

FARMINGTON Independent

Your online connection to Farmington, Minnesota

Editorial: UMore ideas are intriguing — now make them reality

The Farmington Independent - 01/31/2008

There's a lot to get excited about these days while discussing the University of Minnesota's proposed UMore development. The project, located in Empire Township, is expected to add 20,000 to 30,000 new residents to the area over the next quarter century or so.

At this point, the development is all concepts and dreams. A series of reports released last week as a kind of vision statement for the development such big-picture thinking. Who wouldn't want to live in a city where biking and walking takes priority over driving??Where public art is everywhere??Where new technologies are used to keep residents healthier, happier, better educated and more connected to their friends and neighbors?

Putting ideas on paper is easy, but too often those big dreams fall victim to economic reality once construction starts.

It's far too early to know whether that will happen here, but there seems to be good reason to believe some of the thinking behind the reports — if not the specific examples — will find their way into the final UMore development. This project has advantages that many lack. It's got the resources of a major university behind it and a number of partners interested in making sure the project succeeds.

A lot of interesting thought has gone into this development so far, and the plans that have emerged to this point show the potential to create something remarkable. And while some of that is likely to go away by the time work starts on the first new home or business we're confident at least some of what has been discussed so far will make the final cut.

We certainly hope it does.