

[To be typed on the letterhead of Shanghai Wholesale, LLC.]

April 19, 2022

Councilmember Jason Chavez
Minneapolis City Council
City Hall
350 S. Fifth St., Room 307
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Re: Minneapolis Roof Depot Project

Dear Councilmember Chavez:

I am the owner of Shanghai Wholesale, LLC. Shanghai Wholesale was established in 2006 as a wholesale food distribution devoted to supplying food items that hold significance for the many different cultures in our community. As a first-generation immigrant woman from China, my dream has been to help my neighbors find comfort in their food heritage. My desire was to create a store where my neighbors and family members can find familiar flavors. Today, Shanghai Wholesales allows over 100,000 individuals to gain access to food items missing from other retail shelves in their communities.

Shanghai Wholesale has become a household name for providing Saint Paul and Twin City residents with truckloads of fresh food items, ranging from fruits and vegetables to the varieties of ethnic items for its minority population. Shanghai Wholesale is the largest multicultural retail operation in the Twin Cities.

The Company distributes food and food products daily to approximately 2,000 customers located in the Twin Cities and beyond. These customers include restaurants and bars, supermarkets, grocery stores and even religious communities such as the Hutterite colonies in Minnesota, South Dakotan and North Dakota.

The majority of the Company's customers are family owned restaurants, supermarkets and grocery stores. These customers are predominantly Chinese, Hmong, Somalian, Ethiopian, Vietnamese, Thai, Hispanic and typically own just one to three stores or restaurants. They are underserved by the large food distributors that control most of the wholesale food distribution market. These distributors often do not offer the food products needed by these ethnic businesses or may not be able to scale quantities or distribution services to the size and needs of these smaller, yet vitally important, businesses. Therefore, the success of these businesses are dependent on the ability of Shanghai Wholesale to provide them with the commodities they need.

I have been working with the East Phillips Neighborhood Institute (“EPNI”) with respect to the redevelopment of the Roof Depot site. I strongly believe this is an important project for the City and the East Phillips community to develop. The project represents an excellent opportunity for the City to turn a chronically troubled site into a vibrant business and community center for the East Phillips neighborhood.

EPNI estimates the project will need private investors to contribute a total of approximately \$6,000,000 in equity for the project to develop as planned. This is to advise you that I have expressed to EPNI my strong interest in becoming one of the lead investors in the project. While we clearly have significant work to complete with respect to developing the project’s financial proforma, I am committed to participating in that effort, both as an investor and as potential tenant of the development.

I ask that you take this strong expression of interest into consideration as you work with the other City Council members in finalizing this opportunity for the East Phillips Neighborhood and the citizens of Minneapolis.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions or if I can provide additional information.

Sincerely,