

Hillcrest Master Plan



Community Engagement Summary

to the Hillcrest CAC
May 18, 2021
Bill Dermody, City Planner



SAINT PAUL
MINNESOTA

STPAUL.GOV



Today's Presentation: Community Engagement Summary

- Context: Where we are/previous engagement
- Outreach
 - To Promote
 - To Inform
- Input
 - Who we heard from
 - What we showed/asked
 - What we heard
 - What people like
 - Concerns
 - BIPOC input spotlight
 - Out-of-the-blue ideas



Context: Where we are

- This was the 3rd round of engagement: input on two finalist scenarios & housing policy
- 1st round of engagement in February 2020:
 - Postcards mailed to 4,883 surrounding residents (including renters and apartment units) to promote Hillcrest events and encourage email list signups
 - 230 engaged to inform the community priorities used to create site approaches
 - 160 at community event
 - 48 at 3 popups
 - 22 via online survey
- 2nd round of engagement in August 2020:
 - 200+ engaged to provide input on four site approaches, to inform finalist scenarios
 - 93 at community online event
 - 85 at 4 popups
 - 308 via online survey/Social Pinpoint (counted comments, not individuals)
 - 7 via conversation circle



Promotion (for this round of engagement)

- 3 mass emails to ~9,600 people each
- Social media
- Greater East Side Council (District 2) efforts



Efforts to Inform

- March 16 community online event: ~150 attendees
 - Q/A session
 - Leftover questions answered online
- Video and document posted at stpaul.gov/hillcrest (300+ views)
- 1-page flyers for popups
 - Translated into Hmong, Spanish, Somali
- Provided display boards and flyers to The Beloved United Methodist Church at Furness/Sherwood
- Presentations to Greater East Side (District 2) Community Council, St. Paul Planning Commission, St. Paul Parks & Recreation Commission, and the City Council



Input Overview

- 312 people engaged for their input:
 - Online survey: 136 responses
 - 8 popups: 168 people
 - Conversation group with Councilmember Yang: 7 people
 - 1 phone message (no internet)



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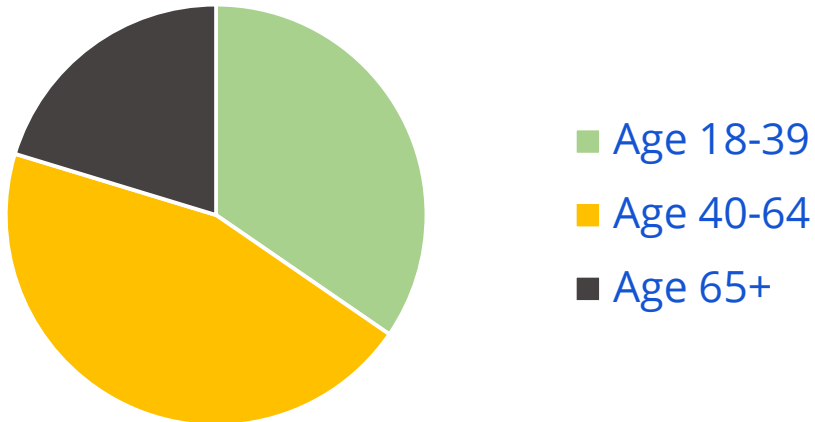
*Also, East Side Freedom Library held two discussions with ~110 participants
(not City-led events)*



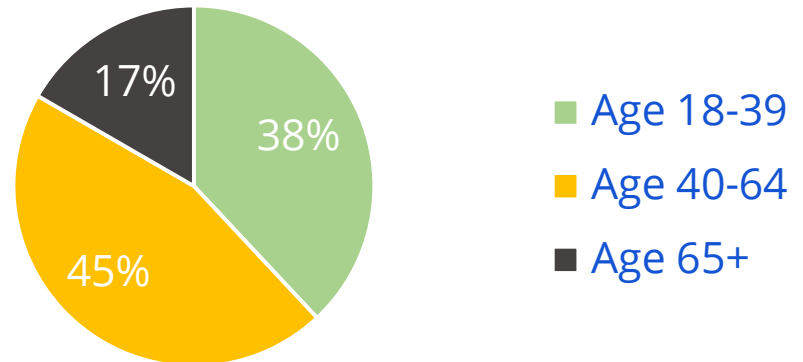
Who we heard from

- Age and gender were largely representative of actual area demographics for survey and popups

Online Survey



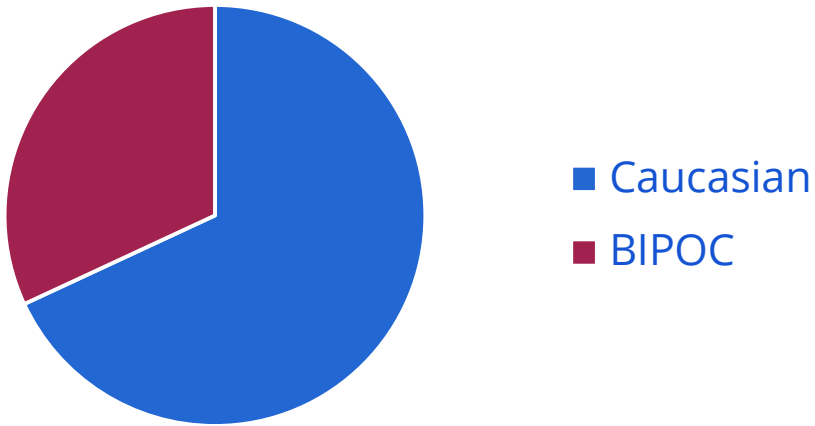
Census Data (adjacent)



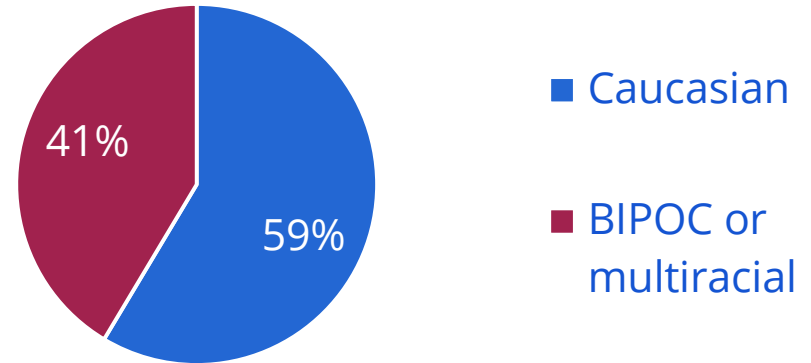


Who we heard from

Via All Input Venues*



Census Data (adjacent)

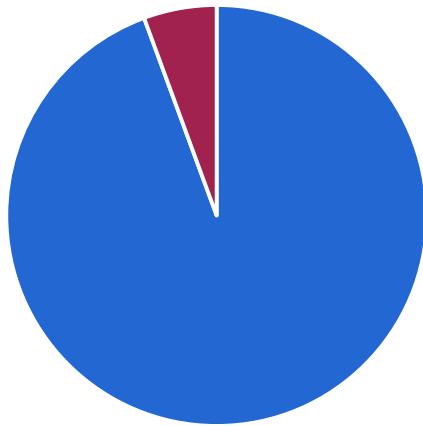


*approximate-observed



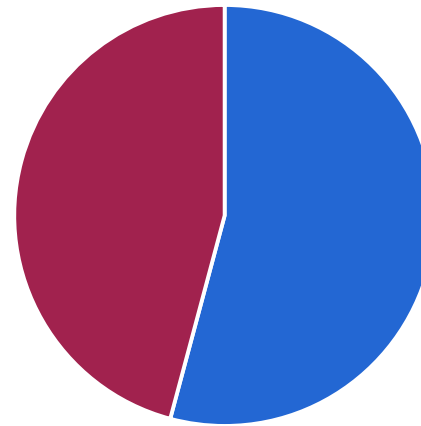
Who we heard from

Online Survey



■ Caucasian
■ BIPOC

Popups*

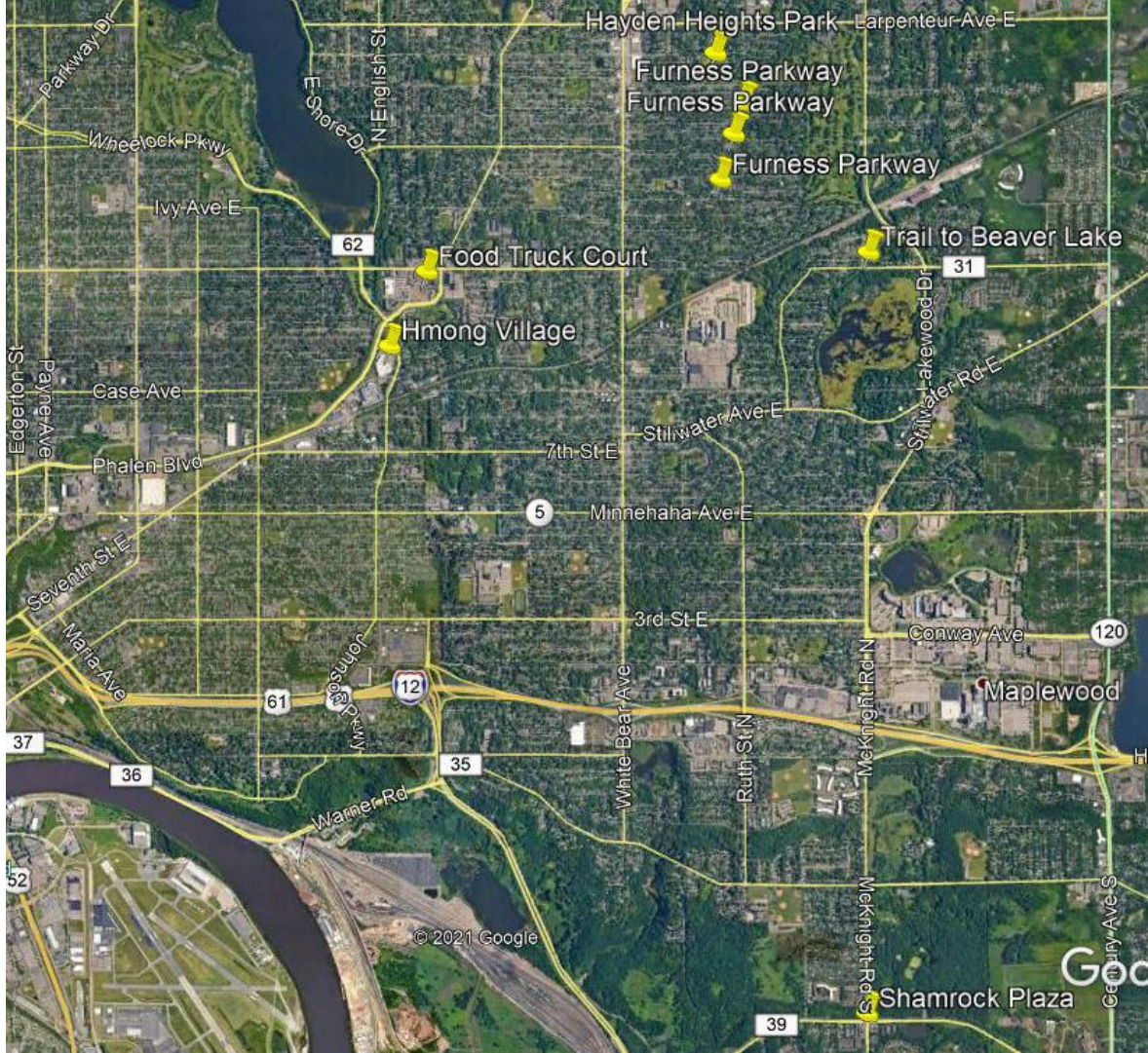


■ Caucasian
■ BIPOC

*approximate-observed

Popup Locations

- 8 events





What we showed

- Online survey participants saw an [online video and a 27-page information booklet](#) including a 2-dimensional map of each scenario, various 3-dimensional massing illustrations, and two summary pages comparing the scenarios' data (acreages by land use, estimated jobs, estimated # of residential units, etc.) and how they fulfill priorities
- Popup participants saw mostly the same info, minus some of the 3D illustrations, on three display boards
- The draft Housing Policy was provided in both contexts

HILLTOP



HOUSING

Low
1-3 Stories



HOUSING

Medium
3-4 Stories



HOUSING

High
5-6 Stories



EMPLOYMENT



OPEN SPACE

Active Park



OPEN SPACE

Passive Open
Space



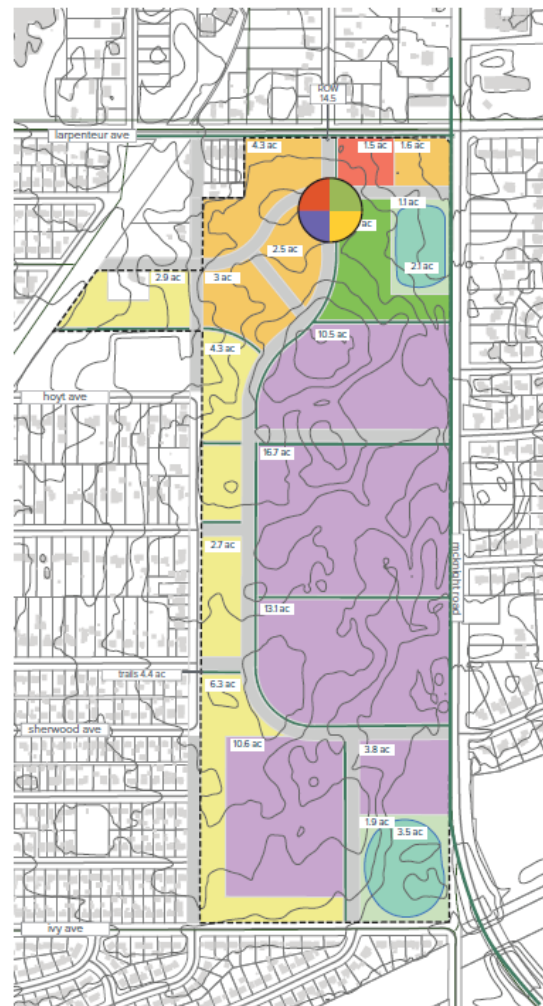
OPEN SPACE

Wetlands



NEIGHBORHOOD
NODE

JOBS FOCUS





What we asked

- The more formal online survey asked 8 questions:
 - What do you like about the Hilltop Scenario?
 - Do you have concerns about the Hilltop Scenario?
 - What do you like about the Jobs Focus Scenario?
 - Do you have concerns about the Jobs Focus Scenario?
 - Do you prefer one alternative over the other?
 - Please explain your choice on the previous question.
 - Do you have an opinion on the draft housing policy?
 - Do you have any additional comments on the project?
- The popups asked essentially the same questions in a less structured manner, sometimes following the residents' interests.



What people like about Hilltop Scenario

(in order of frequency heard)

- More green space
- Preserves high point/topography
- Has more housing
- Layout (of green space/housing/overall)

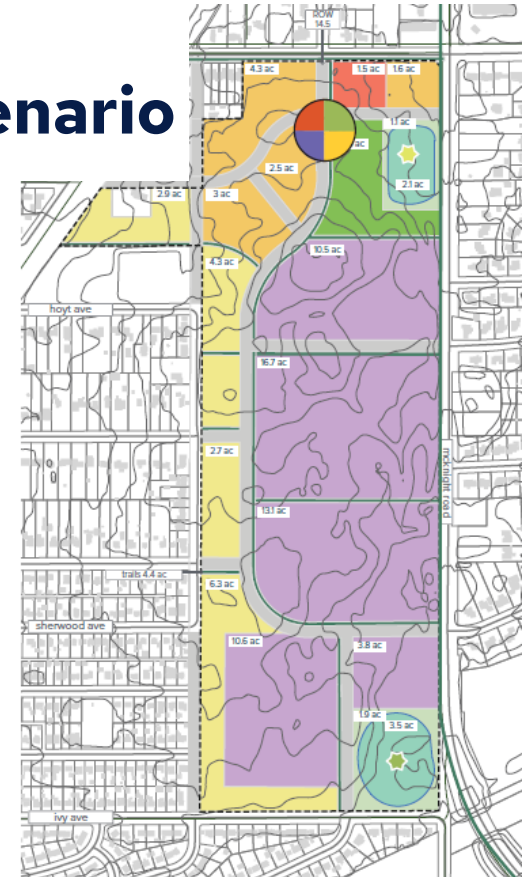




What people like about Jobs Focus Scenario

(in order of frequency heard)

- West edge design (housing along west edge)
- Housing locations/layout
- Light industrial closer to McKnight





Concerns about Hilltop Scenario

(in order of frequency heard)

- Light industrial location
- Too much height/residential density
- Traffic
- West edge design

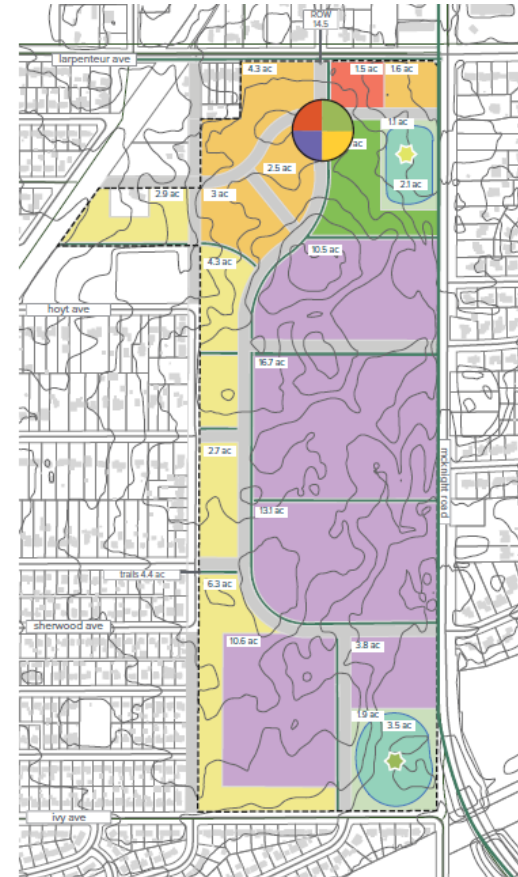




Concerns about Jobs Focus Scenario

(in order of frequency heard)

- Lack of green space/wetlands
- Too much light industrial





Comments on both

(in order of frequency heard)

- Concerned about too much development/not enough green
- Concerned about too much traffic
- Too much light industrial in a residential context
- Don't want affordable housing
- Want affordable housing
- Do not want Winthrop to go through – traffic and speed
- Concerned about impact on taxes/services
- Uninspiring design



BIPOC input spotlight – what's different from overall input?

- Deeply affordable housing is important, for both rental and ownership
 - Including affordable ownership pathways for BIPOC people
- Larger housing units (3+ bedrooms) are important
- Jobs are relatively more important
- Local hiring for jobs is important

Otherwise, the BIPOC input generally reflected overall input.



Differences of opinion by location

- People immediately west of the site care more about the west edge treatment
- People near the site in Maplewood are more concerned about taller buildings in northeast corner, and industrial placed along McKnight Road

(Also looked at Maplewood vs. St. Paul and near site vs. farther from site, but there were no significant differences in either preference between scenarios or comments on them.)



“Out of the blue” opinions and ideas (not prompted by our information or questions) (in order of frequency heard)

- Keep it a golf course
- Make it all/mostly single-family homes
- Extend the engagement timeline
- Include indoor community gathering space in one of the multi-family buildings
 - Could be multi-faith religious space, or secular
- Include community garden space
- People use Winthrop ROW as play space today
- Poor/uninspiring designs
- Add retail/restaurant space or farmers’ market
- Park space should allow for large family picnics
- Ensure bike connections to west line up with White Bear Ave signals (Ivy, Arlington, Hoyt)
- Add regional rail station to the south



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Upcoming Engagement

- Port Authority-led Information Meetings/Listening Sessions on May 22 & 25
 - Coordinating with Councilmember Nelsie Yang, District 2, City staff
 - See [webpage](#) to RSVP and learn more
- Focus Groups in June-July
 - Organization tbd, in coordination with CM Yang, District 2, Port Authority
- Formal public hearings in ~October and January



Questions?

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Bonus Engagements

- ~110 people at 2 East Side Freedom Library events (March 9 & 23)
 - Organized by ESFL – not the City
 - Input included:
 - More extensive engagement needed by City
 - Affordable housing important, including deeply affordable
 - Green space, trees important
 - Culturally based community space needed
 - Energy efficiency important
 - Community garden desired