



CITY OF SAINT PAUL

Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

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December 30, 2014

Dear Leaders of the F.R. Bigelow Foundation,

Implementation of the Great River Passage plan is a top priority for the third term of my administration. While we've made progress, we are seeking catalytic resources that will add momentum to the work. I am writing in support of this request for those resources and hope you will look favorably on this proposal that will lead to a more vibrant and equitable Saint Paul.

The pieces necessary to realize greatness along the 17 mile river corridor exist. There is a well developed plan, potential to leverage up to \$50M in public investment and \$500M in private development, a strong public private partnership between the Riverfront Corporation and the City of Saint Paul, and upcoming nationally significant events that will serve as high profile opportunities to advance implementation. However we are currently lacking capacity to assemble all of these pieces in a manner that will take advantage of the resources and opportunities to deliver on the vision of an activated river front where diverse communities converge and celebrate our most beautiful natural resource.

The City of Saint Paul is committed to prioritizing the Great River Passage work over the next three years. The private funding sought in this proposal will not only fill a gap we were not able to address in the 2015 city budget, but it will also serve to encourage future public investment in the plan implementation. With this investment we will be better able to connect individual public and private development projects to activate space along the river, build broad community wide participation in the plan, and ensure that plan implementation is in line with the city's Racial Equity Initiative.

Momentum is building on private development along the river - from the Ford site to West Side Flats to many points in between. River Front Corporation is a valued and active partner with city staff members on projects like the Island Station. However we need increased capacity to work all of the individual development efforts like one whole project. With this coordinated approach we will more successfully align the private and public investments in order to implement the vision laid out in the Great River Passage.

The philanthropic resources for River Front Corporation will also allow us to draw more individuals from a broader community into the implementation of the plan. A larger and more diverse group of people being invested in the redevelopment of the river will build a broader base of support for the river as a community asset. This will increase the likelihood of all members of our community being engaged with the river and celebrating the natural beauty of our community.

Finally the Racial Equity Initiative is growing substantially as a guiding force for city operations. Key components of the initiative are improved community engagement and review of all city services and investments to better align input and resources in order to close the gaps between whites and non-whites in our city. It is important that all city endeavors similarly focus on diversity of engagement and resource distribution in order for the Racial Equity Initiative to gain traction. These resources will enable this focus while developing the sustainable implementation of the Great River Passage plan.

I am grateful for the long standing partnership between the F.R. Bigelow Foundation and the City. Your philanthropic investment has had a significant impact on our community and the lives of the most disadvantaged residents. I would be grateful for your continued partnership with a particular emphasis on the implementation of the Great River Passage. There's great potential for us to impact future generations of city residents through the thoughtful redevelopment of our river corridor. I hope you will support this proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Christopher B. Coleman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Christopher B. Coleman
Mayor