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Rochester City Council  
Rochester, MN 55904

Subject: Recommendations to the Destination Medical Center Plan

At their February and March 2015 meetings, the Olmsted County Public Health Services Advisory Board (PHSAB) reviewed aspects of the Destination Medical Center (DMC) plan that related to the health of the community and approved a set of recommendations for consideration by the Rochester City Council.

Certain assumptions were made as part of the process, including:

- The DMC plan is seen primarily as an economic development plan for a specific area of downtown Rochester, and appears to be written as a scoping document with broad aspirations.
- Other planning efforts, such as the Rochester Comprehensive Plan, the Rochester Chamber of Commerce's "Journey to Growth", and the Olmsted County Community Health Improvement Plan (among others), also play a significant role in the future health of our community.
- The "built environment" is recognized as a significant influence on people's health (see: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's "Healthy Places" <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/>), and future community design and development proposals can promote, or hinder, individual healthy choices.
- This is a unique opportunity to be more deliberate in planning the future growth of the community, in concert with other current planning efforts and initiatives, to help realize the goal of being the "healthiest community".

#### Recommendations

The following broad recommendations can help assure the DMC Plan contains a strong "Health and Wellness" focus moving forward:

1. Work to leverage and align existing work in the community to the fullest extent possible (ex. Community Health Needs Assessment/Improvement Plan; Statewide Health Improvement Programs – SHIP; Healthy Living Rochester; Rochester Healthy Community Partnership; others).
2. Include the "social determinants of health" (housing, education, income, transportation, others) as key factors in evaluating development proposals and future measures for health status and improvement.
3. Incorporate effective community engagement strategies, such as the use of Health Impact Assessments (<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/hia.htm>), for key future development proposals.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We would be happy to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Richard Geier, M.D.  
Chair, Olmsted County PHSAB

cc: Olmsted County Public Health Services Advisory Board Members  
Richard Devlin, County Administrator  
Pete Glesen, Director, Olmsted County Public Health Services

