

Reimagining North Minneapolis: How Community and Culture Are Driving the Sears Site Redevelopment

ST. PAUL, MN, UNITED STATES, April 29, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The former Sears site in North Minneapolis is entering a new chapter. Once a hub of activity and later a symbol of disinvestment, this historic space is now the focus of a bold, community-first redevelopment effort. Sears Redevelopment Project is proud to announce its official partnership with RiverNorth Development Partners—a collaboration that places equity, culture, and resident voices at the center of urban transformation.

This article shares an exciting update on the Sears Redevelopment Project and our new partnership with RiverNorth Development Partners. Through a recent conversation with Anthony Taylor, managing partner at RiverNorth, we explore the shared goals of this collaboration and what it means for the future of the site. With a strong commitment to ethical development and social impact, RiverNorth brings a people-first approach that aligns with our vision for a more vibrant, inclusive community space. We invite the community to stay tuned as we continue shaping this project together.



Anthony Taylor, RiverNorth



Anthony, second from the right, joins Minneapolis Mayor Rybak at the announcement of Ion Corp's new manufacturing facility in North Minneapolis, through the RiverNorth Development effort.

A Partnership Rooted in Community-Driven Development

Anthony's connection to the Sears Redevelopment project grew organically through years of

experience in community-driven initiatives across the Twin Cities. He previously collaborated on the ReConnect Rondo project in Saint Paul, a transformative effort focused on restoring and reconnecting historically disrupted communities through equitable development. His work also extended to Frogtown and the University Avenue corridor, where he concentrated on improving mobility and access through walkable, bike-friendly infrastructure. It was during this time that he first met Ange Hwang, Executive Director of Asian Media

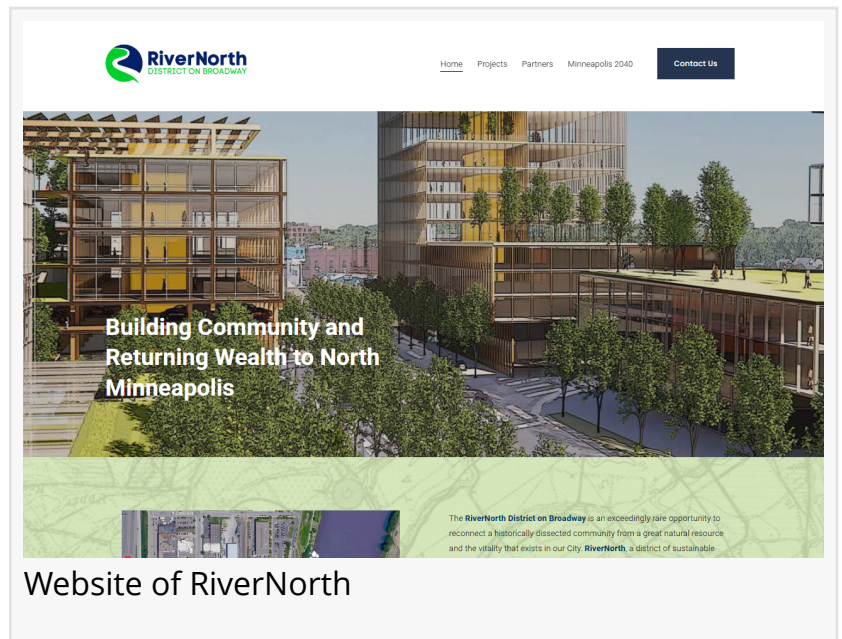
Access, through shared work in North Minneapolis. Their paths crossed over a mutual commitment to uplifting communities through thoughtful, inclusive development. When he learned about the Sears site, he was immediately interested. “These are organizations rooted in human development,” he reflected. With a deep belief in culturally responsive and community-led planning, he saw the partnership as a powerful alignment—focused not just on buildings, but on building well-being, opportunity, and long-term impact for the people who call North Minneapolis home.

Reviving the Sears Site: Where History and Community Intersect

At the heart of RiverNorth’s approach is a commitment to ethical development and measurable social impact—values that align seamlessly with the mission for the Sears Redevelopment. He emphasized that partnering with community-based organizations like Asian Media Access (AMA) and Asian American Business Resilience Network (AABRN) allows RiverNorth to design projects that prioritize the well-being of residents while also building economic resilience and long-term success. For him, the Sears site represents more than just a physical space—it’s layered with historical, cultural, and civic significance. “The Sears site is special because it’s the site of historical damage done by the highway system and it is currently the intersection of multiple cultural communities,” he said. He also noted that the location uniquely sits at a crossroads between government and the people—a place where public institutions and community life come together. This convergence, he believes, makes the redevelopment both a responsibility and a rare opportunity to design with intention, reconnect what was once divided, and invest in a future shaped by community-led values.

Guiding the Process: RiverNorth’s Work Behind the Scenes

The Sears Redevelopment is currently in the pre-development stage, with RiverNorth working closely alongside the project team to lay the groundwork for what’s to come. The development plan is ambitious and intentional: it outlines a future that combines youth, adult, and family development with economic opportunity, integrates intergenerational programming, and weaves



together commercial, educational, and housing elements. As the project moves forward, RiverNorth will continue playing a central role across many aspects of planning and execution—including ensuring financial feasibility, designing for walkability and livability, and coordinating with city and county partners. Their work also emphasizes sustainability, with a focus on creating an energy-efficient and environmentally conscious development, as well as economic sustainability, by supporting long-term opportunities that allow the community to thrive. Most importantly, there is a clear commitment to creating community investment opportunities, allowing residents to directly benefit from the growth happening in their neighborhood.

Upcoming Community Ride to Explore the Sears Site

RiverNorth and the project are already thinking creatively about how to engage the community in the coming months. One exciting initiative planned for summer 2025 is community-led walk tours - unique events designed to help residents explore how the Sears site connects to key neighborhoods including State Capitol, Cathedral Hill, the East Side, Downtown, Frogtown, and the Rondo community. More than just a Walk Audit, the event will celebrate the cultural and geographic significance of the location. With local artists, music, food, and storytelling, the goal is to create an immersive experience centered on art, culture, and shared vision. The event plans to be a joyful, community-focused gathering—a meaningful step in building connection and momentum before redevelopment begins.

Looking Ahead: Stay Connected with the Sears Redevelopment

The Sears Redevelopment Project is moving forward with a strong commitment to honoring the community's voice and vision. As Anthony Taylor shared, the most exciting part of this journey is supporting culturally grounded, community-led organizations like AMA and AABRN to guide a development that truly reflects the people it serves. Stay tuned as the Sears Redevelopment continues to take shape—follow [Sears Redevelopment Project website](#) for the latest updates, upcoming events, and ways to get involved.

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