

# ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

This Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) form and EAW Guidelines are available at the Environmental Quality Board's website at: <http://www.eqb.state.mn.us/EnvRevGuidanceDocuments.htm>. The EAW form provides information about a project that may have the potential for significant environmental effects. The EAW Guidelines provide additional detail and resources for completing the EAW form.

**Cumulative potential effects** can either be addressed under each applicable EAW Item, or can be addressed collectively under EAW Item 19.

**Note to reviewers:** Comments must be submitted to the RGU during the 30-day comment period following notice of the EAW in the *EQB Monitor*. Comments should address the accuracy and completeness of information, potential impacts that warrant further investigation, and the need for an EIS.

## 1. PROJECT TITLE

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Superior Plating Site Redevelopment

## 2. PROPOSER

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**Proposer:** Lennar Multifamily Communities, LLC  
**Contact Person:** Doug Bober  
**Title:** Division President, Central Division  
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## 3. RGU

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**RGU:** City of Minneapolis  
**Contact Person:** Becca Farrar-Hughes  
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## 4. REASON FOR EAW PREPARATION

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Check one:

Required:

- EIS Scoping
- Mandatory EAW

Discretionary:

- Citizen petition
- RGU discretion
- Proposer initiated

**If EAW or EIS is mandatory, give EQB rule category subpart number(s) and name(s):**

## 4410.4300 MANDATORY EAW CATEGORIES.

Subp.19. Residential development D. 375 attached units in a city within the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area that has adopted a comprehensive plan under Minnesota Statutes, section 473.859; and Subp. 32. Mixed residential and industrial-commercial projects with a sum of quotients exceeding 1.0; Connected Actions or Phased Actions per 4410.1000, subpart 4.

## 5. PROJECT LOCATION

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**County:** Hennepin

**City/Township:** Minneapolis

**Addresses:** 315 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE, 101 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE, 115 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE, 119 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE, 125 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE, 108 5<sup>th</sup> Street NE, 116 5<sup>th</sup> Street NE, and 120 5<sup>th</sup> Street NE

**PLS Location (¼, ¼, Section, Township, Range):** NW ¼ of NE ¼ of Township 29N, Range 24W, and Section 23

**Watershed (81 major watershed scale):** Mississippi River – Twin Cities

**Tax Parcel Numbers:** 23-029-24-12-0090, 23-029-24-12-0182, 23-029-24-12-0083, 23-029-24-12-0084, 23-029-24-12-0085, 23-029-24-12-0080, 23-029-24-12-0079, and 23-029-24-12-0078

### Figures:

- Figure 1. County Map
- Figure 2. USGS 7.5 Minute Topographical Map
- Figure 3. Project Location Map
- Figure 4. Project Site
- Figure 5. Environmental Resources

### Appendices:

- Appendix A. Proposed Project
- Appendix B. Land Use Plans
- Appendix C. Amendment to the Amended and Reinstated Voluntary Response Action Agreement
- Appendix D. Correspondence
- Appendix E. Shadow Study
- Appendix F. TDMP

## 6. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

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### a. Provide the brief project summary to be published in the EQB Monitor (approximately 50 words).

The proposed mixed-use project would result in the redevelopment of an approximate five and one-half acre site, formerly occupied by Superior Plating, located at University Avenue NE and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE in Minneapolis. This phased development is anticipated to be developed in two

separate phases and would provide at completion up to 750 attached residential units, 75,000 square feet of commercial space and 1,000 off-street parking spaces.

- b. Give a complete description of the proposed project and related new construction, including infrastructure needs. If the project is an expansion, include a description of the existing facility. Emphasize 1) construction and operation methods and features that will cause physical manipulation of the environment or will produce wastes; 2) modifications to existing equipment or industrial processes; 3) significant demolition, removal, or remodeling of existing structures; and 4) timing and duration of construction activities.**

A two-phase, mixed use development is proposed on the former Superior Plating site that would include up to 750 residential units and up to 75,000 square feet of commercial space including but not limited to retail, restaurants, and office space. See Figure 3 for project location. Phase I would encompass the western parcel (Parcel 1) and include low-rise attached residential units, a tower up to 20 stories in height that includes up to 260 dwelling units, 26,000 square feet of commercial space, and approximately 360 parking spaces which would be enclosed within a three level parking structure (one level below ground and two levels above ground). See Appendix A for proposed Phase I plans. Phase II would encompass the eastern parcel (Parcel 2). See Figure 4 for Parcel 1 and Parcel 2 locations. Phase II would be up to 30 stories and would include up to 490 dwelling units and 49,000 square feet of commercial space. Phase I is anticipated to start in Fall of 2015, with a completion date in Fall of 2017. Phase II is anticipated to start in Fall of 2017, with a completion date in Fall of 2019. Currently, the parcel located at 100 5<sup>th</sup> Street NE uses a portion of the Superior Plating site for business operations. There is potential for acquisition of this parcel during Phase II.

*Existing Conditions:*

The proposed project would be located on a designated Superfund Site, which has been partially remediated by the current owner. To date, remediation has consisted of demolition and disposal, along with removal of contaminated soil down to the bedrock in northwestern corner of the site (See Section 12 for details on contamination). The majority of the building structure has been removed on Parcel 1. A portion of the concrete building slab is still in place and would be removed prior to redevelopment of the site. Parcel 2 is primarily covered in impervious surface including a storage building and a small area of overgrown vegetation. See Figure 4 for existing conditions on the project site. As a result of the remediation activities, all wet utilities (water, sanitary, storm sewer) have been or would be removed to the edge of the property boundary. A leachate collection system (LCS) was also installed for collecting and treating contaminated groundwater on the site. For more information on the remediation process and status, see Section 12.

Infrastructure improvements are proposed on the project site to serve the needs of the proposed mixed use development. The single proposed main vehicular access point for the project site is in the location of the previously vacated 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE. The project site is bordered by University Avenue NE (State Highway 47), 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE (County Road 52), 5<sup>th</sup> Street NE, and the Burlington Northern railroad tracks. University Avenue NE is a four-lane, two-way street; 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE is a three-lane, westbound one-way street; and 5<sup>th</sup> Street NE is a

two-lane, two-way street. A one-way service drive from University Avenue is proposed. This service drive would be used for service vehicles, and retail employee parking only.

**c. Project magnitude**

Measure	Magnitude
<b>Total Project Acreage</b>	5.4
<b>Linear Project Length</b>	N/A
<b>Number and Type of Residential Units</b>	Up to 750
<b>Commercial Building Area (square feet)</b>	Up to 75,000
<b>Industrial Building Area (square feet)</b>	0
<b>Institutional Building Area (square feet)</b>	0
<b>Other Uses – specify (square feet)</b>	Up to 1,000 parking stalls on site (parking structures)
<b>Structure Height(s)</b>	Up to 20 stories (up to 240 feet)

**d. Explain the project purpose. If the project will be carried out by a governmental unit, explain the need for the project and identify its beneficiaries.**

The purpose of the project is to redevelop an existing Superfund Site into a mixed use residential and commercial development in Northeast Minneapolis. The subject parcel is contaminated and vacant. Remediation would continue in order to allow for a redevelopment that is consistent with adopted City policies.

**e. Are future stages of this development, including development on any other property, planned or likely to happen?  Yes  No**

**If yes, briefly describe future stages, relationship to present project, timeline, and plans for environmental review.**

The proposed development would occur in two phases (Phase I and Phase II). Phase I would include a mixed use development with up to 260 residential units and 26,000 square feet of commercial development. Phase II, which is anticipated to begin two years after the start of construction for Phase I, would include up to 490 residential units and 49,000 square feet of commercial development. There is potential for the parcel located at 100 5<sup>th</sup> Street NE to be included in Phase II. No additional development is proposed.

**f. Is this project a subsequent stage of an earlier project?  Yes  No**

**If yes, briefly describe the past development, timeline, and past environmental review.**

Not applicable.

**7. COVER TYPES**

**Estimate the acreage of the site with each of the following cover types before and after development.**

Cover Type	Before (acres) <sup>1</sup>	After (acres)
<b>Wetlands</b>	0	0

Cover Type	Before (acres) <sup>1</sup>	After (acres)
Deep Water/Streams	0	0
Wooded/Forest	0	0
Brush/Grassland	0	0
Cropland	0	0
Lawn/Landscaping	0.07	0.31
Impervious Surface	5.37	5.13
Stormwater Pond	0	0
Other (describe)	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.44</b>	<b>5.44</b>

<sup>1</sup> Source: Minnesota Land Cover Classification System (DNR, 2008)

## 8. PERMITS AND APPROVALS REQUIRED

List all known local, state, and federal permits, approvals, certifications, and financial assistance for the project. Include modifications of any existing permits, governmental review of plans, and all direct and indirect forms of public financial assistance including bond guarantees, Tax Increment Financing, and infrastructure. All of these final decisions are prohibited until all appropriate environmental review has been completed. See Minnesota Rules Chapter 4410.3100.

Unit of Government	Type of Application	Status
<b>Federal</b>		
<b>Federal Aviation Administration</b>	Airspace hazard permit (for any structures more than 200 feet above ground level)	To be applied for
<b>State</b>		
<b>Minnesota Department of Health</b>	Water Main Installation Permit	To be applied for
	Drainage Permit	To be applied for
<b>Minnesota Pollution Control Agency</b>	NPDES/SDS Construction Stormwater Permit	To be applied for
	Sanitary Sewer Extension Permit	To be applied for, if needed
	Industrial Groundwater Pump Out Permit	To be applied for, if needed
	Response Action Plan Approval	To be applied for as redevelopment plans are developed
	Storage Tank Registration	To be applied for, if needed
<b>Minnesota Department of Transportation</b>	Utility Permit	To be applied for
	Access Permit	To be applied for
	Encroachment Permit	To be applied for
	Obstruction Permit	To be applied for
<b>Minnesota Department of Natural Resources</b>	Groundwater Appropriation Permit (Temporary or Permanent)	To be applied for, if needed
<b>Regional</b>		

Unit of Government	Type of Application	Status
<b>Metropolitan Council</b>	SAC Determination Request	To be applied for, if needed
	Special Discharge Approval	To be applied for, if needed
	Sanitary Sewer Extension Permit	To be applied for, if needed
<b>Mississippi River Water Management Organization</b>	Stormwater Management Plan Approval	To be applied for
<b>Local</b>		
<b>City of Minneapolis</b>	Building Permits	To be applied for
	Demolition Permit	To be applied for
	Emergency Generator Fuel Storage Permit	To be applied for
	Erosion and Sedimentation Control Plan Approval and Grading Permit	To be applied for
	Stormwater Management Plan Approval	To be applied for
	Approval of Easement Vacation (existing utility easement)	To be applied for, if needed
	Temporary Water Discharge Permit	To be applied for, if needed
	After Hours Work Permit	To be applied for, if needed
	Lane Obstruction Permit	To be applied for, if needed
	Encroachment Permit	To be applied for, if needed
	Utility Repair Permit	To be applied for, if needed
	Sidewalk Construction Permit	To be applied for, if needed
	Testing and Inspection Permit	To be applied for, if needed
	EIS Decision	In process
	Zoning (CUP for a PUD, Site Plan Review, Variances, etc.) and Subdivision (Preliminary and Final Plat)	To be applied for
	Remediation Grant Applications	To be applied for, if needed
	Water Discharge from Dewatering or Storm Water Ponds	To be applied for, if needed
	Well Permit	To be applied for, if needed
	Tank Permit	To be applied for, if needed
Remediation Permits	To be applied for, if needed	
Temporary On-Site Storage of Impacted Soil Approval	To be applied for, if needed	

Unit of Government	Type of Application	Status
	Approval of Impacted Soil Reuse	To be applied for if needed
	Temporary Rock Crushing Permit	To be applied for if needed

**Cumulative potential effects may be considered and addressed in response to individual EAW Items 9-18 or the RGU can address all cumulative potential effects in response to EAW Item 19. If addressing cumulative effects under individual items, make sure to include information requested in EAW Item 19.**

## 9. LAND USE

### a. Describe:

- i. **Existing land use of the site as well as areas adjacent to and near the site, including parks, trails, and prime or unique farmlands.**

Superior Plating, an electroplating industrial facility, was formerly located on the site until spring of 2014 (although operations ceased in December of 2011), when it was demolished and site remediation for soil and groundwater contamination began. According to the *Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*, the existing land use of the project site is industrial, commercial, and vacant land. Surrounding the site are commercial, industrial, and residential (low, medium, and high density) uses. Other residential buildings within two blocks of the project site range in height from 2 stories to over 20 stories in height. A railroad corridor that is used by both freight and commuter rail runs in a trench along the northern boundary of the project site. The Mississippi River and riverfront park land and trails are located two blocks away.

There is no farmland in the project vicinity as this site is within an urban development.

- ii. **Planned land use as identified in comprehensive plans (if available) and any other applicable plan for land use, water, or resource management by a local, regional, state, or federal agency.**

This area of the city is included in two land use plans: the *Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*, which is the citywide comprehensive plan, and the recently adopted *Nicollet Island East Bank Neighborhood Association (NIEBNA) Small Area Plan*. Both of these plans identify the future land use for the project site as mixed use. See Appendix B for Land Use Maps. This land use category allows for mixed use development, including mixed use with residential. Mixed use may include either a mix of retail, office or residential uses within a building or within a district.

The *NIEBNA Small Area Plan* expands the boundaries of the East Hennepin Activity Center to include the project site. Activity Centers are the places that shape Minneapolis' urban identity. Activity Centers support a wide range of commercial, office, and residential uses. They attract residents, workers, and visitors from throughout the city and region. They typically have a busy street life with activity throughout the day

and into the evening. They are heavily oriented towards pedestrians, and maintain a traditional urban form and scale. Activity Centers are also well-served by transit. Housing density in Activity Centers is guided for high density (50-120 du/acre) to very high density (120-200 du/acre), dependent on context.

University Avenue and 4th Street NE are both classified as Community Corridors. Community Corridors support new residential development from low to high density in specified areas, as well as increased housing diversity in neighborhoods. Community Corridors support limited commercial uses that are frequently concentrated in Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.

The following policies and implementation steps from the *Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* apply to the proposal:

Land Use Policy 1.4: Develop and maintain strong and successful commercial and mixed use areas with a wide range of character and functions to serve the needs of current and future users.

Land Use Policy 1.5: Promote growth and encourage overall city vitality by directing new commercial and mixed use development to designated corridors and districts.

Land Use Policy 1.8: Preserve the stability and diversity of the city's neighborhoods while allowing for increased density in order to attract and retain long-term residents and businesses.

1.8.1 Promote a range of housing types and residential densities, with highest density development concentrated in and along appropriate land use features.

Land Use Policy 1.9: Through attention to the mix and intensity of land uses and transit service, the City will support development along Community Corridors that enhances residential livability and pedestrian access.

1.9.1 Support the continued presence of existing small-scale retail sales and commercial services along Community Corridors.

1.9.2 Support new small-scale retail sales and services, commercial services, and mixed uses where Community Corridors intersect with Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.

1.9.3 Discourage uses that diminish the transit and pedestrian oriented character of Community Corridors, such as automobile services and drive-through facilities.

1.9.4 Discourage the conversion of existing residential uses to commercial uses outside of Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.

1.9.5 Encourage the development of low- to medium-density housing on Community Corridors to serve as a transition to surrounding low-density residential areas.

I.9.6 Promote more intensive residential development along Community Corridors near intersections with Neighborhood Commercial Nodes and other locations where it is compatible with existing character.

Land Use Policy I.12: Support Activity Centers by preserving the mix and intensity of land uses and by enhancing the design features that give each center its unique urban character.

I.12.1 Encourage a variety of commercial and residential uses that generate activity all day long and into the evening.

I.12.2 Encourage mixed use buildings, with commercial uses located on the ground floor and secure entrances for residential uses.

I.12.3 Encourage active uses on the ground floor of buildings in Activity Centers.

I.12.4 Discourage uses that diminish the transit and pedestrian character of Activity Centers, such as automobile services, surface parking lots, and drive-through facilities.

I.12.5 Encourage a height of at least two stories for new buildings in Activity Centers, in keeping with neighborhood character.

I.12.6 Encourage the development of high- to very-high density housing within the boundaries of Activity Centers.

I.12.7 Encourage the development of medium- to high-density housing immediately adjacent to Activity Centers to serve as a transition to surrounding residential areas.

I.12.8 Support district parking strategies in Activity Centers, including shared parking facilities with uniform signage, and other strategies.

I.12.9 Encourage architectural design, building massing and site plans to create or improve public and semi-public spaces in Activity Centers.

I.12.10 Encourage developments to incorporate climate sensitive site and building design practices.

The *NIEBNA Small Area Plan* identifies the former Superior Plating Site as a development opportunity site. The *NIEBNA Small Area Plan* envisions redevelopment of the site with high density mixed use housing, retail and commercial uses in tall buildings and with incorporation of green spaces, inviting streetscapes and high architectural design values. The plan includes the following Land Use and Housing Goals:

1. Enhance the urban lifestyle of the neighborhood.
2. Increase the opportunities for additional local shops and small scale retail.
3. Increase the number and diversity of people living in the neighborhood by encouraging a variety of age ranges and income levels.

4. Plan and guide development for mixed use and greater height allowances on the former Superior Plating site and other opportunity sites.

5. Maintain the existing neighborhood fabric and historic characteristics of the neighborhood. The proposed Superior Plating Site Redevelopment would be consistent with the above-listed policies and goals of the City's comprehensive plan and the *NIEBNA Small Area Plan*.

**iii. Zoning, including special districts or overlays such as shoreland, floodplain, wild and scenic rivers, critical area, agricultural preserves, etc.**

*Current Zoning:*

The project site is located in area zoned as C2, Neighborhood Corridor Commercial District; the Superior Plating facility (classified as a Medium Industrial Use) was a lawfully established nonconforming use. The City of Minneapolis describes the C2 District as follows:

“The C2 Neighborhood Corridor Commercial District is established to provide an environment of retail sales and commercial services that are larger in scale than allowed in the C1 District and to allow a broader range of automobile related uses. In addition to commercial uses, residential uses, institutional and public uses, parking facilities, limited production and processing and public services and utilities are allowed.”

*Potential Zoning:*

The *NIEBNA Small Area Plan* recommends that the entire area of the expanded East Hennepin Activity Center be rezoned to C3A Community Activity Center District. The City of Minneapolis defines the C3A district as:

“The C3A Community Activity Center District is established to provide for the development of major urban activity and entertainment centers with neighborhood scale retail sales and services. In addition to entertainment and commercial uses, residential uses, institutional and public uses, parking facilities, limited production and processing and public services and utilities are allowed.”

*Special or Overlay Districts:*

There are no special districts or overlays on the project site. The site is adjacent to the Mississippi River Critical Area Overlay District, the East Hennepin Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District and the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. The *NIEBNA Small Area Plan* recommends that the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District be extended to include this site.

**b. Discuss the project's compatibility with nearby land uses, zoning, and plans listed in Item 9a above, concentrating on implications for environmental effects.**

The proposed Phase I and anticipated Phase II developments are compatible with existing and planned land uses for the area. Both the *Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* and the *NIEBNA Small Area Plan* guide the site for this type of mixed use, high to very high density development proposed, including incorporation of residential towers of 20 stories or greater.

The following table sets forth the maximum development potential under consideration for the site:

**EAW Development Metrics**

	<b>Lot Area</b>	<b>Proposed Gross Floor Area</b>	<b>Proposed Floor Area Ratio</b>	<b>Proposed # of Dwelling Units</b>	<b>Residential Density</b>	<b>Proposed Height</b>
<b>Phase I</b>	124,201 SF 2.85 acres	360,000 SF	2.90	260	91 du/acre	5-17 stories
<b>Phase II</b>	113,270 SF 2.6 acres	679,000 SF	5.99	490	188 du/acre	5-20 stories
<b>Total</b>	237,471 SF 5.45 acres	1,039,000 SF	4.37	750	138 du/acre	5-20 stories

Compliance of the proposed project with both the C2 and C3A District regulations has been evaluated due to the potential for rezoning from the existing C2 District to the C3A District.

*Floor Area Ratio (FAR):*

*C2 District:* The maximum FAR before density bonuses in the C2 District is 1.7. Both Phase I and Phase II are expected to qualify for two 20% FAR density bonuses, one for providing all required parking in a parking garage of at least two levels and a second for mixed commercial and residential buildings where residential uses are located above a ground floor in which at least 50% of the gross floor area (GFA) is devoted to commercial uses. Each 20% bonus increases the allowed FAR by 0.34. With two bonuses, the maximum FAR for a development in the C2 is 2.38. If the development is approved as a Planned Unit Development (PUD), it becomes eligible for a third 20% density bonus (for the purpose of promoting an integrated project that provides additional site amenities), increasing the maximum FAR to 2.72.

*C3A District:* The maximum FAR before density bonuses in the C3A District is 2.7. A 20% FAR density bonus increases the maximum FAR by 0.54. With two bonuses, the maximum FAR for a development in the C3A is 3.78. If the development is approved as a PUD, it becomes eligible for a third 20% density bonus, increasing the maximum FAR to 4.32.

The maximum proposed FAR of 2.90 for Phase I exceeds the maximum allowed in the C2 District. It exceeds the 2.38 FAR allowed for a project with two density bonuses by approximately 25% and the 2.72 FAR allowed in a PUD by approximately 10%. If Phase I is developed at this maximum density in the C2 District, an FAR variance would be required. If Phase I is rezoned, the maximum proposed FAR of 2.90 is below the FAR limits for the C3A District and no variance would be required.

If Phase II is developed as a stand-alone project to the maximum FAR of 5.99 proposed for study in this EAW, it would greatly exceed the maximum FAR for a PUD project in the C2 District. If the Phase II parcel were rezoned to C3A, the proposed FAR would be closer to the maximum

FAR of 4.32 allowed for a PUD in the C3A, but a variance would be required to achieve an FAR of 5.99.

If Phase I and Phase II are joined as a single PUD, either at the initiation of Phase I or later when development approvals for Phase II are sought, and both parcels are rezoned to C3A, the maximum proposed FAR of 4.37 is only slightly greater than the maximum of 4.32 allowed for a PUD project in the C3A District without a variance.

*Height:*

The height limit of both the C2 and C3A Districts is 4 stories/56 feet. A conditional use permit (CUP) for increased height, or approval of a PUD height alternative, would be required for both Phase I and Phase II as proposed.

*Parking:*

The actual parking requirement for each phase would depend upon the actual number of dwelling units and the specific type and size of commercial uses in the project (e.g. retail, restaurant, restaurant with entertainment), however, it is anticipated that the total parking requirement for each phase can be met in on-site parking structures. If needed, some amount of parking variance could be considered reasonable in light of the pedestrian-oriented character of the East Hennepin Activity Center and the proximity of transit services.

*Other:*

The proposed residential, retail and restaurant uses in Phase I are all permitted uses in the existing C2 District. Some other types of uses, such as hotel, are permitted in the C3A but not the C2 District, so rezoning may be required depending on whether a hotel use is sought for either phase.

There is no minimum lot area or minimum lot area per dwelling unit requirement in either the C2 or C3A zoning districts.

The yard requirements are the same in both the C2 and C3A Districts. In general, there is no yard requirement for uses in the commercial districts. However, a 5 to 15-foot interior side or rear yard is required for residential and hotel uses with windows facing these yards.

**c. Identify measures incorporated into the proposed project to mitigate any potential incompatibility as discussed in Item 9b above.**

Although the proposed towers of up to 30 stories greatly exceed the 4-story height limit, they are consistent with the desired redevelopment of this site as depicted in the *NIEBNA Small Area Plan*. Regardless of their consistency, as previously noted a conditional use permit (CUP) for increased height, or approval of a PUD height alternative, would be required for both Phase I and Phase II as proposed and would need to be evaluated by Staff. Context, scale and character, access to light and air, shadowing as well as massing and materiality would factor into Staff's assessment/recommendation as part of the regulatory process. The shadow study included in Appendix E illustrates the shadows that would be created by the proposed residential towers.

Rezoning to C3A may be required or recommended, depending upon the final development plans, including types of uses and FAR.

## 10. GEOLOGY, SOILS, AND TOPOGRAPHY/LAND FORMS

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- a. **Geology – Describe the geology underlying the project area and identify and map any susceptible geologic features such as sinkholes, shallow limestone formations, unconfined/shallow aquifers, or karst conditions. Discuss any limitations of these features for the project and any effects the project could have on these features. Identify any project designs or mitigation measures to address effects to geologic features.**

According to the Geologic Atlas of Hennepin County (1989),<sup>1</sup> bedrock geology of the project site consists of Platteville and Glenwood Formations, fine grained limestone containing thin shale partings near the top and base and underlain by a thin layer of green, sandy shale. Based on previous investigations, the depth to bedrock in the project site is generally less than 15 feet. The surficial geology consists of Middle Terrace deposits (sand, gravelly sand, and loamy sand, overlain by thin deposits of silt, loam, or organic sediment).

No sinkholes, unconfined/shallow aquifers, or karst conditions were identified in the project area.

- b. **Soils and Topography – Describe the soils on the site, giving NRCS (SCS) classifications and descriptions, including limitations of soils. Describe topography, any special site conditions relating to erosion potential, soil stability, or other soil limitations, such as steep slopes or highly permeable soils. Provide estimated volume and acreage of soil excavation and/or grading. Discuss impacts from project activities (distinguish between construction and operational activities) related to soils and topography. Identify measures during and after project construction to address soil limitations including stabilization, soil corrections, or other measures. Erosion/sedimentation control related to stormwater runoff should be addressed in response to Item 11.b.ii.**

Soil in the northwest corner of the project site was excavated to bedrock in Spring of 2014, to remediate contamination associated with the former plating operations on the site. Soil on the remainder of the project site generally consists of fill soil underlain by native deposits of poorly graded sand (SP), silty sand (SM), and clayey sand (SC).

Topography at the project site is generally level; however, the vacated portion of 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE is constructed on an embankment, which, at its highpoint, is about 10 feet higher than the majority of the project area. On Parcel 2 a swale, which is about four feet deep, parallels the vacated 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE. Along the northern boundary of Parcel 2, the grade slopes down about 10 feet toward the adjacent railroad tracks.

During redevelopment, grading and excavation activities would encompass almost the entirety of the project site (approximately 5.4 acres). Site redevelopment plans currently include removal of the majority of the soil to accommodate underground parking, and foundations would likely bear directly on limestone bedrock.

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<sup>1</sup> Available at <http://conservancy.umn.edu/handle/58491>

## II. WATER RESOURCES

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**a. Describe surface water and groundwater features on or near the site below.**

- i. Surface Water – lakes streams, wetlands, intermittent channels, and county/judicial ditches. Include any special designations such as public waters, trout stream/lake, wildlife lakes, migratory waterfowl feeding/resting lake, and outstanding resource value water. Include water quality impairments or special designations listed on the current MPCA 303d Impaired Waters List that are within one mile of the project. Include DNR Public Waters Inventory number(s), if any.**

The Mississippi River is about 0.2 miles from the project site and is a DNR Public Water. No other surface water resources (wetlands, lakes, streams, etc.) are located within or adjacent to the project site. Within one mile of the site, there are two impaired waters: the Mississippi River and Bassett Creek.

- ii. Groundwater – aquifers, springs, and seeps. Include 1) depth to groundwater; 2) if project is within a MDH well protection area; and 3) identification of any onsite and/or nearby wells, including unique numbers and well logs, if available. If there are no wells known on site or nearby, explain the methodology used to determine this.**

The project site is not within a wellhead protection area. However, the project site is within the Twin Cities Army Ammunition Plant (TCAAP) special well construction advisory area.

According to the Minnesota Department of Health County Well Index, there is one abandoned industrial well within the project site (unique number 00232311) and one dewatering well with unknown status at the intersection of 5<sup>th</sup> Street NE and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE (unique number 00441497) (See Figure 5).

The depth to groundwater in this area is approximately 30 to 35 feet.<sup>2</sup> The elevation at the bank of the Mississippi River is 798 feet. The elevation of the project site ranges from 827 to 846 feet.

**b. Describe effects from previous activities on water resources and measures to minimize or mitigate the effects below.**

- i. Wastewater – For each of the following, describe the sources, quantities, and composition of all sanitary, municipal/domestic, and industrial wastewaters projected or treated at the site.**

- 1) If the wastewater discharge is to a publicly owned treatment facility, identify any pretreatment measures and the ability of the facility to handle the added water and waste loadings, including any effects on, or required expansion of, municipal wastewater infrastructure.**

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<sup>2</sup> Barr Engineering. Supplemental Investigation: Superior Plating, Inc., January 1989.

The former Superior Plating building was serviced with the City of Minneapolis's sanitary sewer tunnel within University Avenue. The future project is proposing to connect to either or both sanitary sewer lines located within vacated 4<sup>th</sup> St. NE and also University Ave. NE. The City's sanitary sewer is conveyed from beneath these streets northwest to 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue NE, then southwest to Main Street NE before connecting to the Metropolitan Council's sanitary interceptor MN300. Interceptor MN300 has a current capacity of approximately 75 MGD according to data provided by the Metropolitan Council. With a maximum flow from the proposed project being 212,350 GPD, sanitary interceptor MN300 has excess capacity to accommodate the proposed project. In order to tie into public sanitary sewer lines, permits for work within the right-of-way may be required from any one of the following jurisdictions: Minnesota Department of Transportation, Hennepin County, and the City of Minneapolis.

The property would be served by the publicly owned Metropolitan Council (Met Council) Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant in Saint Paul, MN. The plant currently treats approximately 178 million gallons per day, with a total capacity of up to 314 million gallons per day according to the Metro Council Environmental Services Plant Inflow Summary Report for the period ending 9/30/14. Based on the Twin Cities Met Council Sewer Availability Charge Guidelines, the estimated wastewater from the 750-unit multi-family mixed use complex is anticipated to consist primarily of normal domestic sewage. The maximum development scenario of 750 units and 75,000 square feet of retail is expected to generate approximately 212,350 gallons per day (0.212 million gallons per day). The Metropolitan Council's Metropolitan Wastewater Treatment Plant can treat the volume and composition of wastewater generated by the proposed project without pretreatment or other plant facility improvements.

**2) If the wastewater discharge is to a subsurface sewage treatment system (SSTS), describe the system used, the design flow, and suitability of site conditions for such a system.**

No discharge to subsurface sewage treatment systems (SSTS) is anticipated.

**3) If the wastewater discharge is to surface water, identify the wastewater treatment methods, discharge points, and proposed effluent limitations to mitigation impacts. Discuss any effects to surface or groundwater from wastewater discharges.**

No wastewater discharge to surface waters is anticipated.

- ii. **Stormwater – Describe the quantity and quality of stormwater runoff at the site prior to and post construction. Include the routes and receiving water bodies for runoff from the site (major downstream water bodies as well as the immediate receiving waters). Discuss any environmental effects from stormwater discharges. Describe stormwater pollution prevention plans including temporary and permanent runoff controls and potential BMP site locations to manage or treat stormwater runoff. Identify specific erosion control, sedimentation control, or stabilization measures to address soil limitations during and after project construction.**

The Superior Plating site consists of 5.44 acres of primarily impervious coverage. The project site was initially developed prior to the implementation of regulations to manage stormwater runoff quality and quantity and no apparent stormwater best management practices (BMPs) appear to be located within the site. Demolition and remediation is currently in progress to address existing soil and water contamination issues, and portions of the site have been cleared to the underlying bedrock. Stormwater runoff from the site currently drains into several municipal storm sewer catch basins which connect to the City of Minneapolis's storm sewer system and ultimately drain into the Mississippi River untreated. In addition, the BNSF railroad line located behind the parcel has drainage ditches on each side of the track which discharge to the Mississippi River (making the control of stormwater runoff quality and rate of discharge important elements of the future redevelopment plan).

Post construction quality of stormwater runoff from the project site would be improved by BMPs to meet the treatment requirements of the City for total suspended solids (TSS) removal, as well as MPCA treatment requirements. Stormwater quantity would be controlled such that volume and discharge rates do not exceed existing for the 2-, 10-, and 100-year SCS Type II/24-hour storm events. All proposed BMPs for the project site would occur outside the public right-of-way. Completed conveyance systems and BMPs for the project would be designed according to acceptable industry standards and conform to jurisdictional requirements.

The final design of the site, once determined, would achieve all of the outcomes stated in the above paragraph for stormwater management within the project boundaries and would comply with all stormwater requirements stated within the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, including Chapter 54, which states provisions for water quality and rate control. BMP's have not yet been determined for the project, but may include one or more of the following practices, among others: hydrodynamic separators, media filtration systems, bio-retention basins, underground detention systems, underground infiltration galleries, permeable pavements, and green roofs.

A Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be developed in accordance with the NPDES permit administered by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). The SWPPP would cover temporary measures to prevent pollution during construction (erosion and sediment control as well as controls to minimize spills, leaks, or other discharges of pollutants) and permanent measures to prevent stormwater

pollution after construction. These BMPs may include one or more of the following: silt fencing, inlet sediment filters, sediment traps, grit chambers, temporary ditch checks, rock filter dikes, fiber logs, turf reinforcement mats, temporary seeding, riprap and erosion control blankets for disturbed areas, and seeding or placement of sod or other plant material for final restoration.

Additionally, an Erosion and Sediment Control Plan is required by the City of Minneapolis (Chapter 54 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances) for all land disturbance activities exceeding five thousand square feet or five hundred cubic yards of earth moved. An Erosion Control Plan checklist would be followed by the developer to meet the City Code requirements, minimize drainage problems, soil erosion, and prevent sediment from entering curb and gutter systems and storm sewer inlets.

- iii. **Water Appropriation – Describe if the project proposes to appropriate surface or groundwater (including dewatering). Describe the source, quantity, duration, use, and purpose of the water use and if a DNR water appropriation permit is required. Describe any well abandonment. If connecting to an existing municipal water supply, identify the wells to be used as a water source and any effects on, or required expansion of, municipal water infrastructure. Discuss environmental effects from water appropriation, including an assessment of the water resources available for appropriation. Identify any measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental effects from the water appropriation.**

Permanent dewatering is not expected as a part of this project. A Water Use Appropriations Permit would be obtained if permanent dewatering was determined to be necessary for the final design of the project.

A Water Use Appropriation Permit is required for permanent water appropriations and applies to users withdrawing more than 10,000 gallons of water per day or 1 million gallons per year.

A Temporary Projects General Permit 1997-0005 is required for all temporary water appropriations. To be included under this permit the project must have minimal potential for causing adverse environmental impacts, water appropriations that do not exceed 50 million gallons per year with appropriations completed within one year from start of pumping, and records of monthly water appropriation volumes that must be submitted to the DNR on or before February 15<sup>th</sup> of the year following water use. A City of Minneapolis Temporary Water Discharge Permit would also be obtained for any temporary dewatering for construction.

The applicant would be required to comply with all local permitting requirements necessary for dewatering of groundwater and stormwater on-site during construction as applicable.

- iv. **Surface Waters**

a) **Wetlands – Describe any anticipated physical effects or alterations to wetland features, such as draining, filling, permanent inundation, dredging,**

and vegetative removal. Discuss direct and indirect environmental effects from physical modification of wetlands, including the anticipated effects that any proposed wetland alterations may have to the host watershed. Identify measures to avoid (e.g., available alternatives that were considered), minimize, or mitigate environmental effects to wetlands. Discuss whether any required compensatory wetland mitigation for unavoidable wetland impacts will occur in the same minor or major watershed, and identify those probable locations.

No impacts to wetland features or surface waters were identified within the project; therefore, no impacts are anticipated.

**b) Other surface waters – Describe any anticipated physical effects or alterations to surface water features (lakes, streams, ponds, intermittent channels, county/judicial ditches) such as draining, filling, permanent inundation, dredging, diking, stream diversion, impoundment, aquatic plant removal, and riparian alteration. Discuss direct and indirect environmental effects from physical modification of water features. Identify measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate environmental effects to surface water features, including in-water Best Management Practices that are proposed to avoid or minimize turbidity/sedimentation while physically altering the water features. Discuss how the project will change the number or type of watercraft on any water body, including current and projected watercraft usage.**

No impacts to surface water features are anticipated.

## **12. CONTAMINATION/HAZARDOUS MATERIALS/WASTES**

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- a. Pre-project Site Conditions – Describe existing contamination or potential environmental hazards on or in close proximity to the project site, such as soil or groundwater contamination, abandoned dumps, closed landfills, existing or abandoned storage tanks, and hazardous liquid or gas pipelines. Discuss any potential environmental effects from pre-project site conditions that would be caused or exacerbated by project construction and operation. Identify measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects from existing contamination or potential environmental hazards. Include development of a Contingency Plan or Response Action Plan.**

The project site consists of the majority of two city blocks separated by a vacated roadway. The western block (i.e., Parcel 1) contained a large building, formerly used as an electroplating facility (Superior Plating). The east block (i.e., Parcel 2) contains a storage building for the Superior Plating facility and a surface parking lot. Although not part of the project site, an active automotive service facility is adjacent to Parcel 2 on the southeastern-most corner of the block.

Investigations conducted in 1983 identified releases of hazardous substances to soil and groundwater. Since that time, extensive investigation to evaluate the extent and magnitude of

the releases has been undertaken, the results of which are documented in over 30 environmental reports. Most recently, as the Site was readied for redevelopment, Phase I and Phase II environmental site assessments were conducted on behalf of the Site owner, First and University Investor, LLC (FUI), in 2011 and 2012. A list of the environmental investigations is provided in the MPCA's RAP Implementation Letter, which is included in the attached Amendment to Amended and Restated Voluntary Response Action Agreement (VRAA) (Appendix C).

Primary chemicals of concern on the site include elevated levels of metals, volatile organic compounds (VOCs), polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs), and cyanide. One source of these chemicals was from electroplating activities that occurred on the site between approximately 1956 and 1983. After 1983, facility improvements were thought to control additional releases from the on-going electroplating activities. Other sources included the placement of "junk fill," lead from automotive emissions, and solid demolition wastes from historical structures located on the site. Plating waste has only been identified on Parcel 1.

A Response Action Plan (RAP) was prepared in 2012 and approved by the MPCA. The RAP was subsequently amended, and the amendment was approved by the MPCA in 2013. The amended RAP was implemented on Parcel 1 in 2013 and 2014 during which time the defunct plating operation was decommissioned, the above-grade portions of the building and select portions of the floor slabs demolished, and identified soil with contaminant concentrations in excess of the Residential Soil Reference Values (SRVs) was excavated and disposed of offsite. An area of soil with elevated concentrations of chromium is located along the western sidewall of the excavation on Parcel 1 and was not removed because additional excavation threatened to undermine the adjacent sidewalk and bridge embankment. In areas of Parcel 1, the sites soils were excavated to bedrock. Residual plating waste in the bedrock caused storm water coming in contact with the bedrock to become contaminated. To address the situation, a storm water management plan was developed and is currently being implemented. As part of the management plan, a layer of polyethylene sheeting was placed over the bedrock, and as storm water accumulates in the excavation, the water is removed, tested and properly disposed of.

No cleanup has been conducted on the eastern half of the site (i.e., Parcel 2).

Following review of the RAP Implementation Report for Parcel 1, the MPCA approved the response actions and also issued a Certificate of Completion for Parcel 1. An Environmental Covenant also was executed that places Activity and Use Limitations on the Site. (A copy of the Environmental Covenant is provided as an exhibit to the VRAA and included in Appendix C.). The Environmental Covenant limits disturbance or excavation/removal of soil exposed in the western sidewall of Parcel 1, of soil on Parcel 2 and bedrock in the storm water management area in the northwest corner of Parcel 1 except with MPCA approval. The Environmental Covenant also obligates the owner to ongoing operation and maintenance of the groundwater pump and treat system, the storm water management system, and the Leachate Control System (LCS).

Groundwater within the limestone bedrock is also impacted with chlorinated solvents and metals from the previous plating operations, and a groundwater treatment system located across 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE to the south controls migration of the contaminant plume that extends

offsite to the southeast. The current property owner, First and University Investor, LLC, would operate the pump-and-treat system for at least two years and up to five years after impacted soils with contaminant concentrations above Tier I SRVs are excavated from the western block of the site. If after five years the MPCA determines operation of the pump-and-treat system is necessary, the MPCA would take over operation of the system.

An interceptor collection trench (part of the LCS) is also located offsite along the railroad corridor at the southwest corner of the project site. The interceptor trench collects contaminated perched and/or shallow groundwater; the water is then treated and discharged to the sanitary sewer. Operation of the system is being transitioned to the MPCA.

Recent investigations conducted at the site on behalf of Lennar have identified residual impacts in excess of the Residential SRVs on Parcel 1. In addition, contaminated soil remains on Parcel 2 where no cleanup has been conducted to date. To appropriately manage impacted soil (and possibly bedrock or remaining floor slabs) that would be excavated for redevelopment, a MPCA-approved Response Action Plan would be implemented to appropriately manage impacted material that are encountered. As required by the Environmental Covenant, vapor mitigation would be incorporated into the project design. Local permits may be required for the implementation of the RAP for both construction activities and the proposed structures as applicable.

- b. Project Related Generation/Storage of Solid Wastes – Describe solid wastes generated/stored during construction and/or operation of the project. Indicate method of disposal. Discuss potential environmental effects from solid waste handling, storage, and disposal. Identify measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects from the generation/storage of solid waste including source reduction and recycling.**

Construction of the development would generate construction-related waste materials such as wood, packaging, excess materials, and other wastes, which would either be recycled or disposed of in the proper facilities. The developer is committed to implementing best practices to minimize waste and maximize recycling and comply with City regulations. The refuse and recycling collection areas have not been designed for the project. Solid waste generated from the completed project would consist of mixed municipal/residential waste materials. A source recycle/separation plan would be implemented in accordance with City requirements. Mixed municipal solid waste not recycled would be either incinerated at the Hennepin County Energy Recovery Center or hauled to a sanitary landfill.

- c. Project Related Use/Storage of Hazardous Materials – Describe chemicals/hazardous materials used/stored during construction and/or operation of the project including method of storage. Indicate the number, location, and size of any above or below ground tanks to store petroleum or other materials. Discuss potential environmental effects from accidental spills or releases of hazardous materials. Identify measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects from the use/storage of chemicals/hazardous materials including source reduction and recycling. Include development of a spill prevention plan.**

Any hazardous waste materials used/stored during construction and/or operation of the proposed project shall be disposed of in the manner specified by local or state regulation or by the manufacturer. Whenever possible, vehicle refueling and maintenance should not be performed on the construction site. However, any vehicle refueling or maintenance that must take place on the construction site must have proper spill prevention controls in place prior to commencing work. The Contractor's personnel shall be instructed in these practices, and the Contractor's Erosion Control Supervisor shall be responsible for seeing that these practices are followed.

- d. Project Related Generation/Storage of Hazardous Wastes – Describe hazardous wastes generated/stored during construction and/or operation of the project. Indicate method of disposal. Discuss potential environmental effects from hazardous waste handling, storage, and disposal. Identify measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects from the generation/storage of hazardous wastes including source reduction and recycling.**

This project would be subject to the requirements of the General Permit for Authorization to Discharge Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity, Permit No. MN RI00001. This permit requires the preparation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The General Permit requires that building materials, pesticides, herbicides, insecticides, and fertilizers that could negatively impact water quality shall be kept in sealed containers and be covered in order to minimize exposure to storm water. Additionally, hazardous materials, including but not limited to petroleum products, solvents, and cleaners are to be properly stored in seal containers and secondary containment provided as required by Minnesota Administrative Rules (Chapter 7045). Waste generated by construction is to be contained in water tight facilities. The waste generated is to be kept from direct contact with the soil or stormwater runoff. All waste generated onsite is to be properly disposed of per MPCA rules.

As part of the RAP implementation activities on Parcel I, contaminated soil exposed in the western sidewall, which is characteristically hazardous for chromium, would be excavated and either treated onsite to render the material nonhazardous and then disposed of offsite as industrial waste or transported offsite as hazardous waste for disposal. Management of this soil would be done in accordance with MPCA approvals.

The project proposes up to 75,000 gross square feet of commercial space. The specific tenants of this space have not been identified; however, future tenants would be held to the rules and regulations of the MPCA.

### **13. FISH, WILDLIFE, PLANT COMMUNITIES, AND SENSITIVE ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES (RARE FEATURES)**

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- a. Describe fish and wildlife resources as well as habitats and vegetation on or near the site.**

There are no fish and wildlife resources and habitats on or near the project site. The majority of the site was previously developed with buildings and pavement, and some soil has been removed down to the bedrock due to contamination. Approximately 2 percent of the overall project site

was covered in overgrown vegetation. The project site is adjacent and west of the Mississippi River Critical Area and the Mississippi River. Neither would be impacted as a result of this project.

- b. Describe rare features such as state-listed (endangered, threatened, or special concern) species, native plant communities, Minnesota County Biological Survey Sites of Biodiversity Significance, and other sensitive ecological resources on or within close proximity to the site. Provide the license agreement number (LA-718) and/or correspondence number (ERDB) from which the data were obtained, and attach the Natural Heritage letter from the DNR. Indicate if any additional habitat or species survey work has been conducted within the site and describe results.**

A review of the DNR Natural Heritage Inventory System was conducted (license agreement 718) for the project site and an area within a radius of approximately one mile of the project site. The database includes the known occurrences of any federal or state endangered, threatened, or special concern species. The review identified three species and a bat colony that may be found near this area.

- Black sandshell (*Ligumia recta*): Federal status – none; State status – special concern

The black sandshell is a mussel species known to occur in portions of the Mississippi River, living in the sand or gravel bottom areas of the river. The project site would not have any direct effect on the Mississippi River or this mussel species.<sup>3</sup>

- Peregrine falcons (*Falco peregrinus*): Federal status – none; State status – special concern

Peregrine falcons were reintroduced to Minnesota and the Minneapolis metro area in the early 1980s and have been successful in establishing a local self-sustaining population. Population recovery has been extensive enough that in 1996 the state status of this species was changed from endangered to threatened, and in 2013 the state status changed to special concern. In 1999, the peregrine falcon was removed from the federal endangered species list. Peregrine falcons are known to nest within nesting boxes located on skyscrapers in downtown Minneapolis. Peregrine falcons feed mainly on birds, ranging from warblers to ducks, which are caught and killed in mid-air. In urban areas, pigeons provide an abundant food source. The construction of the project site would not have an impact on peregrine nesting or affect their ability to survive within the downtown area. Therefore, no impact is anticipated on the peregrine falcon population in the city of Minneapolis.<sup>4</sup>

- Tricolored bats (*Perimyotis subflavus*): Federal status – none; State status – special concern

Tricolored bats, also known as the eastern pipistrelle, are known to colonize along the banks and caves of the Mississippi River. These bats are small and tend to colonize in small numbers. Tricolored bats forage early in the evening and may catch up to half their body weight in insects each hour. Tricolored bats eat moths, flies, beetles, and ants. They forage mainly over water and tend to avoid deep woods or open fields. The project area would not

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/rsg/profile.html?action=elementDetail&selectedElement=IMBIV26020>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/rsg/profile.html?action=elementDetail&selectedElement=ABNKD06070>

impact the Mississippi River (waterbody adjacent to the colonies); therefore, no impact is anticipated.<sup>5</sup>

- c. **Discuss how the identified fish, wildlife, plant communities, rare features, and ecosystems may be affected by the project. Include a discussion on introduction and spread of invasive species from the project construction and operation. Separately discuss effects to known threatened and endangered species.**

No impacts to fish, wildlife, plant communities, rare features, or ecosystems are anticipated.

Invasive species are plants and animals that are not native to an area and are capable of causing harm. Certain measures can be taken to limit the likelihood of introducing invasive species, such as securing local materials to avoid the long range movement of goods or washing vehicles prior to accessing the project site. Additionally, landscape design would include native, non-invasive plants.

- d. **Identify measures that will be taken to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects to fish, wildlife, plant communities, and sensitive ecological resources.**

No adverse effects to fish, wildlife, plant communities, and sensitive ecological resources are anticipated as a result of redevelopment of this site. The building exteriors would be steel structures with pre-cast panels, glass, metal mullions, and decorative stone. Glass surfaces would contribute to up to seventy-five percent of the building surface area. Due to the proposed uses of the buildings (residential, retail, restaurant, etc.), glass surfaces would be separated by metal mullions, and precast sections. This would minimize the potential for bird/window collisions. It is anticipated that the exterior building lighting would meet LEED goals, limiting night lighting and consequential impacts to migrating birds. The towers on Parcels 1 and 2 may also provide nest site opportunities for peregrine falcons.

#### **14. HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

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**Describe any historic structures, archeological sites, and/or traditional cultural properties on or in close proximity to the site. Include 1) historic designations; 2) known artifact areas; and 3) architectural features. Attach letter received from the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). Discuss any anticipated effects to historic properties during project construction and operation. Identify measures that will be taken to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects to historic properties.**

A SHPO database review was completed for the former Superior Plating site and correspondence is included in Appendix D. The results of the SHPO database search can be obtained upon request.

The building that was previously on the Superior Plating site was determined to be a historic resource by the City of Minneapolis in a letter dated February 11, 2013, and was identified on the SHPO database search. The current land owner obtained a demolition permit from the City of Minneapolis and City of Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) on July 19, 2013 (see Appendix D). Required mitigation included the following:

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<sup>5</sup> <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/rsg/profile.html?action=elementDetail&selectedElement=AMACC03020>

- A photographic recordation (prior to demolition) of the property was to be submitted to the HPC in accordance with the guidelines of the Minnesota Historic Property Record
- Any future redevelopment of the site must incorporate an interpretative element that provides the history of the building and surrounding area

Other properties within the same quarter section were identified on the SHPO database search as this site is adjacent to, but not within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District (See Figure 5). The adjacent property located at 100 5<sup>th</sup> Street NE (Anthony Falls Auto Center), adjacent to Parcel 2 located in the southeastern corner of the block was also identified on the SHPO database search (Inventory Number HE-MPC-2229). The SHPO records did not identify this property as being included in a report identifying eligibility. Currently, no additional detailed information was obtained from SHPO regarding this adjacent property. As previously noted, it is possible that the subject parcel could potentially be acquired and incorporated into the second phase of development slated for the eastern half of the site. Demolition of the building would potentially require review by the City's Heritage Preservation Commission should the building be deemed an historic resource.

The old 4<sup>th</sup> Street bridge abutment is located on the project site. This bridge abutment was not identified within the SHPO records nor listed with the City of Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Office; therefore, no additional coordination regarding the bridge abutment is needed at this time.

## 15. VISUAL

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**Describe any scenic views or vistas on or near the project site. Describe any project related visual effects such as vapor plumes or glare from intense lights. Discuss the potential visual effects from the project. Identify any measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate visual effects.**

The proposed development includes up to two 20-story tower structures (one for Phase I and one for Phase II), which are taller than the immediately adjacent buildings. The buildings along the Mississippi Riverfront appear to be approximately 18 stories. The buildings directly adjacent to the proposed development site consist of low rise residential and single story commercial properties. However, the proposed development is consistent with the mixed use development identified for this area in the *NIEBNA Small Area Plan*.

The shadow study included in Appendix E illustrates the shadows that would be created by the proposed development. The shadowing of this proposed development would be similar to other tower structures in the vicinity.

The existing views from the project site include the adjacent railroad and residential and commercial buildings. The Mississippi River and riverfront development is not currently visible from the project site but would be visible from the proposed towers.

As previously noted, a conditional use permit (CUP) for increased height, or approval of a PUD height alternative, would be required for both Phase I and Phase II as proposed and would need to be evaluated by Staff. Context, scale and character, access to light and air, shadowing as well as massing and materiality would factor into Staff's assessment/recommendation as part of the regulatory process.

The exterior of the buildings would be approximately seventy-five percent glass and twenty-five percent stone. The proposed materials of stone with glass windows would provide consistent visual connection to the surrounding area, and would meet the design guidelines identified in the *NIEBNA Small Area Plan*.

## 16. AIR

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- a. Stationary Source Emissions – Describe the type, sources, quantities, and compositions of any emissions from stationary sources such as boilers or exhaust stacks. Include any hazardous air pollutants, criteria pollutants, and any greenhouse gases. Discuss effects to air quality including any sensitive receptors, human health, or applicable regulatory criteria. Include a discussion of any methods used assess the project’s effect on air quality and the results of that assessment. Identify pollution control equipment and other measures that will be taken to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects from stationary source emissions.**

No stationary source emissions are anticipated; therefore, no mitigation is required. The heating and cooling systems for the development have not been designed. No significant impacts are anticipated from the typical residential/commercial systems that would provide heating and cooling for the multifamily residential and the commercial uses proposed as part of the development.

- b. Vehicle Emissions – Describe the effect of the project’s traffic generation on air emissions. Discuss the project’s vehicle-related emissions effect on air quality. Identify measures (e.g., traffic operational improvements, diesel idling minimization plan) that will be taken to minimize or mitigate vehicle-related emissions.**

Typical of most developments, the proposed project would generate air pollution as a result of increased motor vehicle activity. Motor vehicles emit a variety of air pollutants including carbon monoxide (CO), hydrocarbons, nitrogen oxides, and particulates. The primary pollutant of concern is CO, which is a byproduct of the combustion process of motor vehicles. CO concentrations are highest where vehicles idle for extended periods of time. For this reason, CO concentrations are generally highest in the vicinity of signalized intersections where vehicles are delayed and emitting CO. Generally, concentrations approaching state air quality standards are found within about 100 feet of a roadway source. Further from the road, the CO in the air is dispersed by the wind such that concentrations rapidly decrease.

The Indirect Source Permit (ISP) rule 7023.9010 was terminated in 2001; therefore, an ISP is not required for the proposed development. A hot spot air quality screening was conducted and is described below.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has approved a screening method to determine which intersections need analysis for potential hot spot air quality impacts. The screening analysis consists of two criteria. If either criterion is met, then an intersection analysis would be required.

The first criterion is to determine whether the total daily approach volume of the project site exceeds 79,400 AADT. If it does, then an analysis would be required. The approach volumes at

all of the signalized intersections near the project site are below approximately 20,000 AADT, well below the threshold of 79,400. Therefore, the first criterion is not met.

The second criterion compares the project site to the locations of 10 intersections that the MPCA has identified as having the highest volumes in the metro area. If any of these 10 intersections were affected by the proposed project then analysis would be required. The nearest of these intersections is 3.5 miles away, at the intersection of Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street in Minneapolis, and would not be impacted by the development; therefore, the second criterion is not met. As a result, no hot spot analysis is needed, and no measurable change in air quality is anticipated as a result of the project.

Local regulations exist for vehicle idling. Hook-ups would be installed for commercial vehicles that allow for the shutting off of truck engines and auxiliary equipment during deliveries. No additional vehicle-related air quality mitigation is required.

- c. Dust and Odors – Describe sources, characteristics, duration, quantities, and intensity of dust and odors generated during project construction and operation. (Fugitive dust may be discussed under Item 16a). Discuss the effect of dust and odors in the vicinity of the project including nearby sensitive receptors and quality of life. Identify measures that will be taken to minimize or mitigate the effects of dust and odors.**

*Odors:* The construction and occupancy of the proposed project is not expected to generate objectionable odors.

*Construction Dust:* During construction, contractors would follow best management practices to reduce dust emissions.

*Fugitive Dust Emissions after Occupancy:* Once occupied, the project is not expected to generate fugitive dust emissions.

## 17. NOISE

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**Describe sources, characteristics, duration, quantities, and intensity of noise generated during project construction and operation. Discuss the effect of noise in the vicinity of the project including 1) existing noise levels/sources in the area; 2) nearby sensitive receptors; 3) conformance to state noise standards; and 4) quality of life. Identify measures that will be taken to minimize or mitigate the effects of noise.**

*Existing Noise:* The project site is located in an urban area surrounded by a state highway, county roads, and the BNSF railroad.

*Construction Noise:* The Minneapolis Code of Ordinances regulates both the hours of operation for construction equipment and allowable noise levels. Construction of the project would adhere to requirements identified in Minneapolis Code of Ordinance, Chapter 59.30 which states “operation of construction equipment without a permit is allowed only on Monday through Friday from 7.00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., not including federal holidays. A permit would be obtained from the City for work outside these hours as applicable.

*Operational Noise:* The Minneapolis Code of Ordinances and the MPCA regulate mechanical noise associated with building operation. The occupancy of the proposed project would comply with these requirements.

Building design would incorporate noise reduction technologies in interior spaces as a result of existing local traffic and BNSF rail operations adjacent to the project site.

## 18. TRANSPORTATION

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- a. **Describe traffic-related aspects of project construction and operation. Include 1) existing and proposed additional parking spaces; 2) estimated total average daily traffic generated; 3) estimated maximum peak hour traffic generated and time of occurrence; 4) source of trip generation rates used in the estimates; and 5) availability of transit and/or other alternative transportation modes.**

Currently, there is no public parking on the site. There are 19 on-street parking stalls available adjacent to the site on 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE and 15 stalls available on 5<sup>th</sup> Street NE. The developer is proposing to provide sufficient off-street parking to meet the minimum parking requirements of the City of Minneapolis for the proposed maximum development, depending upon the type of commercial uses on site (e.g. retail, restaurant, restaurant with entertainment).

Trip generation estimates for the proposed residential and retail components of the development were calculated using the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) *Trip Generation Manual*, Ninth Edition. The proposed site is expected to generate an estimated 7,995 daily trips, including 520 new trips (305 entering, 215 exiting) during the weekday evening peak hour between 4:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m.

The site is well situated to promote the use of alternative modes of transportation. Many of the streets surrounding the development site have dedicated bicycle lanes, and multiple Nice Ride stations are located near the project site. The site is directly adjacent to a Pedestrian-Oriented Overlay District, and transit service in the project area is widely available. Three Metro Transit bus routes stop adjacent to the site, while three additional routes stop one block away and five additional routes stop two blocks away.

- b. **Discuss the effect on traffic congestion on affected roads and describe any traffic improvements necessary. The analysis must discuss the project's impact on the regional transportation system. *If the peak hour traffic generated exceeds 250 vehicles or the total daily trips exceeds 2,500, a traffic impact study must be prepared as part of the EAW. Use the format and procedures described in the Minnesota Department of Transportation's Access Management Manual, Chapter 5 (available at: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/accessmanagement/resources.html>) or a similar local guidance.***

A traffic impact analysis was completed for the intersections of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE and 5<sup>th</sup> Street NE, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE and 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE, and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE and University Avenue NE. The full traffic impact analysis for the proposed development is provided in Appendix F. As part of the development of the site, two geometric and signal improvements are recommended to maintain acceptable operations at the intersection of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE and 4<sup>th</sup> Street NE:

- Dual right turn lanes departing the site at 1st Avenue NE and 4th Street NE, converting the taper for the northbound approach to a through lane
- Additional signal heads on the northbound and southbound approaches, corresponding to the lane geometry modifications.

The project would not have any significant impacts on existing traffic network with the implementation of these modifications.

**c. Identify measures that will be taken to minimize or mitigate project related transportation effects.**

In addition to the geometric and signal modifications necessary to allow access to and from the site, the following improvements should be implemented at the intersection of 1st Avenue NE and 4th Street NE to minimize project-related transportation impacts:

- Restripe the pedestrian crossing on the southbound approach from the site.
- Restrict right-turn-on-red from the site to minimize conflicts with the northbound left turning movement.
- Restrict left-turn-on-red on the northbound approach to minimize conflicts with southbound site traffic.
- Update the offset at the intersection of 1st Avenue NE and 4th Street NE to accommodate the revised phasing.

With the recommended improvements, traffic operations under the Future Year (2020) Full-Build conditions are expected to operate acceptably. The mitigations would also minimize the potential for vehicle spillback into upstream intersections.

## **19. CUMULATIVE POTENTIAL EFFECTS**

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**Note: Preparers can leave this item blank if cumulative potential effects are addressed under the applicable EAW Items.**

**a. Describe the geographic scales and timeframes of the project related environmental effects that could combine with other environmental effects resulting in cumulative potential effects.**

This EAW describes the potential redevelopment of the former Superior Plating site located at University Avenue NE and 1st Avenue NE in Minneapolis. While no specific adjacent development projects are known at this time, redevelopment opportunities do exist within close proximity to the site and within the broader vicinity despite the fact that the area is a built-out urban environment. The proposed development was anticipated and implements plans and policies adopted by the City. The proposed project is not expected to have any adverse impacts. Due to the proposed urban characteristics and for the somewhat restricted opportunities for new development in this area, no cumulative potential impacts of this development are anticipated.

- b. Describe any reasonably foreseeable future projects (for which a basis of expectation has been laid) that may interact with environmental effects of the proposed project within the geographic scales and timeframes identified above.**

*Nicollet-Central Modern Streetcar Stations:*

The Locally Preferred Alternative for the Nicollet-Central Modern Streetcar project includes stations in the vicinity of the Superior Plating Redevelopment site. Stations would be located in a parking lane, would be approximately 80 feet long, and may be located at:

- 1st Avenue NE and 2nd Street NE
- 1st Avenue NE and University Ave
- Hennepin Avenue and 2nd Street NE
- Hennepin Avenue and University Avenue
- 5th Street NE and Hennepin Avenue

The streetcar station located at 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and University Avenue would be located within existing right-of-way; therefore, no impacts to the project site are anticipated.

- c. Discuss the nature of the cumulative potential effects and summarize any other available information relevant to determining whether there is potential for significant environmental effects due to these cumulative effects.**

There are no other major development projects that have been identified within the project area.

The property adjacent to parcel 2 (St. Anthony Falls Auto Center) is roughly 11,000 sf in size. There are no known development plans for this parcel; however it is expected that it could be acquired, incorporated and redeveloped as a part of the second phase of the Superior Plating Redevelopment project. It is expected that the adjacent parcel would be held to the same regulatory approvals and reviews as the proposed development and therefore would not pose any cumulative impact to those identified for this project (as previously noted, it is possible that an HPC review may be required should the subject building be proposed for demolition), as they would be mitigated via the review process.

Environmental Contamination:

A Response Action Plan (RAP) was prepared in 2012 and approved by the MPCA. The RAP was subsequently amended, and the amendment was approved by the MPCA in 2013. The amended RAP was implemented on Parcel 1 in 2013 and 2014 during which time the defunct plating operation was decommissioned, the above-grade portions of the building and select portions of the floor slabs demolished, and identified soil with contaminant concentrations in excess of the Residential Soil Reference Values (SRVs) was excavated and disposed of offsite. In areas of Parcel 1, the sites soils were excavated to bedrock. As part of the management plan, a layer of polyethylene sheeting was placed over the bedrock, and as storm water accumulates in the excavation, the water is removed, tested and properly disposed of.

Recent investigations conducted at the site on behalf of Lennar have identified residual impacts in excess of the Residential SRVs on Parcel 1. In addition, contaminated soil remains on Parcel 2

where no cleanup has been conducted to date. To appropriately manage impacted soil (and possibly bedrock or remaining floor slabs) that would be excavated for redevelopment, a MPCA-approved Response Action Plan would be implemented to appropriately manage impacted material that are encountered.

Traffic Impacts:

As part of the development of the site, two geometric and signal improvements are recommended to maintain acceptable operations at the intersection of 1st Avenue NE and 4th Street NE. The project would not have any significant cumulative effects on existing traffic network with the implementation of these modifications.

## **20. OTHER POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

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**If the project may cause any additional environmental effects not addressed by Items 1 to 19, describe the effects here, discuss the how the environment will be affected, and identify measures that will be taken to minimize and mitigate these effects.**

All known potentially adverse environmental effects are addressed in the preceding sections. The MPCA RAP and a Site Contingency Plan for the development would address any unknown but foreseeable environmental hazards on the site.

## RGU CERTIFICATION

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The Environmental Quality Board will only accept **SIGNED** Environmental Assessment Worksheets for public notice in the EQB Monitor.

**I hereby certify that:**

- The information contained in this document is accurate and complete to the best of knowledge.
- The EAW describes the complete project; there are no other projects, stages, or components other than those described in this document, which are related to the project as connected actions or phased actions, as defined at Minnesota Rules, parts 4410.0200, subparts 9c and 60, respectively.
- Copies of this EAW are being sent to the entire EQB distribution list.

Signature

Becca Farrar-Hughes

Date

2/23/15

Title

Becca Farrar- Hughes, Senior City Planner