



NORTHSPAN

Saint Paul's Industrial Land: Economic Engine & Fiscal Backbone

[Analysis of the Economic Impact of the Saint Paul Industrial Sector](#)

Commissioned by: Saint Paul Port Authority | Analysis by: Northspan

Data collected: January 1, 2024, to December 31, 2025



Economic development + environmental stewardship + equity



Expands
the City's
tax base



Cleans up
contaminated
land



Creates quality
industrial jobs



Advances
sustainable
and equitable
development



Advocates
for river
commerce

The Real Value of Industrial Land

1

Update economic and fiscal impact analysis

2

Address the outdated perceptions of “heavy industry”

3

Provide data-driven land use insights

4

Evaluate tax revenue vs. cost of city services

Commissioned by



Analysis by

NORTHSPAN

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January 1, 2024, to

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N O R T H S P A N

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Saint Paul Faces Converging Pressures

1

Rising property tax burden
on homeowners

2

Rising housing demand

3

Limited land supply

4

Downtown in flux

An aerial photograph showing a large-scale construction project in progress. The foreground is dominated by extensive earthmoving, with large mounds of brown soil and dirt paths. Several yellow excavators and other heavy machinery are visible on the site. In the middle ground, a well-maintained green golf course is visible, with a few buildings and trees scattered around. The background consists of a dense forest of green trees under a clear blue sky. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, sans-serif font.

How do we balance converging
land pressures
while protecting
economy drivers?



Industries Included in Economic Impact Analysis

- Manufacturing
- Construction
- Utilities
- Wholesale trade
- Transportation and warehousing
- Data processing, hosting, & related services
- Commercial & industrial machinery renting and leasing
- Commercial & industrial machinery & equipment repair/maintenance
- Linen & uniform supply
- Appliance repair & maintenance
- Waste management and remediation
- Truck, utility trailer, & RV rental/leasing
- Waste management and remediation
- Telecommunications



The Nature of Saint Paul Industrial Land

1

Industrial land is limited and geographically concentrated

2

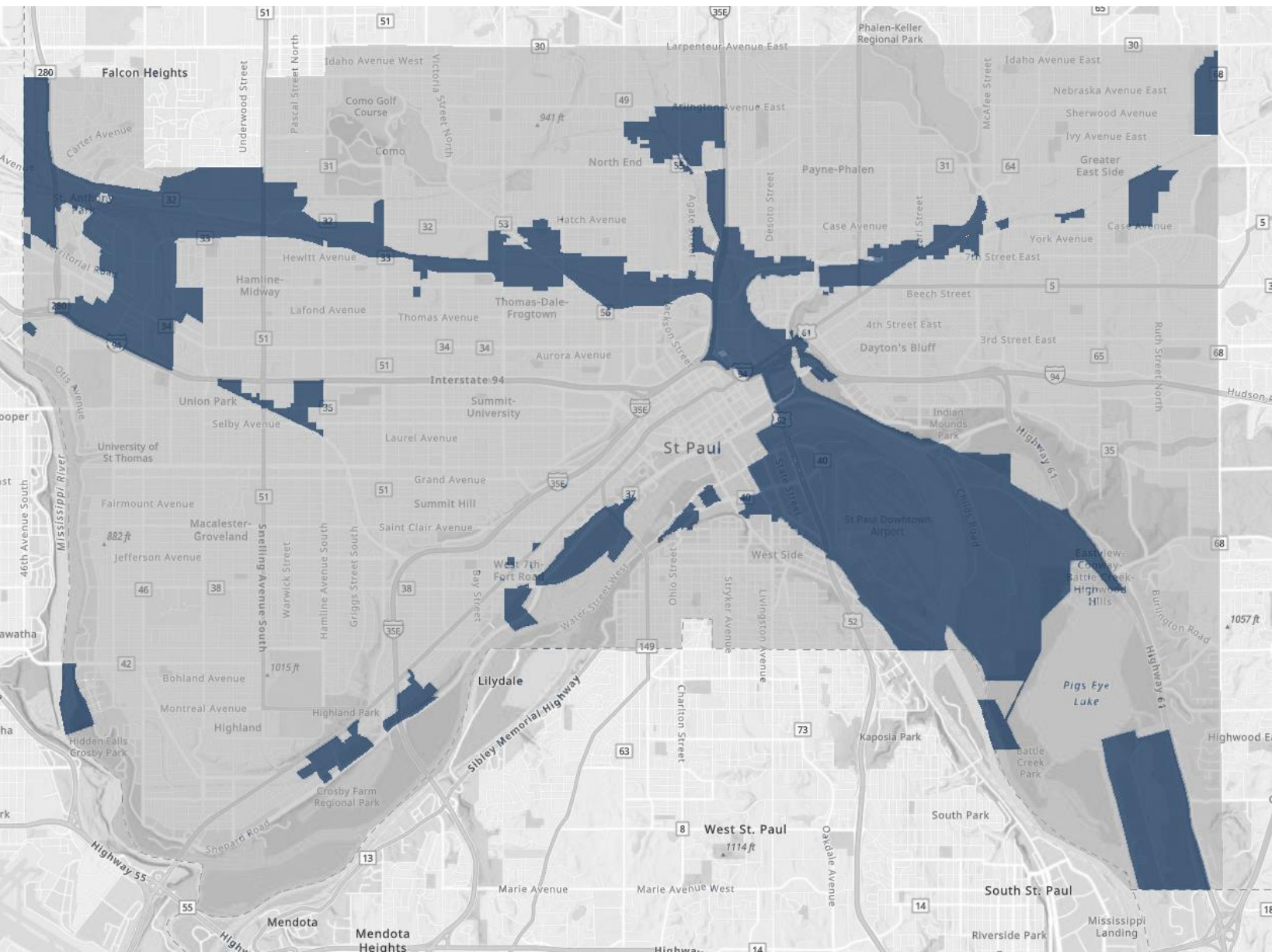
Much of it is strategically located near infrastructure

3

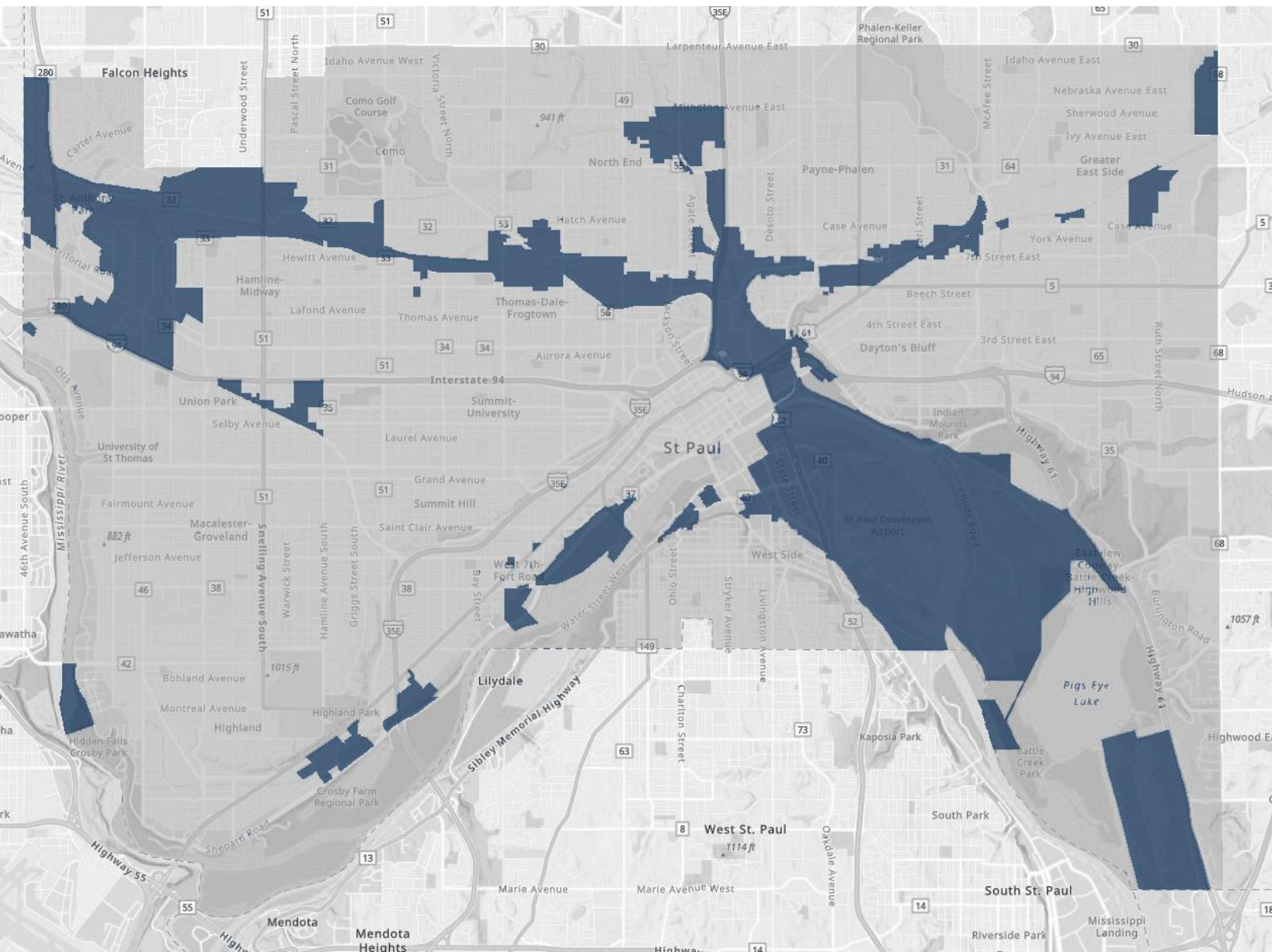
Once converted, industrial land is difficult to replace

4

More than 50% of Saint Paul's zoned industrial land cannot be developed



50%
of Saint Paul's zoned
industrial land
cannot be developed



50%

of Saint Paul's zoned industrial land cannot be developed

Industrial land is finite and irreplaceable

The background of the slide is a blurred industrial setting. On the right side, there is a prominent blue metal lattice structure. In the upper center, a single warm-toned light fixture is visible. The overall scene suggests a factory or manufacturing environment.

REPORT FINDINGS

Industrial Sector: Economic Engine

A smiling man with a grey beard and mustache, wearing a blue and white checkered shirt and an orange safety vest, stands in a warehouse. He is leaning on a large cardboard box. The background shows blue metal shelving units filled with various items, likely in a distribution or manufacturing facility.

31,000+

Jobs Supported

\$2.8 billion

Labor Income

\$9+ billion

Direct Economic Output

\$1+ billion

Annual Tax Contributions

A person wearing a high-visibility orange safety vest with reflective stripes, blue jeans, and white sneakers is walking past a large stack of brown cardboard boxes. The scene is set in an industrial or warehouse environment. A dark blue semi-transparent overlay covers the left side of the image, containing white and blue text.

Industrial activity
powers Saint
Paul's **economy**

An aerial photograph showing a large-scale industrial or construction project. In the foreground, there's a wide, flat area of green grass. A dirt road or path runs through the middle ground, leading to a large, irregularly shaped body of water. The water has a light blue-green hue. To the left of the water, there's a large, conical pile of dark brown earth or soil. Further back, there's a large area of cleared, brown earth, possibly a construction site. In the far background, a residential neighborhood with houses and trees is visible under a clear sky.

REPORT FINDINGS

Industrial Land: Backbone of the Tax Base



1.9% of parcels generate
**9.3% of property tax
revenue**



\$1 spent → **\$1.80
returned**



\$14,000 more revenue
per acre than average
residential land



**Net positive
land use**



→ Productive **industrial land**
outperforms every other
land use fiscally

A blurred background image of an industrial setting. On the right side, a person wearing a white protective suit and a dark cap is visible, seemingly working on a structure. The background consists of various metal beams, pipes, and machinery in shades of blue and grey.

REPORT FINDINGS

Industrial Jobs: In-person Jobs Strengthen the Local Economy



Primarily **in-person** occupations



Strongly correlates with **higher tax revenue**



Drives foot traffic and **neighborhood vitality**



Provide **strong wages**

Median industrial sector wage
(non-management):
~\$37/hour = ~\$76K/year



These jobs create
economic ripple
effects citywide





SPPA Activates Industrial Land

Energy Park

Westminster Junction
Business Center

Williams Hill
Business Center



Westminster Junction Business Center

Underutilized former rail switch yard

BEFORE

50

Jobs

\$138,000

Property Tax Revenue/Year



Westminster Junction Business Center

Modernized multi-tenant business center

 HealthPartners Specialty Center

BEFORE

50

Jobs

\$138,000

Property Tax Revenue/Year

AFTER

900

Jobs

\$2.6M

Property Tax Revenue/Year

16

Companies



Strategic redevelopment

**multiplies tax and job
outcomes**





Williams Hill Business Center

Dump site

BEFORE

12

Jobs

\$80,000

Property Tax Revenue/Year

Williams Hill Business Center

Productive industrial business center

BEFORE

12

Jobs

\$80,000

Property Tax Revenue/Year

AFTER

450

Jobs

\$2.4M

Property Tax Revenue/Year

A large, modern, curved glass building with a blue tint, identified as the HealthPartners Neuroscience Center. The building is set against a clear blue sky. In the foreground, a red car is driving on a road, and there are some green plants and a street lamp. The text "Productive industrial creates" is overlaid on the top part of the image.

Productive industrial creates

**long-term
fiscal assets**



Energy Park

Koppers Company Superfund Site

BEFORE

0

Jobs

\$0

Property Tax Revenue/Year

Energy Park

A 200-acre mixed-use development

BEFORE

0

Jobs

\$0

Property Tax Revenue/Year

AFTER

5,770

Jobs

\$8.5M

Property Tax Revenue/Year

93

Companies

780

Housing Units

An aerial photograph showing a well-planned industrial and residential area. The scene includes several large industrial buildings with flat roofs, parking lots, and roads. A prominent feature is a large, curved road that winds through the area. In the foreground, there are more industrial structures and a parking lot. The background shows a mix of industrial and residential buildings, with a residential area visible on the right side. The overall layout suggests a strategic integration of industrial and housing.

When strategically planned
**industrial land can
coexist with housing**

The data and the real-world outcomes align



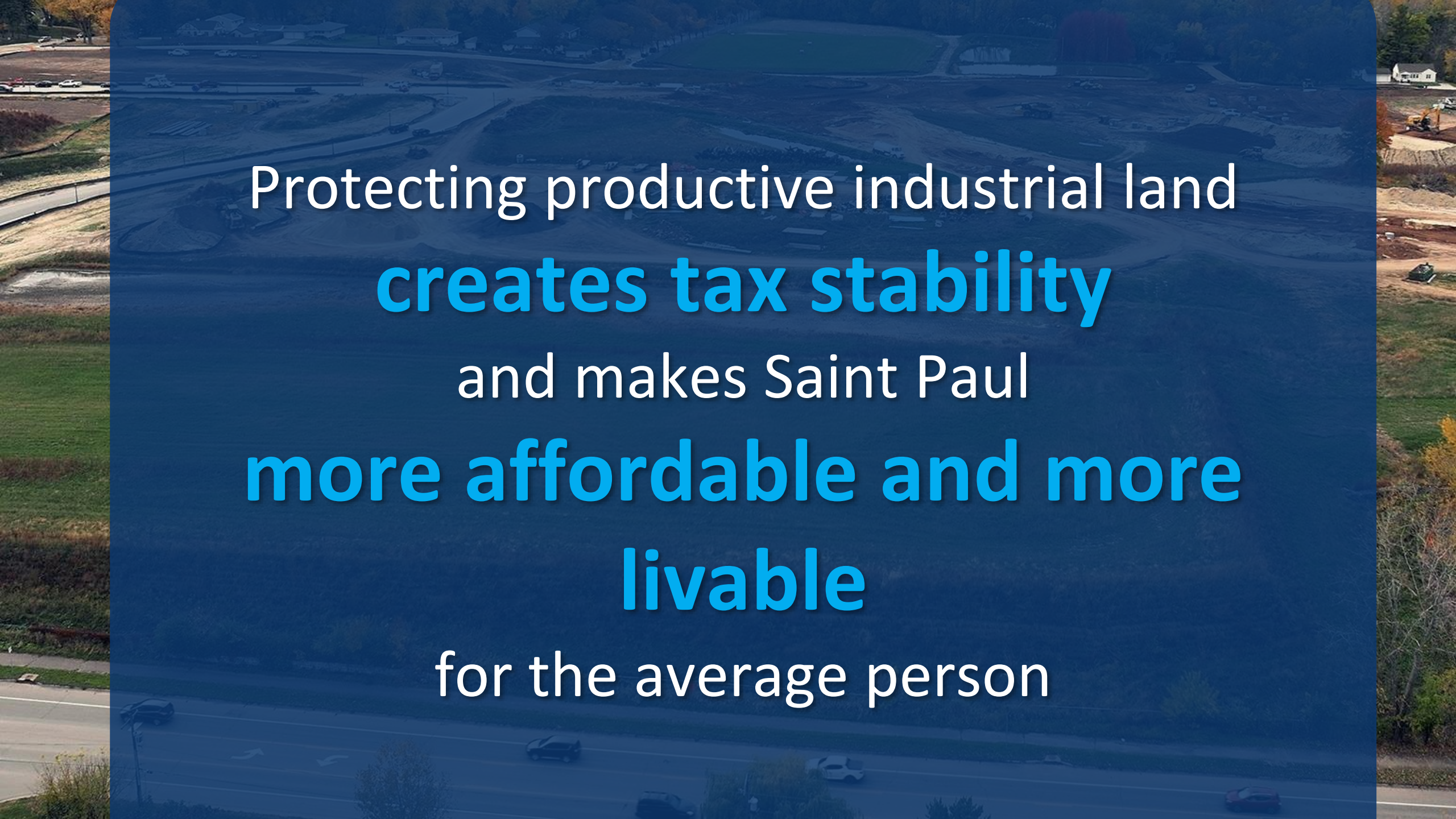
Industrial land
produces
outsized fiscal
returns



Idle land can
become tax
engines



Modern
industrial
development
creates jobs

An aerial photograph of an industrial or commercial development site, showing various buildings, parking lots, and roads. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue rectangle that contains white and light blue text. The text is centered and reads: "Protecting productive industrial land creates tax stability and makes Saint Paul more affordable and more livable for the average person". The words "creates tax stability", "more affordable and more", and "livable" are in a larger, bold, light blue font, while the other words are in a smaller, white font.

Protecting productive industrial land
creates tax stability
and makes Saint Paul
more affordable and more
livable
for the average person

An aerial photograph of an industrial construction site in Saint Paul, Minnesota. The scene shows a large area of cleared land with a yellow excavator working on a dirt mound. A winding asphalt road curves through the site, and a small pond is visible in the foreground. In the background, there are trees and some industrial buildings. The text "Saint Paul's industrial land is not a legacy of the past." is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

Saint Paul's industrial land is
**not a legacy
of the past.**

It's the
**financial
engine**
of Saint Paul's
future.

1.9% of
parcels
generate:

9.3%

Of Tax Revenue

31,000+

Jobs Supported

\$9+ billion

Direct Economic Output

Strategic
balance
TODAY

Economic
resilience
TOMORROW



Saint Paul
PORT AUTHORITY