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Saint Paul to Receive One of Four National Grants for Urban Planning Pilot Project in Central Corridor

SAINT PAUL – A major grant from the Environmental Simulation Center, Inc., a grantee of the Ford Foundation, will ensure that changes brought about by the planned Central Corridor light rail line bring maximum benefit to area residents and business owners in the Frogtown and Rondo communities. The Environmental Simulation Center announced the grant award this week to Saint Paul, one of four cities nationwide to receive the grant.

“Central Corridor represents a \$1 billion investment opportunity for that will forever change the face of Saint Paul,” said Mayor Chris Coleman. “This grant not only affirms the vision we have for University Avenue and its neighbors, but it will also allow us to continue our work designing a project that benefits people who live, work and do business in the Central Corridor.”

A collaboration comprised of District 7/Thomas Dale; the Greater Frogtown Community Development Corporation; District 8/Summit-University; Aurora Saint Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation, University UNITED/U-PLAN, and the City of Saint Paul will use the grant, in part, to establish a Community Change Center in a building owned by Greater Frogtown CDC at 533 North Dale Street. The center will house a branch office of U-PLAN as well as a newly hired coordinator/liaison who will help connect community members to organizations providing services in the areas of housing, job training, public health, education, violence prevention, transit mobility and the like.

The intent of the grant is to link the social service infrastructure to the physical infrastructure through the planning process. The framework for this interaction is a Human Development Overlay District (HDOD), which will enable human, social, and economic development and public health agencies to provide assistance to residents and businesses so that they can embrace physical changes as opportunities for upward mobility.

“Central Corridor will bring change to the businesses and residents currently in the neighborhoods along the corridor. The grant will provide us the tools to link the resources to those people and business owners who should benefit from the changes this amazing project will bring,” said Brian McMahon on behalf of the Frogtown Rondo Partnership.

The Ford Foundation, through the Environmental Simulation Center, is funding four pilot projects around the country that met certain requirements, including in Boston, Los Angeles, and Astoria, Oregon. Saint Paul was selected because of significant changes light rail will bring to

the Frogtown and Rondo communities. The Saint Paul application demonstrated the necessary proficiency with sophisticated

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planning tools including GIS mapping, data gathering, and architectural visioning technologies to plan for this catalytic event. A number of maps and graphics pertaining to the Frogtown/Rondo project are posted at www.frogtownrondo.org.

The Ford Foundation created this pilot project to demonstrate how these high-technology resources can be used to better understand conditions in the neighborhoods, to allow for monitoring changes over time, and to proactively engage the community in planning for its future.

The partner organizations currently are reaching out to service providers to explore possible collaborations in this effort. For additional information, contact organizations in the Frogtown/Rondo HDOD Partner Organizations:

- Steve Boland, Greater Frogtown Community Development Corporation
www.greaterfrogtowncdc.org
- Tait Danielson-Castillo, District 7, Thomas Dale, www.d7mix.org
- Dan Kravetz, Aurora/ St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation,
www.aurorastanthy.org
- Ina Landrum, District 8, Summit University, www.summit-u.com
- Adam Maleitzke, U-PLAN, www.u-plan.org
- Nancy Homans, policy director, Office of Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman,
www.stpaul.gov
- Brian McMahon, coordinator, University UNITED, www.universityunited.com

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