



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
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Date: August 28, 2014
To: Saint Paul Planning Commission
From: Neighborhood Planning Committee
Subject: **Draft Shepard Davern Plan and Amended District 15 Plan Summary**

Background:

Attached is a draft of the Plan Update, the existing chapter of the Highland District Plan, and an edited version of the Highland District Council's Plan Summary from 2007, which is the official Comprehensive Plan Addendum.

In December 2012, Saint Paul Planning Commission initiated the Shepard Davern Planning and Zoning Studies, and authorized the creation of a community task force to advise the work of City staff.

Early in the process, it was determined that the clearest course of action would be to create a Plan Update that would be an updated chapter of the District 15 Highland Park Plan. The Plan Update is proposed to replace the existing "West 7th Street" Commercial District chapter. This Plan Update also allows the decertification of the Shepard Davern Small Area Plan from 1999.

The Shepard Davern Task Force, co-chaired by Planning Commissioner Gaius Nelson and Highland District Council board member Greg Campbell, met for one year, from March 2013 through April 2014. The committee was comprised of residents, property and business owners and representatives, and other interested members of the community.

The Plan Update was reviewed by the Highland District Council's Community Development Committee in July 2014. At that meeting, a number of comments and edits were provided and incorporated into the draft that was a result of the Task Force's efforts.

Plan Update:

Attached is a draft of the Plan Update. The Plan Update was written by City staff with input from the community Task Force. The Task Force reviewed, by topic area, the goals and strategies in the Highland District Plan (2007) and the Shepard Davern Small Area

Plan (1999), as well as any other relevant plans (Great River Passage Plan, etc.). Based on these discussions, goals and strategies were maintained, edited, removed, or new ones created. The Task Force also reviewed the complete list of strategies to set implementation priorities.

The majority of strategies identified by the Task Force are similar to those in past plans, including an emphasis on safety concerns along West 7th and a desire for better access to the Mississippi River area across Shepard Road. One substantive shift was the desire to remove the following provision in the Highland District Plan:

“If Sibley Manor or other large affordable housing complexes are redeveloped ensure that an allocation of at least 30% of the new units provided on site are affordable to residents making below the St. Paul median income.” (pg 26)

The Task Force felt that the area has a surplus of affordable housing, and that it would be unfair to single out particular properties to carry an additional burden of affordable housing. There was a strong desire to see a greater mix of housing type in the area. Through discussion at the Task Force, which included multiple District Council board members and the owner of the Sibley Manor property, it was determined that the existing Citywide requirements for affordable housing (for developments that receive government subsidy) would be sufficient to ensure the maintenance of a mixed income community.

The top priorities of the Task Force are to:

- Create a neighborhood park between Shepard Road and West 7th to better serve both the elderly and youth populations in the area. In particular, to look for opportunities that would be easily accessible to Sibley Manor.
- Support a better balance of housing types, tenures and ownership models, including high quality housing that will serve as an amenity for the neighborhood.
- Improve the safety and walkability of West 7th, including slowing traffic coming into the city off the Highway 5 bridge onto West 7th, and creating the feeling of a Gateway to Saint Paul.
- Improve neighborhood accessibility to Crosby Farm Park and the trails on the south side of Shepard Road, particularly through enhanced pedestrian and bicycle crossings as identified in the Great River Passage Plan.

Recommendation:

The Neighborhood Planning Committee recommends that the Planning Commission release the draft *Shepard Davern Plan* and updated *Area Plan Summary: District 15 Highland Park Neighborhood Plan* for public comment.

Area Plan Summary

District 15 Highland Park Neighborhood Plan

Addendum to The Comprehensive Plan for Saint Paul

Recommended by the Planning Commission April 20, 2007

Adopted by the City Council July 18, 2007

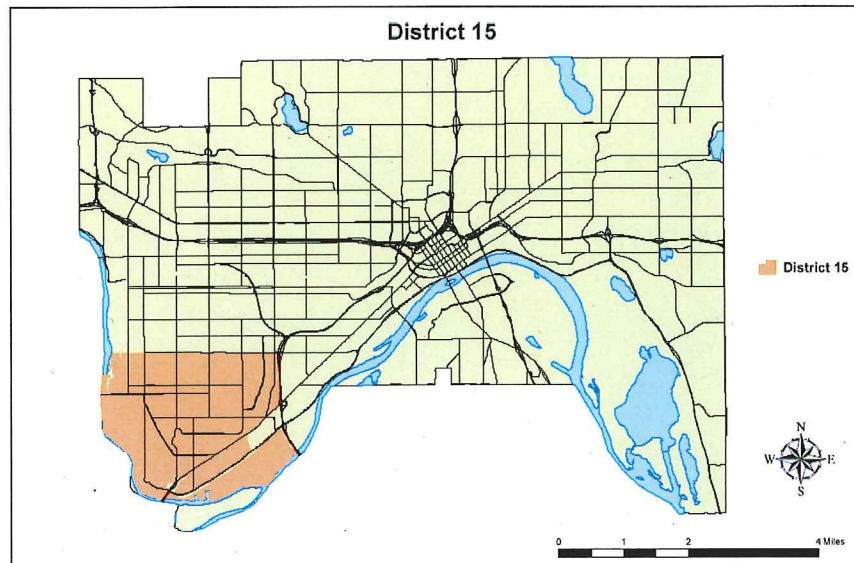
PROPOSED updates to reflect Shepard Davern Area Planning Process 2014

*This summary appends to the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan the vision and strategies of the **District 15 Highland Park Neighborhood Plan** and replaces the Highland Park District Plan adopted in 1979. The **District 15 Highland Park Neighborhood Plan** consists of eight major areas of focus, including (1) Commercial Districts, (2) Housing, (3) Urban Design, (4) Transportation, (5) Parks, Recreation, and Libraries (6) Environment, (7) Public Safety, and (8) Education. The full-length plan, used for reference in the creation of this Area Plan Summary, was not itself adopted by the City and may include some policy differences. Copies of the full-length plan are available for review at the Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development and the offices of the Highland Park District Council.*

This summary also reflects the community task force planning process completed in 2013-14 for the Shepard Davern area, or the West 7th Street Area Commercial District as discussed below. The two actions from the 2007 adopted version of this document were both addressed during the 2013-14 process, and so have been stricken from this summary document. Updated sections are highlighted.

Location

The Highland Park neighborhood is bounded by Randolph Avenue on the north, the Mississippi River on the west and south, and I-35 on the east, with the exception of a small wedge shape east of Homer Street between Shepard Road and West 7th Street that belongs to District 9.



Location of District 15 Highland Park Area in City of St. Paul

Vision

Highland Park seeks to strengthen its place as one of the great places to live, work and recreate in the City of Saint Paul. The community aims to foster an environment that respects and enriches the mutually beneficial relationship between residential livability and commercial vitality by stressing its values, including quality of life, diversity of culture and pride in our community.

Through the implementation of this Plan, the community strives to:

- incorporate a mix of uses and a pedestrian-friendly street environment in commercial areas
- provide services that contribute to neighborhood self-sufficiency while improving the District's position in the regional economy
- maintain high-quality housing stock through physical maintenance and community interaction that promotes pride and safety
- welcome residents from a broad spectrum of age groups and income levels with new housing units that are high quality as well as affordable
- protect and expand access to the district's natural amenities including parks, trails, views and recreational facilities
- enhance environmental consciousness to reduce the negative impacts of humans on the environment

- encourage proactive planning for the Ford Plant site, while continuing to support the invaluable asset it provides
- maintain a high level of safety through community engagement, strong relationships with public safety departments, and utilization of crime-preventive urban design features
- enjoy a high level of education due to a successful relationship between the neighborhood, the City, and the education community

Actions for achieving the above vision and goals for Highland Park are presented in several topic areas: Commercial Districts, Housing, Urban Design, Transportation, Parks and Recreation, Environment, Public Safety, and Education.

Commercial District

West 7th Street Area

- ~~1) Amend the Shepard Davern Gateway Small Area Plan and Overlay [Summary adopted 9/22/1999] with two modifications:~~
 - ~~a) Reduce the maximum allowed building height to five floors or fifty five feet while continuing to enforce forty foot height limits in the Mississippi River Critical Area~~
 - ~~b) Eliminate convention facilities as permitted uses~~
- ~~2) Initiate a TN3 Master Plan to evaluate potential rezonings and implementation of TN design guidelines to replace the design guidelines in the Shepard Davern Overlay area~~
 - 1) Improve the safety and walkability of West 7th Street, including the slowing of traffic coming into the city off the Highway 5 bridge, to create the feeling of a Gateway to Saint Paul.
 - 2) Create a neighborhood park and community gathering space between Shepard Road and West 7th, to better serve both the elderly and youth populations in the area. In particular, look for opportunities that would be easily accessible to Sibley Manor.

Highland Village

- 3) Rezone portions of Highland Village to TN-2 to support mixed-use development and appropriate building design
- 4) Explore options for shared parking agreements and new parking facilities in Highland Village
- 5) Explore the potential for a Parking Benefit District or cooperative special assessment in Highland Village to address parking issues, generate revenue for street improvements, and fund future parking facilities
- 6) Work with Metro Transit to maintain transit access to both Downtown St. Paul and Downtown Minneapolis from Highland Village
- 7) Conduct a planning study of the Ford Plant site and the adjacent railroad corridor to consider future land use options

Snelling-Randolph Commercial Area

- 8) Consider rezoning portions of the Snelling-Randolph commercial area to TN-2 to support mixed-use development and to provide design standards that limit the visual impacts of parking and maintain attractive building facades

Housing

- 9) Utilize zoning mechanisms, such as TN zoning that allow for residential uses in the commercial areas, while limiting the expansion of commercial uses into residential neighborhoods
- 10) Ensure that any redevelopment of the St. Gregory's site—or any future redevelopment in residential areas—is compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood
- 11) Encourage mixed-income developments, offering both renter and owner options
- ~~12) If Sibley Manor or other large market rate or subsidized affordable housing complexes are redeveloped, District 15 requests that at least 30% of the new units provided on-site are affordable to residents making below the St. Paul median income~~ **REMOVED AT REQUEST OF TASK FORCE; REPLACEMENT BELOW**
- 12) Support a balance of housing types, tenures, and ownership models in the Shepard-Davern area of the Highland District, and pursue high quality housing that can serve as an amenity for the neighborhood.**
- 13) District 15 requests that the City implement architectural design standards to ensure that new residential construction is compatible with adjacent houses in scale, form and architectural design

Urban Design

- 14) District 15 encourages the City to enhance the basic design standards in the City code for commercial areas to be more similar to TN zoning district design standards
- 15) Use City's sign code to limit billboards and ensure attractive signage
- 16) Increase the number of street trees with infill planting where gaps exist and with new development projects
- 17) Continue to survey and inventory historic properties in the district in order to provide protection and encourage sympathetic renovation
- 18) Encourage buried power lines

Transportation

- 19) Use traffic calming design techniques—like those outlined in the City's Transportation Plan—to increase pedestrian and driver safety
- 20) In the West 7th Street Area, make the following changes to the public street right-of-ways to ensure an attractive and safe pedestrian environment:
 - a) District 15 will discuss with MnDOT setting a uniform speed limit of no more than 35 miles per hour along West 7th Street through Highland Park
 - b) Ensure that all realigned streets create a gridiron street pattern with short, urban-sized blocks
 - c) Provide on-street parking when possible
 - d) Install frequent street trees and other streetscaping
 - e) Require wide sidewalks throughout the area and replace existing gaps in the sidewalk network (Davern, Rankin, Madison, Alton and Springfield streets)
 - f) District 15 desires to install count-down pedestrian crossings at major intersections, including West 7th Street and Davern and add new crosswalks and signage at all intersections, and will work with Public Works to pursue these objectives.
 - g) ~~Install a semaphore at the intersection of Shepard and Davern~~ **COMPLETE**

- ~~h)g)~~ District 15 will pursue installation of a left-turn signal with the existing semaphore at the West 7th Street and Davern intersection
- ~~i)h)~~ District 15 will pursue redesign of the intersection at West 7th, Montreal and Lexington to increase pedestrian safety
- ~~j)i)~~ Redesign intersection of St. Paul and Cleveland Avenues to increase pedestrian safety
- 21) District 15 will pursue reconnecting Shepard Road to the Mississippi River as a parkway extension of Mississippi River Blvd with extensive landscaping and pedestrian and bicycle trails.
- 22) Prioritize resources for the reconstruction of the Edgumbe-Hamline bridge
- 23) The Highland community strongly desires a reduction in the speed limit on Snelling Avenue from 35 to a uniform 30 miles per hour between Highland Parkway and Montreal
- 24) Study TN rezoning for portions of Highland Village and West 7th Street area to achieve better design standards for parking
- 25) Install bike lanes on Snelling and Randolph, where possible
- 26) Enhance bicycle facilities and construct bicycle routes in the District consistent with the City's Transportation Plan, however, the Highland District Council opposes adding new bicycle lanes along Mississippi River Blvd.
- 27) Expand and encourage use of and access to transit options
- 28) Increase the number of bus shelters along bus routes
- 29) Protect the Mississippi River Blvd from transportation changes that would increase motor vehicle traffic
- 30) Protect the District from transportation changes that will create new or larger arterial roads
- 31) Ensure that all streets have a sidewalk on at least one side of the street and adequate lighting

Parks, Recreation, and Libraries

- 32) Assess resources for the expansion of services at Homecroft as a community recreational center and enlargement of its meeting and play spaces, which are identified as priorities by the Highland District Council
- 33) Prioritize Capital Improvement Budget monies to build a new park near the existing Sibley Manor, as outlined in the Shepard-Davern Plan
- ~~34) Assess funding for a new recreation center south of West 7th Street, identified as a priority by the Highland District Council~~ **REMOVED AT REQUEST OF TASK FORCE**
- ~~34) Improve accessibility to Crosby Farm Park and the trails on the south side of Shepard Road, particularly through enhanced pedestrian and bicycle crossings as identified in the Great River Passage Plan.~~
- 35) Identify and map opportunities for future green and open space acquisition, conservation, public access to the Mississippi River, and creating connections between existing open spaces and parks
- 36) Maximize connectivity between parks and open space through the use of bicycle and pedestrian trails in Highland and with adjacent districts
- 37) Protect views and vistas to and from the Mississippi River while protecting environmentally sensitive areas
- 38) Upgrade historic Highland Golf Course Clubhouse as a multi-use facility that can be rented by the public for events
- ~~39) Prioritize resources for an expanded library in the West 7th St corridor~~ **REMOVED AT REQUEST OF TASK FORCE**

- ~~40~~39) Prioritize resources for renovation of the Highland library and consider expansion
- ~~41~~40) Support opportunities for the public to comment on potential parks and recreation changes

Environmental

- 41) Provide a variety of educational and community clean-up events
- 42) Identify structures in District 15 that are at risk for lead-based paint and lead pipes and mitigate their negative effects through programs for replacement, rehabilitation and repainting
- 43) Identify areas of high stormwater run-off and alleviate its effects through the integration of best management practices into developments
- 44) Develop creative funding strategies for upgrading infrastructure within the District
- 45) Reestablish Saint Paul's representation on the Metropolitan Airport Commission's Noise Abatement Board
- 46) Support city-wide energy conservation efforts such as the Neighborhood Energy Connection and its "hOurCar" car-sharing program
- 47) Maintain weekly recycling pick-up
- 48) Replace boulevard and park trees that are lost due to disease, damage, etc.
- 49) Plant only native species or cultivars in natural areas while controlling exotic and invasive species
- 50) Preserve and protect natural resources, like the Mississippi River, its floodplain and bluffs by restricting new development from extending past its current boundaries unless such development is specifically allowed in the floodplain or critical area overlay districts
- 51) Strictly enforce height limits within the Mississippi River Critical Area

Public Safety

- 52) Continue to support Neighborhood Block program
- 53) Educate property owners on crime prevention and security improvements in the home and commercial areas
- 54) Increase police patrols—particularly at night—to prevent unlawful behavior
- 55) Increase police presence in parks—particularly Crosby Farm Park and along the Mississippi River
- 56) Upgrade deteriorating sidewalks
- 57) Ensure that strong police community bonds are continued through interactions at both District Council meetings and involvement with the monthly Western District community meetings
- 59) Apply CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Community Design) principles in the design of public projects

Education Strategies

- 60) Encourage public participation in school decisions that will have a large impact on the surrounding neighborhood

Priority Actions for City Participation

The following actions (referenced by number in the plan summary) have been identified as

priorities of the community that require leadership or signification participation by city government. Community groups and city departments should implement the projects identified in this summary by applying for city resources in competitive processes such as the Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) and Sales Tax Revitalization program (STAR), and working through the regular operating programs of relevant city departments.

Planning and Economic Development

#1, #2, #3, #7, #8, #9, #10, #12, #13, #14, #4847, #5251, #5352

Public Works

#19, #20, #21, #22, #23, #24, #26, #29, #4645

License, Inspections and Environmental Protection

#5, #15, #4342

Parks and Recreation

#26, #32, #33, #34, #5049

Libraries

#39, #40

Police

#5554, #5655

Planning Commission Findings

The Planning Commission finds that the Area Plan Summary of the District 15 Highland Park Neighborhood Plan, as proposed by the District 15 Planning Council, is generally consistent with the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan and adopted City policies.

Planning Process

The District 15 Comprehensive Plan Update was created through a public participation process and a thorough investigation of the issues that will affect Highland Park in the next ten to twenty years. The community plan process started in January 2004. The Highland District Council created a Task Force to deal specifically with creating goals for Highland's future. The creation of this plan took place in several steps over a twenty-month period. The Task Force was composed of members of the Highland District Council and staff, planners from the City of St. Paul, members of the community, business owners, and student consultants from the University of Minnesota – Humphrey Institute. Residents and business-owners were also asked to give input on the Plan through interviews with key stakeholders and at public meetings.

The Task Force met nearly two dozen times between January 2004 and September 2005 to discuss the issues of primary importance to District 15. These meetings were brainstorm sessions

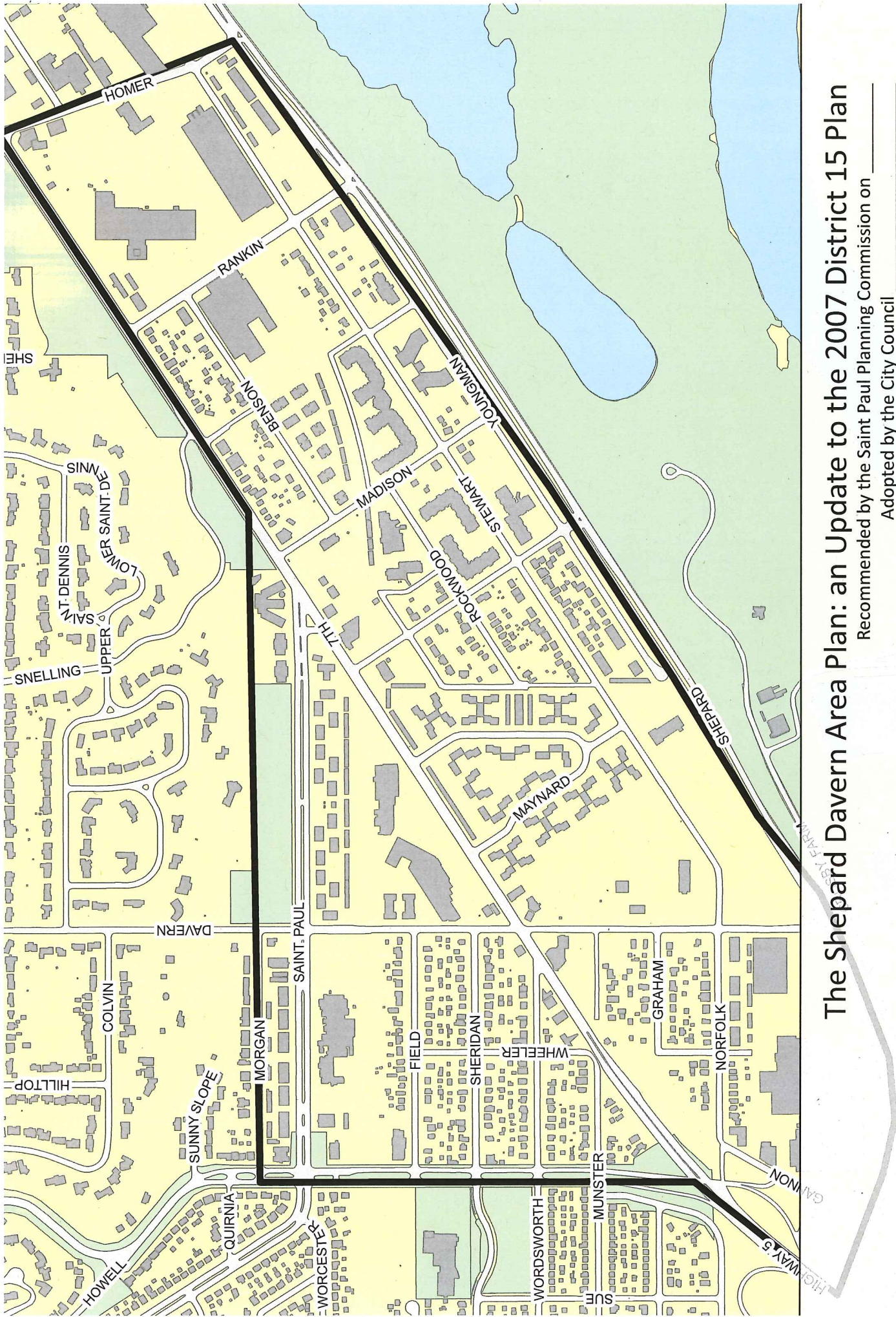
that focused on land use, economic development, public safety, transportation, parks and recreation, quality of life issues, business/commercial, and human services. The outcome of these meetings was a preliminary draft of the District Plan addressing the prominent issues in the District.

In January of 2005, four graduate students from the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs (HHH) at the University of Minnesota were contracted to develop and organize the updated plan for Highland as part of their final capstone project. The graduate students met with the Highland District Council, the Planning Task Force, and many community members to get further input for the District Plan. They developed a stakeholder analysis to determine who was invested in the Highland District, and whom they should contact about specific issues. The HHH graduate students also developed an analysis of the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) in the District. The Highland District Council gave their input on the assets and issues for many topics and changes Highland will address in the future. The HHH graduate students compiled this information and used it to create the Plan Elements listed in the plan.

The draft District Plan was presented to the public at the Highland District Council's annual meeting on April 26, 2005. The students gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the plan, and provided draft Plan Element sections for the community to read and respond to. The community members who attended the meeting were encouraged to give input and commentary on the draft. The Highland District Council held a second public meeting for input on the District Plan on June 23, 2005 at the Hillcrest Recreation Center. This meeting was an open forum where the public expressed their ideas about the Plan. Both sets of public meetings lead to positive feedback and significant changes to the final Plan.

After the students finished their work, the District Council hired one of the graduate students to finalize the Plan. At a special meeting on September 22, 2005, the Highland District Council Board voted unanimously to approve the District Plan.

In 2013, at the request of the Highland District Council, the Neighborhood Planning Committee and Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul initiated a planning update process for the Shepard Davern area. The 1999 Shepard Davern Small Area Plan and Highland District Plan's West 7th Commercial District chapter were both to be examined. A task force of community members, co-chaired by a community representative and planning commissioner, was convened and met monthly for a year to complete this plan update. The new Shepard Davern Area Plan was intended to replace the West 7th Commercial Area chapter of the Highland District Plan. It changed some of the priorities for the area, which are reflected in this amended Area Plan Summary. The new Shepard Davern Area Plan was also proposed as an addendum to the Comprehensive Plan. Furthermore, the plan allowed the 1999 Shepard Davern Small Area Plan to be decommissioned.



The Shepard Davern Area Plan: an Update to the 2007 District 15 Plan

Recommended by the Saint Paul Planning Commission on _____

Adopted by the City Council _____



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Credits

Area Plan Task Force Members

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Jack Dobier
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Larry Kaiser
Lisa Moe
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Kathy Soderberg
Michael Waldman

Saint Paul Planning Commission

Representative / Co-Chair

Paula Merrigan (January - June 2013)
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Key City Staff

Michelle Beaulieu
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Michael Richardson
Kathryn Purcham

An Update to the 2007 D15 Plan - page 1



Planning Background

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The Shepard Davern area is at the southwestern-most edge of Saint Paul, just across the Mississippi River from the MSP International Airport and the Mall of America, and easily accessible from Downtown Saint Paul via Highway 5 / West 7th Street or Shepard Road. This strategic location has been the focus of many planning efforts, including a 1999 Small Area Plan, as part of the Fort Road Development Plan of 2005, a chapter of the District 15 Neighborhood Plan (also 2005), and as a component of the Great River Passage Plan (2013). Much of the Shepard Davern area are presently covered by two Overlay Districts that are part of the Saint Paul Zoning Code: the Shepard Davern Residential and Shepard Davern Commercial Overlay Districts (see map below).

The existing Shepard Davern Overlay Districts exclude a number of key commercially-zoned properties along West 7th Street, and do not include the full area discussed in the Shepard Davern Small Area Plan (1999). These districts also include certain standards that have made it difficult to attract development, and may be prohibitive to the redevelopment of some of the properties in the area.

Since the creation of these overlay districts, the City of Saint Paul has adopted new Traditional Neighborhood zoning districts which include many of the pedestrian-friendly qualities and design standards that are included in the Shepard Davern Overlay Districts. TN zoning districts may be a more straightforward and comprehensive replacement for these overlay districts.

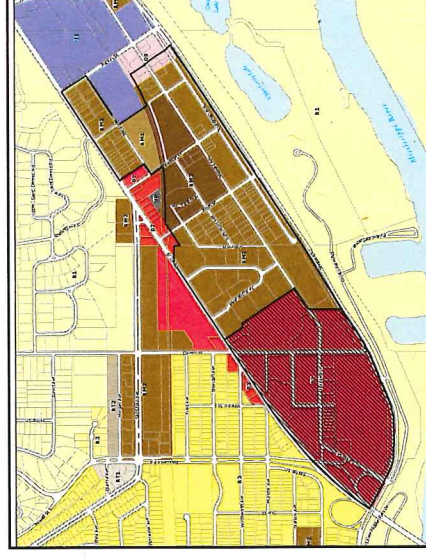
This plan addresses the key goals from past planning efforts to create a modern, relevant vision for the Shepard Davern area, develop goals for the neighborhood, and will inform the zoning study which will replace the Overlay Districts.

Purpose of Update

The 2005 Highland District Plan recommends rezoning the area to Traditional Neighborhood District 3, to “ensure that developers have not only the flexibility to be creative, but also the regulations to guarantee high-quality design.” In 2011, after an amendment to the Residential Overlay District, the Highland District Council requested that the existing small area plans be reviewed and updated, and that a zoning study be completed for the areas under both the Residential and Commercial Overlay Districts.

Format of Update

This plan update is intended to form a seamless part of the existing Highland District Plan from 2005, as requested by the Saint Paul Planning Commission. When adopted it will replace the 1999 Shepard Davern Gateway Small Area Plan, which will be decertified.



*Area zoning and Shepard Davern
Overlay Districts*

The Shepard Davern Area Plan

An Update to the 2007 D15 Plan - page 2

Study Area

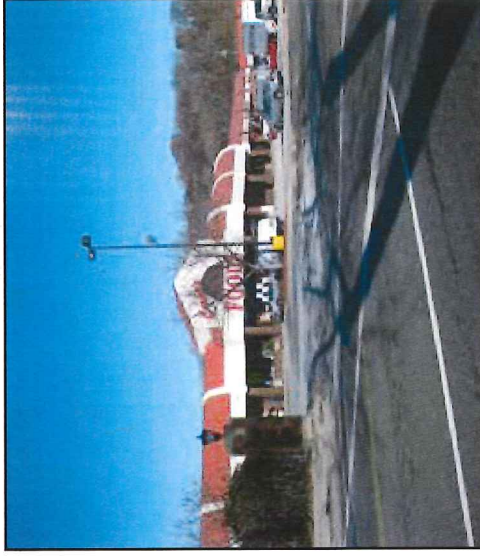
The Shepard Davern area is centered on West 7th Street, a high-traffic, high-speed thoroughfare that bisects the area of District 15 between the Highland Bluffs and the Mississippi River. The area currently contains a variety of uses including a combination of multi-family dwellings and detached single-family homes, as well as airport-serving surface parking lots, strip malls, and light industrial uses. The Mississippi River provides a beautiful natural border on two sides of the area and its floodplain provides the location for some of the most scenic public parks in St. Paul.

The Shepard Davern area has the potential to be one of the most vibrant, attractive neighborhoods in Saint Paul. The area has numerous natural, locational and social assets that provide a base for a bright future. The area includes the majority of Highland Park's affordable housing and contributes substantially to the neighborhood's ethnic and socioeconomic diversity. Sibley Manor in particular provides an invaluable asset to Highland as a privately-operated source of affordable housing. For half a century, Sibley Manor has been an entry point for immigrant families in St. Paul. Without Sibley Manor and other properties in the Shepard Davern area, Highland and the City of Saint Paul would be a much less diverse place. It will be important, however, to assure that a mix of housing tenures and types are encouraged in this neighborhood, both to attract additional retail opportunities, and to capitalize on the other assets of the Shepard Davern area.

In addition to affordable housing and diversity, other assets in the area include: Crosby Farm Park and the Mississippi River, easy access to Downtown St. Paul and the Airport, the commercial visibility offered by West 7th Street, a substantial amount of underdeveloped land (mainly in surface parking lots) that is ripe for redevelopment, good transit access on West 7th Street and a mix of commercial, industrial and residential land use.

With the combination of locational, natural, and community assets, the Shepard Davern area is poised to become an even stronger community and commercial center than it is today. However, the area must also address some current issues and potential concerns. Among the most worrisome issues are: high traffic speeds on West 7th Street, lack of a connection to the Mississippi River and a lack of a pedestrian-friendly street environment.

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*Sibley Plaza, photo by
City of Saint Paul 2013*



*Graham Place Apartments, photo by
City of Saint Paul 2013*

The Shepard Davern Area Plan

An Update to the 2007 D15 Plan - page 3

Study Area, continued

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The concerns for the future are: that new development will be incompatible with the rest of the Shepard Davern area and Highland Park in scale or use, and that development will overshadow the natural environment along the Mississippi River.

The Shepard Davern Area will ideally become a place that capitalizes on its assets, effectively addresses its issues and minimizes the risk posed by external threats. The realization of this ideal will have to include an interconnected set of pedestrian-oriented and mixed-use urban villages. These urban villages replace most of the area's underutilized land with new 3-5 story mixed-use buildings with a combination of first-floor convenience retail and affordable and market rate housing for people throughout the life cycle. The vision may include some hotels, but should avoid overly-tall buildings and large regional uses that would disrupt the character of the neighborhood and would not meet a local need. The majority of the existing single-family homes and light industrial uses will stay to support a diverse housing stock and jobs. The street environment will support pedestrian and bicycle travel as well as transit and automotive travel. The area will be an attraction for the neighborhood and the entire City.

The Shepard Davern neighborhood has been so named for a number of years. However, the intersection of Shepard Road and Davern Street is hardly the heart of the neighborhood, is not a widely recognized geographic point, and therefore does not brand the area well. There may be an opportunity to re-brand the neighborhood to better reflect the vision for the future of the neighborhood, rather than the past. For consistency, this plan uses the "Shepard Davern area" name.

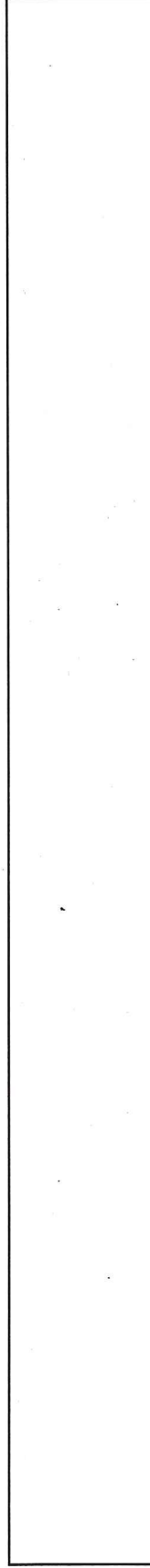


image credit

Land Use Goals

The Shepard Davern study area is a truly mixed-use district, with a range of land uses from light industrial to retail and office spaces, to both single- and multi-family housing. The mixed-use character is a strength, and provides local businesses and services for the many residents of the area as well as for those passing through the corridor. As the neighborhood's residential density increases, maintaining a balance between these land uses will be important, so that industrial uses fit into the character of the neighborhood, to strengthen the commercial businesses to serve new residents, and to retain single-family housing without dwarfing it in scale. The area is a singular community, and signage, unifying streetscape, or other tools particularly identifying the community and the Gateway to Saint Paul will help visitors feel welcome to both the district and the city.

Land Use Objectives and Strategies

LU1. Attract more neighborhood serving businesses to the area, to better serve the needs of residents in the area.

LU1.1 Encourage mixed-use developments with first-floor retail spaces on primary roadways, particularly West 7th.

LU1.2 Work with developers to attract a mix of neighborhood serving businesses and regional businesses to create a strong retail base.

LU2. Work to address property crime issues in the neighborhood, making it a safer more attractive place to work, shop and live.

LU2.1 Increase police presence in the neighborhood, to address areas where criminal activities have been identified.

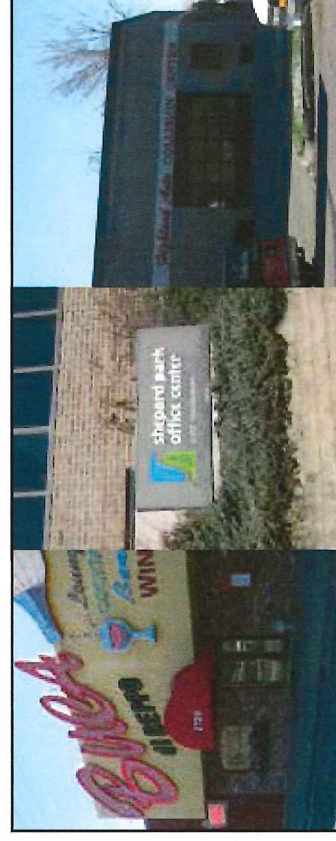
LU2.2 Work with crime specialists to address particular issues in the area, through methods that may include increased lighting, camera surveillance, and/or Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), particularly in reviewing retail area parking lot design.

LU3. Encourage public/private partnerships to create both vibrant open spaces and community gathering spaces that are welcoming to neighbors.

LU4. Encourage light industrial uses in existing industrially zoned areas and adjacent to existing industry, for example, light manufacturing and data processing.

LU5. Work with existing industrial businesses to create a more enticing area.

LU6. Through a community-driven process, come up with a new neighborhood name for a stronger neighborhood identity. Use this to strengthen the Gateway to Saint Paul.



Buca Restaurant, Shepard Park Office Center, and Highland Auto, photo by City of Saint Paul, 2013

The Shepard Davern Area Plan



Parks and Recreation

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The Shepard Davern area is surrounded by parkland, not the least of which being Crosby Farm Park on the south side of Shepard Road, and including McDonough Park along Saint Paul Avenue. These parklands, however, are not well-used by residents in part due to their inaccessibility, but also because of the desire to keep these spaces natural. Access to these parks should be enhanced for residents of the area, but the need for more active park spaces should also be addressed to better serve the community's recreation and gathering-space needs.

Parks and Recreation Objectives and Strategies

PR1. Create a new neighborhood park between Shepard Road and West 7th to better serve both the elderly and the youth populations in the area. In particular, look for opportunities that are easily accessible to Sibley Manor.

PR1.1 Work with private developers to take advantage of parkland dedication and stormwater management requirements.

PR2. Look for opportunities for community gardening and/or urban agriculture in the area.

PR2.1 Explore alternative uses for McDonough Park.

PR3. Maintain the natural areas adjacent to the river as a unique asset, in accordance with the recommendations of the Great River Passage Plan.

PR4. Enhance the river area to create a destination that will attract more regional visitors to the area. Include signage to help people move through the park, and work with schools to encourage more visits.

PR5. Improve neighborhood accessibility to the Crosby Farm Park and trails on the south side of Shepard Road.

PR5.1 Enhance access points through improved pedestrian crossings at the four points identified by the Great River Passage Plan: South Davern Street, Alton Street, South Madison Street and South Rankin Street.

PR6. Improve access to the Two Rivers Outlook on the south side of Shepard Road and the east side of West 7th Street.

PR7. Improve and maintain the appearance of City-owned land on the hill adjacent to West 7th Street north of Saint Paul Avenue (including McDonough Park), in particular to enhance the area and create a Gateway to Saint Paul.



Great River Passage Plan, pg 106

The Shepard Davern Area Plan

An Update to the 2007 D15 Plan - page 6



Housing

DRAFT

The Shepard Davern area is unique in the mix of housing types and tenures. It is one of the most densely populated areas in Highland Park and the City of Saint Paul. The area has a high renter population and a relatively high density of low-income residents compared to the rest of the Highland District. The diversity of housing types and range of affordability is valued by the community, and efforts should be made to assure that one housing type or tenure does not dominate the marketplace. While this diversity is an asset to the Shepard Davern area, there should also be a concerted effort to create a sense of identity and community among the various populations that live there.

Housing Objectives and Strategies

- H1. Support a better balance of housing types, tenures and ownership models, including high quality housing that will serve as an amenity for the neighborhood.
- H2. Attract more neighborhood serving businesses to the area, to better serve the high density of residents in the area (see Land Use Objectives and Strategies).
- H3. Retain the existing clusters of single-family houses, particularly in areas where the single-family residential structure is the primary building type on a given block.
 - H3.1 Use zoning to protect the single-family character of these areas.
 - H3.2 Work with the Highland District Council and housing organizations to encourage and incentivize maintenance and rehabilitation of single-family dwellings in targeted areas as necessary.
- H4. Create new block clubs, and support existing block clubs, to foster sense of community.
 - H4.1 Work with the Highland District Council to raise the awareness of the block club system and to sign people up to organize block clubs.
- H4.2 Work with apartment and rental property managers to set up block clubs for people living in multi-family structures.
- H4.3 Create a stronger community connection to Highland Village.
- H5. Identify, promote and support social service organizations that serve the diverse populations living in the area.
 - H5.1 Create a resource list of service organizations available to property owners.
- H6. Assure that landlords are complying with housing and maintenance regulations and standards.
 - H6.1 Work with the District Council and pertinent City departments to identify and address problem properties.



The Regency Apartments, photo by City of Saint Paul 2013

The Shepard Davern Area Plan

An Update to the 2007 D15 Plan - page 7



Transportation

DRAFT

Shepard Davern is the first neighborhood of Saint Paul that people experience when coming into the city off the Highway 5 bridge. The area is well-connected to three major regional job centers (Downtown Saint Paul, the MSP Airport, and the Mall of America). And the Mississippi River area provides opportunities for recreation. Taking advantage of these three attributes through improved streetscaping, maintaining and widening public transportation options, and improving pedestrian access across both West 7th and Shepard Road, will improve the Shepard Davern neighborhood for residents, encourage patronage of local businesses, and bring more visitors to the area. Sidewalk improvements, lighting, and bicycle improvements including bike racks, could dramatically improve the district.

Transportation Objectives and Strategies

T1. Improve all transportation modes, including the walkability, of the area to better accommodate the high density of residents in the area.

T1.1 Work with City and County staff and other stakeholders during upcoming transportation studies to further the goals of the immediate community. Participate in public hearings, workshops, and open houses, and encourage neighbors to engage as well.

T1.2 Work to develop priorities to create Capital Improvement Budget (CIB) proposals for improvement projects.

T1.3 Initiate specific pedestrian and walkability improvements, with particular attention paid to both pedestrian safety and streetscape amenities.

T2. Slow the traffic coming into the city off the Highway 5 bridge onto West 7th, both to improve the safety of the pedestrian environment along West 7th, and to help create the feeling of a Gateway to Saint Paul.

T3. Maintain Shepard Road as a truck route.

T4. Improve the safe access to and safety of bus stops along the north side of West 7th Street.

T4.1 Work with Metro Transit, Saint Paul Public Works, and private developers of adjacent sites during redevelopment, to identify potential new shelter locations along West 7th.

T5. Improve pedestrian spaces and overall safety and condition of Davern Street.

T5.1 Improve the sidewalks and install bike lanes on Davern.

T5.2 Improve the condition of Davern at the CP rail crossing.

T5.3 Seek ways to reduce vehicle speeds on Davern north of West 7th Street.

continued on next page



Metro Transit Bus Rte 54, photo by City of Saint Paul 2013

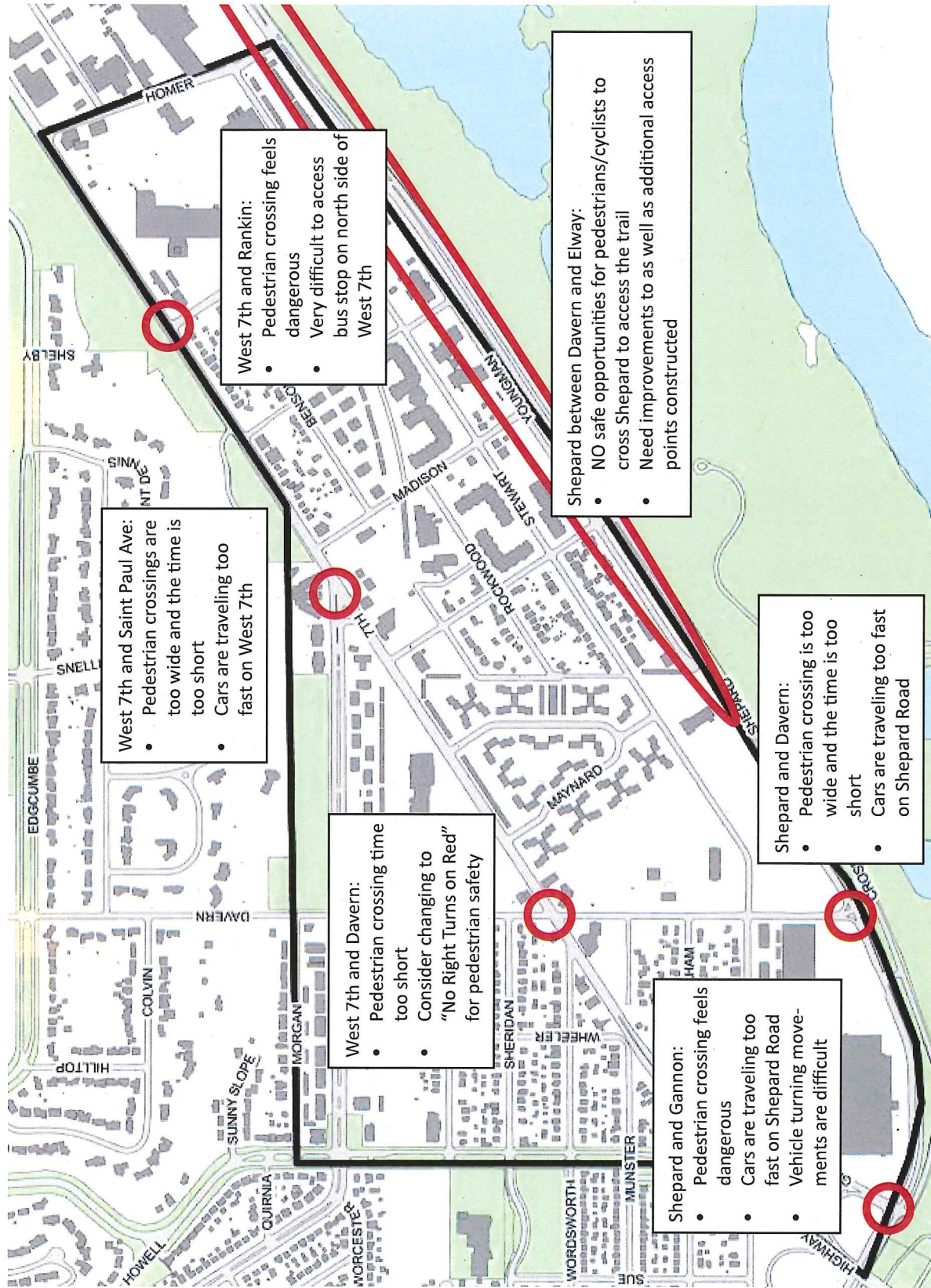
The Shepard Davern Area Plan

An Update to the 2007 D15 Plan - page 8



Transportation Objectives and Strategies, continued

- T6. Implement bicycle improvements throughout the area, as identified in the St Paul Bikeways Plan, to encourage bicycling as an affordable means of transportation for area residents.
- T6.1 Install bike parking consistent with the bike parking design for Highland Village and the rest of the District.
- T7. Make improvements at problematic intersections for the safety of all users (see map for identified areas). Use these opportunities to bring higher value and amenity to the neighborhood through streetscaping.
- T8. Study the Canadian Pacific rail spur for bicycle and pedestrian trail use, and actively engage and seek meaningful input from neighborhood stakeholders, adjacent property owners and tenants. Community members should be active participants in the process.
- T9. Use the Saint Paul Great River Passage Plan to guide streetscape and connectivity improvements, and to improve access through the neighborhood and to the river area. In particular, seek ways to implement the improvements identified in for Shepard Road.



| Land Use Strategies | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| # | Strategy Summary | Responsible Parties | Community Priority for Implementation |
| L1 | Attract neighborhood-serving businesses | PED | High |
| L2 | Address property crime issues, other safety concerns | PED, PW, Police | High |
| L3 | Create vibrant urban spaces | PED, HDC | Low |
| L4 | Encourage light industrial uses in I-zoned areas | PED | Medium |
| L5 | Improve industrial areas of neighborhood | PED | Low |
| L6 | Craft a new identity for the area with a new name | HDC, PED | Medium |

| Parks and Recreation Strategies | | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| # | Strategy Summary | Responsible Parties | Community Priority for Implementation |
| PR1 | New neighborhood park btwn W.7th and Shepard | Parks, PED | High |
| PR2 | Community gardening opportunities | Parks, HDC | Low |
| PR3 | Maintain natural river areas | Parks | Medium |
| PR4 | Attract regional visitors | Parks | Low |
| PR5 | Improve accessibility of Shepard Road trails and Crosby Farm Park | Parks, PW | High |
| PR6 | Improve access to Two Rivers Park Outlook | Parks, PW | Medium |
| PR7 | Improve appearance of parks along W. 7th | Parks, PW | High |

Note: HDC=Highland District Council, PED=Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development, PW=Public Works, DSI=Department of Safety and Inspections

| Housing Strategies | | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------------------|
| # | Strategy Summary | Responsible Parties | Community Priority for Implementation |
| H1 | Better balance of housing types | PED | High |
| H2 | Attract neighborhood-serving businesses | PED | High |
| H3 | Retain existing single family housing areas | PED | High |
| H4 | Create new block clubs | HDC | High |
| H5 | Raise awareness of social services and other resources | HDC, PED | High |
| H6 | Work with landlords and identify problem properties | HDC, PED | High |

| Transportation Strategies | | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| # | Strategy Summary | Responsible Parties | Community Priority for Implementation |
| T1 | Improve transportation options, particularly walkability | PW, PED, HDC | High |
| T2 | Slow traffic off Highway 5 onto W. 7th | PW, MnDOT | High |
| T3 | Maintain Shepard Road as truck route | PW, MnDOT | Medium |
| T4 | Improve bus stops on W. 7th | PW, MnDOT, Metro Transit | High |
| T5 | Improvements to Davern Road | PW, PED | Medium |
| T6 | Bicycle improvements | PW | Low |
| T7 | Intersection safety | PW, PED, MnDOT | Medium |
| T8 | CP rail spur study | PW, PED, RCRRA | High |
| T9 | Great River Passage recommendations | PW, Parks, PED | Low |

Appendix: Basic Census and Market Information

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1.
Esri forecasts for 2012 data.
2010 data unless otherwise noted.

Population

- Total Population: 5,465
- 59.3% White Alone
- 26.9% Black Alone
- 0.3% American Indian Alone
- 4.8% Asian Alone
- 0.0% Pacific Islander Alone
- 6.0% Some other race Alone
- 2.6% Two or more races
- 10.2% Hispanic Origin

Housing

- Households: 2,846
- Average Household Size: 1.91
- Housing Units: 3,187
- Owner Occupied Units: 16.9%
- Renter Occupied Units: 72.4%
- Vacant Housing Units: 10.7%
- Households with children: 17.9%

Income

- Average Household Income (2012): \$44,974
- Households with income <\$15,000: 26.4%

Data source: Esri and Dun & Bradstreet, 2012

Market Profile

- Total Retail Trade Demand (/Potential): \$48,427,107
- Total Retail Trade Supply (/Sales): \$11,671,773
- Retail Gap: \$36,755,333
- Total Food & Drink Demand: \$5,655,567
- Total Food & Drink Supply: \$11,041,826
- Food & Drink Gap: -\$5,386,259

Notable Gaps

- Grocery Stores Gap: \$6,523,479
- Health & Personal Care Stores Gap: \$3,101,885
- Building Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores Gap: \$486,673
- Electronics & Appliance Stores: \$1,041,954
- Full-Service Restaurants Gap: -\$2,584,706
- Gasoline Stations Gap: -\$2,133,931



CITY OF SAINT PAUL
Christopher B. Coleman, Mayor

25 West Fourth Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Telephone: 651-266-6565
Facsimile: 651-266-6549

DATE: August 28, 2014
TO: Saint Paul Planning Commission
FROM: Neighborhood Planning Committee
SUBJECT: Shepard Davern Area Zoning Study and Proposed Rezoning

BACKGROUND

In 1999, the Saint Paul City Council adopted the **Shepard Davern Small Area Plan** prepared by City staff in collaboration with a community task force. The plan addressed future land use, design guidelines, street scaping and housing goals, and included the adoption of two overlay zoning districts – the Shepard Davern Commercial and Shepard Davern Residential Overlay Districts – which required higher design standards, allowed building heights up to sixty-five (65) feet, and allowed some retail and residential uses above the underlying zoning.

Shortly after adoption of the Shepard Davern overlay districts, the City of Saint Paul created new “traditional neighborhood” zoning districts, which included design standards very similar to those in the Shepard Davern overlays. The availability of these new districts prompted a recommendation in the **District 15 Plan Summary** (2007) to replace the Shepard Davern overlay districts and underlying zoning with T3 traditional neighborhood zoning.

In early 2013, the Planning Commission initiated the Shepard Davern Zoning Study for the area generally defined as Shepard Road on the south, Homer Avenue on the east, a north border running from the east along West 7th/Highway 5 and then 1 block north of Saint Paul Avenue for the remainder, and a western border along Edgumbe Road to West 7th/Hwy 5 and then jogging west to Shepard Road.

THE SHEPARD DAVERN ZONING STUDY PROCESS and DRAFT PROPOSAL

The attached Shepard Davern Zoning Study Timeline highlights the key activities and public engagement during the process.

- The Shepard Davern Task Force conversations over a year, its priorities, and its resulting draft plan formed the foundation of these zoning proposals.
- In May, all property owners in the study area were sent a mailing about the zoning study, indicating whether their parcel was under consideration for rezoning, providing a proposed zoning map, and inviting them to learn more: at two community meetings in June; on the city's website; or by contacting City staff directly.
- The two June meetings were well attended and the zoning study and proposals explained. Staff received some feedback on the zoning proposals from property owners and members of the Shepard Davern Task Force.

SHEPARD DAVERN AREA ZONING STUDY

BACKGROUND AND POTENTIAL ZONING CHANGES

**Prepared by the Department of
Planning and Economic Development**

DRAFT -- August 18, 2014

SHEPARD DAVERN AREA ZONING STUDY

BACKGROUND

The Shepard Davern neighborhood of Highland Park is a vital and high profile community serving as the southwest gateway to the City of Saint Paul. The area is characterized by a mix of commercial, office and industrial uses along West 7th Street, blocks of single-family, multi-family and senior housing, a handful of religious and community institutions, and is adjacent to miles of trails and open space amenities of the Mississippi River Valley. The “gateway” portion of the neighborhood in the southwest underwent significant redevelopment shortly after 2000 when a number of multi-family and senior living building projects replaced blocks of former single-family homes.

In 1999, the Saint Paul City Council adopted the **Shepard Davern Small Area Plan** prepared by City staff in collaboration with a community task force. The plan addressed future land use, design guidelines, streetscaping and housing goals, and included the adoption of two overlay zoning districts – the Shepard Davern Commercial and Shepard Davern Residential Overlay Districts – which required higher design standards, allowed building heights up to sixty-five (65) feet, and allowed some retail and residential uses above the underlying zoning.

Shortly after adoption of the Shepard Davern overlay districts, the City of Saint Paul created new “traditional neighborhood” zoning districts, which included design standards very similar to those in the Shepard Davern overlays. The availability of these new districts prompted a recommendation in the **District 15 Plan Summary** (2007) to replace the Shepard Davern overlay districts and underlying zoning with T3 traditional neighborhood zoning.

Traditional Neighborhood zoning is also consistent with land uses policies for the area in the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan, as outlined below.

The Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan (2010) Land Use map that guides future development in the city designates:

West 7th corridor through the Shepard Davern area as a “*Mixed Use Corridor*”

- thoroughfares served by public transit that are appropriate for a mix of uses, including residential, commercial, retail, office, small scale industry, institutional, and open space

Sibley Plaza area as a “*Neighborhood Center*”

- compact, mixed use areas of higher density housing, as well as shopping, community amenities, and employment centers

In early 2013, the Planning Commission initiated the Shepard Davern Zoning Study for the area generally defined as Shepard Road on the south, Homer Avenue on the east, a north border running from the east along West 7th/Highway 5 and then 1 block north of Saint Paul Avenue for the remainder, and a western border along Edgecumbe Road to West 7th/Hwy 5 and then jogging west to Shepard Road.

SHEPARD DAVERN AREA ZONING STUDY

- allows building height of thirty (30) feet, plus an additional one (1) foot of height for each one (1) foot of setback from all property line setbacks.

T3 zoning:

- allows a mixed commercial and residential project, with no limits on amount or location of each use
- prohibits drive-thrus
- requires that parking be placed to the side and rear of the main structure; not in the front next to the main street – the goal of this is to reduce the visual impact of parking lots and to encourage a development pattern that is more conducive to walking, biking and transit
- allows building height of fifty five (55) feet, or up to ninety (90) feet with a Conditional Use Permit if specific standards are met and if the additional height above seventy five (75) feet is setback in proportion to the additional height
- Of the remaining B2 parcels, all but one is being considered for rezoning to T3, which would:
 - allow the addition of stand-alone residential uses, in addition to the currently allowed business, service and office uses
 - require higher design standards for new construction
 - allow an increase in the maximum height of new structures from the current 30 feet, to 35 feet for single-family and townhomes, to 45 feet for multi-family housing, and to 55 feet for business or mixed business and residential (under special conditions and with setbacks, a building may be allowed up to 90 feet)
- The other B2 parcel, which is on W 7th St. just east of Madison and adjacent to a residential district, will be evaluated for T1 or T2, to be consistent with potential zoning for the rest of the block it is on, (more information on page 6).

A B3 district is intended to accommodate businesses more diversified than those in the B1 and B2 districts along major traffic arteries or adjacent to community business districts.

- In the study area, the fourteen (14) parcels zoned B3 are along W 7th St. and are used for a mix of restaurants, offices, retail and distribution uses.
- Nine (9) B3 parcels clustered together near Alton and Madison, and adjacent to multi-family housing are being considered with T3 zoning, which would:
 - allow the addition of stand-alone residential uses, in addition to the currently allowed business, service and office uses
 - prevent the addition of certain uses that are allowed in B3 districts, but not in T3, such as auto repair and sales, bingo halls, pawn shops, green houses and drive-thrus (existing businesses of these types would be allowed to remain in operation as “nonconfirming” businesses)
 - require higher design standards for new construction
 - allow an increase in the maximum height of new structures from 30 feet to 35 feet for single-family and townhomes, to 45 feet for multi-family housing, and to 55 feet for business or mixed business and residential. Under special conditions and with setbacks, a building may be allowed up to 90 feet.
- Five (5) B3 parcels clustered on the north side of W 7th between Wheeler and Davern, and adjacent to single-family housing are being considered with T2 zoning, which would:

SHEPARD DAVERN AREA ZONING STUDY

- require higher design standards for new construction
- reduce the maximum height of new structures from current limit of 50 feet to 35 feet

T2 zoning:

- allow new development to include a wide range of retail and service uses
 - require higher design standards for new construction
 - reduce the maximum height of new structures from current limit of 50 feet to 35 feet or to 45 feet if special conditions are met
- Four (4) RM2 parcels are proposed for T3 zoning – the Sibley Manor development, a property along Shepard Road used for auto service and parking, and an apartment property northwest of Sibley Plaza, which would:
 - allow new development to include a wide range of office, service and commercial uses
 - require higher design standards
 - change the maximum height of new structures from the current limit of 50 feet for any residential to 35 feet for single-family and townhomes, to 45 feet for multi-family housing, and to 55 feet for business or mixed business and residential. Under special conditions and with setbacks, a building may be allowed up to 90 feet

RM3 zoning exists on six (6) parcels, 4 of which are developed with multi-family and senior projects and 2 as single-family lots. All parcels are proposed for rezoning to T3, which would:

- allow a wide range of new service and business uses to the area, in addition to housing
- require higher design standards for new construction
- add height limits on new buildings -- 35 feet for single-family and townhomes, 45 feet for multi-family housing, and 55 feet for business or mixed business and residential, or up to 90 feet if special conditions and setbacks are met; a height limit does not exist in RM3

R1 and R3 one-family residential districts provide for predominantly low- and medium-density, one-family dwellings along with civic and institutional uses, public services and utilities that serve the residents in the districts. The two (2) R1 parcels are undeveloped, one owned by the city along the north side of St. Paul Avenue and a small one owned by and adjacent to Chateau Care Suites.

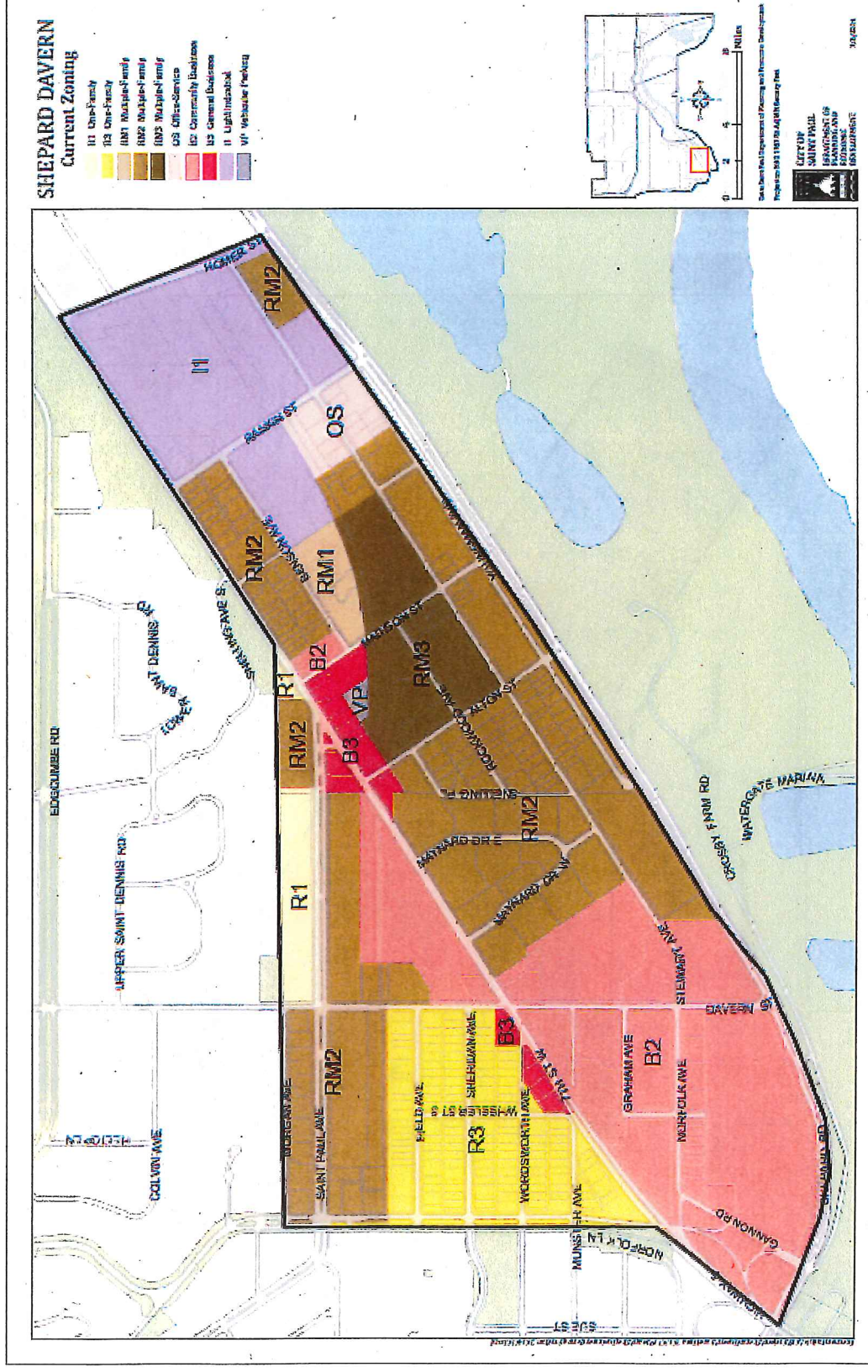
- The 135 R3 parcels comprise the single-family neighborhood north of West 7th between Edgumbe and Davern.
- No changes to zoning are proposed for the R1 and R3 properties.

The I1 district is intended to accommodate wholesale, warehouse and industrial operations whose external effects are restricted to the area of the district and are not detrimental to surrounding districts.

- The fourteen (14) I1-zoned parcels constitute an industrial area on the eastern side of the the study area.

SHEPARD DAVERN AREA ZONING STUDY

CURRENT ZONING in the Shepard Davern zoning study area.





**HIGHLAND
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Highland District Council
1978 Ford Parkway Saint Paul, Minnesota 55116
651-695-4005 Fax 651-695-4019
Email: hdc@visi.com

August 21, 2014

Saint Paul Planning Commission
25 West 4th Street, Suite 1400
Saint Paul, MN 55102

To Saint Paul Planning Commissioners,

The Community Development Committee (CDC) of the Highland District Council (HDC) would like to submit this letter to give input to the Neighborhood Planning Committee before the Shepard Davern zoning overlay study hearing on August 27, 2014. We want to make you aware of an important and evolving development in our community that involves a key piece of property, Sibley Plaza.

Sibley Plaza is a major development within the study area. The strip shopping center is considered the neighborhood's "Town Center" by residents. The majority of the neighborhood's retail activity resides in Sibley Plaza. The plaza includes restaurants, service providers and a major grocer that serves Shepard Davern and the surrounding community.

Paster Enterprises, the owner of the plaza, is about to announce a new plan for the shopping center. The Highland District Council will be hosting a community meeting to review the plans for the Sibley Plaza shopping center, with Paster, on September 16th, 2014.

After this meeting, the HDC will have had presentations on the Shepard Davern plan amendment, the Shepard Davern zoning study, and the key redevelopment of Sibley Plaza, which is in the study area.

As you will see in the Shepard Davern plan documents the HDC and the committee assigned to oversee the plan made considerable and successful efforts to engage the public. Although this meeting comes after the formalized plan, we believe it is important to hear public input.

Therefore, the HDC would like to wait and weigh in with recommendations at the Planning Commission's Public Hearing in October. The CDC feels strongly that the public input process has been very thorough and that there does not need to be a delay, or an immediate decision one way or the other on the zoning of the Sibley Plaza property.

However, we want to make you aware that the Sibley Plaza redevelopment is an important part of the Shepard Davern plan and that we expect to provide important and timely input in October. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Community Development Committee of the Highland District Council

Resolution 2014-07D

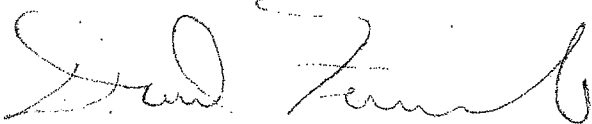
pharmacies. These practical realities are acceptable and achievable given the property's current zoning designation, but would be prohibited under the newly proposed zoning.

We have made substantial progress in the planning and design phase of our proposed project and do not wish to abandon our efforts because of the re-zoning proposals. Thus, we respectfully request that Sibley Plaza retain its current B2 zoning. It is our understanding that in the event the zoning is changed over our objections this important entry point into the City would become a pre-existing nonconforming use which would leave us with only the option of cosmetic improvements to the existing structure, thus drawing only those tenants who would be willing to accept the current condition of the existing shopping center. This would not be in the community's best interest, and it would not be in our best interest. Furthermore, this would not cater to the national or local tenants we seek to attract in order to bring patrons from the upper Highland area to West 7th Street. Additionally, we would not be able to add the proposed 130 units of market rate rental housing.

Our location is a "gateway property" seen by those arriving from the airport as a first impression of the City. That first impression would be infinitely better if the property is redeveloped as we are planning and will present to the City, as opposed to the alternative that would be caused by a re-zoning to T-3.

We look forward to working with you in the planning process and exchanging ideas and information in order to build a more vibrant community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "David Feinwachs", written in a cursive style.

David Feinwachs
General Counsel

CC: Howard Paster
Ken Henk

alternatives. The first alternative is to remodel the existing shopping center buildings or if the existing buildings are demolished and a new up to date shopping center is reconstructed then the only option is to build the shopping center adjacent to the sidewalk along West Seventh Street. I do not believe that this is in the best interest of the West Seventh area nor do I believe that it will accomplish a good result.

As evidence of the impracticality of the consequence of a T3 zoning, I previously represented a client that was a tenant in the retail/apartment project constructed on the southeast corner of Snelling Avenue North and Larpenteur Avenue. This retail/apartment project was built adjacent to the sidewalk at that busy intersection. As a consequence of limited access to and from this property, my client's projected business activity was never achieved. In order to reduce it's financial exposure under it's lease, my client was required to pay a large termination fee to the landlord. It appears to me that the same situation will exist at Sibley Plaza if the new buildings are to be built adjacent to West Seventh Street.

I'm therefore urging you as representative of the City of Saint Paul to recommend that Sibley Center Shopping Center site remain at it's current zoning, or if rezoned to T3 than the exception be granted to build the new structures along the north side of the site.

Very truly yours,

Gerry E. Frisch