



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Pivotal Minneapolis Neighborhood to be Reimagined

*New Company to Create a Master Plan for the
Eastern Edge of the University*

MINNEAPOLIS – July 10, 2018 – Visus Group, a community development partnership between UMarq Investments, a Pohlad-owned entity, and the University of Minnesota Foundation Real Estate Advisors (UMFREA), will lead the creation of a master plan for a vital 15-acre area on the eastern edge of the University of Minnesota’s Minneapolis campus. This area is at the confluence of important University medical, academic and sports facilities, mass transit, roadways and neighboring communities.

Visus Group will release concept plans later this summer for public input, and the final plan will be developed by year’s end. Local and national third-party developers will have the opportunity to then propose vertical development. Visus Group’s world-class project team – including SHoP Architects, Arup, Kimley-Horn, Coen+Partners and el dorado – will also engage thought leaders from the University and elsewhere in architecture, science, the arts and technology to explore ideas and concepts to be incorporated into the master plan. Neighborhood and community meetings, lecture series, listening sessions and other outreach activities to gather ideas from the public will be announced in the coming weeks.

“We want a mix of creativity, commerce and community energy to develop this plan,” said Brandon Champeau, Visus Group Executive Director. “Only with input from the community, University, public and private sectors can we bring the needed mix of expertise and aspiration to help this area be a vibrant, distinct and authentic community that will be home to businesses, organizations and residents for generations to come.”

Nationally, vibrant communities adjacent to major institutions are a competitive factor in attracting and retaining researchers, faculty, students and business partners. Members of the partnership visited similar communities including Over-the-Rhine, Cincinnati, University of Wisconsin Madison’s State Street, University of Chicago’s 53rd Street, University of Pennsylvania’s University City, and others to fully understand the opportunity. They determined that a complete and diverse neighborhood is a competitive imperative for the University, the City and the greater Minneapolis-St. Paul region. A coordinated plan must ensure all new and existing investments support the area in reaching its full potential.

“Completing this vital area is essential to keeping the University and region on par with our peers nationally,” said Sarah Harris, UMFREA Managing Director. “It will better serve the people who are already here and position the area as a preferred community center and crossroads destination for students, businesses and organizations that want to be located in a great neighborhood near a top research university.”

The project has been named “Motley” in homage to the historic neighborhood that occupied part of the campus’s eastern edge and because the word’s definition – eclectic and diverse – mirrors Visus Group’s vision for the area.

The master plan, which will align with the City of Minneapolis 2040 goals, will focus on developing a cohesive community vision for new private development and the public spaces that tie it all together. Visus Group is investing \$6 million in the initial planning process, with a goal of submitting a plan to the City for review in early 2019.

Interested parties are asked to opt-in for invites and updates at info@motleympls.com

Visus Group is a community development partnership between UMarq Investments, a Pohlad-owned entity, and the University of Minnesota Foundation Real Estate Advisors (UMFREA), a subsidiary of the University of Minnesota Foundation that manages Foundation-owned properties and focuses on partnering with the private sector to make the area surrounding the University’s Minneapolis campus vibrant. UMFREA conducted an extensive search for a partner before selecting UMarq for its expertise, resources and demonstrated commitment to community benefit. Although it is a private venture, Visus Group will function in keeping with UMFREA’s nonprofit mission that values equally its positive community impact and the financial returns that allow it to continue its work.

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