



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

25 West Fourth Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Telephone: 651-266-6700
Facsimile: 651-228-3220

March 7, 2013

Mayor Christopher B. Coleman
City Council President Kathy Lantry and Councilmembers
Third Floor – City Hall
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Colleagues:

On behalf of the Saint Paul Planning Commission, it is my privilege to send you and the citizens of Saint Paul our 2012 Annual Report.

A highlight from the past year was adoption of the Great River Passage Master Plan, a “legacy plan” for unifying the entire length of Saint Paul’s Mississippi riverfront into one comprehensive vision to be realized over the next 30 to 50 years. Also, the Greater Lowertown Master Plan, Near East Side Roadmap, and North End-South Como District 6 Plan were all adopted this past year.

The Transportation Committee began work on two major studies that will be completed in 2013. The Complete Streets Plan will result in a design manual and up to ten pilot projects that will focus on making streets more multi-modal. The Streetcar Feasibility Study will result a set of prioritized corridors for development of a future streetcar network in Saint Paul.

In June, the City launched Open Saint Paul, a new online participation tool. Open Saint Paul allows policymakers to get direct feedback on current issues from residents who may not be able to attend public meetings or hearings, including issues related to planning processes addressed by the Planning Commission. As of year end, eight questions had been posted to the site for feedback, 1,163 people had visited the site, 136 people had posted a comment, and 100 people had asked to be notified when new topics are posted. We look forward to the continued use of this tool in our future planning efforts.

Work on the Ford Site continued in 2012, including approval of a site plan for decommissioning the 122-acre property and initiation of a zoning study that will evaluate zoning tools for implementing the site’s sustainable redevelopment.

Several major Zoning Code amendments received attention this past year, including the City’s first revisions to the nonconforming use regulations in over 15 years, which were approved by the City Council in December. Significant work has also proceeded on analysis of potential amendments to industrial zoning and urban agriculture zoning regulations.

These are just a few highlights of the Planning Commission’s work in 2012. On behalf of the Planning Commission, we thank you for the opportunity to serve the City and engage the community in the important work of planning for the future of Saint Paul.

Sincerely,

Barbara A. Wencil
Planning Commission Chair

Saint Paul Planning Commission

2012 ANNUAL REPORT

www.stpaul.gov/ped

ABOUT THE SAINT PAUL PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission is a 21-member advisory body made up of citizen volunteers appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Council. The Planning Commission and its Zoning, Comprehensive Planning, Neighborhood Planning, and Transportation Committees take on municipal planning issues as required by law. It reviews and makes recommendations on comprehensive planning and zoning recommendations, studies and amendments. It also holds public hearings where members of the public can be heard.

This Annual Report provides a summary of the Planning Commission's major activities and accomplishments in 2012.



Completed Projects

Great River Passage Master Plan

The Great River Passage Master Plan is the City's long-term plan for unifying the entire length of Saint Paul's Mississippi riverfront (17 miles of river, 26 miles of shoreline) into one comprehensive vision to be realized over the next 30-50 years. The Master Plan envisions the river corridor as an interconnected system of parks and trails that connects to private development in neighborhoods adjacent to the river. It builds on 15 years of Saint Paul's efforts to fully realize what an incredible environmental, recreational, physical, economic, cultural, and historic resource the Mississippi River is. In October, the Planning Commission completed its review of the Great River Passage Master Plan, recommended that the City Council adopt appropriate sections of the document as an addendum to the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan and found the addendum to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.



Student Housing Zoning Study

Responding to a City Council request, in late 2011 the Planning Commission began a study of potential zoning responses to a trend of conversions of single family homes and duplexes to college student rental housing. The topic generated considerable public discussion. Although the Planning Commission did not recommend any zoning changes, restrictions on new conversions for portions of the Macalester-Groveland and Union Park neighborhoods were adopted by City Council in July 2012.

Near East Side Roadmap 1

The Near East Side Roadmap and Zoning Study was adopted by the City Council in September as an addendum to the Comprehensive Plan. The Neighborhood Planning Committee conducted an extensive review of the plan prior to recommending its adoption. It contains strategies to guide the planning and development of an area identified as the Near East Side (chiefly the blocks facing East 7th Street from Maria Avenue to Johnson Parkway as well as a portion of the intersection of Arcade Street and Minnehaha Avenue) in the coming decade. Objectives and strategies in the plan address commercial and residential real estate (including vacant

land), multi-modal streets, pedestrian-oriented improvements, community building, neighborhood and business capacity, land use, and rezoning. The plan is an implementation plan, and is therefore more detailed than a typical small area plan that might focus mostly on land use.

North End-South Como District 6 Plan & Zoning Study 2

In March, the City Council adopted the District 6 Plan, most recently updated in 2006, and an associated zoning study. The plan focuses on addressing industrial/residential land use conflicts, incorporating four small area plans, and improving the Como/Front/Dale intersection. The Metropolitan Design Center at the University of Minnesota prepared sketches of design concepts for the Como/Front/Dale intersection.



● Corresponds to map on page 2

Nonconforming Use Text Amendments

The first major revisions to Saint Paul's nonconforming use regulations in over 15 years were adopted by the City Council in December. The Neighborhood Planning Committee spent over two years reviewing the regulations, correcting, clarifying, and bringing the language into compliance with state laws. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the amendments in April and submitted their recommendations to the City Council in September.



3 Greater Lowertown Master Plan

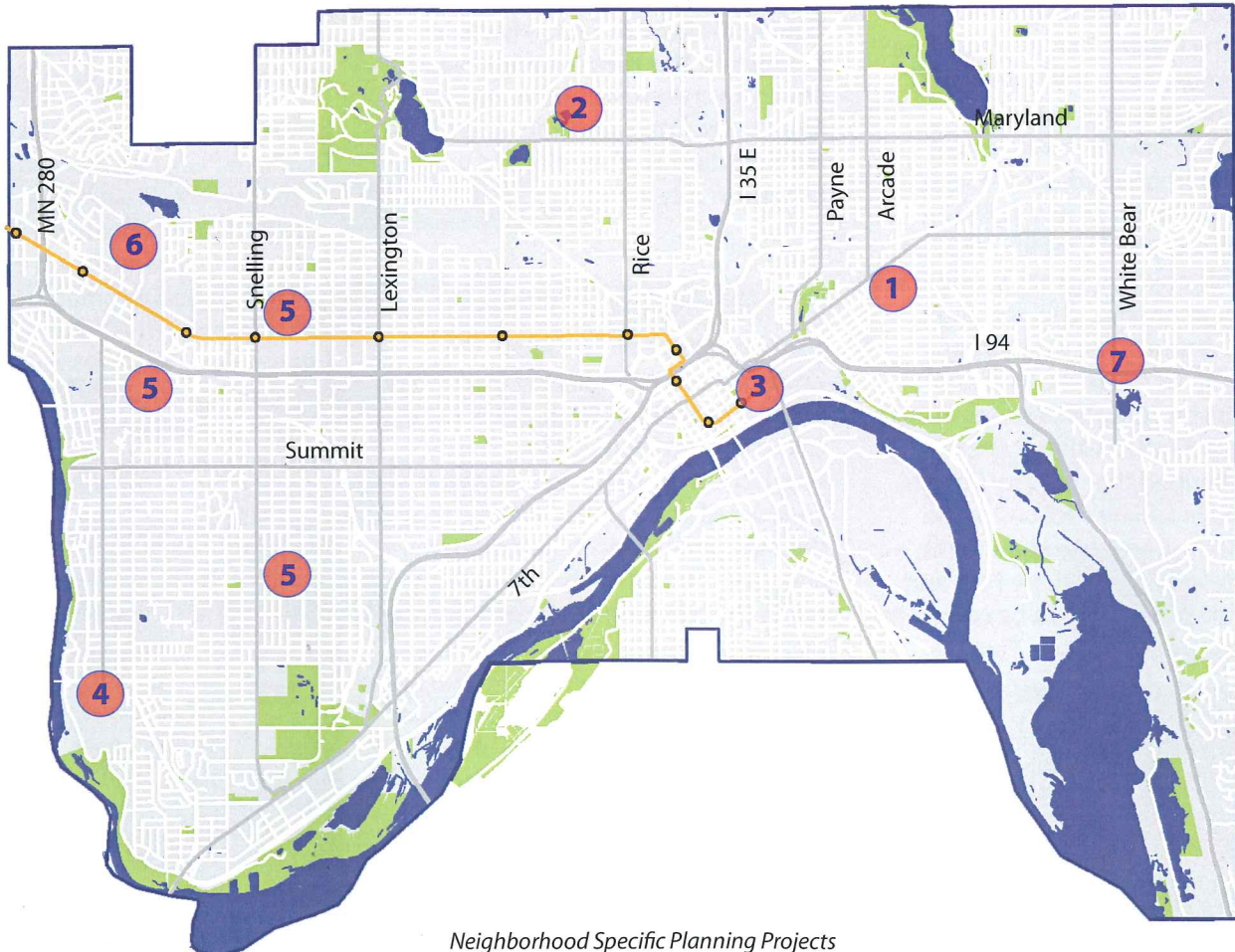
The GLMP was prepared by a multi-disciplinary consultant team, under the direction of a community task force and with technical planning assistance from City staff. It contains goals, objectives, and strategies based on the chapters of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan, with a couple of additional sections to

address specific neighborhood issues, such as the arts and environmental sustainability. In March, the Planning Commission found the Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and recommended its adoption as an addendum to the City's Comprehensive Plan.

Ongoing Projects

Open Saint Paul

In June, the City launched Open Saint Paul, a new online participation tool administered by an independent, third-party company called Peak Democracy. Open Saint Paul allows policymakers to get direct feedback on current issues from residents who cannot attend public meetings or

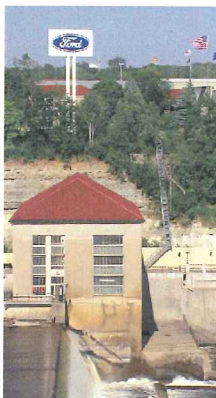


Neighborhood Specific Planning Projects

hearings. Comments are monitored by Peak Democracy to ensure that they are civil and fair. As of the end of 2012, Saint Paul PED had posted a total of eight questions for feedback, 1,163 people had visited the site, 136 people had posted a comment, and 100 people had asked to be notified when new topics are posted.

Ford Site 4

A Ford Site Zoning Study was initiated with funding provided by the Metropolitan Council Livable Communities Fund. The study is evaluating



what types of zoning tools might best implement the range of mixed use, sustainable redevelopment envisioned for the Ford site.

In December, a Master Site Plan for decommissioning the 122-acre Ford property was approved, detailing activities and conditions for removal of structures and foundations, erosion control and grading, and stormwater management and seeding. This work will prepare the site for sale and redevelopment within a few years.

Complete Streets Plan

Major activities for the Saint Paul Complete Streets Plan kicked off in 2012. A consultant team was selected to lead the development of the Saint Paul Street Design Manual. Transportation Committee members along with an interdisciplinary staff team and District Council representatives participated in an all-day workshop in August to guide the content of the manual. Work on this project, including finalizing the manual and procuring several pilot projects, continues and is expected to be completed in late 2013.

Industrial Zoning Study

The study initiated Zoning Code amendments pertaining to regulation of industrial districts and uses. The changes better reflect policies in the Comprehensive Plan, support the intent and purpose of industrial districts for employment and economic activities, and provide for efficient land use and aesthetic quality. The amendments also bring the code up-to-date by incorporating Planning Commission determinations of similar use in recent years. The Commission is considering public testimony received on the draft amendments, with a Planning Commission recommendation anticipated in early 2013.

Jefferson, Prior, and Charles Bikeways 5

The Jefferson, Prior, and Charles Avenue bikeways are crucial components of a comprehensive, citywide bicycle network for Saint Paul. These improvements will make travel safer and more pleasant for people traveling by foot, bike, or car, through each of these corridors. The Charles and Prior bikeways are also part of the Bike Walk Central Corridor Action Plan adopted in 2010. The Planning Commission and its Transportation Committee helped guide the public design review process for these bikeways, which are now in various stages of planning and construction.



West Midway Industrial Study 6

The study was established by the Planning Commission in 2010 and is now in the drafting stage. The study's goal is to determine how the area can be used to strengthen Saint Paul's industrial sector and employment base while, at the same time, fit with an existing residential neighborhood and three Central Corridor station areas. A task force was on hiatus until the Northwest Quadrant Transportation Study was completed and now has begun meeting again. A recommendation is due to the Planning Commission in the Second Quarter of 2013.

Urban Agriculture Zoning Study

The Urban Agriculture Zoning Study was initiated by the Planning Commission in October 2011. The zoning study addresses inadequacies in the zoning code by providing parameters for the establishment of urban agriculture (including community gardens) and farmers market uses. A draft was released for public review in April and the public hearing was held in June. Revised text amendments are expected to be back to Planning Commission for review in early 2013.



Streetcar Feasibility Study

The Saint Paul Streetcar Feasibility Study, launched in late 2012, will develop a set of prioritized citywide streetcar corridors that would improve local circulation, support economic development, and complement existing and planned transportation systems in the city. This study will prepare Saint Paul for long-term success in financing and implementing a comprehensive streetcar network. The Transportation Committee of the Planning Commission serves as the Steering Committee for the project, which is expected to be completed by the end of 2013.

Gateway Corridor Alternatives Analysis 7

The Gateway Corridor Commission has been studying transit improvement options between downtown Minneapolis and Hudson, Wisconsin for over two years. The Transportation Committee had multiple briefings on the Alternatives Analysis, which now includes two mode options moving forward to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement stage in 2013: Bus Rapid Transit and Light Rail Transit along the I-94 right-of-way from downtown Saint Paul to Carmichael Road in Hudson.

Metro Transit Arterial Transitway Corridors Study

The study evaluated and ranked corridors best suited for application of "Rapid Bus" improvements. Snelling Avenue and West 7th Street are the top rated projects in the region and work to develop specific plans for each will commence in 2013. The Rapid Bus concept includes limited stop bus service, off-board ticketing, enhanced transitway stations, distinctive bus look, signal priority, and at least 15 minute service all week.

The Planning Commission is staffed by the Department of Planning and Economic Development (PED).

Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

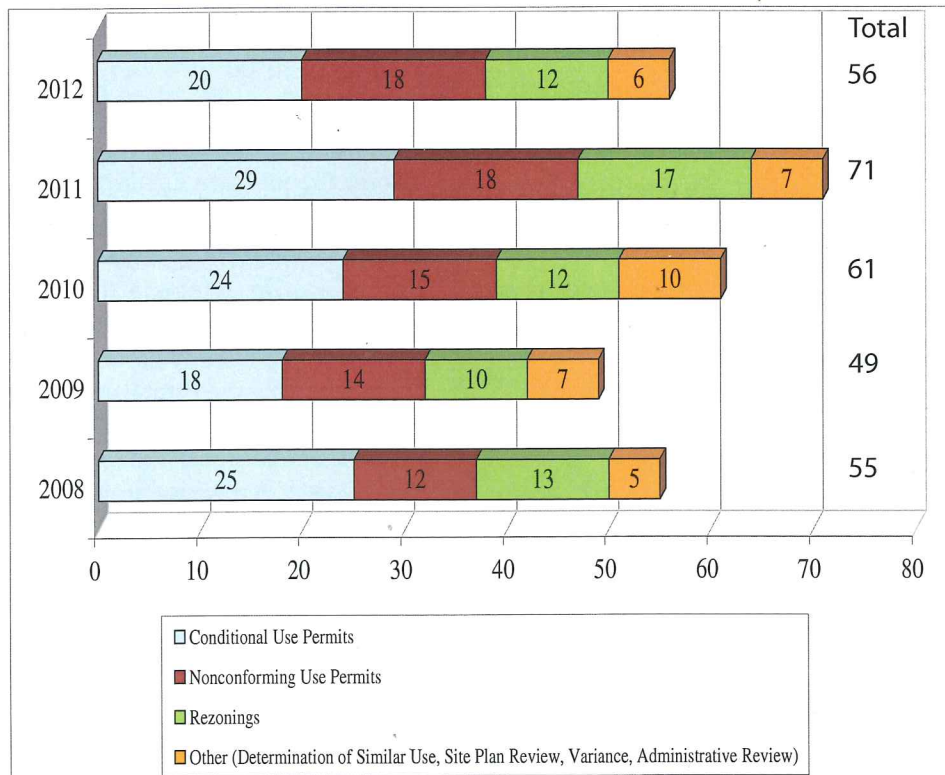
Cecile Bedor, Director, PED
 Donna Drummond, Planning Director
 Sonja Butler, Secretary to the Planning Commission

2012 Planning Commissioners

- Barbara Wencil, Chair
- Jon Commers*
- Pat Connolly
- Daniel Edgerton
- Anthony Fernandez*
- Gene Gelgelu
- Bree Halverson*
- Rich Kramer*
- William Lindeke
- Paula Merrigan
- Gaius Nelson
- Christopher Ochs
- Trevor Oliver
- Julie Perrus
- Marilyn Porter
- Elizabeth Reveal
- Tony Schertler
- Emily Shively
- Bob Spaulding
- Terri Thao
- Jun-Li Wang
- Daniel Ward
- David Wickiser

* Served for part of 2012

For more information:
 Department of Planning and Economic Development
 1400 City Hall Annex
 25 West Fourth Street
 Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102
 Tel: 651.266.6573
<http://www.stpaul.gov/ped>



The Zoning Committee reviewed 56 cases in 2012, down 21 percent from 2011.



The Most Livable City in America

Printed on recycled paper.

