

# **HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA**

**REPORT TO THE COMMISSIONERS**

**DATE: AUGUST 23, 2023**

**REGARDING: RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EXECUTION OF A JOINT POWERS AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE HOUSING AND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY OF THE CITY OF SAINT PAUL, CITY OF SAINT PAUL, AND THE METROPOLITAN COUNCIL FOR LAND LOCATED NEAR THE GREEN LINE LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT CENTRAL STATION WARD 2, DISTRICT 17**

## **Requested Board Action**

Authorize the execution of a Joint Powers Agreement between the City of Saint Paul, the Housing and Redevelopment Authority of Saint Paul (HRA) and the Metropolitan Council (Met Council) for the land located near the Green Line Light Rail Transit (LRT) Central Station in downtown Saint Paul. Broadly, the agreement states the willingness for all parties to work jointly on the marketing and redevelopment of the land located around Central Station including the process to advertise the land for sale and obtaining development proposals.

## **Background**

The Green Line LRT Central Station and surrounding properties represents just under 2-acres of redevelopment property in downtown Saint Paul. The site is commonly known as the Central Station Block and is bisected by the Green Line LRT rail tracks. Also within the site is a vertical access tower with a stairway to the skyway system that connects to the nearby University Club Building and other infrastructure associated with the operations of the Green Line LRT. The remainder of the land is vacant with 1.44 acres owned by the Metropolitan Council and 0.22 acres owned by the HRA.

To facilitate private development on the block, the Met Council intends to subdivide its property to create a transit parcel which will house the rail lines and infrastructure needed to operate the LRT station and a non-transit parcel which can be marketed and sold for private development,

including the air rights to facilitate potential vertical development above the rail lines. It is the intention of the HRA to include its parcel in the marketing efforts to provide for a uniform development parcel for the site. Ideally, the site will be marketed for sale through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process led by the Met Council and supported by the HRA. The Joint Powers Agreement provides a framework for joint marketing and eventual redevelopment of the parcels between the Met Council and HRA.

There is no financial or budgetary impact to any of the parties as the result of this agreement. If costs arise related to the redevelopment of the property, each party will be responsible for paying its own costs unless otherwise agreed upon between the entities. Any cost sharing arrangements or other financial items related to this project will be determined at a future date.

Additionally, the agreement highlights some key items that will need to be accounted for and resolved between the Met Council and the HRA before an RFP on the site could be issued including: releasing any existing encumbrances associated with funding and operations of the LRT from the future development parcel, platting and/or subdividing the development property, and basic procedure related to procuring a developer.

### **Budget Action**

This agreement does not represent a specific financial commitment from either party related to the marketing, sale, or development of the property. Any agreements or arrangements impacting the budget would be brought back to the Board at a future date.

### **Future Action**

The Saint Paul City Council must also authorize execution of this agreement before any parties can sign the document. That action is anticipated to take place at the August 23, 2023 City Council meeting. Other future actions related to the Central Station Block are yet to be determined. Additional future actions may be needed for the project more generally and will be brought before the appropriate body for final approval.

**Financing Structure**

NA

**PED Credit Committee Review**

NA

**Compliance**

NA

**Green/Sustainable Development**

NA

**Environmental Impact Disclosure**

NA

**Historic Preservation**

NA

**Public Purpose/Comprehensive Plan Conformance:**

Redevelopment of available land downtown falls into the goal of the 2040 plan to increase Saint Paul's tax base. Additionally, this project offers the unique opportunity for significant infill development in the downtown core and as the ability to increase density around a significant transit investment. Specifically, the future redevelopment project meets the following Comprehensive Plan policy areas:

LU-1: Encourage transit supportive density and direct growth to areas with highest existing or planned capacity

LU-2: Pursue redevelopment opportunities as higher-density and mixed use development or employment centers

**Recommendation:**

Authorize the execution of a Joint Powers Agreement between the Metropolitan Council, the City of Saint Paul, and Housing and Redevelopment Authority of the City of Saint Paul for the parcels collectively known at the Central Station Block.

**Sponsored by:** Commissioner Rebecca Noecker

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