



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Mayor Christopher B. Coleman

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September 20, 2016

Mr. Jason Schupbach
Director of Design Programs, Visual Arts Division Team Leader
National Endowment for the Arts
400 7th Street, SW Washington, DC 20506

Dear Mr. Schupbach and *Our Town* Panelists,

As Mayor of the City of Saint Paul, it is my pleasure to express my support and commitment to The Trust for Public Land's request for a National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) *Our Town* grant to support creative placemaking efforts for the parkland at Griggs.

Although the Twin Cities are known for having excellent parks, it is nevertheless the case that significant pockets remain where park access is quite limited. Residents of Saint Paul's Midway neighborhood – named for its location midway between the downtowns of Saint Paul and Minneapolis – are especially underserved due to a lack of public green space. The Midway neighborhood is home to a densely populated low-income and culturally diverse community with far less parkland as a percentage of its area than the city as a whole. The proposed parkland at Griggs will provide these residents an outstanding five-acre community green space for passive and active outdoor recreation and other activities.

Requested NEA *Our Town* funding will enable the City in partnership with The Trust for Public Land to work with artists to engage the community and help build a cross-community and cross-cultural identity, with the park as the catalyst. Community members' creative placemaking projects will highlight the various cultures, communities, and relationships present in Midway, but expressed in unexpected and engaging ways. The overall goal for this project is to help create a more equitable parks system through inclusive creative community engagement approaches that increase social connections, connect communities, develop a sense of neighborhood, and create a shared vision for, and ownership of, the new park.

We ask for your utmost consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or concerns.

Respectfully,

Christopher B. Coleman
Mayor