

Summary Report to the City of Saint Paul Legislative Hearing Commission

Summary of Feasibility Work for Rehabilitation of 678 Snelling Avenue North

Background: The nonprofit African Economic Development Solutions (AEDS) purchased the property on January 15, 2021; the property had reportedly been vacant for over ten years. The project serves multiple goals: creation of an anchor building for the Little Africa Cultural District, rehabilitating a long-vacant building, providing stable space for small businesses that would meet the needs of the African immigrant communities and the neighborhood and create employment. The initial property evaluation was a recommendation for demolition and new construction of the planned commercial and office use. Feedback from the neighborhood and city staff led to a reconsideration of rehabilitation. A building evaluation and a schematic plan were obtained from a structural engineer. The architecture firm Cushing Terrell was selected based, in part, on their experience with grocery stores, and an initial feasibility plan was prepared.

Feasibility Plan: Like many St. Paul commercial streets, the building fills the lot from Snelling to the residential alley, leaving only on-street parking. Fortunately, there is room and an existing curb cut for nine indoor parking spaces. Total square footage will be 13,330 square feet on two floors, including an extension of the existing second floor mezzanine.

A preliminary cost for substantial rehabilitation was estimated based on repair and replacement of the exterior brick; new roof with insulation and roof supports; window replacement, new HVAC system with rooftop units; new accessible bathrooms; new electrical service, new staircases, a LULA or elevator, structure to expand the mezzanine; new insulation, walls, flooring, and lighting.

Funding:

		<i>Status</i>	<i>Decision</i>
Federal	\$ 1,513,395	\$200,000 committed	9/30/2021
State	\$ 1,000,000	pending	5/17/2021
City/LCDA	\$ 200,000	\$100,000 committed	9/30/2021
Private	\$ 700,000	pending	5/31/2021
Total Sources	\$ 3,413,395		
			decision August 2021
Acquisition	\$ 307,500		decision May 2021
Construction & Contingency	\$ 2,651,806	pending	decision May 2021
Soft Costs & Reserve	\$ 454,089		
Total Uses	\$ 3,413,395		

Funding Timeline:

	<i>Best Case</i>	<i>Worst Case</i>
All funding committed	9/30/2021	3/30/2022
Construction Start	11/30/2021	5/30/2021
Occupancy	5/30/2022	12/1/2023