

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations



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July 27, 2015

Mr. Robert Cardillo, Director
National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency
7500 GEOINT Drive
Springfield, Virginia 22150

Dear Mr. Cardillo:

I am writing to urge the selection of St. Louis, Missouri for the location of the new National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA) West Campus headquarters. Selecting the Northside of St. Louis for this location will bring desperately needed jobs and redevelopment to economically distressed communities of color, thereby fulfilling Executive Order No. 12072, 43 Fed. Reg. 36,869 (Aug. 16, 1978), which requires consideration of the impact of federal site selection on the social and economic conditions of urban communities.

The economic benefits of building the new West Campus Headquarters on the Northside of St. Louis will help the local community heal the race and class divisions that have fractured the greater St. Louis metropolitan area. Northside St. Louis borders Ferguson, Missouri where Michael Brown was tragically killed last year. Northside St. Louis residents are 85 percent African American, the unemployment rate is an astounding 22 percent, and 45 percent of the population lives in poverty.

As you know, the NGA has outgrown its current West Campus Headquarters in downtown St. Louis. The NGA is currently one of the largest employers in the city of St. Louis, and the Northside location is one of four potential sites under consideration for the new West Campus Headquarters. Selecting the Northside location will not only keep 3,100 existing West Campus Headquarters jobs in St. Louis, but will potentially bring thousands of new NGA jobs to this location as it grows in the future.

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The proposed 100-acre NGA West Campus Headquarters site is part of a now-underway \$8 billion urban community development project called NorthSide Regeneration. This project is developing a 1,500-acre area into approximately 3 million square feet of private sector commercial office space, 3,000 market-rate housing units, and a massive upgrade to the public infrastructure of roads, transit, parks, and open space. The area is adjacent to Downtown St. Louis, the Grand Center Arts District, and the CORTEX Innovation District.

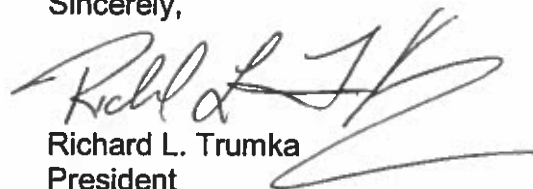
Public sector support for this redevelopment project includes up to \$360 million from the state of Missouri and \$390 million from the city of St. Louis in tax increment financing. The city of St. Louis has also placed a \$180 million General Obligation Bond issue for infrastructure improvements on the August ballot, including a major portion of the needed infrastructure in and around the proposed NGA West Campus Headquarters site. The private sector has invested over \$100 million in the NorthSide Regeneration development, with additional investments in process.

Construction of the new NGA West Campus Headquarters will create an estimated 15,000 construction jobs in St. Louis. To help create jobs for local residents, the St. Louis Building & Construction Trades Council has proposed a community workforce agreement that will provide local hiring and apprenticeship training. Working with NGA, this agreement will launch sustainable career opportunities with skilled jobs for a severely underserved community. It shows how different interests can come together to prioritize the well-being of the entire community.

Finally, locating the new NGA West Campus Headquarters in the Northside of St. Louis will strengthen the local community by providing new housing opportunities. To support this goal, the AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust, of which I am a Board member, has issued a Letter of Interest to invest in the first 242 units of market rate housing next to the proposed NGA West Campus Headquarters site. The AFL-CIO Housing Investment Trust has over \$5 billion in net assets and extensive experience in financing multifamily housing in Missouri and nationally.

For these reasons, I hope you will agree that Northside St. Louis is the best location for the new NGA West Campus Headquarters. The job creation and economic development that the NGA West Campus Headquarters can bring to Northside St. Louis will provide long lasting benefits to the local community. If the AFL-CIO can be of assistance in this regard, please contact Heather Slavkin Corzo at 202-637-3900.

Sincerely,



Richard L. Trumka
President