



April 22, 2014

Merritt Clapp-Smith
Principal Planner
Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development
25 West 4th Street, 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Ms. Clapp-Smith:

East Metro Strong fully supports the City of Saint Paul's application for a TIGER planning grant: *Building a Multimodal Corridor on the Canadian Pacific Rail Spur: Preliminary Design Study and Master Plan*. With this letter we:

- endorse the City's application, and
- commit to supporting the project with a funding match of \$20,000 if a TIGER award is secured and the project proceeds.

East Metro Strong

East Metro Strong is a public-private coalition of East Metro communities and institutions working to help communities in the eastern half of the Minneapolis-Saint Paul Region prosper, in part through smart transportation investments. Our Board includes representatives from counties (Dakota, Ramsey, and Washington), cities (Saint Paul, West Saint Paul, and Woodbury), private companies (3M, Health East), public institutions (Bethel University) and philanthropy (Minnesota Philanthropy Partners).

East Metro Strong supports this application—with this letter, and with our matching funds—for three reasons:

1. The project is critical to repositioning the five (5)-mile Canadian Pacific heavy rail line that formerly served the Ford Twin Cities Assembly Plant into *a high quality multimodal corridor will provide a unique and important public transportation asset*. As a well-designed off-road corridor, it will provide an efficient commuter route linking Minneapolis, the future Ford site redevelopment, several neighborhoods, and downtown Saint Paul. With its remarkable views of the Mississippi River Valley, it will also become one of the finest recreation amenities in the Twin Cities region.

2. A high-quality multimodal corridor, in turn, will help:
 - a. Draw the kind of *high-quality, low-impact development on the 140-acre Ford site* that the region wants and needs.
 - b. Draw *investment all along the redeveloped corridor*. We have seen the corridor-wide impact of redeveloping a rail corridor elsewhere in the region, with the success of the Midtown Greenway. We want and need that kind of impact in the East Metro.
3. The City of Saint Paul has developed, in this application, an approach to preliminary design for the corridor that should result not only in the best re-use of the corridor, but ensure that the corridor is re-used at all.

In sum, East Metro Strong sees in this application a compelling opportunity to reuse this unique transportation asset in a way that supports our goal of east metro prosperity.

Sincerely,



William Schroer
Executive Director

cc:

Office of Infrastructure Finance and Innovation
Office of the Secretary of Transportation

1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590
United States
TIGERgrants@dot.gov