



Friends of  
**Downtown  
Northfield**

Friends of Downtown Northfield  
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## **Letter of Support – S.F. 0768**

### **Catalyzing Underutilized Buildings Across Minnesota**

Tuesday, March 18, 2025

Chair Rest and members of the Senate Taxes Committee,

The Friends of Downtown Northfield is a Mainstreet America accredited organization that works to strengthen and sustain our vibrant Division Street downtown area. Our board regularly receives requests for assistance (funding) for ‘mom-and-pop’ landlords who are working to counter generations of missed maintenance cycles, to keep historic buildings operational and utilized. This is expensive and difficult work.

While Northfield has a large demand for downtown office spaces and is therefore not the most typical case for this CUB tax credit, we see many upper floors remaining vacant due to difficulty bringing buildings up to contemporary code. Several storefronts are vacant because of the high costs of lending that owners took on to make necessary renovations, which they now must pass on to lease holders. Mixed use buildings, incrementally developed over 40 years in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, are why our downtown area is so sought after for office, commercial, and living spaces. People like living where they work, shop, walk, and gather. The market’s solutions are out of scale developments that offer little affordable housing and larger footprints than our lots can provide; these proposals do not cash flow or meet Northfield’s needs. CUB is an opportunity to encourage developers to take on creative projects, bringing the best parts of our historic downtown (beautiful mixed-use buildings) into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Please consider this letter of support in your upcoming discussions regarding SF 0768. This is a small business, affordable housing, historic preservation, pro-density, environmentally conscious, common-sense solution to a marketplace failure.

Sincerely,

Emery John

Acting Director of the Friends of Downtown Northfield