Legislation Text

File #: RES 15-1399, **Version:** 1

Supporting the establishment of the University Avenue Innovation District.

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul has supported the development and completion of the METRO Green Line Light Rail Transit line; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul is involved in an ongoing partnership with the City of Minneapolis on planning and development along the METRO Green Line Light Rail Transit line; and

WHEREAS, the Westgate station area represents significant opportunities for growth along the METRO Green Line in Saint Paul, including growth in population, employment, and tax base; and

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted the Westgate Station Area Plan in 2008, supporting the continued investment in the station areas with high density mixed use, and the adjacent area with office and light industrial development; and

WHEREAS, the West Midway industrial area surrounding the Westgate, Raymond and Fairview Green Line stations has been guided by the City for reinvestment and redevelopment as a population and employment base for the City; and

WHEREAS, the City Council adopted the West Midway Industrial Area Plan in 2014, supporting strategic investments in public infrastructure along with business retention and attraction;

WHEREAS, the City recognizes the ongoing efforts of the Creative Enterprise Zone to attract and retain entrepreneurs and creative industries in the West Midway area;

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul is working in partnership with the City of Minneapolis in this area to address shared cross-border issues and opportunities; and

WHEREAS, a number of community partners have formed the Prospect North Partnership to support redevelopment in the context of a sustainable and innovative district; and

WHEREAS, the Prospect North Partnership has identified that designating an innovation district (“University Avenue Innovation District”) would assist in establishing an identity and standards for the redevelopment of the area, and Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development staff have agreed with this recommendation as a means to forwarding City goals for economic development; and

WHEREAS, the University Avenue Innovation District’s boundary as identified by the Prospect North Partnership generally includes the area north of University Avenue to the rail yards between the University of Minnesota (west) and Highway 280 (east), and includes the Westgate area of Saint Paul from the city border at Emerald Street (west) to Highway 280 (east) and from the rail yards (north) to I-94 (south); and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development expects this partnership to yield economic development benefits for the broader West Midway area of Saint Paul;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Saint Paul City Council supports the establishment of the University Avenue Innovation District area by:

1. Signing on to a legally non-binding Memorandum of Understanding with other partners in the Prospect North Partnership.

2. Encouraging ongoing PED and other appropriate City staff participation in the Prospect North Partnership with planning, organizing, strategizing for and implementing the area's redevelopment.

3. Considering funding requests for redevelopment opportunities including housing, business development, infrastructure, and greenspace, particularly those that provide or support affordable housing and/or job creation.

4. Communicating about the opportunities in this area to a broader audience, to attract input, support, and potentially investment.

5. Working with the City of Minneapolis on shared issues including, but not limited to, infrastructure connectivity, formation of a cohesive district identity and brand, and alignment of investments in economic development.