

Saint Paul Releases Information about Public Viewing Area and “Open Forum” Stage During the RNC

City will create area across from the Xcel Energy Center where people can reserve time to speak

Applications accepted until August 11

SAINT PAUL – The City of Saint Paul today released additional information about the open forum area that will be set up during the Republican National Convention. The area is less than a block from the Xcel Energy Center and will include a stage to allow groups and individuals the opportunity to express their opinion within an earshot of the RNC. The stage will be set up September 1 – 4, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. each day, and reservations will be accepted until August 11.

The public viewing area will be open from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. each day and is part of an ongoing commitment by Saint Paul to make it possible and safe for anyone to be able to view and experience the convention. People can also come to downtown and see live media broadcasts, live music, and other activities associated with the convention from this location.

“From the day we were selected to host the convention we have made an unprecedented effort to balance the needs of people attending the events while also protecting the rights of everyone to be able

- more -

speak freely,” said Saint Paul Mayor Chris Coleman. “This plan creates an organized way to give people who want to share their thoughts the chance to be close to the Xcel Energy Center during the convention. The public forum area also fits into the overall public safety plan for the RNC.”

Each person or organization will get 50 minutes to speak from the stage. Interested groups and individuals must fill out a permit application to be considered for one of the timeslots. Similar to the parks permits process at the beginning of the year, a lottery will determine the schedule. All applications are due August 11 by 3 p.m., and the lottery will be held on August 12. The initial schedule will be announced on the City's Web site on August 18.

The City of Saint Paul will provide a stage and sound system with microphone for the open forum. People who plan to speak on the stage will not be allowed to bring any additional equipment with them. Only one permit application per group or individual will be allowed for the lottery, and any excess application submissions will be returned to the applicant.

Applicants may apply for additional time slots, if available, beginning August 19, 2008, by submission of a completed application. They will be issued stage time based on a first-come, first-served basis. Updates to the schedule will be posted on the City's Web site.

Permit applications are available on the City's website, and may be submitted via mail, fax (651-632-5115), or in person to the Saint Paul Parks Permit Office (1100 Hamline Avenue North, Saint Paul, MN 55108).