



Saint Paul Innovation Cabinet Action Plan

July 2017

Strategies for Growing Innovation Jobs in Saint Paul



Throughout its history, Saint Paul has been the home of innovation that has had a significant impact on the region, the country and the world. From the railroads and the birth of supercomputers to the ongoing reach of some of the most innovative international companies and small startups, Saint Paul has been an innovation hub. But staying innovative requires focused effort. To best realize the opportunities in the Twin Cities region, we must pursue targeted strategies.

The Saint Paul Innovation Cabinet, formed by Mayor Chris Coleman and Councilmember Chris Tolbert, was charged with developing a vision for expanding job and business growth around the technology and innovation sectors in Saint Paul. **Full Stack Saint Paul** is a framework to build on the local business community's existing momentum and implement targeted strategies aimed at building an environment where more innovative businesses can locate and grow.

Building on our strong culture of innovation is critical to Saint Paul's economic future. Innovative businesses attract outside capital that will enhance the city's vibrant business districts and create high-paying jobs in our community. By pursuing this forward-looking strategy, there may be as many as three more spin-off jobs in other sectors for every innovation job created, bringing greater value to the whole community.

Full Stack Saint Paul outlines three key strategies that will help the City of Saint Paul achieve its goal of expanding innovation jobs and businesses:

- **Telling the story:** Make people aware of the vibrant innovation culture in Saint Paul, its legacy and potential, and its role in the greater metro region.
- **Developing people:** Build and support the places and events where innovators connect and support key pipelines for growing innovation talent in Saint Paul, especially among under-represented populations.
- **Developing innovative places:** Create an ecosystem of high-quality real estate solutions that provide work environments and amenities that help Saint Paul innovation companies recruit and retain talent.

The strategies set forth in this action plan will be implemented by the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce and the City of Saint Paul's Planning and Economic Development Department. The core team will consult regularly with work groups on each topic and a steering committee made up of Saint Paul Innovation Cabinet members as well as other public and private partners.



Strategy 1: Telling the Story

Goal

Identify current innovation in Saint Paul and tell its compelling stories to the city, region and beyond. Saint Paul has a vibrant, innovation culture, which builds on a long legacy of innovation dating back to the start of 3M in 1910.

- Show significantly increased awareness of Saint Paul innovation every year through 2020

How this strategy grows innovation jobs

- Demonstrates Saint Paul's role in the regional innovation hub
- Raises visibility and highlights the potential of Saint Paul as a home for innovation
- Focuses on the faces of innovation and is inclusive of all types of innovation
- Shows that there is innovation at all business levels, not just start-ups but also larger companies
- Highlights the supportive business community and local government
- Builds momentum for the innovation community

Potential Partners

- City of Saint Paul
- Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce
- GREATER MSP
- Port Authority
- Visit Saint Paul
- Communications subgroup with representatives from private industry

Timeframe

This strategy will require a sustained effort over several years to change the perception of Saint Paul as an innovation hub.



Strategy 2: Developing People

Goal

Build and support the places and events where innovators connect and support key pipelines for equitably growing innovation talent in Saint Paul.

- Add 2,000 tech-related jobs by the year 2020
- Ensure that 50 innovation-focused events will be held annually in Saint Paul

How this strategy grows innovation jobs

Innovative companies in Saint Paul come from a diverse range of sectors (e.g., agribusiness, health care, technology). Connecting innovators and developing a wide range of talent across these sectors will greatly improve the opportunities for job growth and ensure that Saint Paul residents benefit from that job growth.

Potential Partners

- City of Saint Paul
- Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce
- Visit Saint Paul
- Local colleges and universities
- Center Cities Competitiveness Initiative partners
- MSP TechHire
- Tech organizations (e.g., MinneBar, MinneDemo, and MinnAnalytics)
- Business organizations representing diverse populations in the city

Timeframe

People development is an urgent need and must be substantive to support the other strategies.



Strategy 3: Developing Innovative Places

Goal

Create and market an ecosystem of high-quality real estate solutions that provide work environments and amenities to help Saint Paul innovation companies recruit and retain talent.

- Increase innovation-related commercial space in the City of Saint Paul by 200,000 square feet

How this strategy grows innovation jobs

Saint Paul has the essential elements in place to support more innovation jobs, including vibrant entertainment and cultural options, world-class transit, major innovation employers, a world-class workforce, and top-tier higher education institutions. To grow innovation jobs, Saint Paul needs a more tangible strategy to create places for those jobs and the employers who offer them.

This city-wide effort is built on a recognition of the value of clustering office space in specific districts and will initially focus on two districts: downtown and along the Green Line west of the Midway. This strategy has three core themes:

- Innovative commercial space
- Anchor space for each district
- Amenities that support district ecosystems

Initial indications point to a need for specialized spaces rather than generalized co-working space. Emphasis should be placed on renovating existing buildings that have the ability to quickly expand space options and add to the vitality of the downtown and Midway neighborhoods.

Potential Partners

- City of Saint Paul
- Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce
- GREATER MSP
- Ramsey County
- Major local companies, including potential funders of real estate development projects

Timeframe

This is a long-term solution. Efforts should become more visible in 12 months but could take more than 36 months to take hold.