

HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA

REPORT TO THE COMMISSIONERS

DATE: DECEMBER 3, 2025

**REGARDING: AUTHORIZATION FOR EXTENSION OF JB VANG
PARTNERS, INC. AS TENTATIVE DEVELOPER OF 694
AND 680 MINNEHAHA AVENUE EAST, DISTRICT 4,
WARD 7**

Requested Board Action

Staff is requesting the Housing and Redevelopment Authority of the City of Saint Paul (“HRA”) Board of Commissioners approve the extension of designation of JB Vang Partners, Inc., a Minnesota corporation (“JB Vang”) as tentative developer of the HRA-owned former Hamm’s Brewery Complex at 694 and 680 Minnehaha Avenue East until June 30, 2027, in order to finalize financing, construction costs, and receive approvals needed to redevelop the Hamm’s Site.

Background.

On January 11, 2023, the Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority by Resolution 23-71 approved the designation of JB Vang as the tentative developer for the 4.8-acre Hamm’s redevelopment site as it best met the redevelopment vision shared by the community and HRA.

The Hamm’s redevelopment includes:

1. The East End Apartments with 110 units ranging in size from 1 to 3 bedrooms, with rents affordable at 30% to 60% AMI, with an average of 60% AMI.
2. The rehabilitation and reuse of the historic Hamm’s brewery structure to provide 86 artist lofts apartments ranging in size from studio to 2-bedroom units, with rents affordable at 30% AMI to 70% AMI, with an average of 60% AMI.
3. The development of a 30,000 square foot marketplace within the historic Hamm’s brewery structure with space for 30 to 50 vendors and 1-3 anchor businesses creating opportunities for local entrepreneurs.

4. Open space improvements including a pedestrian/bike path link from the Bruce Vento Trail to the Hamm's redevelopment, better connecting the site to the surrounding community.

Since the tentative developer designation JB Vang:

1. Completed environmental, building structure and geotechnical studies
2. Completed a series of four community outreach meetings and met with district councils and community members to provide updates on the redevelopment plans
3. Worked diligently to obtain \$4,941,625 in funds from the Metropolitan Council and Ramsey County
4. In July of 2025, applied to MHFA for financing for the East End Apartments
5. Worked successfully with the city to ensure a zoning change to T3 to facilitate the mixed-use development at this opportunity site
6. Completed historic district designation research. The City Council approved the designation of a local historic district on November 5, 2025. The local district designation will allow JB Vang to apply for federal and state historic tax credits for the historic reuse project, estimated at about \$28 Million

Budget Action

N/A

Future Action

Future actions will include requested HRA approval of a Development Agreement relating to the sale of HRA land and gap financing, requested approval of the issuance of 4% conduit revenue bonds for the East End and West End affordable housing projects, and a public hearing regarding sale of HRA property to JB Vang.

Financing Structure

The financing for the East End project is anticipated to include 4% conduit revenue bonds, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, Ramsey County and Metropolitan Council loans and grants,

\$4,000,000 in HRA gap financing, and Minnesota Housing Finance Agency deferred funding of approximately \$10.6 Million. The West End historic reuse project funding is anticipated to include 4% conduit revenue bonds, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, Ramsey County and Metropolitan Council loans and grants, HRA gap funding, Historic Tax Credits, and New Market Tax Credits.

PED Credit Committee Review

The PED Credit Committee will review this project prior to any recommended HRA Board action for financial assistance from the HRA.

Compliance

The following compliance requirements may apply to this project: Vendor Outreach Program, Affirmative Action, Federal Davis Bacon Labor Standards, Affirmative Fair Housing Plan, Two-Bid Policy, Project Labor Agreement, Living Wage Ordinance, Sustainability Policy, Business Subsidy and Section 3.

Green/Sustainable Development

This project will comply with the Saint Paul Sustainable Development Policy.

Environmental Impact Disclosure

Staff is working to complete an environmental assessment, as required by HUD, in anticipation of the use of HOME funds for the East End project.

Historic Preservation

The HRA-owned Hamm's Brewery Complex buildings were constructed between 1892 and 1956. On November 5, 2025, the City Council approved the designation of a Hamm's local historic district. This will allow JB Vang to apply for federal and state historic tax credits, estimated to generate about \$28 million in historic tax credits for the west end reuse project.

Public Purpose/Comprehensive Plan Conformance

The proposed project will rehabilitate vacant Hamm's Brewery Complex structures, improving the safety and security of the site, while preserving part of the City's historic heritage. The project will create new affordable housing with rents affordable to households from 30% AMI to 70% AMI, provide 2- and 3-bedroom units for families, provide affordable artists' lofts units and provide units for formerly homeless individuals and persons with disabilities. The project will include a commercial marketplace including wealth building opportunities for local small businesses. Additionally, the site plan provides public green space and supports strong and accessible connections for pedestrians and bicyclists, providing access to Bruce Vento Trail and Swede Hollow Park. The site will provide residents and commercial tenants and customers with convenient access to transit with major bus lines, on Payne Avenue to the west and on Arcade to the east, which connect to the light rail downtown.

JB Vang's proposed redevelopment aligns with the goals of the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The Hamm's Brewery Complex was designated as a Mixed-Use Opportunity Site in the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan, allowing for higher density mixed-use development or employment centers (Policy LU-2). The proposed development will also meet the following goals established in the City's 2040 Comprehensive Plan:

- Policy H-7. Reduce overcrowding within housing units, caused by doubling up of households and inadequate space for large families, through the production of small and family-sized affordable housing options.
- Policy H-15. Accommodate a wide variety of culturally-appropriate housing types throughout the city to support residents at all stages of life and levels of ability.
- Policy H-31. Support the development of new affordable housing units throughout the city.
- Policy H-46. Support the development of new housing, particularly in areas identified as Mixed Use, Urban Neighborhoods, and/or in areas with the highest existing or planned transit service, to meet market demand for living in walkable, transit-accessible, urban neighborhoods.
- Policy PR-31. Encourage and support private landowners and developers to create and maintain privately-owned public space (POPS) and green infrastructure, especially as land use intensity and activity levels increase.

- Policy HP-6. Maintain and preserve designated and determined eligible historic and cultural resources.
- Policy HP-9. Prioritize the preservation of properties and districts designated for heritage preservation from destruction or alteration that would compromise the integrity of their character-defining features.
- Policy LU-6. Foster equitable and sustainable economic growth by supporting business, real estate and financial models that keep more money locally, such as locally-owned businesses, local-prioritized employment, employee-owned businesses and commercial land trusts.

Furthermore, the proposal is consistent with the 2009 Dayton's Bluff District Plan, the 2012 Near East Side Roadmap, and the 2019 Swede Hollow Master Plan.

Recommendation

The Executive Director recommends approval of the resolution extending the tentative developer designation of JB Vang Partners, Inc. (or an entity owned and controlled by it) as tentative developer for the Hamm's Brewery Complex until June 30, 2027.

Sponsored by: Commissioner Cheniqua Johnson

Staff: Marie Franchett, 266-6702; Laura Haynssen, 266-6597

Attachments

- Map
- D4 Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Profile