



Legislation Text

File #: RES 11-803, **Version:** 1

Establishing a Central Corridor Housing Action Plan.

AMENDED APRIL 20, 2011

Whereas, the Saint Paul City Council acknowledges the high probability that streets adjacent to University Avenue will experience notable changes in traffic and parking patterns as a result of Central Corridor Light Rail Transit (CCLRT) construction and operation; and

Whereas, the Central Corridor Development Strategy and subsequent related Central Corridor planning documents identify shared alleys and side streets as routes for access to parking and servicing for businesses along University Avenue; and

Whereas, Chapter 157 Saint Paul city code permits vehicles to block an alley for the purpose of loading and unloading, but does not regulate specific alleys for times when parking or stopping would be prohibited; and

Whereas, City Council recognizes that the development of the CCLRT project has the potential to increase property values along the line, which in the absence of effective strategies around affordable housing will make it harder for lower income households to afford housing in the area; and

Whereas, the City Council desires to clarify and streamline existing housing policies by moving forward with a unified plan that will ensure a range of housing options on the Corridor and minimize displacement of lower income families and individuals; and

Whereas, the City Council recognizes that the devastation caused by the construction of I-94 through the old Rondo neighborhood, including the displacement of many families and the physical division of the neighborhood, is still fresh in the minds of the community and that the mistakes of the past must not be repeated; and

Whereas, the City Council recognizes that many residents on the Corridor are already experiencing significant housing cost burdens and that property values in station areas have already started to climb relative to other parts of the city, and that there is a local and regional interest in ensuring that the CCLRT is accessible and affordable to current and new Corridor residents; and

Whereas, Saint Paul has been a leader in the region in implementing affordable housing policies and goals, and wishes to continue this record by taking pro-active measures to ensure that light rail development continues to improve the lives of residents;

Whereas, the City Council believes that one of the true tests of the success of the Central Corridor project will be whether or not people of all incomes benefit from the project in terms of quality of life and access to economic opportunity and housing that they can afford; and

Whereas, the Central Corridor Development Strategy commits the City of Saint Paul to the creation of an Anti-Displacement Action Plan; and

Whereas the Saint Paul Planning Commission has already determined to further study the issue of density

bonuses for affordable housing and other public benefits, and whether or not to allow detached accessory dwelling units on single-family lots along Central Corridor; and

Whereas the Saint Paul City Council desires that the Planning Commission also review the idea of requiring large retail developments to include a certain minimum amount of smaller retail spaces to accommodate the space needs of small businesses, now, therefore,

Be it Resolved, that the Saint Paul City Council requests that within one month staff from the Departments of Planning and Economic Development, Safety and Inspections and Public Works present a process and estimated timeline for the creation of City policy to regulate alley usage and permit parking adjacent to University Avenue, guided by studied and anticipated changes to traffic patterns within streets adjacent to University Avenue; and

Be it Further Resolved, that the Saint Paul City Council calls upon the Planning Commission to review tools to promote affordability of housing and business opportunities, including the following issues, and return recommendations to the City Council within the next six months: 1) Possible allowance of accessory detached dwelling units on residential lots along Central Corridor; 2) Requiring retail developments of a certain minimum size to include a certain amount of square footage for small format retail uses; 3) Possible use of density bonuses as a tool for encouraging more production of affordable housing or other public goals; and

Be it Further Resolved, that the Saint Paul City Council calls for the creation of a Central Corridor Affordable Housing and Anti-Displacement Action Plan, to be led by a collaborative group of stakeholders. The group is charged with the creation of an action plan with clear, measurable indicators to maximize the ability of current Corridor residents to remain in place, and to ensure that mixed-income communities are a primary objective of new development along the line. The group will report back initial findings and recommendations within 6 months, and will be comprised of community stakeholders, developers, advocates, and policymakers. The actionable plan drafted by the group will help Saint Paul minimize displacement and will include collaborative partnerships between the City and other private and public entities to achieve the agreed upon goals.