



Wednesday, September 20, 2017

Dear Mayor Coleman and Saint Paul City Councilmembers,

On behalf of The Alliance, a 33 member coalition of environmental, social justice and community-based advocacy organizations, I wish to call on city of Saint Paul leaders to commit to truly affordable housing goals for the Ford redevelopment site. Our coalition works on urban growth and development issues in the seven county region, and we apply a racial and economic equity lens to our work.

Support for the Current Zoning Plan

We are on record as supporting the current Ford Site Zoning and Public Realm Master Plan and would urge the city council and mayor's office to work towards maximizing the residential density of the project, bringing up to 4,000 units of new housing opportunities to Saint Paul. We would also remind the city of its obligation to affirmatively further fair housing opportunities in the city, and there is no better place to showcase the city's commitment to this goal than this 125 acre redevelopment site.

Density equals destiny - for a city that wants to grow its future population and preserve the strength of its political representation at the local, county, state and federal level, the site must optimize the residential component in the plan.

This is a major development opportunity, one of the most desirable plots of land anywhere in the metro area, it will have a positive impact for the whole city in terms of economic benefits, jobs, population growth and increased tax base - but it is also a development site of "regional significance" because of its use of regional wastewater and transit services, and the impact it will have on its neighbor cities, as well as on the local/county/state roadway systems. Furthermore, it promises to provide a vital boost to the regional economy, promote urban livability and will be a premier example of sustainable urban growth for years to come.

While we support the current plan, there is one major area where we feel the city needs to improve on the project.

Affordable Housing Goals

Our main concern is that the city does not have a specific goal to build housing for low-wealth families making \$20,000-\$26,000 per year in annual income, no goals for seniors on fixed income, no goals for Section 8 housing opportunities, and no goals for persons with disabilities on limited incomes.

From what we've seen, the city is targeting families that make between \$43,000-\$53,000 per year for their affordable housing goals, but it has yet to show us their plan to include individuals and families making less than \$43,000 per year, and from a Fair Housing and Civil Rights perspective, that is raising some very serious concerns.

Vehicular Volumes at AM Peak Hour

