



June 12, 2015

Councilmember Dave Thune
City of Saint Paul
310-C City Hall
15 Kellogg Blvd. West
Saint Paul, MN 55102

VIA EMAIL

Re: Hawkins, Inc. (Barge Channel Road) (City File No. 15-018-147)

Dear Councilmember Thune:

The Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce (SPACC) writes to express its strong support for Hawkins, Inc.'s request for a conditional-use permit (CUP) to allow it to make a significant investment in an existing industrial facility in Saint Paul. For the reasons discussed in greater detail below, we urge members of the city council to affirm the planning commission's approval of this important project and reject the appeal.

Hawkins seeks to invest roughly \$7 million to update an existing river-dependent facility in the Southport industrial area located at 701 Barge Channel Road. Specifically, Hawkins is proposing construction of eight new storage tanks, secondary tank containment walls, truck and rail containment structures and important safety and security upgrades. These improvements will allow this facility to adopt current standards and best practices for industrial storage and material handling, and will actually result in a net reduction of storage. However, because this facility is located in a Flood Fringe District, a CUP is required.

The proposed improvements have been design by Larson Engineering, a reputable design and engineering firm. The improvements will withstand any flooding episode, in accordance with current engineering standards. In addition, the improvements exceed the standards of the Minnesota Building Code and the spill guidelines of the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. Because of the high-quality nature of these improvements, this facility will provide a greater degree of environmental protection, along with increased employee safety.

Moreover, as noted in the zoning committee staff report, dated April 2, 2015, the proposed improvements satisfy Saint Paul's conditional-use standards and the factors used to consider CUP applications for permits in the flood fringe district. The improvements are consistent with Saint Paul's comprehensive plan and floodplain management program. There will not be any negative impact on air quality, surface water, or groundwater as a result of the improvements. In addition, the improvements will not adversely affect river valley views.

Finally, and most importantly, the improvements proposed by Hawkins are supported by city staff, the zoning committee, and the planning commission. At each stage of the regulatory process,

these improvements have received unanimous support from the reviewing body. This unequivocally demonstrates that the improvements proposed by Hawkins are supported by the community.

Hawkins is a successful local business that is committed to building a strong community. Recently, Hawkins was named by *Forbes* magazine as one of the top 100 most trustworthy companies in the United States. With approximately 50 employees and a total payroll of roughly \$5 million in Saint Paul, Hawkins provides high-paying quality jobs in our community. These improvements will allow Hawkins to continue to grow and expand locally. Bottom line, this is exactly the type of investment we should be encouraging businesses like Hawkins to make in Saint Paul.

In closing, we believe this project is good for Saint Paul. We encourage the city council to deny the appeal and approve Hawkins' request for a CUP.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or comments. Thank you.

With Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Matt Kramer', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Matt Kramer
President

cc: Russ Stark, President, Saint Paul City Council
Members of the Saint Paul City Council

