



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

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April 8, 2020

Dear Mayor Francis and South St. Paul councilmembers,

We are writing today to share our support for the city's Hardman Triangle redevelopment plan.

Friends of the Mississippi River (FMR) is a non-profit organization with a mission to engage community members and other stakeholders to protect, restore and enhance the Mississippi River and its watershed in the Twin Cities Region. We represent thousands of people in the metropolitan area who care deeply about the river, including a growing membership of over 2,700 people and more than 3,200 volunteers and 2,000 advocates engaged each year.

FMR takes an active interest in working with municipalities, counties, state government, and other stakeholders to help shape and influence decisions that impact the health of the river. 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 (MNRRA), are preserved for current and future generations to benefit from.

Hardman Triangle is within the bounds of this national park. We're enthused about the city's development vision for the area. Several elements of the site plan demonstrate a desire for a vibrant, walkable riverfront community worthy of its national park location:

- Improved bike and pedestrian connections through the area and to the Mississippi River.
- Design standards that promote a vibrant, human-scaled public realm.
- Building positioning that preserves views of the river and bluff.
- Inclusion of plants, green space and stormwater management through artful stormwater features, landscaping and vegetated roofs.

By January 2023, South St. Paul will have adopted its MRCCA ordinance. In advance of formal ordinance adoption, FMR encourages all communities to manage development in the spirit of the ordinance to the extent possible.

While the city will write its own ordinance, there are some state requirements with which the ordinance must comply. As relates to Hardman Triangle, one key ordinance requirement will be the 65-foot structure height limit. The development plan appears to conform to this standard.

We encourage the city and developers to reach out to us early in the design process for proposed projects in this area. We look forward to continuing to work with South St. Paul leaders and residents as development at Hardman Triangle advances.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colleen O'Connor Toberman".

Colleen O'Connor Toberman
River Corridor Program Director