunity like this again. People can spin the costs and tax revenue a million different ways to try and sway people one way or the other. I pay taxes for the benefit of the people. Taxes support schools and I don't have kids. Taxes pay for roads I don't drive on. Taxes pay for politicians that sometimes don't get things done 😊. I understand that but I know the goal is to benefit the community and that is what I think this plan will do. If the alternative is what we have now then I am 100% in support of this plan.

There are kinks that need to be worked out and I hope that the community is involved throughout the process. The committee was made up of a great group of people that brought up ideas that I would have never thought of. It is important that this continues. Involving the community makes it easier for the end product to be something that the community will enjoy and support. Ultimately this plan should benefit the community and if the community is not involved in the process a large opportunity will be missed.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to enjoying this site for years to come.



5-20-2016

RE: Snelling-Midway Super Block Redevelopment

Dear St. Paul Planning Members,

I wanted to communicate my support for the Snelling-Midway super block redevelopment. Having been living and working in the midway for over 20 years. I believe the value of the new superbloc design will significantly enhance the quality of life for the current and future neighborhoods surrounding the space. Further, recognizing that the task for the council was to provide feedback toward the Master Plan of the stadium site and superbloc area, I realize that it was outside our boundary to ensure specific items were operationally addressed. I endorse the 12 block urban village concept and feel that if implemented around the master plan as proposed the region and city will greatly benefit from the increased vitality and growth.

Having participated on the council along with attending several of the open house sessions as well as reviewing the online input, it is my judgement that there is overwhelming community support for the renovation of the space moving it from its current "Strip Mall" and "empty bus barn dirt lot" community experience toward a 12 block urban village concept with a MLS stadium.

Throughout the process, the ebb and flow of information was dynamic and at times there were delays as the architects and their teams worked various designs to meet the needs of the property owners and the stadium needs. Key concerns and opportunities that were shared and observed through the process were concerns around traffic and parking; game day implications; engagement of local businesses; support for the diversity of business footprints and functions as well diversity of housing options and finally the overall accelerated timeline.

It is important to note that the current location is perhaps the most opportune location as it affords public and private transportation from numerous modalities (car, train, Public and private bussing). While a great deal of attention was drawn toward the parking concerns, city staff confirmed that the proposed plan meet parking code needs without making the area a sea of parking. The encouragement to use public transportation during event days will greatly limit this concern once the project is realized (similar to what we have seen with the Saint's Stadium and the University of Minnesota Football stadium).

There was significant support for the large green space/park that could be programed year round and afford community interaction. Additionally, I heard from businesses that the multifaceted facilities in the super block afford significant opportunities for local, small and national businesses to thrive and support the neighborhood. Also the community concerns about the opportunity for existing businesses to be a part of the new design were raised and address by the property owners who appear to be working hard to include them in the future.

City staff, architects and other presenters were very professional and worked tirelessly to engage the broader community along with addressing the operational timeline and owner's timeline expectations. I recognize that some opportunities require expedited timelines to be in a position to take advantage of the opportunity. While the process has been shorter than other projects in the past, I do feel that there have been significant and varied opportunities for local residents, business owners and other interested parties to participate in the process.

Sincerely,



Eric E. LaMott

May 15, 2016

To whom it may concern,

I came into this process as a member of the Community Advisory Committee with great optimism for the development of the Midway site – both the proposed soccer stadium and the RK Midway development – and I remain cautiously optimistic about the kind of transit-oriented, high-density development that will occur in the coming years. I hope that in 5 years we will look back on the ways in which this superblock has been dramatically transformed and represents a vibrant, welcoming commercial and residential entrance to the Hamline Midway neighborhood – something that has been sorely lacking for far too long. That said, my greatest fear is that we will have a shiny soccer stadium 5-10 years out, alongside the same massive surface parking lots that we find there today. And while I fully recognize that no one can make any guarantees about whether private development will be spurred by a stadium (or if any subsequent development is a result of the stadium), I would feel much better about the stadium if I had confidence that, if all the neighborhood ever gets is a new stadium, that we residents at least stand to benefit in meaningful ways from the City's investment in the site. And as the situation stands now, I do not have that confidence. More must be done.

The reality is that this entire process was rushed, and now we are left to be reactive, rather than proactive in many ways. I share the sentiments expressed by Councilmember Jane Prince, who recently stated publicly that there was not sufficient time to make sense of the contract the City entered into in early March with Minnesota United. And where I feel this is most unfair to the residents of St. Paul is that we find little mention of the assurances of and attention to equity that public officials routinely espouse as urgent, necessary, and important. As I noted at the last CAC meeting in late April and previously in this letter, we must weigh in on both the master plan – which as it stands now, is something that nearly 100% of people would stand behind strongly, but stands as purely a dream at this point – but also the potential situation in which we are left with only a soccer stadium – or even minimal additional development on the RK Midway site for years to come. And if we encounter the latter, then we must ask, How do residents stand to benefit? Where is the discussion of equity?

- How can we insist that those who work at the stadium are paid a living wage? \$15 an hour? With benefits?
- How can we ensure that whatever green space exists on the site is open to the public?
- How can we ensure that non-field spaces within the city-owned stadium can be used by the public?
- How do we insist that Minnesota United, the City of St. Paul, and the Metropolitan Council provide funding (from the many sources of revenue that will stream from the stadium, including rental income) for Hamline Midway and Union Park community development -- similar to the TCF Good Neighbor Fund, to which the Vikings donated \$90,000 in each of the past 2 years? Where is the money for improved streetscapes, public art, youth programming, cleanliness, wayfinding, pedestrian safety...?
- How do we ensure that there is a representative of Minnesota United and RK Midway who is fully committed to being a neighborhood liaison?

The neighborhoods most directly impacted by this project deserve to reap the rewards of this project beyond just a hypothetical increase in property values or property tax revenue on the RK Midway site. And this type of benefit should occur, regardless of if the entire Master Plan were to come to fruition. In

some scenarios, this type of neighborhood support becomes even more important if development truly does take off on the RK Midway site – for then issues of gentrification come to the fore, and the people we continue to leave behind in our city are further left behind. Let's assume property values do go up (along with property taxes); then let's consider how effective our affordable housing policies are to ensure low- and moderate-income people are able to stay in the area and/or live where they choose? What tools are at our disposal besides TIF to push developers to create affordable housing units on the RK Midway site or nearby? Unless we are forward-thinking in our pursuit of fairness and equity, we will continue to leave hundreds of thousands of people behind in our community, most notably people of color.

I trust that issues around parking, environmental concerns, and adequate public transportation access to games are worked out in the coming months and years. These are not my greatest concerns, though they are to many people who live close to the site. But the reality is that all we have is hope and trust at this point, because nearly everything being proposed is an unknown right now. It doesn't mean that this Committee's service has been meaningless; in fact, I'd argue that it's been quite fruitful, eye-opening, and rewarding to have served with such thoughtful, committed, passionate community members. We asked tough questions, then more tough questions, raised valid concerns, and will continue to do so in the coming months and years. But as I stated earlier, the rush to make this project happen simply meant that our influence was greatly hampered by decisions, contracts, and studies that either already took place (the City's contract with Minnesota United), have not yet taken place (Environmental, transportation, parking studies), or are complete unknowns (what any or all development will actually look like).

My hope is that the CAC will be contacted directly upon any Planning Commission public hearings that take place in the coming years regarding this site, so that we can be the first to respond to real proposals – notification that too often reaches few people when these hearings are scheduled is not good enough. I also hope that City of St. Paul, Met Council, and State of Minnesota public officials approach this entire development with local residents – especially those most in need – front and center in their dealings with RK Midway and Minnesota United, not just the mantra that we should rest assured that development will occur, which will lead to more property tax revenue, which will then trickle down via public services. Dr. McGuire should be commended for his consistent presence at CAC meetings and his willingness to answer any questions thrown his way. But we expect that he and the team recognize that this is a two-way street, and while we appreciate his monetary investment in the stadium and franchise, we also hope that the team becomes a strong community partner and invests deeply – physically, financially, and publicly -- in our proud and strong neighborhoods. RK Midway, too, if they are to receive strong support from the neighborhood, owes our residents signs of true outreach and engagement. For too long, we have frequented the shopping center businesses, and yet the land is always strewn with trash and shopping carts litter our residential streets (this, of course, being a problem of adjacent shopping center as well). Representatives from RK Midway were largely absent from CAC meetings, and we have heard barely a peep about potential redevelopment from them. Given this history, it is difficult to have confidence that development will take place smoothly or at all in the coming years. I hope this is not the case.

We on the CAC are largely taking a leap of faith here, and yet it should be noted that the widespread support for this project(s) in the community stems largely from decades of disinvestment and lack of attention on both the Bus Barn and RK Midway sites: We neighbors are so desperate to *not* have a litter-



filled mudpit as an entrance to our neighborhood that the majority of residents support this project (in my opinion) because we have no confidence that this will change in coming years if we don't get behind the stadium. Don't get me wrong: I am a huge soccer fan, a United season ticket holder, and someone who has no doubt that soccer is the world's game and deserves to be showcased in Minnesota. The idea of a professional stadium within walking distance of my home is pretty cool. But none of that changes the fact that my neighbors' lives, livelihoods, and peace of mind come before professional sports. The goal, then, is to achieve all of the above at once – a shiny stadium, smart TOD, equity and access and opportunity for those who need it most. They are not mutually exclusive. But we will have failed miserably if we look back in 5 years and we have not achieved it all. Let us keep that in mind as we move forward on this project.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Oppenheimer

May 17, 2016

Dear St. Paul City Staff, Planning Commission, and City Council:

As a member of the Snelling-Midway Community Advisory Committee, I am writing this letter in support of the Master Plan and the previous planning documents adopted for the redevelopment area surrounding the proposed Minnesota United FC Stadium. I have five specific notes that I hope add specificity to the Master Plan. These points reflect conversations at community meetings.

Since I am a City Planner by profession, my comments are admittedly focused on the physical elements of the Master Plan and how I predict people will interact with those physical elements. I admit that it can be difficult to translate the community's feedback into a specific physical design, but I think City staff has done a nice job of matching the elements found in the Master Plan with the ideas and concerns of the community.

### 1. Reduce Right-of-Way Widths on North End of Site and Utilize Woonerf Design

At community meetings, multi-modal transportation was the most important area of emphasis for the stadium and surrounding development in terms of sustainability. While the bike lane planned for Shields Avenue will provide great east-west access, more emphasis should be placed on the pedestrian and bicycling environment being created on the north end of the site, particularly around Midway Square and Victory Plaza. I suggest that Asbury and Simpson Streets north of Shields Avenue be closed to all traffic except for pedestrians, bicyclists, ride-share vehicles, and taxis. The right in/right out access provided from University onto these streets will create apprehension for pedestrians. These right of ways should be reduced from 70' to less than 50' and should be made curb-less (woonerf design) and closed to traffic. The 70' right-of-way on Spruce Tree should also be reduced. The large right-of-way widths on the south half of the site are more appropriate because this is where Snelling Avenue, Interstate 94, and St. Anthony Boulevard are located.

### 2. Provide Prominent Pedestrian Path from Snelling Station to Soccer Stadium via Green Space

Transit users should be provided with a clear and obvious path from the transit stop to the Stadium via green spaces and woonerf (curb-less street). Pedestrians should be provided an easy line of sight from transit stations to their designation. I suggest that best practices in Urban Design be applied as you review renderings completed by the Developer of each parcel in order to make the determination that the building designs are fulfilling this desire from the community.

### 3. Limit Automobile Access into this "Urban Village"

The West End in St. Louis Park is the perfect example of a place of an Urban Village that is plagued by traffic congestion. It is an area that was meant to be very walkable when it was originally designed. Congestion has occurred not only because of its suburban location, but also because there is not easy automobile access to the parking on the periphery of the site. Automobile drivers must traverse through the core of the site to reach the parking ramp and cars are still allowed on all of the interior streets.

Automobile drivers should be ushered quickly into underground parking ramps located off of Pascal Street and St. Anthony Boulevard. For each building's design, the parking ramp should be placed in a manner that reduces automobile/pedestrian/bicyclist conflict points. To reduce trips on Snelling Avenue, traffic coming eastbound on Interstate 94 can be directed to Pascal Street and then to St. Anthony Boulevard to enter a ramp. It should be considered whether only taxis, bicycles, pedestrians, shuttle busses, and TNC (Uber, etc.) should be allowed into the inner streets of the superblock, particularly on the north half. This might seem too ambitious right now, but it's a strategy that will encourage other modes of transportation well into the future. Overall, automobile access should be focused on the south end of the site near the Interstate and pedestrian/bicycle access should be focused on the north end of the site. Even though this area is near an interstate, this is the perfect location to really go all the way with the Urban Village concept and provide true pedestrian walkways or curb-less streets (woonerf) in the least.

#### 4. Include an Inclusionary Housing Policy for this Redevelopment Area

To maintain housing affordability in large redevelopment project in a neighborhood with a range of incomes, I suggest that the City investigate a policy that would require that at least 20% of units within this superblock be available to people with an income at 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI). This site will be eligible for many grants that could make these an Inclusionary Housing Policy feasible.

#### 5. Require Relatively Small Retail Spaces

We heard throughout this planning process that the community is interested in seeing small and local businesses (and particularly businesses run by people of color and people with an international background) thrive on this site. Particularly along the north side of this site, specific building designs should incorporate retail spaces of less than 20,000 square feet into their ground floor plan. Large tenants requiring more than 20,000 square feet should be limited on this site. While small retail spaces are shown on the Master Plan, this should be specified within the approval for each building's final design.

#### Conclusion

As each building proposal is reviewed within this redevelopment area, I imagine that the conversation will evolve among residents, Planning Commissioners, staff, and City Council members. It's possible that adjustments to the Master Plan will be needed as market forces and ownership changes occur. I hope that the documents from the Community Advisory Committee are helpful to you and that you reach out to our group again if the conversation evolves to a point at which the Master Plan must be updated and/or more in-depth community input would be necessary to move forward.

Sincerely,



Emily Goellner

Dear Members of the Planning Commission:

My name is Greg Nielsen. Since January I have served as a member of the Community Advisory Committee for the Minnesota United soccer stadium and master site redevelopment plan. I am a resident of the Hamline-Midway neighborhood and work as a program director for the Metropolitan Regional Arts Council. At MRAC I manage a number of grant programs overseeing the distribution of public and private funding for small to mid-sized arts organizations. I view my role on the committee as representing two perspectives: as a local resident, and as a professional with expertise in community arts.

I am writing to express my support for both the Minnesota United soccer stadium as well as the master site redevelopment plan. I feel this property has been largely neglected and perpetuates a maligned stereotype of our neighborhood. The city of St. Paul, in particular the neighborhoods surrounding this parcel, deserve a development that reflects the character of our community and supports its continued growth.

While I question the use of public funds to support the construction of stadiums, I have come to see this project's potential to turn a blighted property into something truly special. I am particularly excited by the following components of the plan, which I view as essential to the project's success

- The **3.4 acres of green space** to the north of the stadium. University Avenue is bereft of green space. The addition of this public space would be a tremendous asset to our community and offers great potential for year-round arts and cultural programming.
- The planned **density and transit-oriented development**. I fear without the stadium and the vision of this proposal, there is a strong likelihood that the property would become something akin to the Quarry in Northeast Minneapolis - a chain of big-box retailers clustered together, surrounded by large surface parking lots.
- Vision for the creation of an "**urban village**." This large mega-block presents a unique opportunity to be forward thinking in both its use and design.

My enthusiasm for this project, however, is tempered by the rapid pace of its development and the general lack of specifics presented to the public. I share with many the concerns surrounding the phasing of the project, and what changes to the plan may be necessary to accommodate market demand. Realizing such changes may be inevitable, I expect the city would hold the developers accountable to the original vision through any variance requests, proposed modifications, etc.

I would consider this project a failure if any of the three items listed above were eliminated or undermined through changes made to the proposed master site plan. I understand the T4 designation of this parcel ensures some degree of protection. It is my hope that the Planning Commission and city share the vision expressed by Dr. Bill McGuire and RK Midway and will hold the two accountable to see it come to fruition.

Sincerely,

Greg Nielsen

Dear St. Paul Planning Commission Members:

I submit to you my comments on the process, recommendations, and reflections regarding the work of the Midway Redevelopment Advisory Committee. I served on the Committee from December, 2015 through May, 2016. My comments reflect solely my personal experience and knowledge in mass transit, and limited mobility—the contributions I brought to the deliberations of the Committee.

**Process:**

- The timeline for the stadium development was completely unrealistic—not enough time was allotted to incorporate the feedback from the Midway Redevelopment Advisory Committee, much less the neighbors
- Little to no interest was shown in the concerns of neighbors, or committee members; no interest was shown in making any modifications to address the concerns
- Decisions were made prior to the committee’s access to, and discussion of, the relevant information and issues
- Committee meetings were presentation-heavy, and committee-input light
- Not all primary stakeholders were present at all of our meetings
- The architects did not present, explain, and/or defend their work; they left that work to be done by the team owner
- The team owner was left to carry the entire burden of presenting, explaining, and/or defending the stadium and redevelopment area; his role was to offer the funding and commitment to the stadium’s development and success
- Not all of the relevant stakeholders, primarily RK Midway, were present at all of the committee meetings, making clarification of issues, and answers of our questions regarding the stadium design and development, and Midway area redesign extremely difficult to ascertain
- Committee members were not given the master plan until the committee had held meetings for two months
- The master plan should have been the starting point from which the committee’s deliberations began, not information viewed as a source of expectation-disappointments, as stated by the team owner
- Background information that contributed to the presentation-heavy nature could have been shared prior to the meetings in several ways [the materials were made available *following* the meetings on the City website. The timing of posting that information could have been changed easily]:
  - By e-mail to committee members, and those who signed in at committee meeting sign-in sheets
  - City libraries, for individuals who did not have access to computers at home
- Our committee is the *Midway Redevelopment Advisory Committee*, not the Soccer Stadium Development Advisory Committee
- Feedback from neighbors who attended the three public hearings held was minimized, and dismissed

- The AUAR and the transit study were not completed, thus not available to the Midway Redevelopment Advisory Committee, such that they could be incorporated into our deliberations
- Transit, as well as the issues of pedestrian safety, and traffic congestion, are central to the successful redevelopment of the Midway area in light of the soccer stadium's construction; these issues did not receive their due consideration
- Accessibility of the Minnesota United stadium, and the Midway area, as defined to be redeveloped, were afterthoughts. Usability to seniors and individuals with disabilities, was not a consideration made, as evidenced by presentations to the Committee
- Accessibility and usability are distinct considerations. While overlapping in some respects, accessibility refers to complying with specific code requirements, measurements, and the like.
- Usability refers to the implementation of accessible features and requirements. Usability is the term that answers whether when accessibility standards have been an integral part of the design and maintenance of the stadium and Midway area may be used by seniors, and/or other individuals with disabilities

### **Recommendations:**

- The architects and developers need to work with the Minnesota United Soccer Stadium Advisory Committee to ensure that accessibility standards, and usability best practices are employed. The Committee worked on the Target Stadium, so, they understand how to approach the issues in the context of stadiums
- The St. Paul Department of Public Works needs to develop standards and instructions regarding usable snow shoveling and snow plowing. Usable snow shoveling and usable snow plowing constitutes finding alternatives to dumping snow into curb cuts. Curb cuts are the equivalent to freeway ramps for drivers
- The City of St. Paul needs to advocate for the development of these standards with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, with specific attention to the Minnesota Department of Transportation Twin Cities Metro District, whose responsibility includes the Midway area

### **Reflections**

Questions unaddressed and not included need to be raised as the report of the Midway Redevelopment Advisory Committee is presented:

1. Do you believe individuals who will visit, do business, and live in and/or near the Minnesota United Stadium, and the Midway area being redeveloped will always have the same physical capabilities?
2. If so, how do the design, development, and maintenance plans incorporate that factor?
3. Are seniors and individuals with disabilities a part of the stadium and Midway area being designed and developed/redeveloped?
4. Will seniors, and individuals with disabilities bring money to the stadium, and the Midway area?
5. If so, what is the value of that money?
6. Does it differ from the value of the money brought by other individuals? Justify or explain.

7. Do you believe that seniors and/or individuals with disabilities will contribute to the economic viability of the Minnesota United Soccer Stadium, and the Midway area being redeveloped?

### **Conclusion**

Other committee members with more experience in, and knowledge of other areas that I have not addressed will likely share their concerns, recommendations, and reflections. Every committee member shares a deep commitment to the vibrancy of the Midway area of St. Paul. I respect what each individual brought to our deliberations. I am a 30-year resident of St. Paul. My areas of experience and expertise include being a lifelong mass transit user, and advocate. For three years I have served on the Metropolitan Council's Transportation Accessibility Advisory Committee [the TAAC]. However, my comments are solely my own, and do not reflect positions of the TAAC. I *have* gained greater awareness of transit issues through my TAAC service. Finally, my experience as an individual with limited mobility issues due to my cerebral palsy, essential tremors, and osteoarthritis has informed my Midway Redevelopment Advisory Committee service. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Patty Thorsen

St. Paul, Minnesota

Renee Spillum  
1612 Lafond Avenue  
St Paul, MN 55104

Dear St Paul Planning Commission,

I have been a resident of the Hamline Midway neighborhood since 2006, a member of the Hamline Midway Coalition and Development Committee since 2010, and my family put down permanent roots here with the purchase of our home in 2013, just five blocks from the Midway Shopping Center site. I served as HMC's representative on the Smart-Site Task Force in 2014 and remember distinctly the conversations that group had about the need for catalytic development from some type of large user or institution on the bus barn portion of the site. At the time it seemed we might be waiting for a very long time for such a user.

It is exciting to see this conversation moving to the next step, and I am optimistic that my chosen neighborhood will begin to fulfill its full potential much sooner than I have dared to hope before. I believe the site plans presented and the development values espoused are great reflections of the work that has been done on this site to make it an outstanding example of TOD.

That said, for this implementation of those ideas to be successful, there are a few protections that need to be in place to ensure that the vision the CAC and many other stakeholders have started to rally around is what actually gets built. I believe we need the following protections:

1. A set of minimum floor area ratio (FAR) or building heights. I recommend **a minimum of 6 stories at the new block to be created at the corner of Snelling and University, and a minimum of 4 story buildings elsewhere on the site**, excluding the shops on the park. While we all hope for much more density, it is clear that the master plan must define minimums beyond the T4 zoning minimum of 1.0FAR, which could allow 2 story buildings throughout the site – not enough density to justify the level of public investment that will be necessary to complete the overall development.
2. **Limits on visible structured parking**. Including on floors above the proposed retail ground level, perhaps stated in linear feet. The CAC was shown an image produced by S9 Architects that showed three full levels of exposed parking above the retail floor, with office above that. While this was not a proposed building, there was a very negative reaction to this image and I believe the master plan should protect against such a building composition.
3. I believe the **proposed street** in the master plan that borders the privately constructed green space on the north and east should be **permanently dedicated to non-circulation purposes** (i.e. closed to regular traffic). It could provide paved space for food trucks, farmers markets and art fairs, service vehicles, event loading



and unloading, etc. However, allowing this road to carry circulating regular traffic would cut off the park space from public access with an additional road to cross immediately after crossing University Avenue, in particular, and is counter to the goals of this project to be pedestrian friendly. The fact is that this green space will be a valuable amenity to surrounding private developments. Though it will be privately financed, it is quite a large area to permanently exclude from the tax rolls. The public trade off for that tax expenditure should be a high expectation of its functionality.

4. A **minimum level of affordable housing must be required**—I would suggest 40% of total units across the site, whether ownership or rental. I would like strong protections in place to keep this housing affordable **in perpetuity** (or near it). Our hope is that this development will spur economic growth, which will make this site a much more appealing place to live in the future. As that vision hopefully comes to fruition, protection for low-income residents will become increasingly important over time. We want income diversity across the site, however, and while I do not necessarily want to cap the affordable housing on the site, I have heard from many people the desire to see market rate housing development as part of the redevelopment.

5. A community benefits agreement must be put in place to protect the neighborhood around the new development. It should include the following provisions:

- **A community liaison** should be designated and contact information made available to the district councils on a perpetual basis from both RK Midway and from the Stadium. Issues will undoubtedly arise. The existing relationship with the shopping center has not produced results when the community has issues, such as the proliferation of shopping carts into the Hamline Midway neighborhoods that tenant businesses refuse to collect, environmentally unfriendly salting practices on surface parking lots, accessibility unfriendly snow-removal, and more.
- **A financial commitment from the stadium to fund mitigation of traffic, litter and nuisance concerns if any arise.** I do not want to propose a specific solution to a problem that does not exist yet. However, I fear that the need to establish a parking district, a litter pick up group, or other efforts may emerge. Residents of our furthest south streets, which also happen to be the least well off, could be financially responsible for any implementation without this protection. I look to the TCF Bank partnership with their neighbors as an example of how we could look at this—flexible, responsive and generous enough to relieve residents of any financial burden that a solution might otherwise cause them.
- I believe an impactful commitment from the overall redevelopment would be to identify **a desirable location for both Union Park and Hamline Midway Coalition to have access to for no cost, one per year, to hold fundraising events.** The best case scenario would be some kind of rooftop

patio space in an apartment building, hotel or other building. Specifying such an arrangement prior to any developments being proposed is not possible, but clearly articulating the desire of the formal neighborhood groups to be given special privileges somewhere on the site would be a small cost to the development, but a meaningful benefit to us. It also symbolizes the idea that this master plan should directly benefit the community that's already here, not only the new community within it.

In general, I am very optimistic about the potential of this stadium to catalyze a dramatic transformation of this blighted site. Our work is only beginning. I hope the CAC can continue to exist in some form to provide community insights as actual development projects are proposed. As others have articulated, the process this group has gone through has established that this is a wonderful, diverse group of stakeholders with different experience and expertise, but we have not truly gotten the opportunity to use that to make a meaningful impact on the project. One main concern I have is related to district boundaries which seriously disadvantage the Hamline Midway neighborhood and Ward 4, despite the fact that the negative (and positive) impacts of this development will more directly fall on us. A formal way to include our district council and ward in future decision making (i.e. granting of CUPs within the master plan, etc) would be highly prudent.

I look forward to watching this new, vibrant part of the city take shape. I can easily imagine a new lifestyle for my family, where we walk with our young children the few blocks to this site and find many activities that interest us there, in a safe, walkable environment. A place I am proud to show visitors from other cities that defines the Midway not as a giant suburban strip mall, but as a great example of urban, transit oriented development. A place I want to live.

Sincerely,

-Renee Spillum