

Mauricio Ochoa
1239 Thomas Avenue
Saint Paul, MN 55104

March 15, 2021

Council Member Mitra Jalali Nelson,

My name is Mauricio Ochoa and I am resident of the Hamline-Midway neighborhood writing in support of the project proposed at 411-417 Lexington Avenue. I am very encouraged to see the continued growth of the Neighborhood Node at Lexington & University as a transit-oriented node that places housing and retail in close proximity to the Green Line, diminishing reliance on cars. The area between Lexington Avenue and Snelling Avenue is littered with auto-oriented uses that do little to contribute to the walkability and vibrancy described in the 2040 Plan. The existing node is full of drive thrus, surface parking lots, and a formidable pile of snow. Infilling empty lots and surface parking lots with projects like the one proposed helps create a more accessible neighborhood while adding housing diversity to this area.

Having said that, I would strongly encourage the City Council to continue to investigate ways of encouraging the creation of more affordable housing in response to the many concerns raised during the Planning Commission meetings. Having a codified Inclusionary Zoning Policy, eliminating parking minimums, and redefining affordability without using the regional AMI metric would help address the concerns of the neighbors while promoting continued growth.

Thanks for your consideration,

Mauricio Ochoa