



Ryan T. O'Connor | County Manager
Ramsey County
15 West Kellogg Boulevard
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Ramsey County Manager O'Connor,

I am writing on behalf of the Saint Paul Downtown Alliance to express my support for your efforts to create more capacity for shelter space and transitional housing. As you know, 2020 has included many challenges across our communities, including a tenfold increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness and living outside. Many of those people from across the region have made the streets, parks, and green spaces in downtown Saint Paul their temporary home. This was accompanied by a 300% rise in crime in downtown. In addition to the obvious humanitarian crisis, it is also important that we create near-term solutions to avoid exacerbating an economic crisis. As the economic engine for the county and region, downtown's recovery is essential to our collective future.

As the current home of many shelter facilities, affordable housing, and social services downtown is already doing more than its share to address these systemic and regional challenges. I appreciate your efforts to add to the shelter and transitional housing capacity in locations that accommodate access to services in downtown while not further concentrating them exclusively in downtown. While we are concerned about the possibility of permanently losing the jobs and health care services of Bethesda, we support your efforts to utilize the facility to make an immediate improvement in the number of people living outside in downtown Saint Paul.

Please let me know if I can assist in any way.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe Spencer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joe Spencer

cc : Jean Krueger, Ramsey County Property Manager