



**DOWNTOWN  
MINNEAPOLIS  
NEIGHBORHOOD  
ASSOCIATION**

**40 S. 7<sup>th</sup> Street, STE 212 PMB 172  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402  
Phone: (612) 659-1279  
Online: [www.thedmna.org](http://www.thedmna.org)**

March 8, 2018

Aaron Hanauer, Principal City Planner  
City of Minneapolis CPED  
250 South 4th Street, Room 300  
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Re: Thrivent Corporate Headquarters Project

Dear Aaron:

I am writing to you on behalf of the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association regarding Thrivent's plans to build a new corporate headquarters on an existing surface parking that they currently own located adjacent to their existing headquarters building. Representatives from ESG Architects and Thrivent attended the DMNA Land Use Committee on March 6, and gave a presentation on their proposal. They explained that the new building would be located on the north half of the block bounded by 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue on the east, Portland Avenue on the west, 6<sup>th</sup> Street on the north and 7<sup>th</sup> Street on the south.

HGA Architect Bill Blanski and Kirsten Sprecht, Thrivent's Vice President of Real Estate Development, guided the Land Use Committee members through the site plan. Sprecht stated that there is a strong desire by Thrivent to make sure this project embraces the surrounding neighborhood and serves as a focal point for the East Town business district and a gateway into the core of downtown. Blanski highlighted the following aspects of the project:

- The corner of Portland Avenue and 6<sup>th</sup> Street features a public plaza or park. This space would offer outdoor seating and public art, including the possibility of a larger, distinctive sculpture. A coffee shop and grab-and-go cafe would connect to the plaza and would be open to the public.
- In addition to the coffee shop / café, a chapel and meditation room, similar to those in Thrivent's current offices, would be located on the first floor.
- A company art gallery as well as a branch of the Thrivent Federal Credit Union would be located on the skyway level, easily accessible to the public.
- A "central court drive," or "woonerf," would run through the center of the block and allow car entry to the two levels of underground parking as well as pedestrian traffic.
- Skyways would connect the headquarters to development in the southern half of the block, a proposed residential project to the west and HCMC to the east.

- Thrivent is in discussions with Metro Transit about the possibility of integrating nearby bus stops into the project.

After hearing the presentation and asking a few questions about the project, the DMNA Land Use Committee recommended providing a letter of support for the current concept plan for Thrivent's new corporate headquarters. The committee; however, did suggest softening the blank wall along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. They appreciate that the overall site plan does a very nice job with the public realm space. However, they would like to see the Park and Portland Avenue Vision emulated along 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue by possibly adding windows to the façade of the building or by featuring a piece of public art.

If you have any questions regarding this letter of support, please feel free to contact me at [christie@thedmna.org](mailto:christie@thedmna.org), or 320-583-4573.

Kind regards,

Christie Rock Hantge  
DMNA Neighborhood Coordinator

CC: Kirsten Sprecht, Thrivent  
Council Member Steve Fletcher  
Joe Tamburino, DMNA Board Chair  
Kevin Frazell, DMNA Land Use Committee Chair