SENATOR PATRICIA TORRES RAY
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Senate
State of Minnesota

August 27, 2009

Tom Madden
Minneapolis Public Schools
807 NE Broadway
Minneapolis, MN 55413

Dear Tom,

Through the generosity of Minneapolis Public Schools, the Midtown Farmers' Market continues to connect the locally-grown food and goods of 70 vendors with 40,000 annual customers at 2225 East Lake Street, former home of Anishinabe Academy.

As you know, Midtown Farmers' Market vendors, customers, and community members wish to create a permanent home for the market at 2225 East Lake, its location of seven seasons. This vision is the cornerstone of the transit-oriented Corcoran Midtown Revival Plan, which was adopted by the City Council as part of the Minneapolis Plan in 2002, and calls for public open space and a mix of diverse housing and retail opportunities.

But I believe we have an opportunity to do even more.

At 2225 East Lake, we have an opportunity to create a model redevelopment built around an urban, all-local farmers' market. At 2225 East Lake, we have an opportunity to connect urban consumers to sustainable agriculture. At 2225 East Lake, we have an opportunity to leverage the green, health-oriented assets of the neighborhood, including Hiawatha Light Rail's 20,000 daily riders, the Midtown YWCA's 12,000 health and fitness members, the Midtown Greenway's 3,000 daily riders, and more.

We have strong support from the community and many partners, including Hennepin County, which is presently leading a planning effort along the transit corridor through the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Project. Commissioner Peter McLaughlin has expressed a strong interest in working with me, my colleagues at the legislature, and the community on this effort. To that end, the Senate bonding committee would like to explore purchase of 2225 East Lake from Minneapolis Public Schools, to facilitate redevelopment of the site with public and private partners.

To proceed with a state bonding request, I need to know what the School District's plans to sell the site are, what the requirements from parties interested in pursuing purchase of the site are, and what the appraised value of 2225 East Lake Street is.

I would like to request your assistance in obtaining this information so we may proceed with our planning process. The Senate Bonding Committee will begin deliberations in mid-September so I would greatly appreciate your help in obtaining this information before September 12th.

I look forward to working with you on this important opportunity.

Sincerely,

Patricia Torres Ray
Minnesota State Senator

Cc: Steven Liss, Minneapolis Public Schools
Hennepin County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin
Corcoran Neighborhood Organization