



UNION PARK DISTRICT COUNCIL

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An Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity Employer

July 26, 2021

Dear Legislative Hearing Officer of the City Council,

In July 2020, UPDC submitted a statement on recommendations for re-development and treatment of tenants at the 1484 UNIVERSITY AVE W site. We reiterate those (see attached) and add the following:

- The length of time that has elapsed with no progress on the site is very disappointing and damaging to the community and businesses at large.
- The City Council and HRA approved a demolition and development agreement in June 2020, however no progress has been made since then.
- It is not neighborly to leave property in disrepair in such a prominent location. It is a blight that stymies other developments, lowers the values of surrounding properties, scares away customers from nearby businesses, and leaves a clear message to the local small business community that they are not welcome or appreciated.
- Many other properties in the area damaged at the same time have already been repaired.
- Many new developments near Midway Center have been forging ahead – 9 apartment buildings on Marshall Avenue alone.
- The tenants, many of whom were our neighbors and employers of our community, were evicted early with early termination of their leases.
- Low-income and non-car owning customers of those businesses have lost access to affordable retail and easy access to and from public transit.
- The site is the subject of many government sponsored incentives: Federal Opportunity Zone tax breaks, TIF eligibility, \$20 million in infrastructure funding
- It hurt our neighborhood small businesses and customers and continues to hurt our neighborhood.
- We fear our locally owned, entrepreneurial, affordable businesses will be replaced and displaced by new retail national chain tenants that can afford the rent and will further capitalize on the location.

Respectfully,

Abdulrahman Wako
Executive Director
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