

From: City of Minneapolis Community Environmental Advisory Commission
To: Developer of the Downtown Consolidated Office Building; City of Minneapolis, Property Services Division; City of Minneapolis, Council Members
Date: July 11, 2018

We are writing to urge you to further consider several sustainability focused aspects of the new office building in downtown.

Organics and recycling collection points

According to data published by Hennepin County Public Works, nearly two-thirds of the waste generated by businesses and non-profits is recyclable. There is a significant opportunity in the Downtown Campus Building to collect recyclables, including organics, and curb trash. Employees need to see that their building management prioritizes responsible waste disposal so that they understand the importance of their role in protecting the environment, the City's commitment to its waste reduction goals, and ultimately feel responsible for the program's success.

In the Property Services' presentation to CEAC on May 2, there was mention that the Downtown Campus Building would provide two recycling stations on each floor of the building, covering roughly 100 employees per station. We feel that is not an adequate implementation to encourage employees to dispose of their recyclables responsibly. We agree that break rooms and kitchenettes are an excellent place for waste stations. Often food is prepped or thrown away in these areas, so having stations in the kitchenettes creates an opportunity to substantially curb food waste.

However, in addition to these spaces, there are a variety of other common areas where people create food and recyclable waste, such as private workspaces and near printers. We would like you to consider placing additional recycling stations in the following high traffic areas: mailrooms, lobbies, bathrooms, sitting areas, and stairwells. We recommend having recycling near cubicle spaces and printers to encourage proper waste disposal, following the Hennepin County Public Works guideline that intermediate recycling areas be set up for every 20 employees. These recycling areas should include organics recycling. We also ask that you consider size-appropriate bins to accommodate the amount of waste generated in those spaces, and schedule regular pick up to ensure the stations can adequately meet employee needs.

We request that you do not offer paper towels in the bathroom, prioritizing electric dryers to decrease waste. If that is not possible, we ask that you do organics recycling of paper towels in the bathroom.

In order to help ensure that employees understand the waste features of the new building so that collection is more successful, we recommend that there be a short training at the station nearest their desks the first day in the building. This could start them off with good routines.

Glass Facade

We are concerned about the glass facade of the building. Of all facade components, windows represent major sources of thermal losses and gains which impact the temperature comfort in buildings. Therefore, window size, type, and design are the most important consideration for reducing the need for heating and cooling and energy efficiency. We are worried that cost will take priority over energy efficiency when it comes to deciding which windows to use on the building. According to the article "[Assessing the energy performance of modern glass facade systems](#)" by Abdelsalam Aldawoud, double and triple glazing has better energy performance, especially when combined with smart glazing technologies, the size of the gap between glazing panes, and the type of the gas, such as Argon or Krypton, between the glazing panes. If glass must be used heavily on the new building's facade, we would like it to be as energy-efficiency focused as possible.

Electric Heat

CEAC, along with many Minneapolis residents, believe that the city needs to be an innovator and initiator in local action on sustainability. The City's 100 Percent Renewable Resolution demonstrates the city's commitment to moving away from fossil fuels and widely adopting renewable energy. Electrifying heating systems is one of the last steps to move towards a renewable future for our city. We believe that the city should take greater steps to assess the immediate and long term benefits of electrifying the heating system in this new building. This system could provide an example for developers around the city and help move the industry forward. By electrifying the heating system, the city would create a truly sustainable building that could be powered by renewable energy instead of fossil fuels.

Please let us know how you plan on addressing our concerns.

Best,

Minneapolis Community Environmental Advisory Commission

Erin Niehoff, Chair