

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 135
HONORING TOM PICKEL**

WHEREAS, it has come to our attention Tom Pickel is retiring after 35 years of service to DeSales Community Development. 34 of those years were spent as Executive Director; and

WHEREAS, Tom and his 6 siblings were raised in the City of St. Louis by two loving parents, Grace and Ervin, who inspired Tom to lend a helping hand, look for the best in people, and continue to promote the qualities and benefits of living in the City of St. Louis; and

WHEREAS, after Tom and his father went to Kottenheim, Germany in 1989 to connect with German relatives, Tom became the unofficial family ambassador to Germany; and

WHEREAS, he graduated from St. Louis University High School and then the University of Missouri at Columbia where he earned a degree in Business and Public Administration. Tom then earned a master's degree in Urban Affairs from St. Louis University; and

WHEREAS, Tom spent the early part of his career at the Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority, from 1979-1987, first as Assistant to the Development Director, then as Project Director; and

WHEREAS, after working in community development in the Shaw neighborhood, Tom went to work at DeSales Community Housing Corporation in 1987. Early in his tenure, Tom made a bold decision to become a developer in the Fox Park Neighborhood because the private real estate companies had left. He convinced the board, and DeSales then spent the next 25 years as a successful developer, owner, and property manager; and

WHEREAS, during Tom's 35-year tenure, he has led DeSales to become one of the region's largest community development organizations and a leading developer of affordable housing. Key accomplishments during Tom's career at DeSales include: Development of over \$35 million in affordable, multi-family real estate in the Fox Park, Tower Grove East, and Benton Park West neighborhoods; Facilitation of the demolition of a Fox Park problem property, doubling the size of the Fox Park neighborhood park and enabling realization of the neighborhood's park master plan; and

WHEREAS, his many accomplishments also include: Formation of Fox Grove Management, which now oversees over 1,300 units of multi-family housing; the dramatic revitalization of the Botanical Heights neighborhood in partnership with the Garden District Commission and the Missouri Botanical Garden from 2006-2019; founding the Community Builders Network of Metro St. Louis in 2011 and serving as the group's first president; and the redevelopment of vacant commercial and industrial properties in the Fox Park neighborhood, including the headquarters campus of non-profit Rung for Women that opened in 2020; and

WHEREAS, throughout his career at DeSales, he has made time for community, friends, and family: in the 1980s, Tom joined Big Brothers Big Sisters, where he mentored his Little Brother from grade school through college; being a Leftie, Tom played a mean first base for the Black Thorn Pub Softball League from 1993 - 2000. Tom is smart, loyal, committed and fun. One night at the ballpark with several cold beers and you will get to know Tom! And most importantly, Tom married his wife Jean, and they have raised their daughter Audrey in the same St. Louis City neighborhood where Tom grew up.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to thank Tom Pickel for his service to DeSales, and St. Louis, and we wish him peace and happiness in his retirement. We further direct the Clerk of this Board to spread a copy of this Resolution across the minutes of these proceedings and to prepare a commemorative copy to the end that it may be presented to him at a time and place deemed appropriate by the Sponsor.

Introduced this 10th day of November 2022 as attested by:
The Honorable Christine Ingrassia, Alderwoman 6th Ward
The Honorable Annie Rice, Alderwoman 8th Ward
The Honorable Dan Guenther, Alderman 9th Ward
The Honorable Sharon Tyus, Alderwoman 1st Ward

Adopted this 10th day of November 2022 as attested by:

Terry Kennedy
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Joseph Vollmer
President, Board of Aldermen