



Working to protect the Mississippi River
and its watershed in the Twin Cities area.

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Dear Minneapolis Planning Commission members, Mayor Frey, and Councilmember Fletcher:

We are writing today to share our opposition to the proposed parking ramp for the Federal Reserve Bank.

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) is a local non-profit organization that works to protect, restore, and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities metropolitan region. We have more than 2,700 active members, 3,500 volunteers, and 2,000 advocates who care deeply about the river's unique resources. FMR was founded and continues to play a leadership role in ensuring that the public resources of our National Park, the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, are preserved for current and future generations.

We believe that the Mississippi River belongs to all of us and that public access to and enjoyment of the river should be continually enhanced. Land along the river deserves special consideration and should be dedicated to its highest and best uses. The proposed ramp design detracts from both the natural and historic character that make the North Loop a vibrant riverfront neighborhood. A parking ramp does not promote a connection to the river, active transportation, or respect for the historic significance of the Mississippi River and its surroundings.

Furthermore, constructing a new 800-stall parking ramp contradicts the city's 2040 environmental goals of reducing vehicle emissions, disincentivizing driving, and creating walkable neighborhoods. These environmental goals are urgent, now more than ever, and cannot be considered optional.

The plans and ordinances that this project seeks to contravene were developed through many years of public input and should not be disregarded. This is a crucial moment for the city to show adherence to its own goals and policies, especially those in its bold new 2040 plan. We ask that the Planning Commission deny the Federal Reserve Bank's CUP application for a parking ramp. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Colleen O'Connor Toberman
River Corridor Program Director