

Alliance for Metropolitan Stability

15 years

Organizing Together for Justice



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15 YEARS



Russ Adams
Executive Director

Fifteen years ago, nonprofit advocacy groups were told that Minnesotans would never accept compact, mixed-use urban development as anything but an odd and occasional departure from the preferred form of low-density, single-family detached housing separated from commercial and retail destinations. Environmentalists were adding up the total acreage of new areas being opened up for development in the next 40 years—200,000 acres of newly urbanized land, which was the equivalent of our entire state park system. Exotic concepts such as sustainable development and Smart Growth were seen as fringe theories, or worse, foreign approaches you'd expect to see in Europe or Portland, Oregon.

Coalition members of the Alliance refused to buy into that narrow vision, and in the mid-1990s were instrumental in securing a new regional funding program, the Livable Communities Act. This program steered money to communities interested in cleaning up and redeveloping polluted land, cities experimenting with compact urban development models that better connect people to the jobs-transit-housing nexus, and developments that included affordable housing. Later, working with the Transit Partners coalition, we helped pass landmark transportation policy that will create a network of trains and buses to help move people about the region.

Now more people in our region have begun to recognize that all areas of our region are interconnected through both the people that live here and the issues that affect us all. People who



Demonstrators helped to get the word out to pass the Livable Communities Act in 1995.



The Alliance helped faith and environmental communities secure funding to clean up polluted land through the Brownsfields Campaign in 1997.

live in our region are clamoring for more walkable, pedestrian-scale neighborhoods where shopping, cultural, educational, entertainment and health care destinations can be reached without always having to drive a car. And while 60 percent of our new housing stock in 1994 was single-family detached homes, in recent years that statistic has flipped: now more than 60 percent of new developments are multi-family attached homes. And now, light rail transit lines are desired by a great cross section of the metro community.

Fifteen years ago, very few people viewed land use as a social and racial justice issue. As a community, we had not come to grips with the fact that the Twin Cities had a long history of allowing urban renewal plans to run roughshod over vibrant communities of color in the name of progress and expediency. Through

the Alliance, a handful of organizations began collaborating on ways to understand how growth and development patterns contributed to racial and economic disparities.



The annual Tour de Sprawl, initiated by the Alliance and now run by the Sierra Club, offers an opportunity to learn about land use and transit issues.



Participants at an equitable development forum sponsored by the Alliance and partner groups in 2007.



Crowds gathered at the opening of the Twin Cities first light rail line in 2004.

15 YEARS

1994

Community activists formed the **Alliance for Metropolitan Stability**

1995

Helped pass the **Livable Communities Act** through the Minnesota Legislature.

1997

Helped faith and environmental communities **secure \$19.4 million** to clean up polluted land through our **Brownfields Campaign**.

1999

Organized a cross sector coalition in support of a regional inclusionary zoning policy and **secured \$8 million** for the statewide Inclusionary Housing Program.

2000

Helped **secure \$4 million** for the Hennepin County Affordable Housing Investment Fund.

2001

Helped **secure \$10 million** commitment from Ramsey County for the **Affordable Housing Endowment Fund**.

2002

Working with several partner groups, waged a campaign to ensure that cities plan for the true level of affordable housing needs in the region.

2004

Assisted a community coalition to defeat a city of Brooklyn Park ballot initiative that threatened

See 2004 continued on next page



Protestors rally for an expanded transit system and more compact urban development.



The Alliance has supported the African American Action Committee in battles to save affordable housing and secure equitable development in Brooklyn Park.



Community members showed their support for HIRE Minnesota at 2009 rally. Photo: Megan Dobratz.

Today, we support multiple initiatives led by community-based partner groups that are examining growth and development issues with a racial justice lens. We work with a powerful set of allies to breakdown barriers that have existed for decades that isolate low-income people and communities of color from access to workforce development programs, new family-sustaining jobs, public transit, community economic development and housing. With the leadership of the Alliance and our partners, communities are beginning to think about including racial equity as part of their analysis of the benefits and burdens imposed by development projects.

Fifteen years ago, new public policies that



would incent suburban communities to create more affordable housing opportunities were being hotly debated in the state legislature, but were unable to get past a governor's veto pen. Citizens wanted a right to demand more equitable development, and more accountability and transparency in publicly subsidized projects. The

notion that regular people had the right and the power to shape and alter large-scale projects was controversial.



Longfellow Community Council Executive Director Melanie Majors and developer Dale Joel sign the Twin Cities' first community-based CBA in 2008.



Volunteers from ISAIAH, Transit for Livable Communities and the Sierra Club asked the Legislature to be like Honest Abe when they made decisions about transportation funding in 2008. Photo: TLC.



The Stops for Us Coalition has been organizing for more equitable transit access as the Central Corridor LRT is developed. Photo: R.J. Maller.

15 YEARS



In 2009, the Stops for Us campaign had a significant victory when the city of St. Paul agreed to pay for one of the three missing Central Corridor LRT stations we have been advocating for. Photo: Arthur Sidner.



The Alliance and partner groups like All Parks Alliance for Change organized to save affordable manufactured homes in 2007.

Today, the Alliance is working with more than 100 community groups to demand that publicly supported infrastructure projects provide explicit benefits to the communities they affect. We are securing landmark victories to ensure that large-scale, subsidized developments benefit everyone.

What a difference a decade and a half can make! When the Alliance was just getting started as a loose coalition of faith-based, social justice and environmental organizations, we knew we needed to ignite a new movement to advance our agenda. We chose community and coalition organizing as our vehicle for achieving social change.

We have partnered with a variety of established and fledgling advocacy groups interested in innovative public policy reform. We have helped link new research and data to community needs, while elevating the voice of leaders from impacted communities and firmly establishing their place at the decision making table. And we have provided new opportunities for organizers to develop shared strategies, exchange information and strengthen their networks.

See **15 Years**, continued on next page



The Alliance joined HIRE Minnesota in late 2008 because of the unique opportunity to support this campaign led by and for people of color.



Digital Inclusion Coalition pushed for Minneapolis to make Wi-Fi service socially responsible by adding community benefits requirements in 2006. Photo: Roxanne Johnson.



2004 continued

to displace 900 local residents from rental housing, preserving \$84 million of affordable housing stock in the city.

2005

Helped form and support organizing efforts of the **University Avenue Community Coalition**, which organized community members to secure wins for **affordable housing, job training, local hiring** and **living-wage jobs** along the avenue.

2006

Co-convened the **Digital Inclusion Coalition**, which secured a community benefits agreement between the city of Minneapolis and its Wi-Fi vendor that will provide an estimated \$11 million for community technology projects.

2008

Through a 5+ year campaign, helped **Transit Partners** coalition to pass the historic **Transportation Choices 2020** bill, which would provide \$85 million per year for transit projects across Minnesota.

2009

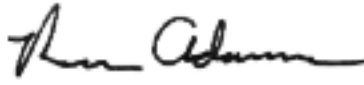
The **Stops for Us** campaign secured one of the three missing community-desired LRT stations along the Central Corridor line.

HIRE Minnesota successfully advocated for \$2.5 million for green jobs training for low-income people and energy-efficiency outreach efforts across Minnesota.

15 YEARS

Fifteen years later, there is widespread recognition that our urban challenges can not be solved by a single solution approach to our problems—that creating more transportation choices, offering a balance of housing options, paying closer attention to persistent racial and economic disparities, and giving more careful consideration of the environmental impacts of our growth patterns are critical to improving the long-term health and quality of life of our community.

The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability thanks you for 15 years of support and partnership in this journey. We know there is much more work to do, but today we celebrate all we have accomplished together.



Russ Adams, Executive Director



Green Jobs Day. Photo: Environmental Justice Advocates of Minnesota

Thank you to the following in-kind donors who helped make our 15th anniversary celebration a success.

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of working for justice.*

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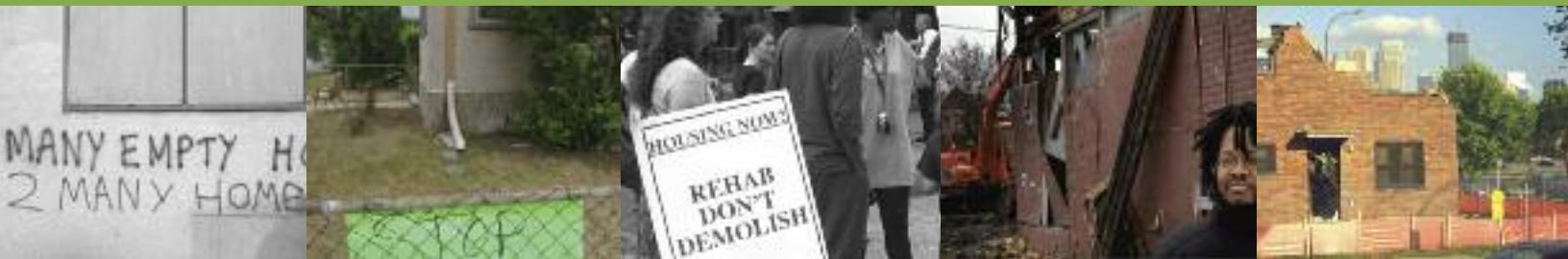
*Thanks for 15 years toward
creating a just, sustainable region.*



*Congratulations! It's a pleasure to work with people
who care about and fight for a healthy community.*

www.sharialbers.com (art)





in•sta•bil•i•ty: being likely to give way or fail

in/stability photography contest

Are we living in stability? Or perpetuating instability?

As we prepared for our 15th anniversary, we gave careful consideration to what type of event would commemorate the occasion. A dinner seemed too formal, a happy hour not significant enough.

Then one of our staff thought of a photo contest. Quickly, we realized there was no better way to look back at 15 years of work for racial, economic and environmental justice than through the lens of people who live and work in the Twin Cities.

We organized the in/stability photo contest around a simple idea. We asked people to send us photos that depicted the progress we have made toward becoming a more stable region, and the work we have left to do.

The winning photos — chosen through a community judging process — show the creativity, talent and differing perspectives of members of the Twin Cities community.

As we look at the works of art that were submitted, we are reminded what a beautiful region we live in, and humbled by the work we have left to do to advance equity and justice in the Twin Cities.

sta•bil•i•ty: having the ability to resist deterioration or displacement



in/stability photography contest winners

Rachel Greenwald

Homelessness in Powderhorn Park

This photo represents how our current economy has negatively impacted our neighborhoods and livelihood. A failing system has left too many homeless and too many empty homes.



Paula Fynboh

House Facing Foreclosure South Minneapolis

With foreclosures happening all around us, this family makes a personal plea to the neighborhood to help save their house.



in•sta•bil•i•ty: being likely to
give way or fail

**in•sta•bil•i•ty: being likely to
give way or fail**



Caitlin Nightingale

Even through the rubble
and deterioration of a
once thriving factory,
someone still found the
capacity to send a
hopeful message:
“I love you.”



Caitlin Nightingale

This old, giant rusty
hook hangs almost like
a noose for the broken,
busted car sitting
haphazardly in the
atrium of this
abandoned factory.



Megan Dobratz

Just blocks from the new \$412 million
Target Field, areas of the North Loop remain
blighted. Undoubtedly, redevelopment will
occur, but as of now, it is still laced with
disparity.



in/stability photography contest winners



Paula Fynboh

Totem Poll, Minnehaha Park dog park

This totem poll was carved from a fallen tree. The artist found a way to share his culture, produce public art, and create something out of nothing.



Paula Fynboh

Artist Totem Poll, South Minneapolis

A community garden brings together local art, cultural tradition, and talent to compete with negative perceptions of an inner city neighborhood.



sta•bil•i•ty: having the ability to resist deterioration or displacement



A-yia Thoj

The Twin Cities is home to many refugees. Many arriving in the 1970s seeking political refuge. The fingers reaching upward in this image are symbolic of the progress the Hmong community has made here.



A-yia Thoj

The bright #1 over the First Bank building has been around ever since I can remember. Seeing it reminds me that things are still OK.



Terry Bebertz

Solitude

The ability to rest and relax is key to being able to enjoy life.



John Hottinger

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P: 651.269.8860

F: 612.605.0010

E: senjh219@comcast.net

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The Alliance has been incredibly helpful to the Metro Urban Studies Term at HECUA as we teach students how to fight for regional justice. Congratulations!

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*Congratulations
to the Alliance
on 15 years!
We look forward
to continued
collaboration.*

HPP

**Housing Preservation Project
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**Congratulations, Alliance for Metropolitan Stability,
on 15 years of working and organizing
toward racial, economic and environmental justice
in the Twin Cities region!**

**Grassroots Solutions provides consulting services in the areas
of grassroots strategy, organizing, training and evaluation.**

grassroots  solutions



The Family Housing Fund congratulates the **Metropolitan Alliance for Stability** on 15 years of helping advance racial, economic, and environmental justice in the Twin Cities region.

The Family Housing Fund's mission is to provide safe, affordable, sustainable homes to families and children in the Twin Cities metropolitan area through ongoing partnerships with the public and private sector. Since 1980, the Fund has helped produce and preserve more than 33,000 homes for low- and moderate-income individuals and families.

The Family Housing Fund embraces the mission of the Alliance and is proud to be a partner in this work to promote equitable and sustainable growth and development throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Please visit www.fhfund.org to learn more about our programs and initiatives.



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*The Community Stabilization Project (CSP) is a
community-based membership organization,
serving low-income families in the Metro Area.*

*Congratulations to the Alliance
for 15 years of Successful Work!*

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and places prosper*

Twin Cities LISC congratulates the Alliance
for Metropolitan Stability on 15 years of
working with the community to advance racial,
economic and environmental justice in our region.
Thank you for your partnership and dedication!

Twin Cities LISC is helping people and places
prosper by supporting developers, growing leaders
and engaging communities. Please visit tclisc.org
to learn more about our work.

www.tclisc.org
651-649-1109
twincities@lisc.org

**Thanks for 15 impressive years of advocating
for social justice and equitable development.
Good luck in the years to come!**



**State Representative
Alice Hausman**



**State Representative
Jeff Hayden**



**State Representative
Melissa Hortman**



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Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
on 15 years of great work!

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*Thanks, Alliance
for Metropolitan
Stability, for your
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Congratulations!



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BWK Rogers PC
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Barry Rogers and Company (aka Rogers and Company), CPAs will have a new name as of January 1, 2010.

The new firm BWK Rogers PC will continue to provide auditing and consulting services to the nonprofit community as we have done for the past 28 years.

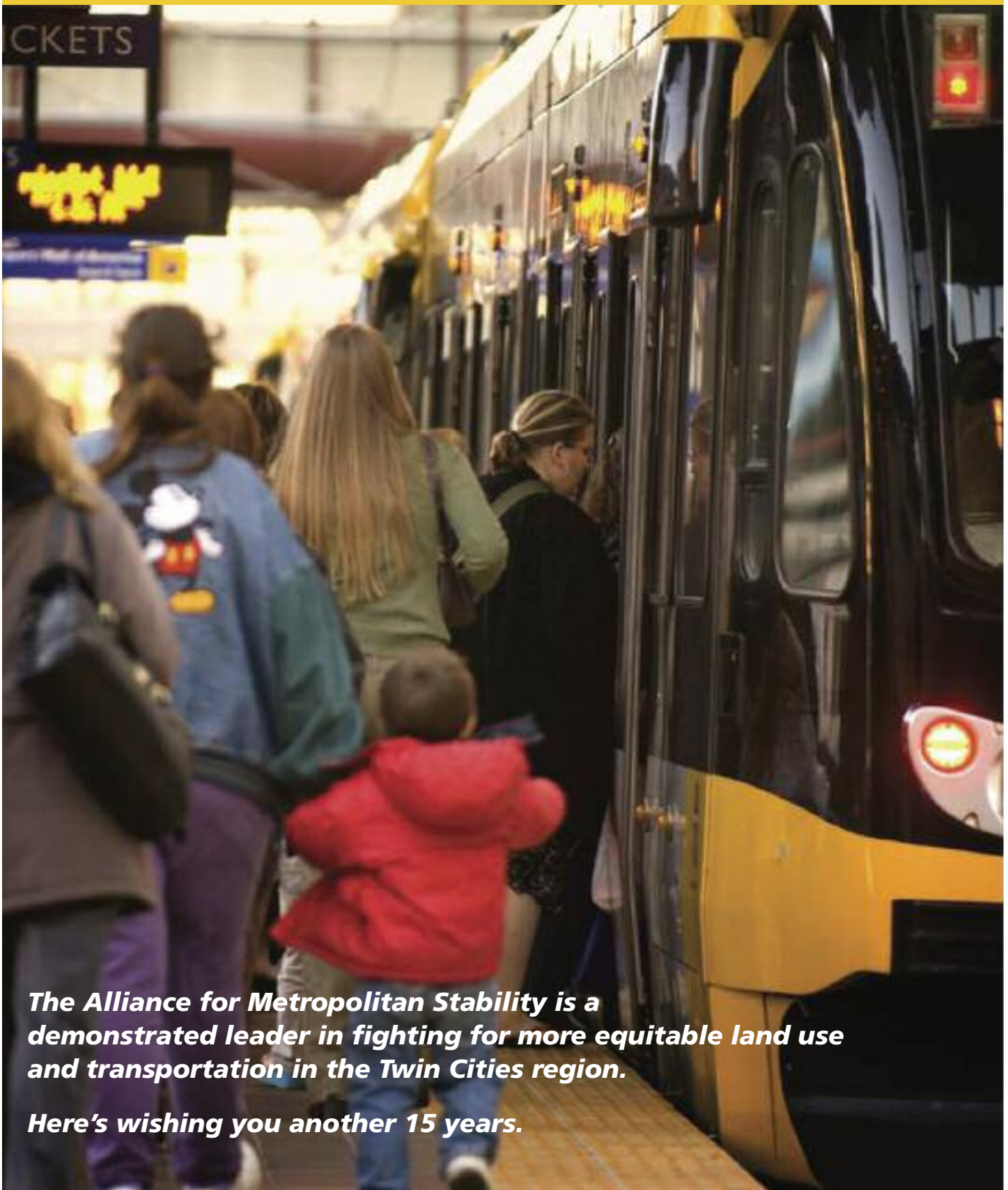
We also will continue to offer training, at least annually, for accounting professionals through the national Certified Nonprofit Accounting Professional (CNAP) program. The CNAP program is designed specifically for non-CPAs and any professionals charged with the financial management of a not-for-profit organization.

Please visit our website at www.barryrogers.com for more information on the CNAP program scheduled dates for 2010.

Congratulations to Alliance for Metropolitan Stability on 15 years of service to the community.



Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy



The Alliance for Metropolitan Stability is a demonstrated leader in fighting for more equitable land use and transportation in the Twin Cities region.

Here's wishing you another 15 years.

Our thanks to the Alliance and its coalition members
for your years of committed action serving the interests
of a just and vital community.



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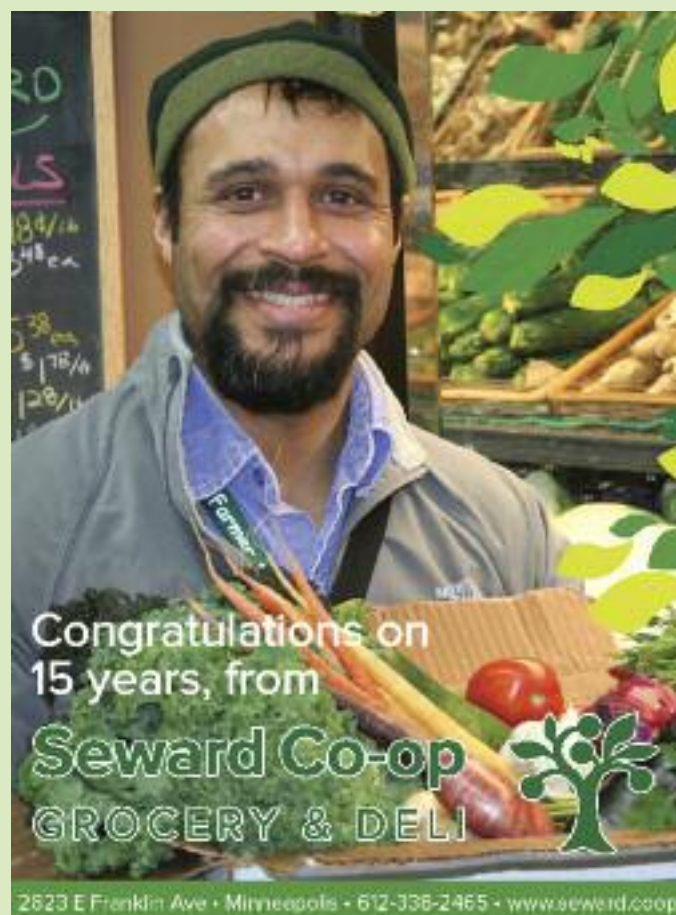
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James Lockhart, Of Counsel

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Metropolitan Consortium of Community Developers

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Enterprise Facilitator
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MCCD is a non-profit organization that provides
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A photograph of a man with a beard and a green headband, smiling. He is wearing a grey jacket over a blue shirt. Behind him is a display of fresh produce, including carrots and tomatoes. To the left, a chalkboard shows some handwritten notes.

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North Star Chapter
thanks the Alliance
for 15 years of
outstanding work!*



THANK YOU
*Alliance for Metropolitan Stability
for your work on
community
benefits
agreements
and your
support of
our work
in Postville,
Iowa.*



***Congratulations on 15 years
of successful advocacy for our metro region.
Here's wishing you many more years of
great community organizing for justice!***



**State Senator
Ellen Anderson**



**State Senator
Dick Cohen**



**State Senator
Scott Dibble**



**State Senator
Mee Moua**



ALLIANCE FOR METROPOLITAN STABILITY

2525 E. Franklin Avenue
Suite 200

Minneapolis, MN 55406

Phone: 612-332-4471

Fax: 612-338-2194

www.metrostability.org

The Alliance for
Metropolitan Stability
is a coalition of 26
grassroots organizations
that work together
to advance racial,
economic and
environmental justice
in the way growth
and development
occurs in
the Twin Cities region.

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Executive Director

Tracy Babler
Development/Communications Director

Maura Brown
Associate Director

Jennifer Jimenez
Coalition Organizer/Researcher

Joan Vanhala
Coalition Organizer

Alessandra Williams
HIRE Minnesota Coordinator

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