



December 1, 2020

Dear Saint Paul City Councilmembers,

The Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers (MCCD) is an association of nearly 50 nonprofit community development organizations committed to expanding the wealth and resources of people and places through housing and economic development. Within our sector and in our communities, MCCD is dedicated to eliminating racial disparities and fostering wealth-creation opportunities. As you consider the proposed 2021 budget, MCCD offers comments on the housing and small business investments.

Fair & Affordable Housing:

MCCD and our members appreciate the City's important affordable housing work, including the SAFE Housing tenant protections passed by the Council in July 2020. We support allocating general funds to the Office of Financial Empowerment for a robust implementation strategy for the tenant protections, including comprehensive marketing & outreach. Additionally, it is critical that the City fund the advanced notice technology solution for the Planning & Economic Development Department. In future budget cycles we would also like to see local funding for acquisitions by nonprofit housing developers.

Small Business & Community Wealth Building:

2020 presented immense challenges to businesses and entrepreneurs throughout Saint Paul, and we support the range of investments proposed:

- \$1M for 2020 civil uprising business assistance;
- \$710K for citywide business assistance;
- \$250K for BIPOC-owned business technical assistance;
- \$250K for BIPOC small developer growth program.

MCCD firmly believes an equitable recovery is possible with intentional investments and accountability to the City's racial equity goals. We appreciate the attention towards BIPOC-owned businesses, new ownership models, and wealth building opportunities, and agree that flexible and forgivable funding opportunities will be the most beneficial to businesses throughout the City.

Despite the challenges 2021 will bring, Saint Paul is full of opportunities and potential as diverse as its residents and neighborhoods. We appreciated PED Director Goodman's attention to the structural imbalances of the HRA/PED budget during her budget presentations this fall, and

MCCD and our members look forward to continued conversations about solutions and partnerships to benefit Saint Paul residents and businesses.

Please feel free to reach out to MCCD's Public Policy Director, Rose Teng ([rteng@mccdmn.org](mailto:rteng@mccdmn.org)) or our Policy Advisor, Caitlin Magistad ([cmagistad@mccdmn.org](mailto:cmagistad@mccdmn.org)) with any questions or concerns. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Elena Gaarder  
President/Chief Executive Officer

Sent to:

Ward 1 City Councilmember Dai Thao  
Ward 2 City Councilmember Rebecca Noecker  
Ward 3 City Councilmember Chris Tolbert  
Ward 4 City Councilmember Mitra Jalali  
Ward 5 City Councilmember Amy Brendmoen  
Ward 6 City Councilmember Nelsie Yang  
Ward 7 City Councilmember Jane Prince

cc:

Mayor Melvin Carter  
Deputy Mayor Jaime Tincher  
Nicolle Goodman, Director, Planning & Economic Development  
Kristin Guild, Deputy Director, Planning & Economic Development  
Kayla Schuchman, Housing Director, Planning & Economic Development  
Kate Rodrigues, Housing Policy Coordinator, Planning & Economic Development  
Muneer Karcher-Ramos, Director, Office of Financial Empowerment  
Kirstin Burch, Fair Housing Coordinator, Office of Financial Empowerment