



**January 12, 2022**

TO: Planning Commission  
FROM: Comprehensive & Neighborhood Planning Committee and  
Luis Pereira, Director of Planning  
SUBJECT: Hillcrest Master Plan & Associated Actions

## INTRODUCTION

The 112-acre Hillcrest Golf Course site is located at the southwest corner of Larpenteur Avenue and McKnight Road, at Saint Paul's northeast boundary with Maplewood. The golf course began operation in 1921 and closed in 2017. Previous anti-fungal treatments have left substantial soil contamination throughout the site, especially on the former greens, tee boxes and fairways. The site contains the city's highest point among hilly topography, and also contains 10 designated wetlands. In 2019 the site was purchased by the St. Paul Port Authority (SPPA) using bonding authorized by the Saint Paul City Council via Ordinance 19-39.

In order to promote the site's redevelopment in accordance with City policies and priorities, the following are proposed:

1. A master plan;
2. Rezoning of the site from R2 One-Family Residential District to T1M, T2M, T3M, and ITM (Traditional Neighborhood Districts and Transitional Industrial District, respectively, with a master plan), to allow for the master plan and to implement its land use designations;
3. Zoning Code amendments to:
  - a. Clarify allowable flexibility via a master plan;
  - b. Update allowable industrial building materials;
  - c. Allow for freestanding monument signage to serve an entire business park, not just the lots on which signs are located; and
4. A Comprehensive Plan amendment to allow for larger block sizes in industrial areas on the site

The following memo provides background on Ordinance 19-39, the master plan process, related processes, and the site itself. It then goes on to describe the proposed master plan contents and its associated rezoning and amendments. Finally, the memo provides analysis of conformance with the Comprehensive Plan and other City plans, and a recommendation.

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## ORDINANCE 19-39

The [June 2019 ordinance](#) that authorized bonding for the site's purchase by SPPA also established key expectations for the site's development, including:

- SPPA will prepare the site for development, including design, engineering, construction and delivery of environmental remediation, public infrastructure, and development-ready pads;
- Outside of affordable housing and advanced energy infrastructure, the project will pay for itself;
  - o SPPA will not request tax increment financing (TIF) for infrastructure for the project;
  - o SPPA will not request further financial assistance from the City to complete the project;
  - o SPPA will be responsible for the cost of any reasonable off-site improvements to public infrastructure required to serve or support the project, specifically including but not limited to the sanitary sewer identified in the Port's briefing letter that throttles before connecting to the Metropolitan Council interceptor;
- Parks and open space will be provided;
  - o The City's parkland dedication requirements will be met;



- SPPA will deliver approximately five (5) acres of active improved park area within the site, including remediated and rough graded land and \$2.5 million for improvements (note to Committee: the full cost to develop this acreage will be estimated to exceed the SPPA contribution);
- Approximately 15 acres of publicly accessible passive open space, buffers, and stormwater retention space to be owned and maintained by SPPA or a third-party;
- A mix of uses, including substantial light industrial;
- A capacity to produce approximately 1,000 jobs and 1,000 housing units.

## MASTER PLAN PROCESS

In 2019, a professional master planning consultant (Cunningham) was hired by the City to create a draft master plan and recommended zoning controls for the Hillcrest Golf Course Redevelopment Site. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and a [Community Advisory Committee](#) (CAC) were established to aid in the creation of the master plan. The consultant team also provided preliminary infrastructure analyses on the topics of [water](#), [sewer](#), [stormwater](#), and [transportation](#) to inform the plan and future detailed infrastructure planning.

The TAC consisted of staff from the departments of Planning & Economic Development, Parks & Recreation, Safety & Inspections, Public Works, and Financial Services, as well as St. Paul Regional Water Services, the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD), Ramsey County Public Works, Metro Transit, and the City of Maplewood. SPPA staff, SPPA's consultants, and the City's consultants also attended the TAC meetings. The role of the TAC was to provide input to the formation of the Plan and to review draft layouts and text prior to community engagement for technical and regulatory feasibility. Topics covered in the 22 TAC meetings included land use layouts, street and trail layouts and design, wetlands, transit needs, stormwater design, park needs, ownership and maintenance expectations, art, economic development trends, code interpretations, review of the preliminary infrastructure analyses and more.

The TAC's work was complemented by a stormwater workshop in September 2020 to guide the master plan's stormwater design and policies. The workshop was funded by RWMWD, and the results of the workshop were incorporated into the stormwater infrastructure analysis report. The workshop established a consensus that the master plan should explore integrated or district stormwater solutions which could be one of the defining features of the site, promoting stormwater management practices that

have a “light touch,” and maximizing co-benefits beyond stormwater such as wildlife habitat and passive recreation.

In addition, the Saint Paul Transportation Committee reviewed the transportation analysis in February 2021 and provided feedback, including recommending that connectivity for all modes should be improved within the site and to the surrounding area, and that Arlington and Ivy Avenues are logical east-west bike routes because they have signalized intersections with White Bear Avenue to the west.

The Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was formed in 2019 through an application process. The composition of the CAC included residents from both Saint Paul and Maplewood, as well as representatives from the business community, and individuals with a particular expertise in housing and multimodal transportation. The role of the CAC was to help shape the master plan and to provide input on the public engagement process. Early in the process the CAC adopted a set of 20 community priorities to guide the plan. In late 2021, the CAC reviewed the draft master plan and provided their comments in a letter attached to this memo.

There have been three phases of broader community engagement to inform the master plan:

- Phase 1, in January/February 2020, engaged approximately 220 people via online surveys, an in-person community forum at a local elementary school (advertised by 4,000+ postcards mailed to area residents), and three pop-up meetings in order to inform “community priorities” that would be formally affirmed by the CAC and guide the contents of the master plan.
- Phase 2, in July/August 2020, engaged approximately 178 people about four potential design alternatives via an online community meeting and four pop-up meetings, and received 480 online comments via a survey and the Social Pinpoint tool that attached comments to site layout images.
- Phase 3, in March/April 2021, engaged approximately 312 people about two finalist scenarios via an online community meeting and eight popup meetings. In addition, 136 online survey responses were received.

Pop-up meetings in all engagement phases were designed to reach BIPOC communities and improve the demographic representativeness of community input. Phases 2 and 3 also included equity-focused conversation circles convened by Councilmember Nelsie Yang to engage additional voices. BIPOC input, to the extent it was different from general population input, put more emphasis on deeply affordable housing (both rental and ownership), larger housing units (3+ bedrooms), jobs, and local hiring. Summaries of each engagement phase are linked within the master plan document.

## PENDING RELATED PROCESSES

Besides the master plan and associated actions before the Planning Commission, several other processes will need to be implemented prior to physical development of the site.

### Environmental Review

State law requires environmental review of this project, either through an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) or an Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR). The City is the responsible governmental unit for this process. SPPA's consultants have begun work on an AUAR for this project, overseen by the City.

### Environmental Contamination Remediation

Remediation and management of the site's extensive soil contamination will be regulated by either the Minnesota Department of Agriculture or the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, who will ensure that the contamination is properly contained or disposed of.

### Wetlands Impacts and Mitigations

The site contains 10 designated wetlands, according to a [wetland delineation report](#) and an [existing conditions inventory](#). Any wetland impacts and mitigations must be approved by two agencies: the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD) and the City of Saint Paul. The City is the responsible governmental unit for enforcing the State of Minnesota's [Wetlands Conservation Act](#) (WCA), as informed by a Technical Evaluation Panel (TEP) of wetlands professionals. The WCA requires persons proposing to impact a wetland to demonstrate their attempts to avoid impacts or, where not avoided, to minimize impacts. Any impacted wetlands must be replaced (mitigated). SPPA has informally consulted with the TEP about the proposed wetland impacts and mitigations to inform this master plan. The RWMWD [reviews applications](#) based on their own district rules and standards. SPPA has also informally consulted with the RWMWD board.

### Subdivision

The City's [subdivision regulations](#) require the site to be platted prior to development. The plat creates lots for development, dedicates parkland, and dedicates public rights-of-way. It is a critical point to establish

infrastructure and operations/maintenance expectations. The plat must be approved by the City Council upon multi-departmental review and a recommendation from the Planning Division.

## City Park Design

The master plan establishes the location for an approximately 5-acre City park, but does not establish the physical components of the park or how it will be programmed. Prior to development, the City's Parks and Recreation Department will conduct community engagement to inform design of the City-owned park. Capital and operations funding will need to be allocated. Per Ord 19-39, SPPA is expected to contribute \$2.5 million for capital costs, which will only partially fund the capital costs. The parkland will be formally dedicated through the subdivision process.

## Development Agreement

A development agreement between the City and SPPA is not necessarily required for the project. If future City subsidy is provided for the development – whether for affordable housing, advanced sustainability infrastructure, or for any other purpose – a development agreement between the City and SPPA or another developer is a likely means to establish the details. A development agreement may also be needed to establish ownership and maintenance expectations or handle other issues between SPPA or another developer and the City.

## Infrastructure Permits/Site Plan Review/Building Permits

City permits will be required for infrastructure, detailed site plans, and building construction in accordance with requirements applicable to all private development in the city, as supplemented by the master plan. Per the master plan, a comprehensive site-wide preparation and infrastructure plan that addresses water, sewer, stormwater, surface transportation elements, energy systems, gas, and electrical must be approved through the City's Site Plan Review process prior to any vertical development, excluding any development related to the energy infrastructure. The purpose of this site-wide plan is to ensure such infrastructure elements will be logically implemented and function as intended on full build out and at all interim development phases. Site plans must conform with the master plan and zoning regulations, as per [Legislative Code Sec. 61.401](#); building permits must conform to the building codes applicable to the various forms of development on-site (e.g. Minnesota Building Code, etc.).

## SITE OVERVIEW

The 112-acre former golf course contains the highest point in Saint Paul, substantial topography, mature trees, and 10 designated wetlands. Substantial mercury pollution is present throughout the site as a result of anti-fungal treatments to the golf course over the years. The site is located less than two miles from the interchange of McKnight Road and Highway 36, and less than three miles from the interchange of McKnight road and I-94. Additional site context is available in the master plan document on the topics of area demographics, site history, topography and wetlands, soil types, pollution, transportation networks, utilities, climate, surrounding land uses and housing density/types, and more.

## MASTER PLAN OVERVIEW

The master plan contains policies, site layouts, and other graphics that will apply to development of the site. Certain plan elements, including district stormwater, advanced sustainability infrastructure, public art, full development of the City-owned park, and affordable housing are dependent on funding availability, as described in the master plan document. Following an introduction and background, the master plan contains the following chapters:

- Land Use, Art and Placemaking
- Transportation
- Parks and Open Spaces
- Sustainability
- Housing
- Zoning
- Phasing
- Other Implementation

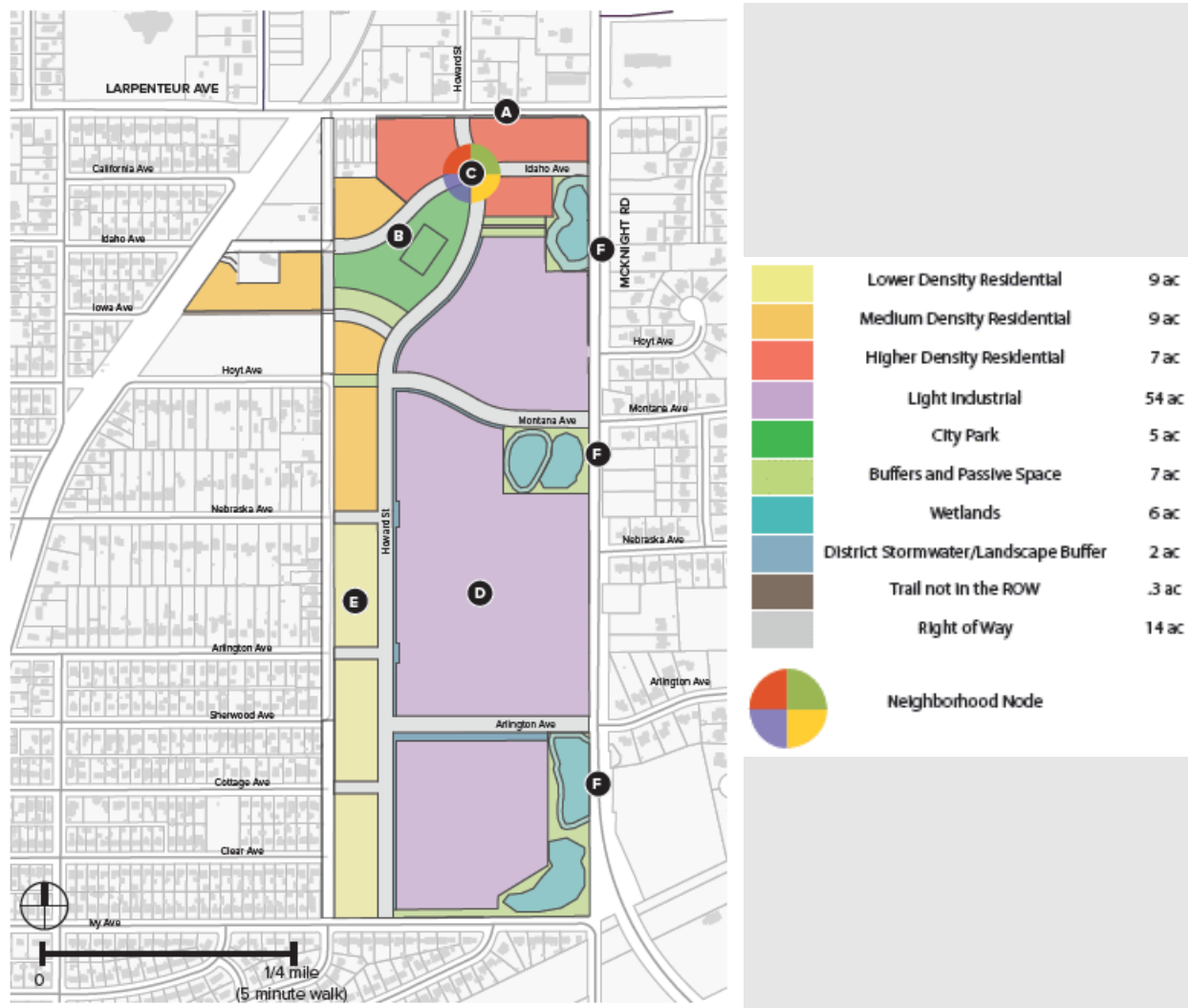


Figure 1: Master Plan Land Use layout

## Land Use, Art and Placemaking

The master plan designates 54 acres for light industrial uses, 25 acres for residential/mixed uses, 5 acres for a City Park, and 15 acres for wetlands, district stormwater, and passive open space. These allocations are estimated to provide for approximately 1,000 jobs and 1,000 households.

The site's land uses are arranged with light industrial uses close to McKnight Road to take advantage of its truck access to the regional highway system and maximize business visibility. A neighborhood node is planned for the site's northern portion, close to Larpenteur Avenue and McKnight Road, where intense

land uses such as higher-density residential, mixed commercial/residential, active, improved park area and job-heavy commercial-industrial are in close proximity. The site's west edge contains lower-density and medium-density residential that will serve as an extension of the adjacent residential neighborhood into the site, and a transition from old to new.

The master plan establishes guiding principles for and identifies key locations in which public art could contribute to placemaking in the project. Although City ordinances do not require public art, public art at street intersections is one way to meet zoning requirements in light industrial areas (per Leg. Code Sec. 66.542(a)(1)) and the master plan establishes that wall murals can satisfy zoning requirements for façade articulation (in Leg. Code 66.542(a)(2)). SPPA has done conceptual planning for public art within the project, including a variety of building murals and pedestrian-oriented sculptures in the light industrial areas. Additionally, although none are currently proposed for the project site, certain City-funded and City-operated capital projects are required to dedicate 1% of eligible project costs.<sup>1</sup> For all of these reasons, public art is likely to be a component of development at this site..

The topography of the site will be impacted by the land use layout. Although the site is expected to still contain the highest point in the city, the hills will be leveled off to facilitate development, including light industrial pads which need to be large and relatively flat. Yet, a drop of more than 50 feet will remain from the high point in the north-center of the site to the low point in the southeast corner – generally a gradual decline along streets, and more likely stepped (with retaining walls) through the light industrial land.

## Transportation

The transportation network within the site includes several key components. A new north-south street (Howard Street) through the length of the site connects Larpenteur Avenue to Ivy Avenue. Industrial-type streets (Montana and Arlington Avenues) connect truck traffic directly to McKnight Road. A generous number of off-street multi-use trails connect to the regional network. Offset intersections along Howard Street discourage cut-through east-west vehicular traffic (while still providing connectivity to the adjacent neighborhoods).

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<sup>1</sup> Eligible funding sources for public art generally include but are not limited to: local general obligation bonds/notes; other local financing sources; state grants and aids; and federal grants and aids. In order for the requirement to apply, the funding source must not prohibit public art. Eligible capital projects include but are not limited to the construction or renovation of new or existing city-owned facilities such as traffic calming; streetscapes; bikeways; stairs, walls and other structures; parks; tot lots, play areas; and trails. More information is available here:

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/financial-services/public-art-ordinance-program>.

McKnight Road and Larpenteur Avenue are Ramsey County-owned arterial streets designed to convey regional-level vehicle travel. With average daily traffic of over 11,000 vehicles per day in 2019 and access to the regional highway network, it is anticipated that McKnight Road will convey most vehicular traffic to and from the site. The master plan provides full vehicular access to McKnight Road at Montana and Arlington Avenues (aligned with streets in Maplewood), and right-in/right-out access at Idaho Avenue just south of Larpenteur – locations identified in consultation with Ramsey County staff. Montana Avenue curves moderately northward as it heads into the site from the east, to facilitate access to the neighborhood node area. Montana and Arlington include multi-use trails.

Access to Larpenteur Avenue is provided via Howard Street, which aligns with Howard Street in Maplewood. On the site, Howard Street divides light industrial uses from residential uses, and features a multi-use trail along its west side. Larpenteur Avenue is a Ramsey County road with average daily traffic of over 5,000 vehicles per day in 2019.

Along the west edge of the site, Winthrop Street is extended south from Sherwood Avenue to Ivy Avenue, and north from Hoyt Avenue to Larpenteur Avenue (Winthrop exists between Sherwood and Hoyt today). Several existing streets to the west are extended into the site, beyond Winthrop Street, including Nebraska Avenue, Arlington Avenue, and Cottage Avenue. No east-west streets go straight through the site from the west edge to the east edge; rather, all east-west streets are offset at Howard Street in the center of the site, so as to discourage cut-through traffic.

Multi-use trails are provided for bicyclists and pedestrians through the site and beyond, including connections to the Furness Trail, the existing trail along the west side of McKnight Road, and a future connection to Beaver Lake County Park to the south. Within the site, the north-south trail along Howard Street connects to the new City park, to trails heading west at Iowa Avenue and Hoyt Avenue, to trails heading east at Montana Avenue, Arlington Avenue, and Ivy Avenue, and to a new trail along the south side of Larpenteur Avenue that will extend westward to the Furness Trail.

Street and trail layouts, including minimum and typical dimensions, are provided in the master plan. On-street parking is generally expected near the neighborhood node and in front of new residential developments, but not in front of light industrial developments.



## Parks and Open Spaces

The master plan calls for approximately 20 acres of parks and open spaces, including a 5-acre City park, 6 acres of wetlands, 7 acres of wetland buffers and other passive open space, and approximately 2 acres of district stormwater. The City park is located in the northern portion of the site near the neighborhood node, with trail connections in all directions. Four of the site's 10 existing wetlands are preserved in place, including three near McKnight Road. The impacted wetlands will be mitigated elsewhere on the site at a 1:1 ratio; if any additional mitigation is required, it will be provided off-site.

## Sustainability

The Hillcrest Master Plan aims high in its sustainability policies in pursuit of carbon neutrality, integration with the ecology of the site, responsible material and waste stream management, and effective, integrated, and visible stormwater treatment. The carbon neutrality aim for this site will help the City reach its goals to reduce carbon emissions citywide by 50% from 2019 to 2030, and to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. The policies in this chapter expand on current requirements and do not duplicate existing state and local regulations that contribute to sustainability. Some of the more costly policies are noted to be dependent on funding, including district-scale ground source energy systems and meeting the City's Sustainable Building Ordinance. (SPPA has been actively pursuing potential funding sources for these elements, as well as on-site solar energy generation.)

## Housing

The Housing Chapter references citywide affordability goals for developments supported financially by the City/Housing and Redevelopment Authority, and presents the following housing type priorities:

1. Rental housing, non-age restricted
2. For-sale homes
3. Age-restricted housing

Affordable housing generally requires public funding or financial assistance.

## Zoning

The site will be rezoned from R2 One-Family Residential to several zoning districts via an ordinance that accompanies the master plan (see "Rezoning" section below and memo attachments). The Zoning Chapter

of the master plan outlines adjustments and clarifications of zoning code requirements as applied to the site, and provides parameters for any future administrative modifications to the adopted master plan. (Larger master plan modifications could always be considered through a public hearing process.) The zoning code adjustments and clarifications address such topics as building setbacks, landscaping, floor area ratios for standalone commercial buildings, design standards, and amounts of front yard surface parking. Allowable administrative modifications include reduction or expansion of widths of rights-of-way, travel lanes, trails, sidewalks, and boulevards; reduction or addition of trails; and movement of a street or trail, under certain conditions including that the changes are found to be consistent with the intent of the master plan.

## Phasing

The Phasing Chapter outlines expectations for phasing of transportation infrastructure in order to ensure a functional system, and requires a “comprehensive site preparation and infrastructure plan” that addresses water, sewer, stormwater, and other relevant infrastructure to be approved by the City prior to any development.

## Other Implementation

Zoning and phasing are elements of the implementation of the master plan. The Other Implementation chapter addresses additional implementation issues primarily related to funding for certain plan elements, including district stormwater, sustainability measures, affordable housing, public art, and design and build out of the the City park. It is recognized that the plan cannot be fully implemented without additional financial resources.

## REZONING

The site is proposed to be rezoned to implement the master plan’s land use designations, as shown in the attached draft zoning map and generally corresponding as follows:

<u>Master Plan Land Use</u>	<u>Zoning District</u>
Light industrial	ITM Transitional Industrial, with a master plan
Lower-density residential	T1M Traditional Neighborhood, with a master plan
Medium-density residential	T2M Traditional Neighborhood, with a master plan
Higher-density residential	T3M Traditional Neighborhood, with a master plan

The zoning districts each include a “M” master plan designation that indicates there is a master plan in place to guide development, in addition to the applicable zoning code provisions. The City park and other open spaces in the master plan, which are permitted uses in all zoning districts under consideration, are proposed to be grouped with the zoning of adjacent land.

The Traditional Neighborhood districts allow for certain commercial uses (e.g. general retail, etc.) in addition to residential uses. Based on market studies conducted for the property owner, only a small amount of commercial uses are anticipated, which will likely be located along or near the McKnight Road and Larpenteur Avenue frontages rather than near the western or southern edges of the site.

The following paragraphs describe the intent of the proposed zoning district designations, as relevant to this site.

- The IT Transitional Industrial District is intended to provide sites for commercial, office and light industrial uses that are compatible with nearby residential and traditional neighborhood districts, parks, and parkways.
- The T1 Traditional Neighborhood District is intended to provide for compact, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use areas of limited size, with a variety of residential, office and service uses that primarily serve neighborhood needs. It is also intended to serve as a transitional use of land along major thoroughfares, between commercial or industrial districts and residential districts or other less intensive land uses.
- The T2 Traditional Neighborhood District is designed for use in existing or potential pedestrian and transit nodes. Its intent is to foster and support compact, pedestrian-oriented commercial and residential development that, in turn, can support and increase transit usage. It encourages, but does not require, a variety of uses and housing types, with careful attention to the amount and placement of parking and transitions to adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- The T3 Traditional Neighborhood District provides for higher-density pedestrian- and transit-oriented mixed-use development. It is designed for development or redevelopment of land on sites large enough to support:
  - (a) A mix of uses, including residential, commercial, civic and open space uses in close proximity to one another;
  - (b) A mix of housing styles, types and sizes to accommodate households of varying sizes, ages and incomes;

- (c) A system of interconnected streets and paths that offer multiple routes for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists, and are connected to existing and future streets;
- (d) A system of open space resources and amenities; and incorporation of environmental features into the design of the neighborhood.

The above elements may be found within the T3 district or adjacent to it; the intent is that all would be present within a reasonable walking distance.

## ZONING CODE AMENDMENTS

A set of zoning code amendments is presented in conjunction with this master plan to address three topics:

1. **An amendment to Legislative Code Sec. 66.344 to authorize master plans to provide flexibility from certain zoning code requirements under certain conditions.** Permitting flexibility from certain zoning code requirements via a master plan can make it easier for a project to achieve Comprehensive Plan policies. Rather than having to abide by rigid variance requirements if a specific exception from code were requested separately, incorporating it into a master plan allows a big-picture analysis where other factors and additional master plan zoning requirements can be taken into account.
2. **An amendment to Sec. 66.542(a) to update allowable building materials in IT zoning districts.** Advancements in materials technology and architectural design have made the current code outdated with regard to allowable industrial building materials. Namely, visual quality has improved for concrete panels, and corrugated metal is more frequently used nowadays as a stylish architectural highlight. Corrugated metal is still inappropriate as the primary cladding material, but it can be aesthetically pleasing and durable as an accent material.
3. **Amendments to Secs. 64.103 and 64.401 to allow monument signs to include business names from throughout a business park, not just those located on the same zoning lot as the sign.** The current zoning code regulations for freestanding monument signage are unduly restrictive in business park settings. The proposed amendments would allow freestanding signs to include business names from throughout a business park, which will reduce signage clutter (fewer monument signs needed) and improve truck wayfinding within a business park – e.g. for this development, guiding trucks headed to a certain business to the right street (Montana Avenue or Arlington Avenue).

The full proposed amendments are attached. Note that, although Sec. 66.344 is located in the section addressing Traditional Neighborhood district master plans, a cross-reference in Sec. 66.544 states that Sec. 66.344 also applies to ITM Transitional Industrial district master plans.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT

In order to accommodate this development, it is proposed that Policy T-31 in the 2040 Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan be amended as follows:

**Policy T-31.** *Outside of areas being developed for industrial uses, ~~Es~~ establish (or re-establish) the right-of-way grid with block lengths of 300 to 600 feet as redevelopment occurs on large sites in order to increase neighborhood connectivity and accommodate pedestrian-oriented, higher-density development.*

Although some light industrial developments, including a few dozen in Saint Paul, can fit on 600-foot blocks, many other light industrial users require larger block sizes. In order to allow the property owner flexibility to pursue a wide range of potential users and related building footprints, surface parking and loading zones, including users who may provide especially well-paying jobs with low barriers to entry for local workers, the master plan shows block lengths of up to 1,440 feet. A Comprehensive Plan amendment is needed to allow for blocks larger than 600 feet in industrial areas such as proposed for this site.

## ANALYSIS: POLICY CONFORMANCE

As might be expected for a 112-acre redevelopment, many City policies are relevant to the draft master plan and associated zoning actions. The following section reviews conformance with many of the most significant and relevant policies from the Comprehensive Plan and other adopted policy documents.

### Comprehensive Plan

The [2040 Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan](#) (Comp Plan) contains relevant topical chapters including: Land Use; Transportation; Parks, Recreation and Open Space; Housing; and Water Resources. Conformance of the project with relevant policies from each Comp Plan chapter is discussed below.

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## LAND USE- COMP PLAN CHAPTER

The Comp Plan designates the site as an “opportunity site” with a “neighborhood node” in its northern portion, as well as an underlying “mixed use” designation for the site’s northern portion and an “urban neighborhood” designation for its southern portion. “Neighborhood nodes” are compact, mixed-use areas that provide shops, services, neighborhood-scale civic and institutional uses, recreational facilities such as parks, and employment close to residences. Comp Plan Policy LU-2 calls for the redevelopment of designated “opportunity sites” including Hillcrest for higher-density mixed-use development or employment centers with increased full-time living wage job intensity – the proposed development is both higher-density mixed-use and employment center. Comp Plan Policies LU-30 and LU-32 call for focusing growth on neighborhood nodes with increased density toward the node’s center and transitioning in scale to surrounding land uses and establishing public parks close to neighborhood nodes. Comp Plan Policy LU-34 is to provide for housing in urban neighborhoods that diversifies housing options, such as townhouses, courtyard apartments and smaller multi-family developments, which are allowed in the T1M and T2M zoning proposed for the site’s western edge. Comp Plan Policy LU-6 calls for fostering equitable and sustainable growth by facilitating business creation/attraction, supporting family-sustaining jobs, and growing the tax base (among other aims), as is being encouraged through the provision of 54 acres of light industrial, with much of it anticipated to be subject to SPPA workforce agreements. The proposed master plan land uses and layout express all of these Comp Plan land use policies.

Other Comp Plan land use policies refer to environmental impacts, such as Policy LU-8 (“Ensure that zoning and infrastructure support environmentally and economically efficient, resilient land use development”), Policy LU-21 (“Identify, preserve, protect and, where possible, restore natural resources and habitat throughout the city” via certain City ordinances, including the subdivision regulations), and Policy LU-19 (“...achieve a long-term increase in canopy coverage citywide, with general goals of 40% tree canopy coverage in all neighborhoods outside of downtown”). The master plan promotes efficient land use, with accommodation of approximately 1,000 jobs and 1,000 households on the 112-acre site. Its provisions for district stormwater and encouragement of tree trenches promote environmentally efficient and resilient infrastructure with regard to water resources, while various provisions in its sustainability chapter promote energy efficiency, including support for LEED-certifying all buildings greater than 5,000 square feet, restricting natural gas service in many cases, and pursuing ground source energy systems. Although many existing trees will be lost due to pollution remediation and development, the master plan calls for both retaining existing healthy native trees to the extent feasible and for planting trees that will meet the Comp Plan canopy goal at maturity.

Another Comp Plan land use policy, LU-30, calls for improving access to jobs by prioritizing development with high job density in neighborhood nodes. Although light industrial jobs can be a range of densities (typically 15-23 jobs/acre), the master plan contains a policy that encourages a preference for the higher end (20+ jobs/acre) of that range in light industrial areas, and the land near the neighborhood node is where such job densities might be most likely to land.

Comp Plan Policy LU-16 encourages the equitable spatial distribution of community food assets including community gardens. With no large grocery store within 2 miles of the site and no significantly sized community garden nearby, lack of community food assets is an issue in this neighborhood. The master plan's Policy POS-5 encourages provision of community garden space either on the site or nearby.

## TRANSPORTATION- COMP PLAN CHAPTER

The master plan furthers numerous Comp Plan policies that support multimodal transportation. Following the Comp Plan's modal hierarchy in Policy T-3, the master plan's transportation network has been designed to prioritize the safety and comfort of pedestrians and bicyclists, with its generous provision of off-street multiuse trails to traverse the site in all directions and reach key destinations on the site and nearby. This multiuse trail network, along with relatively higher land use intensity and encouragement of higher-level public transit service, furthers Comp Plan Policy T-21 to reduce citywide VMT by improving transportation options beyond single-occupant vehicles, Comp Plan Policy T-22 to shift mode share towards walking, biking, and public transit, and Comp Plan Policy T-27 to improve public transit mode share through strategic establishment of transit-supportive land use intensity. The master plan provides sidewalks and/or multiuse trails on both sides of all its streets, in accordance with Comp Plan Policy T-26. The master plan calls for a multimodal hub at the neighborhood node, as supported by Comp Plan Policy T-28. To improve pedestrian and bicyclist comfort, the master plan establishes principles to limit the number and negative impact of curb cuts, as called for by Comp Plan Policy T-12.

The master plan also furthers Comp Plan transportation policies that address environmental sustainability. The master plan sets a goal of 2% of public and publicly-accessible parking spaces having Level 2 chargers and requires private parking structures to be EV-capable if the equipment is not installed when built, measures that address Comp Plan Policy T-4 to develop infrastructure that supports vehicle electrification. In the landscaped boulevards along streets, the master plan encourages tree trenches or other means of visible green infrastructure that can perform stormwater functions, as called for by Comp Plan Policy T-39.

The master plan's street design seeks to make it easy for trucks to access McKnight Road and discourages truck traffic on area local streets, as called for by Comp Plan Policy T-38.

A Comp Plan amendment to allow for larger block sizes in industrial areas accompanies this master plan. The master plan abides by Comp Plan Policy T-31 in the site's non-industrial areas by establishing block lengths of 300 to 600 feet to increase neighborhood connectivity and accommodate pedestrian-oriented, higher-density development. Additionally, the existing 1300-foot-long dead-end streets of Cottage and Clear Avenues to the site's west are connected to the transportation network through an extension of Winthrop Street along the site's west edge (in existing right-of-way). (Also, the Subdivision Regulations in Sec. 69.501 of the Legislative Code, which will be applied at platting, require cul-de-sacs to be no longer than 600 feet.)

#### PARKS, RECREATION AND OPEN SPACE- COMP PLAN CHAPTER

The master plan provides for about five acres of City park, in accordance with Comp Plan Policy PR-18 to ensure that investment in public parks accounts for planned increases in development density. Also, the master plan encourages privately-owned public spaces (POPS) at key locations, per Comp Plan Policy PR-31, and community gardens per Comp Plan Policy PR-32. The master plan creates connections through and beyond the site for bicyclists and pedestrians between the new neighborhood node, the new City park, other nearby parks and recreation facilities like Hayden Heights Recreation Center, schools like Mounds Park Academy and The Heights Community School, and other destinations, as called for by Comp Plan Policy PR-38. Many of the on-site connections are off-street trails, which enhance the safety and comfort of users in line with Comp Plan Policy PR-39. The master plan also calls for an off-street trail along the south side of Larpenteur Avenue that connects the McKnight Road trail and the Furness Trail, and a trail along the north side of Ivy Avenue that could connect to a future trail south to Beaver Lake County Park.

#### HOUSING- COMP PLAN CHAPTER

The master plan supports a variety of Comp Plan policies related to housing affordability. Although the master plan does not set a target number of affordable housing units, it encourages affordable housing and sets targets for types of affordable housing to prioritize. The Comp Plan affordable housing goals set forth in its Policies H-32 and H-33 are repeated in the master plan. Provision of affordable housing at this site would further Comp Plan Policies H-16 (increase housing choice across the city to maximize housing and locational choices for residents of all income levels) and H-31 (support the development of new affordable housing units throughout the city). The master plan's top two affordable housing priorities,



rental housing (non-age-restricted) and for-sale homes, are both suggested to include units for large families, which would further Comp Plan Policy H-7.

If the master plan's provision of approximately 960 housing units alongside light industrial parcels includes affordable units, it would advance Comp Plan Policy H-37 to encourage the development of affordable housing in proximity to employment centers.

The master plan's Sustainability Chapter furthers several Comp Plan housing policies related to environmental sustainability, including H-10 (encourage energy efficient mechanical systems and building products, as would occur if the City's Sustainable Building Ordinance were triggered) and H-14 (encourage native landscaping and rain gardens).

## WATER RESOURCES- COMP PLAN CHAPTER

The master plan requires a green infrastructure stormwater system at a district scale (if funding can be acquired) per Comp Plan Policy WR-2 (and Leg. Code Sec. 81.08.1). It also promotes visible green infrastructure landscape features, as called for by Comp Plan Policy WR-3, in several ways: using existing wetlands that are being preserved as a stormwater feature for rate control, encouraging tree trenches along streets, and through a green infrastructure stormwater system that is integrated with trails, passive open space, art, and other amenities.

## Climate Action and Resilience Plan

The Saint Paul [Climate Action and Resilience Plan](#) (CARP), adopted by the City Council in 2019, contains several strategies to achieve a citywide goal of carbon neutrality by 2050, that are supported by this master plan, including the following that are not covered by the Comp Plan:

- Improve the ecological functionality and resiliency of open space through green infrastructure, best practices for stormwater management, and increased plant diversity and pollinator-friendly habitat;
- encourage the use of low-impact landscaping to reduce consumption of water and chemicals in yard and lawn maintenance, improve permeability to reduce stormwater runoff, and sequester more carbon in soil;
- reduce residents' energy burden; and
- encourage electrification of natural gas appliances.

Other CARP strategies regarding building/built infrastructure sustainability could be implemented through the City's Sustainable Building Ordinance (if triggered) or the developer's pursuit of LEED for Communities credits.

## Pedestrian Plan

In its provision of sidewalks on both sides of streets and off-street multiuse trails, the master plan furthers several goals and strategies of the [Saint Paul Pedestrian Plan](#), including making walking safe for everyone, connecting pedestrians to destinations, and accelerating completion of the sidewalk network in areas where the potential for use is highest. Although the Pedestrian Plan does not identify this area as a high priority area for walking investments, this development is a prime opportunity to cost effectively install pedestrian infrastructure integrated with the full package of site infrastructure. The Pedestrian Plan was adopted in 2019 as an addendum to the Comp Plan.

## Bicycle Plan

The master plan proposes to fill a gap in the bicycling network between the trails along Furness Parkway and McKnight Road, and prioritizes all-weather bicycle storage near the neighborhood node – both encouraged by multiple action steps in Chapters 7 and 9 of the [Saint Paul Bicycle Plan](#).

## District 2 Plan Summary

The [Greater East Side District 2 Plan Summary](#), adopted as a Comp Plan addendum in 2009, calls for providing trails where missing links now exist, particularly along Furness Parkway, which is addressed by the master plan's provision of two trail connections between the Furness Trail and the McKnight Road trail across the site. The Greater East Side District 2 Plan also calls for promoting redevelopment of the stretch of White Bear Avenue between Montana Avenue and Larpenteur Avenue, including the vacant Hafner's site. Although the master plan and rezoning will allow for commercial uses at the Hillcrest site, the master plan uses are expected to complement rather than compete with commercial uses and infill opportunities along White Bear Avenue.

## COMPREHENSIVE & NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Comprehensive & Neighborhood Planning Committee reviewed and discussed the proposal on January 5, 2022. No changes were recommended from the staff recommendation.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Comprehensive and Neighborhood Planning Committee and staff recommend that the Planning Commission:

1. Adopt a resolution that initiates the Hillcrest Rezoning Study;
2. Adopt a resolution that initiates the Hillcrest Zoning Code Study; and
3. Release the draft Hillcrest Master Plan, draft rezoning maps, draft Zoning Code amendments, and draft Comprehensive Plan amendment for public review and set a public hearing for March 4, 2022.

## ATTACHMENTS

1. Draft Hillcrest Master Plan
2. Hillcrest Community Advisory Committee comments
3. Draft Planning Commission resolution to initiate Hillcrest Site Rezoning Study
4. Zoning maps: existing and proposed
5. Draft Planning Commission resolution to initiate Hillcrest Site Zoning Code Study
6. Draft Zoning Code amendments
7. Draft Comprehensive Plan amendment

# Hillcrest Master Plan

Saint Paul, MN  
Draft Report as of January 13, 2022



Prepared for:  
The City of Saint Paul, MN

Prepared by:  
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**SAINT PAUL**  
MINNESOTA

**DRAFT**



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**Tong Thao**, Business representative and Saint Paul resident

**Que Vang**, Housing representative

**Ethan Osten**, Multimodal transportation representative and Saint Paul resident

*\*former*



PREAMBLE

*Every community owes its existence and vitality to generations from around the world who contribute their hopes, dreams, and energy to making the history that led to this moment. Some were brought here against their will, some were drawn to leave their distant homes in hope for a better life, and some have lived on this land since time immemorial. Truth and acknowledgement are critical to building mutual respect and connection across barriers of heritage and difference.*

*The Hillcrest site is located on the ancestral lands of the Dakota People. We acknowledge the Ojibwe, the Ho Chunk, and the other nations of people who also called this place home. We pay respects to their elders, past and present, and consider their treaties made by the tribal nations that entitle non-Native people to live and work on traditional Native lands. We also consider the many legacies of violence, displacement, migration, and settlement that influence us to this day*





# INTRODUCTION





THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The purpose of this Plan is to serve as a guide for the redevelopment of the site. It establishes the policies and the physical framework of streets, land uses, stormwater, and open spaces that will create the structure within which the community will grow.

The Plan seeks to establish a balance point between flexibility and predictability. Flexibility for the property owner to attract tenants, sell land, and redevelop property. Predictability for the City and the neighbors (and future residents and business that will occupy the site) so they can invest with confidence.

STRUCTURE OF THIS PLAN

This Plan has two parts - Background and Master Plan. The Background section of this Plan describes the premise of the Plan, the physical setting of the site, the process to create the Plan (including community engagement), and the goals and priorities of the Plan.

The Master Plan section is divided into topical chapters: (Land Use, Open Space, Transportation, Sustainability, Housing, Zoning, Phasing). The Land Use through Transportation chapters each begin with a description of its contents, followed by policies and site layouts, street sections and/or other images. The Housing, Sustainability, Zoning, Phasing, and Other Implementation chapters contain mainly text. The policies, site layouts, and street sections are binding direction for the site's development, except as potentially modified (see Zoning chapter).



# BACKGROUND

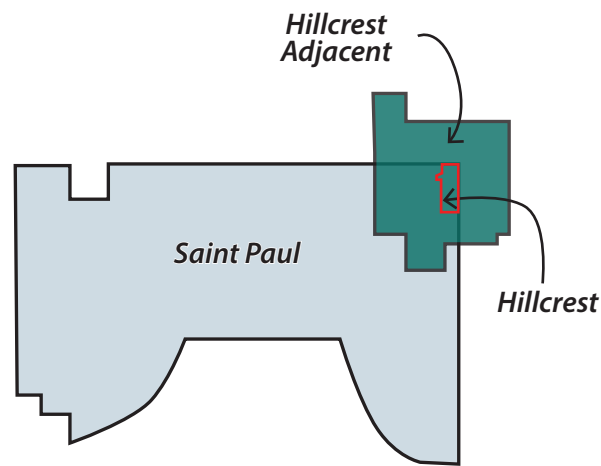




THE PEOPLE OF THE EAST SIDE

Today, the East Side of Saint Paul is a mosaic of people, institutions, and workplaces. It maintains its role as the gateway to Saint Paul by welcoming new Americans from around the world. Neighborhoods have grown together to become one plural community, and large workplaces have largely given way to hundreds of small and medium businesses.

The following tables compare data from the “Hillcrest Adjacent” US Census block groups to the entire city of Saint Paul.



HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
	Hillcrest Adjacent	Saint Paul
Less than \$35,000	25%	34%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	18%	13%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	21%	18%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	14%	12%
\$100,000 or more	22%	23%
Median Household Income	\$57,301	\$52,841

Compared to the rest of Saint Paul, the neighborhoods adjacent to Hillcrest site have a greater percentage of households earning between \$35,000 and \$99,999 per year. However the same area has lower percentage of households earning less than \$35,000 and more than \$99,999. Hillcrest adjacent neighborhoods are middle income with a slightly higher median income as compared to the City as a whole

HOUSING UNITS		
	Hillcrest Adjacent	Saint Paul
Owner Occupied	75%	49%
Renter Occupied	25%	51%
Median Rent Paid	\$1,102	\$901

Compared to the rest of Saint Paul, the households around the Hillcrest site have a higher rate of homeownership. In addition, the average rent is approximately 10% higher. Larger unit sizes in this area may contribute to the differences in rent.

RACE / ETHNICITY		
	Hillcrest Adjacent	Saint Paul
White	58%	52%
Black or African American	10%	15%
Native American	1%	1%
Asian	15%	18%
Other	0.3%	0.2%
Multi-Racial	5%	4%
Hispanic	11%	10%

Compared to the rest of Saint Paul, the population in the neighborhoods adjacent to Hillcrest is similarly diverse. A considerable percentage of residents in the Hillcrest area were not born in the United States. This has been an ongoing characteristic of the area as it has been the landing spot for generations of new Americans for over 150 years.

YEAR MOVED INTO EXISTING UNIT		
	Hillcrest Adjacent	Saint Paul
2010 or later	42%	52%
2000 - 2009	22%	24%
1990 - 1999	14%	12%
1980 - 1989	18%	11%
1979 or earlier	11%	7%

Compared to the rest of Saint Paul, households around Hillcrest tend to be slightly less transient. Nearly 60% of the households have been living in the same unit for over 10 years.

HISTORY OF THE SITE

The land that would eventually become the Hillcrest site is located in the greater Mississippi River Valley. This land was home to Dakota peoples prior to removal or displacement in the 1800s. At the time of the Europeans’ arrival, the Hillcrest site was a deciduous savannah. The land entered private land ownership, was cleared, and cultivated as agricultural land and grazing land until the 1920s.

The Hillcrest Golf Course was designed and opened in 1921. At the time, the golf course was surrounded by undeveloped land. In 1945, at a time of heightened anti-Semitism, two members of the Jewish community identified the need for a club that would allow Jewish members. They purchased the club that year and it became one of the first and only exclusively Jewish golf clubs in the Twin Cities.

Hillcrest Golf Course expanded its membership in the 1970s and remained an active golf course through 2017, when it was closed for financial reasons. Its current landscape reflects this past use in its unique features - including mature trees, wetlands, and hills comingling with remnants of the golf course - flat areas where the tee boxes were positioned in front of cleared fairways (now overgrown) and once manicured putting greens.

Though the golf course has rolling hills, wetlands, and significant trees, it was never a public park. And though it has natural features, it

is a highly denuded site. Upon its closure, in 2017, it was deemed a brownfield due to the decades of mercury spray that was used to keep the manicured appearance of the golf course. Due to its decades of misuse and current mercury contamination, today it is unsuitable for use (or development) and will require significant remediation prior to re-development.

In 2019 the site was purchased by the St. Paul Port Authority (SPPA) using bonding authorized by the Saint Paul City Council via Ordinance 19-39 (see page 9). Ordinance 19-39 establishes the framework of the arrangement between the City and the SPPA. A main condition of the ordinance is the requirement to develop a Master Plan to guide the future of the site.

In the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the City of Saint Paul identified the 112-acre site that was formally home to the Hillcrest Golf Course as one of thirty-five opportunity sites located with the city. These sites were selected for their development potential and will have a significant impact on Saint Paul’s vitality, tax base, and livability.

In the Fall of 2019, the City began the process of developing this Plan.



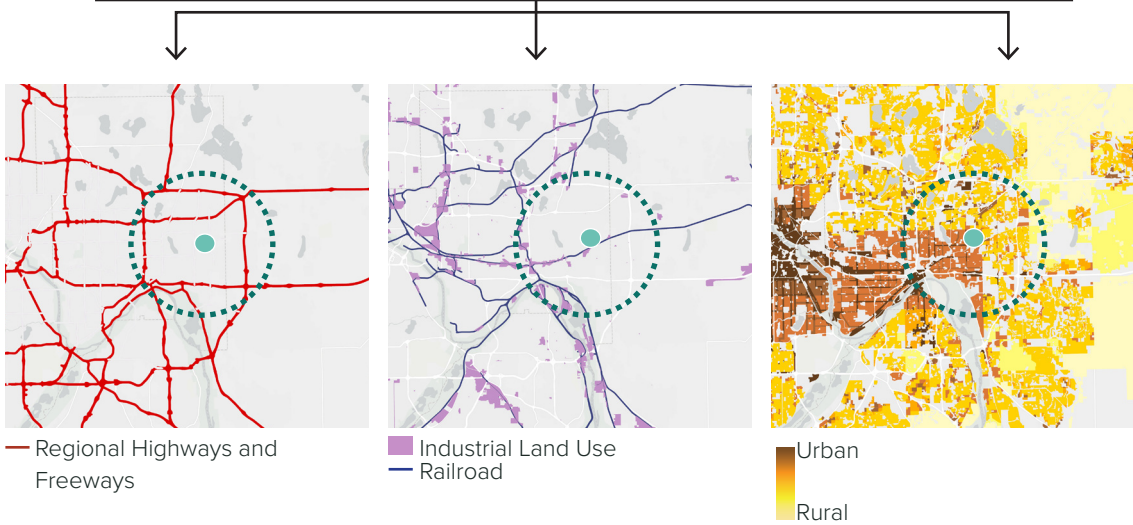
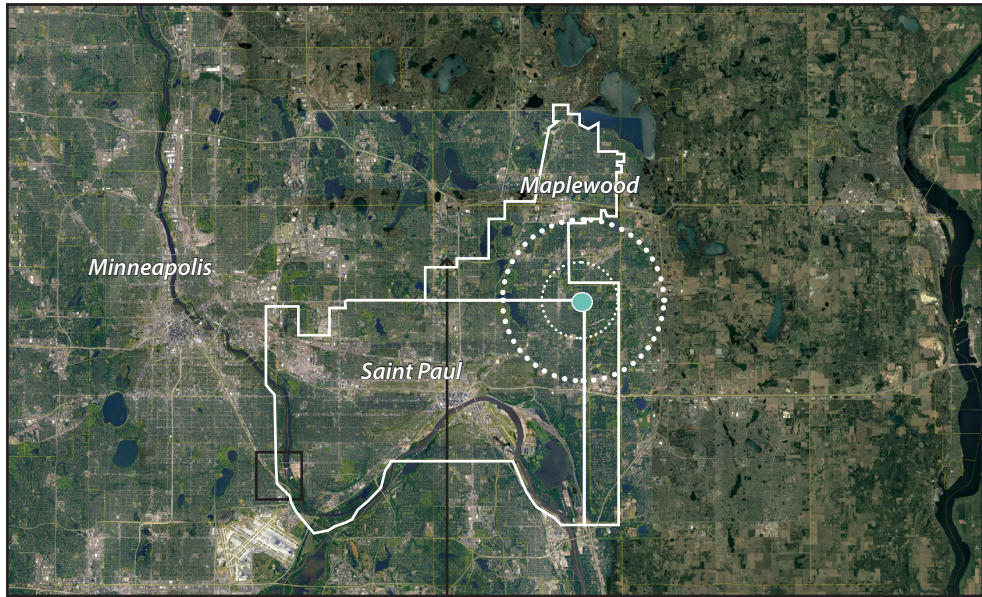
CITY AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

The 112-acre Hillcrest site is located in the far northeast corner of Saint Paul, on the boundary with Maplewood. The site is five miles northeast of downtown Saint Paul in the Greater East Side neighborhood.

The broader East Side neighborhood is notable for its industrial history; its development coincided with the establishment of 3M, Hamm’s Brewery, and Whirlpool Manufacturing. The neighborhood reflects these mid-century suburban development patterns.

There is a range of local and regional parks nearby - including Phalen Regional Park and Maplewood Nature Center - with unique ecological benefits and recreational opportunities.

Saint Paul and the Greater East Side in the Region



STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

The East Side has access to the regional freeway system along all sides. This pattern has allowed the interior to be developed with primarily neighborhood patterns.

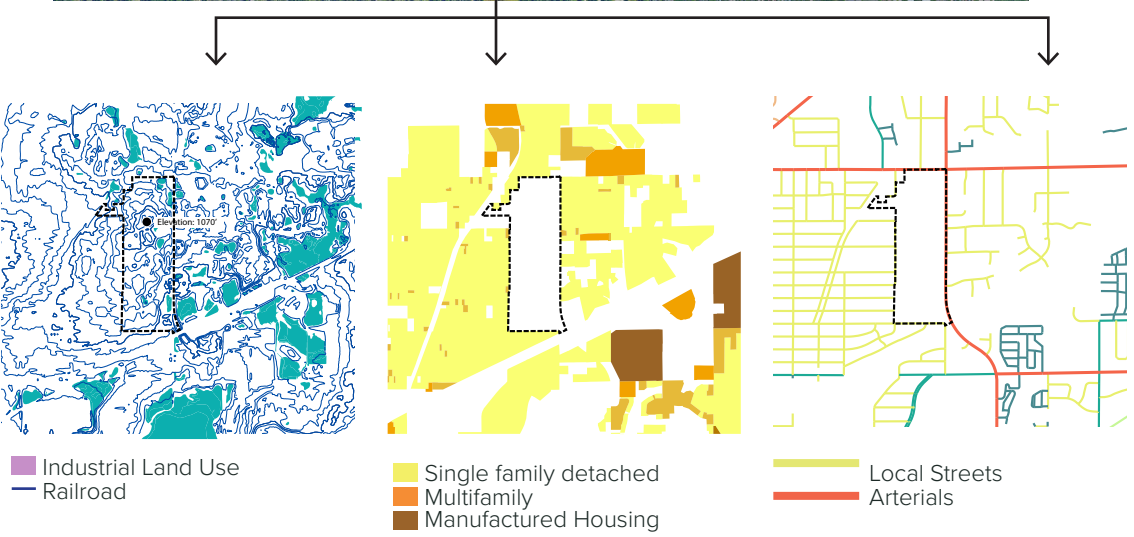
INDUSTRIAL CONNECTION

The East Side employment base was originally from industrial lands along rail lines that connected east/west across the upper Midwest. Throughout the 20th Century, employment transitioned to job centers along freeways and arterials.

HOUSING DENSITY

The site is located on a transition edge of housing density from medium suburban to low density suburban.

Hillcrest in the East Metro



TOPOGRAPHY AND WETLANDS

The Hillcrest site is located at the high point in Ramsey County. It has rolling hills and several wetlands that are part of a larger hydrological system.

HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS

The site is in a predominately residential area, surrounded by housing built between 1940 and 2000.

STREETS AND TRANSPORTATION

Located on the edge of Saint Paul, the Hillcrest site is between two different development and block patterns. The west is characterized by rectangular grid, the east is represented by cul-de-sacs and lower density housing.



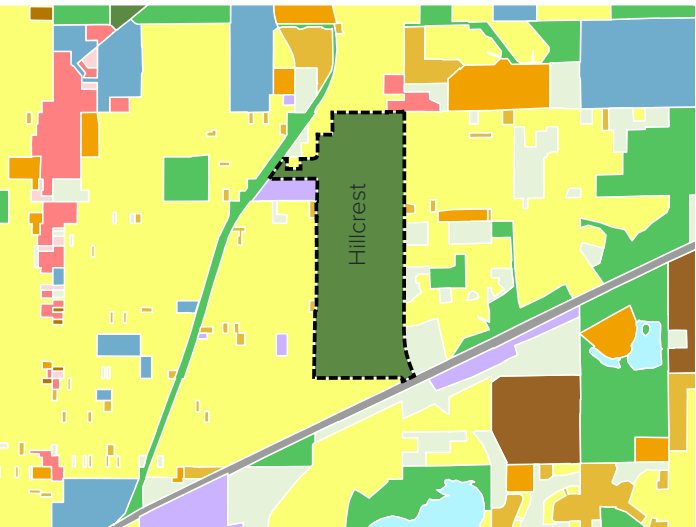
REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

Zoning and Land Use

The City of Saint Paul identified the Hillcrest site as one of its major opportunity sites in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. An Opportunity site is guided by the Comprehensive Plan for redevelopment into a mix of uses including jobs, housing, commercial, and open spaces. The purpose of Opportunity sites is to create areas of greater density, better transit service, more jobs, and needed social and community infrastructure.

The north portion of the site is designated as a Neighborhood Node - a place where residents can walk to many of their daily needs.

The site is zoned R2 One-Family Residential. A rezoning ordinance will accompany the Master Plan to allow for a greater range and intensity of uses that align with the Comprehensive Plan’s designated land uses.



- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Mixed Use and Commercial
- Industrial
- Institutional
- Parks and Open Space
- Transportation
- Water

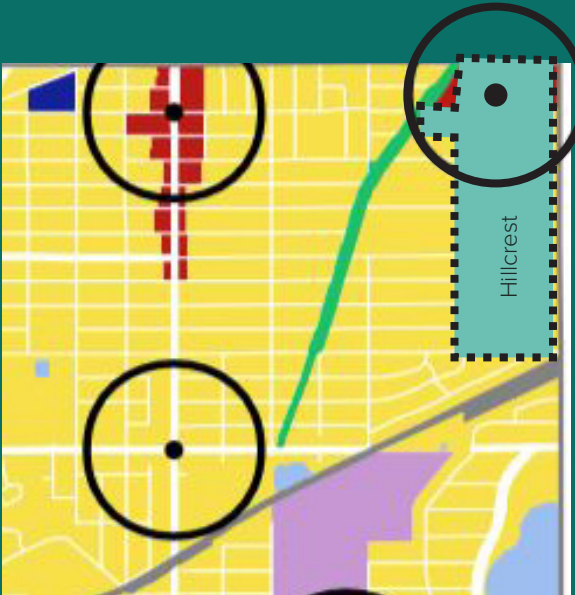
**EXISTING LAND USE**  
The site is primarily surrounded by residential neighborhoods. Redevelopment of the site can support the health of these neighborhoods by filling in housing gaps, providing additional green space, stable and living wage jobs, and goods and services within a short distance.

Ordinance 19-39

In 2019 the site was purchased by the St. Paul Port Authority (SPPA) using bonding authorized by the Saint Paul City Council via Ordinance 19-39. Ordinance 19-39 establishes the framework of the arrangement between the City and the Port Authority by establishing key expectations for the site’s development, including:

- SPPA will prepare the site for development, including environmental remediation, public infrastructure, and ready development pads;
- Outside of affordable housing and advanced energy infrastructure, the project will pay for itself;
  - » No tax increment financing (TIF) will be requested for infrastructure;
  - » No further financial assistance will be requested from the City to complete the project; and
  - » SPPA will be responsible for the cost of any reasonable off-site improvements to public infrastructure required to serve or support the project;
- Parks and open space will be provided;
  - » The City’s parkland dedication requirements will be met;
  - » SPPA will deliver approximately five (5) acres of active improved park via a contribution of \$2.5 million (note: the full cost to develop this acreage will probably exceed this contribution); and
  - » Approximately 15 acres of publicly accessible passive open space, buffers, and stormwater retention space;
- Mix of uses, including substantial light industrial; and
- A capacity to produce approximately 1,000 jobs and 1,000 housing units.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GUIDANCE



**PROPOSED LAND USE - SAINT PAUL 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
The site is defined in the Comprehensive Plan as an Opportunity site with a Neighborhood Node located on the north portion of the site. The Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan has designated most of the area to the west as Urban Neighborhood.

- Urban Neighborhood
- Mixed use
- Major Parks and Open Spaces
- Industrial

- Neighborhood Node
- Opportunity site

[Click Here for a link to the City of Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan](#)

**NEIGHBORHOOD NODES**  
Neighborhood Nodes are compact, mixed-use areas that provide shops, services, neighborhood-scale civic and institutional uses, recreational facilities and employment close to residences. They may be neighborhood centers, transit station areas, or urban villages and have often developed adjacent to major intersections or at former streetcar stops. Neighborhood Nodes serve a neighborhood’s daily needs including access to food; reduce public infrastructure disparities; improve livability; and accommodate growth. Neighborhood Nodes are denser concentrations of development relative to the adjacent future land use categories. Neighborhood Nodes foster an equitable system of compact, mixed-use, and commercial centers across the city to increase access to community services (such as health care) and businesses, and support pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods.

**URBAN NEIGHBORHOODS**  
Urban Neighborhoods are primarily residential areas with a range of housing types. Single family homes and duplexes are most common, although multi-family housing predominates along arterial and collector streets, particularly those with transit. Multi-family housing, schools, neighborhood parks, religious institutions and cemeteries may also be scattered throughout Urban Neighborhoods. Limited neighborhood-serving commercial may also be present, typically at intersections of arterial and/or collector streets.

**MIXED-USE**  
Mixed-use areas are primarily along thoroughfares well-served by transit. The main distinguishing characteristic is a balance of jobs and housing within walking distance of one another.

**OTHER POLICIES**  
Many other Comprehensive Plan policies have been referenced in creating this plan, on details such as transportation, parks and open space, and water resources.



Neighborhood Character

The Hillcrest site bridges St. Paul’s Greater East Side and the City of Maplewood. Though both areas are primarily single-family residential, the differences in age of neighborhood development and jurisdictional design standards have created distinct and often divergent neighborhood characteristics between them. Despite the neighborhoods predominately residential character, there are small existing commercial properties at the northwest and northeast corners of McKnight Road and Larpenteur Avenue, which the the City of Maplewood has guided for business and medium density development in their 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

The far East Side of St. Paul is primarily composed of pre-1960 development. The residential development to the west of the Hillcrest site is notable for its grid layout, standard rectangular quarter-acre lots, wide, tree lined streets, and pedestrian friendly parkways. Open green spaces and recreation opportunities are conveniently located within the neighborhood. The Maplewood neighborhood to the east of the site was primarily developed for residential use after 1980. The neighborhoods are distinct for large homes, limited pedestrian infrastructure, focus on vehicular circulation, and lack of a grid street network.

The separation of Maplewood and East St. Paul is further reinforced through the current design and high traffic volume of McKnight Road as well as the use of walls and barriers along the edge of the current golf course. The development of the Hillcrest site will connect these differing neighborhood types and should identify features and development patterns that would be of benefit for all.



**BLOCK STRUCTURE & AGE OF DEVELOPMENT**  
The site sits on the boundary of two different development patterns. To the west, the development from 1950s is defined by smaller parcels and strong grid. To the east, suburban residential development from the 1980s is defined by larger parcels, increased shared open space, and meandering roads.

ADJACENT SAINT PAUL NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER



ADJACENT MAPLEWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD CHARACTER





Utilities

EXISTING SYSTEM

As a former golf course, the utility network to the existing Hillcrest site is very limited. The vacant club house has water and sanitary service; however, the rest of the site does not have water or sanitary sewer infrastructure.

WATER SYSTEM

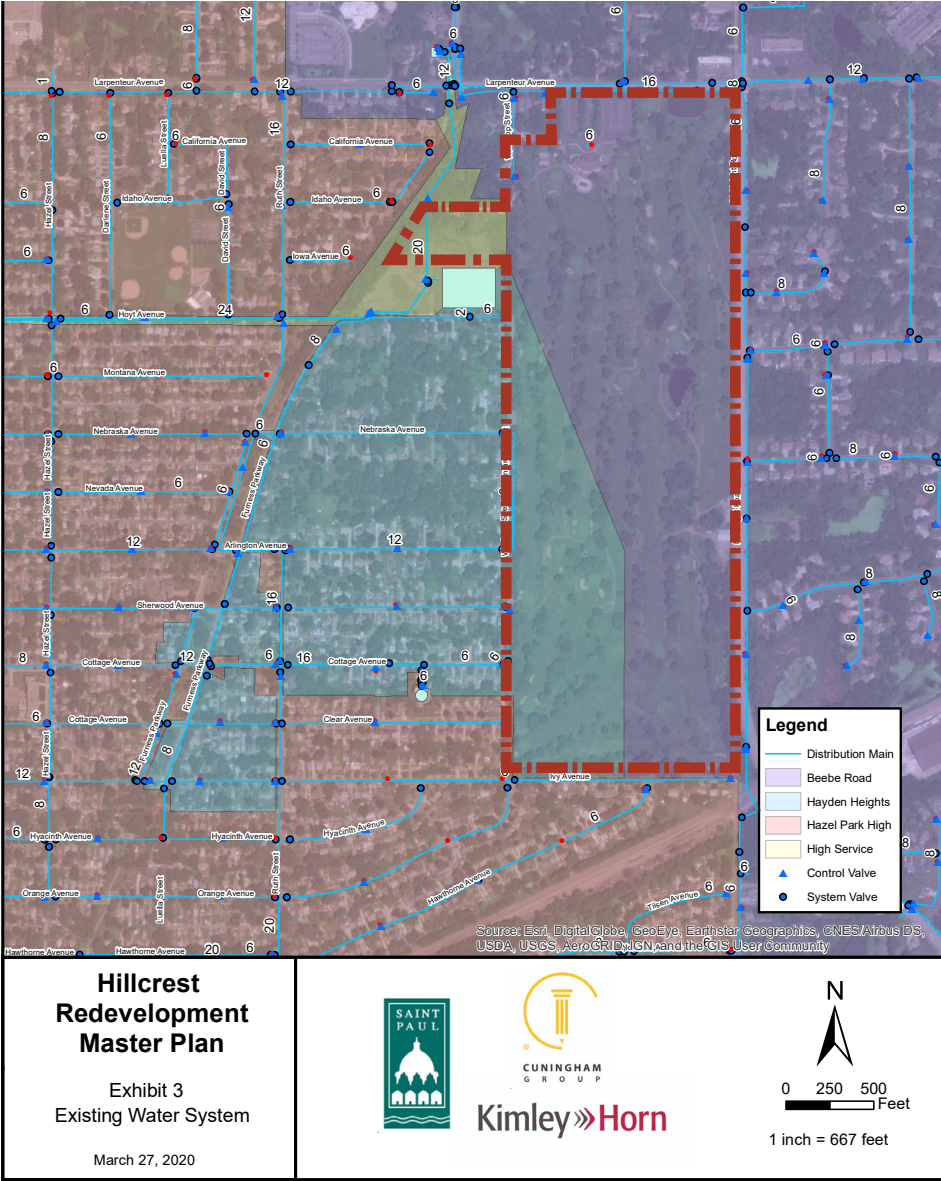
The site will receive water from the municipal water utility, St Paul Regional Water Services.

There are existing 16-inch distribution mains to the north and east boundaries of the site on Larpenteur Avenue and McKnight Road. There are also a combination of 6-inch and 8-inch mains on the southern and western borders of the site. The Hillcrest site is unique because it located between three different pressure zones. SPRWS would like to combine these systems into one pressure zone, and they are currently investigating this in their Infowater model.

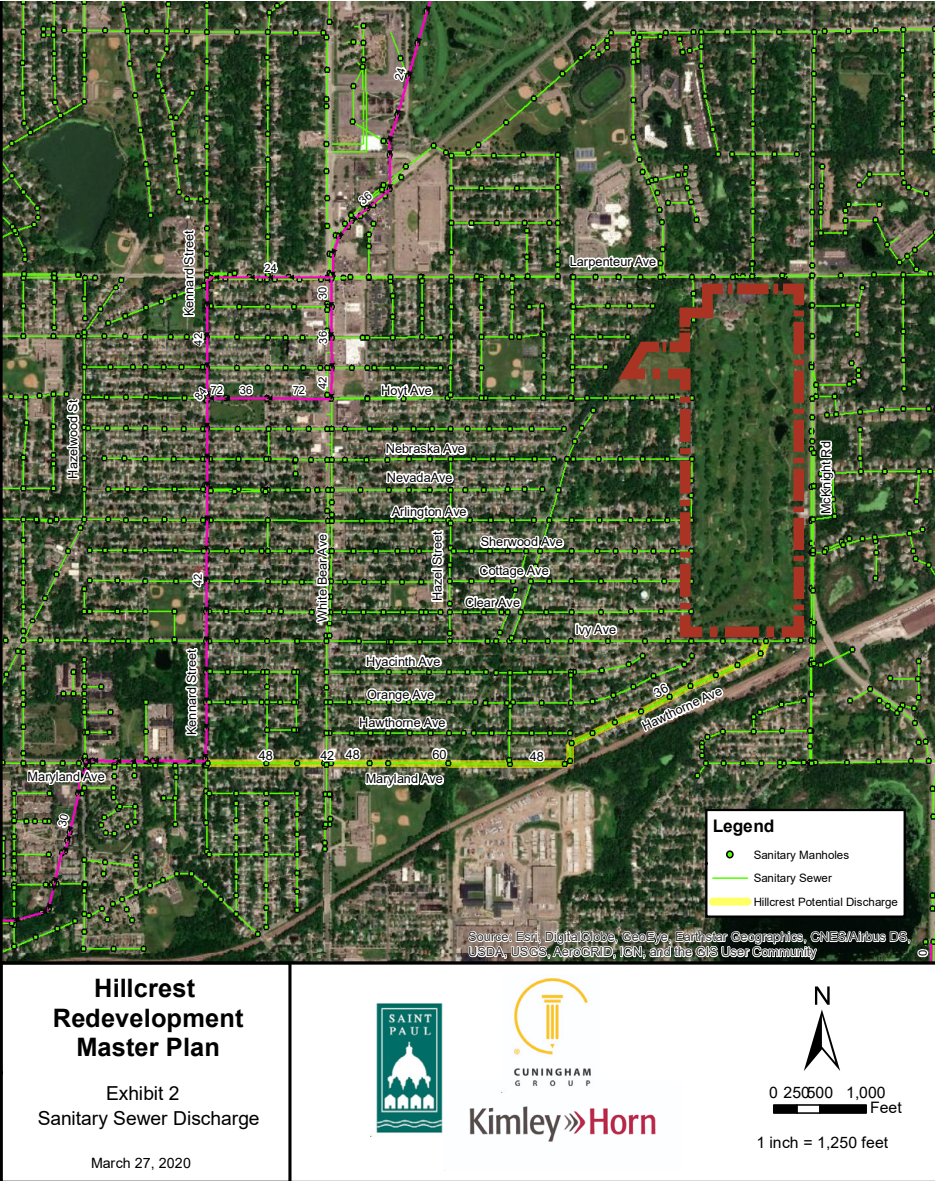
SANITARY SYSTEM

Similar to the water system, the site will connect to the existing municipal sanitary system. The north, east and west boundaries of the site have a mix of 8-inch and 12-inch gravity sewer. To the south there is a 36-inch diameter pipe that increases in diameter as it flows southwest along Hawthorne Ave to the intersection of Maryland Ave and Kennard St. where it discharges into an existing MCES interceptor 1-SP-214. Prior to discharging to the MCES interceptor, there is a short segment of 15-inch pipe. This may be a limiting factor during planning and design. Based on the topography and preliminary utilities report, it is anticipated the sanitary sewer system will flow south to the 36-inch Hawthorne Ave pipe.

[Click Here for a link to Utilities Report](#)



**EXISTING WATER SYSTEM**  
The site will receive water from the municipal water utility, St Paul Regional Water Services and will connect to the existing water grid.



**EXISTING SANITARY SYSTEM**  
There is no current infrastructure on the site.



Transportation

Transportation has played an important role in the growth of the Hillcrest area. Prior to freeway construction in the 1950s, the area was connected to Downtown Saint Paul and the region via arterial roadways and a standard urban grid of rectangular blocks and local streets. Arterials were laid out across the East Side at half mile intervals, the areas in between were platted with local streets. The rectangular grid was occasionally interrupted by topography, natural features or rail lines.

Over time, arterials widened to handle the growing demand of an expanding region. However, the East Side had a unique commuting pattern due to the prevalence of industrial and manufacturing jobs. Despite the growth of Downtown jobs after World War II, many East Side residents maintained their more localized commuting patterns that connected neighborhoods to the several industrial areas throughout the east metro - many adjacent to rail lines.

In addition, a streetcar system was gradually built across the region, stretching from Stillwater on the east to Excelsior on the west. The Hazel Park streetcar line served Hillcrest until 1954, running along Furness Parkway connecting downtown Saint Paul to Mahtomedi.

In the 1960s and 1970s, arterial streets were widened, American households purchased more cars and residents of eastern Saint Paul relied more on personal vehicles for transportation. This dominance of vehicular traffic exists in the current suburban framework.

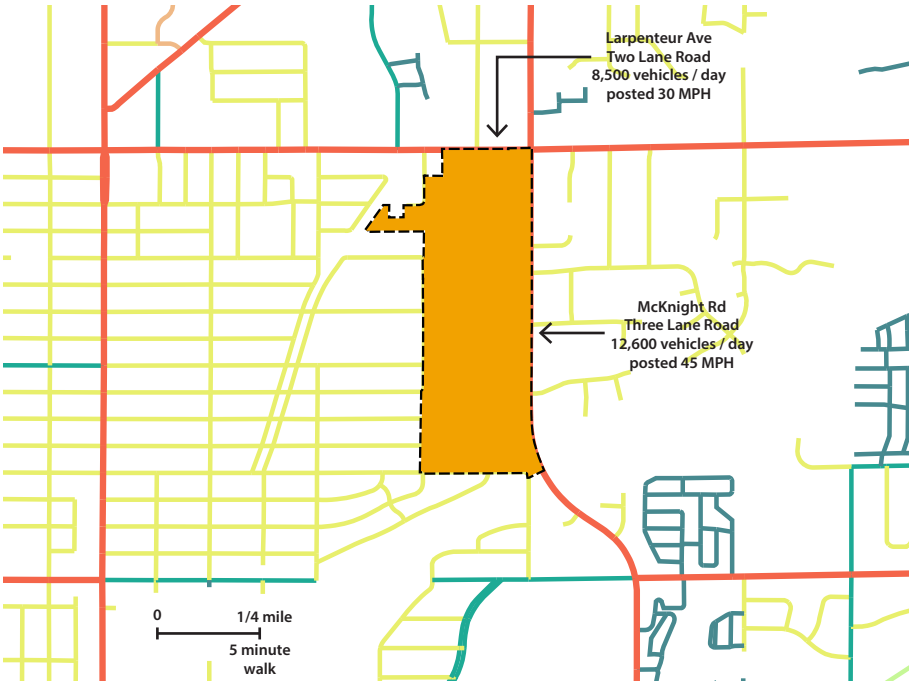
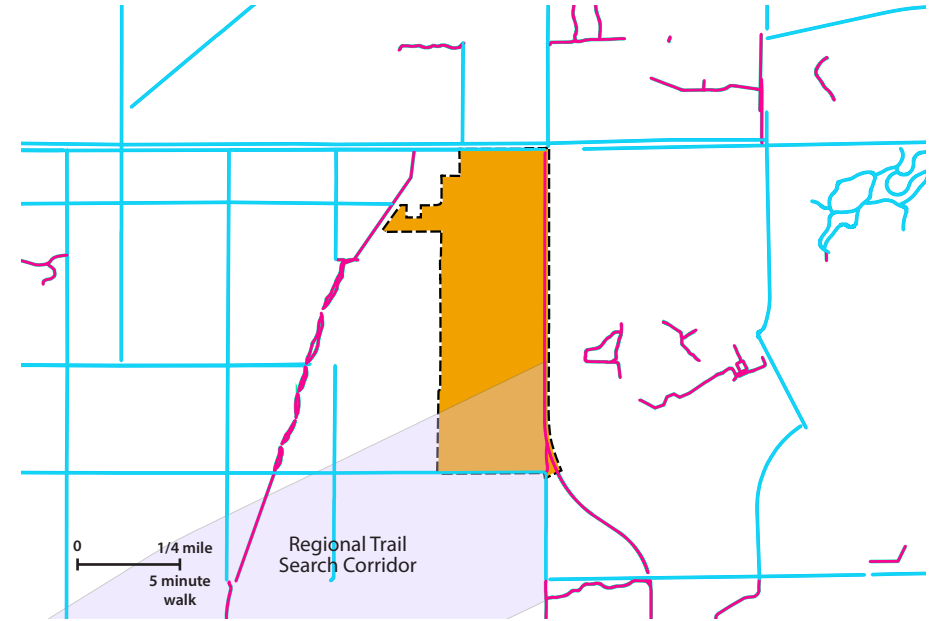
Currently, the site has limited connection to the public transit system. A single bus route stops near to, but not adjacent to the site’s northern portion. A second route is within a walk of the southern edge of the site. There are no planned transit service extensions, although the jobs and housing planned for this site could be an important influencing factor for future service decisions.

Although Furness Trail, the west side of McKnight, and the Larpenteur Avenue bike lanes are nearby, most streets adjacent to the site lack pedestrian and bicycle facilities to allow for safe non-motorized transportation.

[Click Here for a link to Transportation Report](#)



**TRANSIT ROUTES**  
Two Metro area bus lines service the general area, but there are currently no stops adjacent to the site. The Plan will encourage improved transit service to the site in order to improve regional accessibility and encourage a mix of uses.



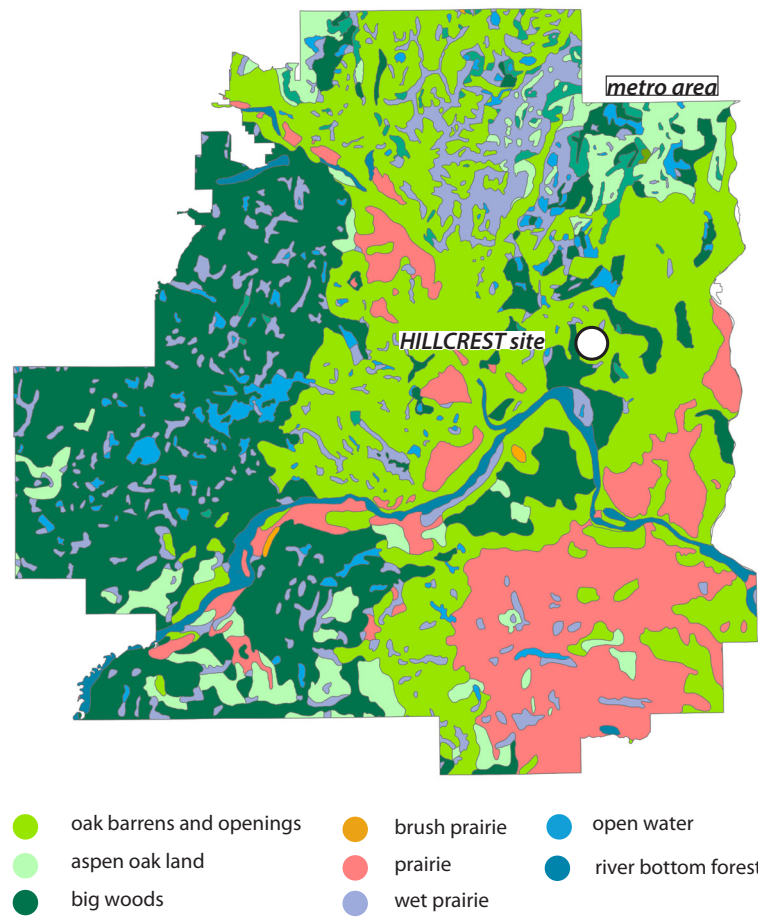
**ROAD NETWORK**  
The site is located at the intersection of county roads Larpenteur Avenue E and McKnight Road N. It has direct access to MN-Highway 36 and Interstate 94. The site currently obstructs local traffic connections between the Saint Paul neighborhood to the west of the site and the Maplewood neighborhood to the east.

**TRAILS (RED) AND BIKE LANES (BLUE)**  
The site is adjacent to several local trails and bike lanes which access local and regional destinations. The Plan will encourage direct connections to these systems.

ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS

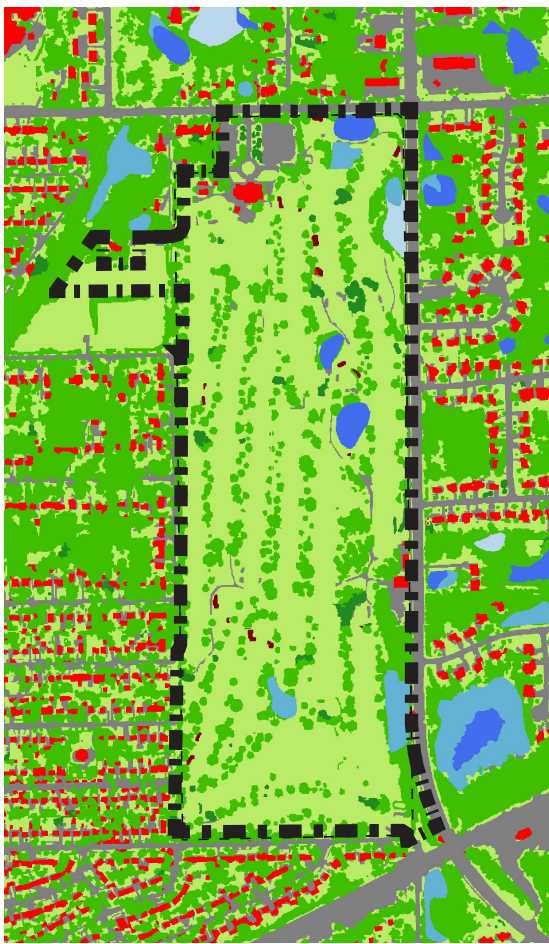
Presettlement Ecology

Prior to European settlement of the Mississippi River Valley in the early 1800s, the land that would eventually become Hillcrest Golf Course was covered by a deciduous savannah classified as oak barrens and openings. These deciduous savanna communities, which once stretched across Central Minnesota, are intermediate ecosystems, falling ecologically between forest and prairies in species make-up and form. They are significant for discontinuous adolescent tree canopy – often oaks – and high level of shrub and groundcover diversity, being home to species associated with both prairie and forest communities. These savannahs were historically maintained by fire and by grazing bison and elk. This disruption kept them in a perpetual adolescent state, never reaching full maturation into the big wood forests seen in other parts of the state. The limited tree canopy and relatively rich, dry soils made them highly desirable agricultural lands and were rapidly converted from their savannah forms into agriculturally productive, settled land.



Current Land Cover

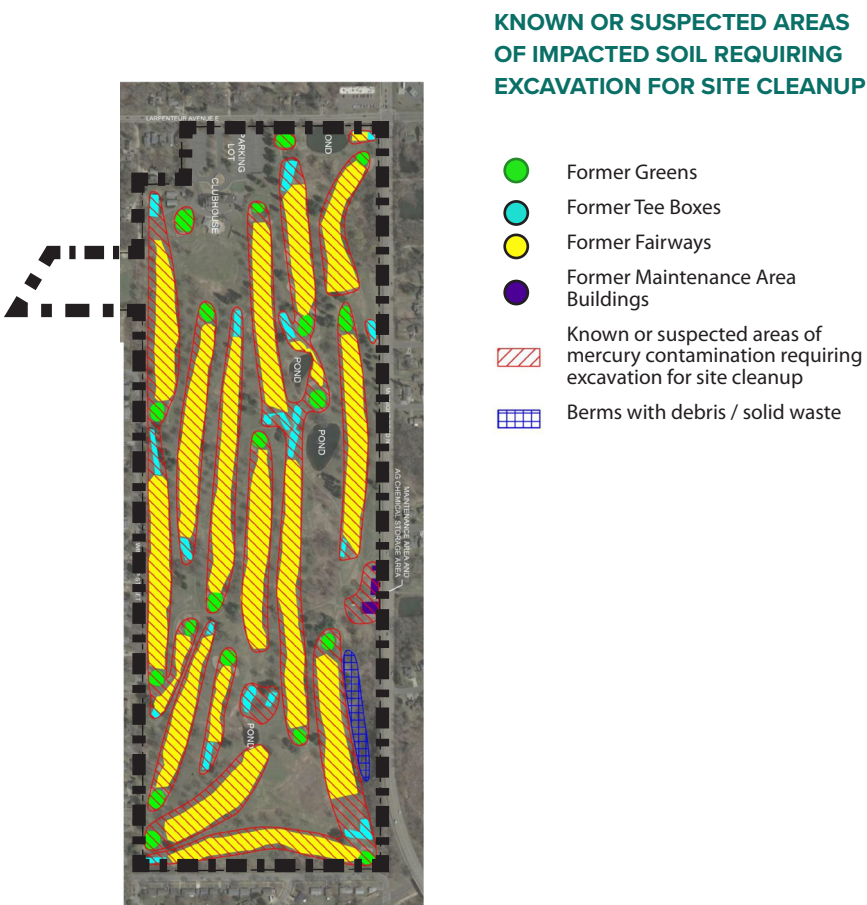
The current land cover is a mix of freshwater ponds, emergent wetlands, shrub wetland, grasslands and shrubs, deciduous tree canopy, and coniferous tree canopy. This existing level of diversity in land cover type offers the opportunity to provide a unique site features, and support a diverse range of urban flora and fauna.



**CURRENT LAND COVER**  
The Hillcrest site is currently defined by its lack of development and diverse range of landcover types.

Pollution

The historic and repetitive agricultural practices used to maintain the golf course introduced significant levels of mercury contamination into the soil that remains to this day. An Environmental Site Assessment completed in June 2019 identified widespread, shallow mercury soil contamination concentrated around storage facilities and former course greens. Future redevelopment will include remediation strategies to ensure the health and well-being of the residents and surrounding environment. This will likely include removal of contaminated soils and the vegetation growing within it, dredging of wetlands and ponds, potential import of replacement topsoil, replanting of various plant communities, etc.. In order to do this, much of the first few feet of soil across the site will have to be tested and disturbed. This will likely result in the loss of most trees on the interior of the site.



**KNOWN OR SUSPECTED AREAS OF IMPACTED SOIL REQUIRING EXCAVATION FOR SITE CLEANUP**



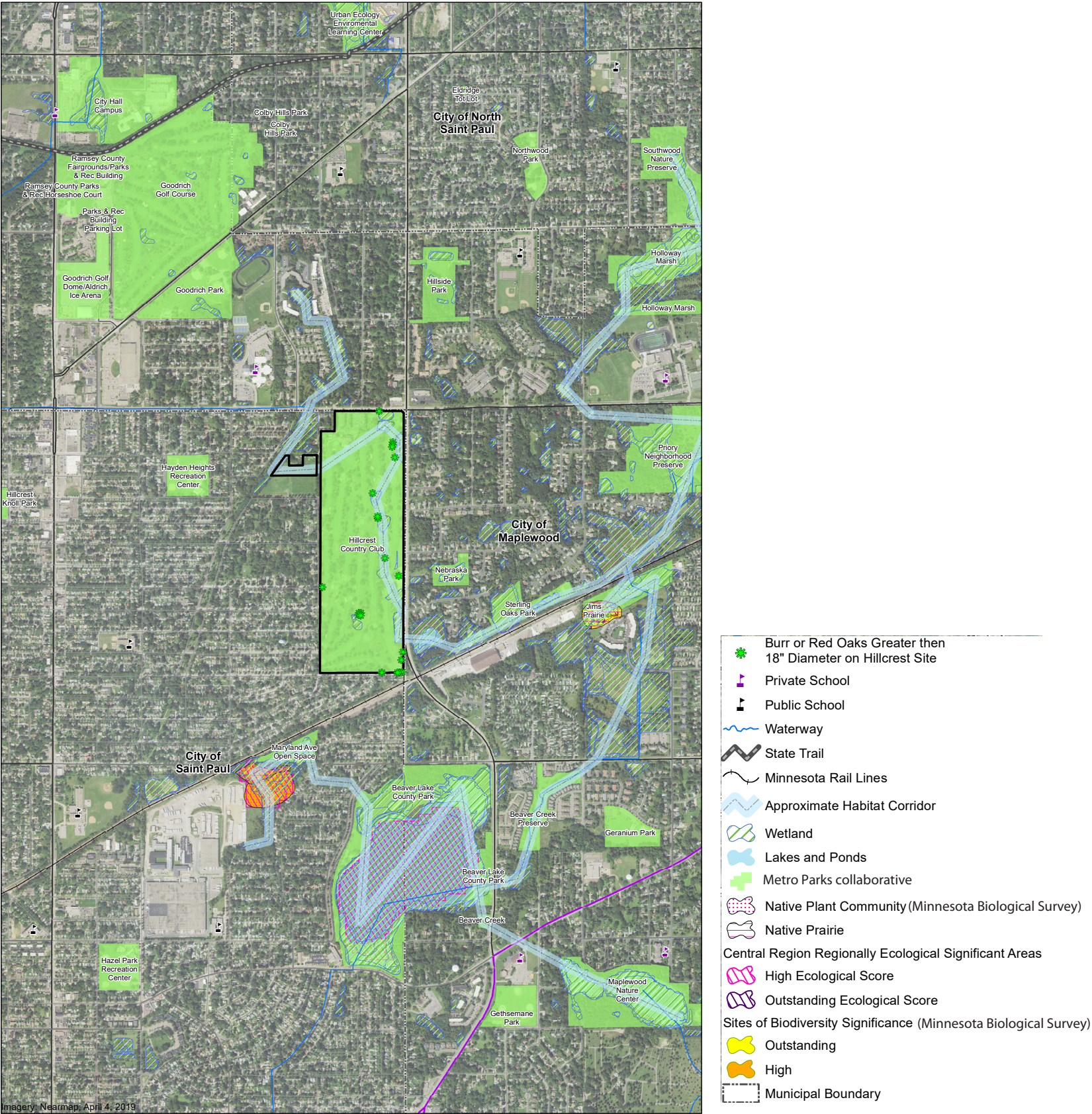
Open Space and Habitat Connectivity

The site’s current mix of land covers - grasses, mature tree canopy, topographic variation, and wetlands - provide a diverse range of habitats for urban flora and fauna. While this plan will reduce overall open green space with the transition to development, the development should look for opportunities to enhance the ecological health of the site, maintain the diversity of habitat types, and connect to the larger suburban/urban ecosystems - including wildlife . Restoration efforts within the Hillcrest site may provide a crucial habitat connection between valuable natural resources in the vicinity of this site.

Connections between these natural resources have been severed by surrounding development resulting in isolated remnant natural communities. There may be an opportunity to to restore these connections and provide natural resource habitat and native plant communities for protection of threatened, endangered, and special concern plant and animal species.

OPEN SPACE CONNECTIVITY

The Hillcrest site is adjacent and proximate to a range of open, green spaces from large park, golf courses, and nature preserves. This offers the unique opportunity to connect to the regional open space network.





Topography

One of the most unique features of the site is its rolling topography. The site's peak is at 1075' in the north of the site; its low point is 992' in the south of the site. The high point divides the site into a north third and a south two-thirds of the site. This topographic variation also creates unique microclimates and stormwater patterns. Further, this peak is the highest in Saint Paul.

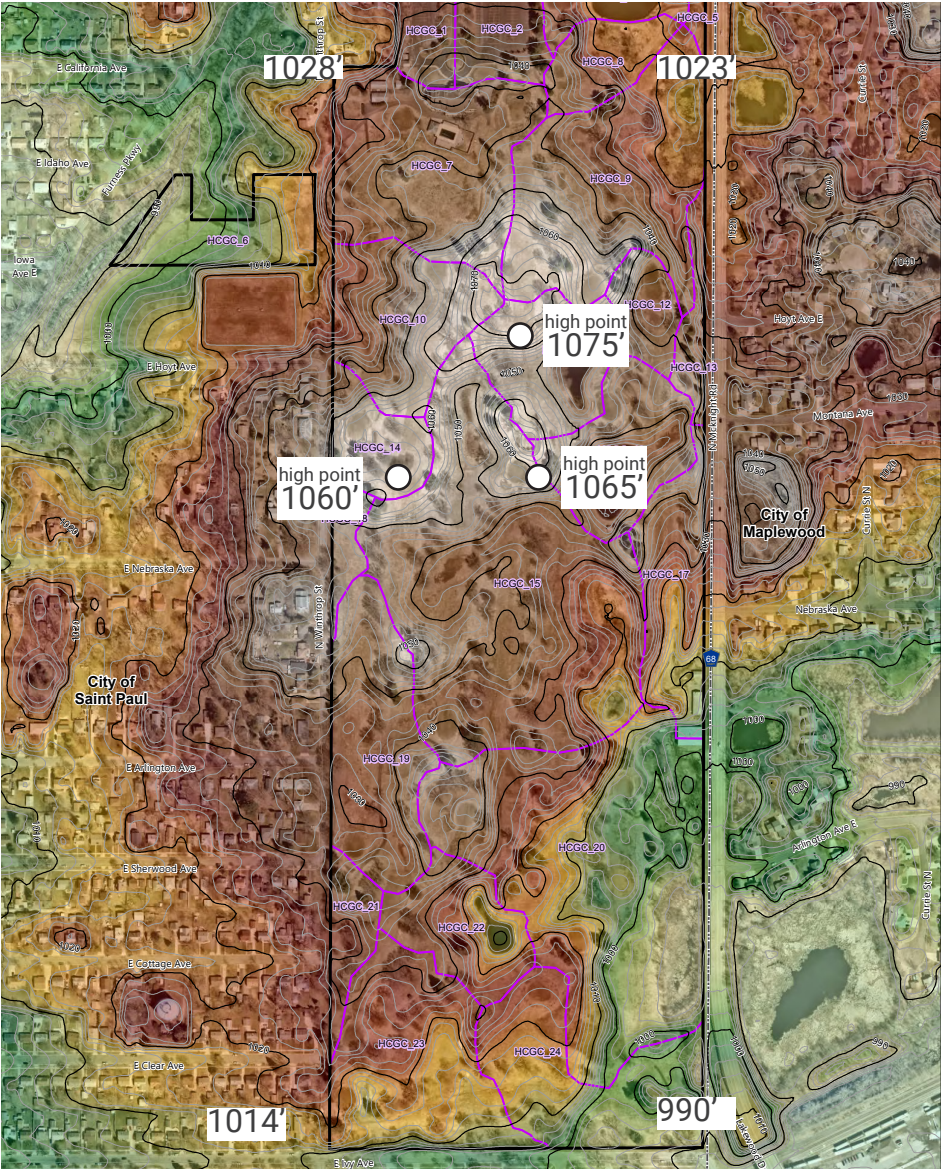
The site's slopes range from below 5% to over 30%, with variation throughout the site. Flatter areas on the site are located north of the high point, where the clubhouse and parking lot were located, as well as pockets in the middle of the site. Several of the wetlands are associated with the flat areas of the site - particularly those in the north.

The topographic variation creates unique challenges to the redevelopment of site. Each of the expected land uses - residential, light industrial, rights-of-way, and open space - have specific grading requirements. Light industrial sites generally need the largest, flattest development pads.

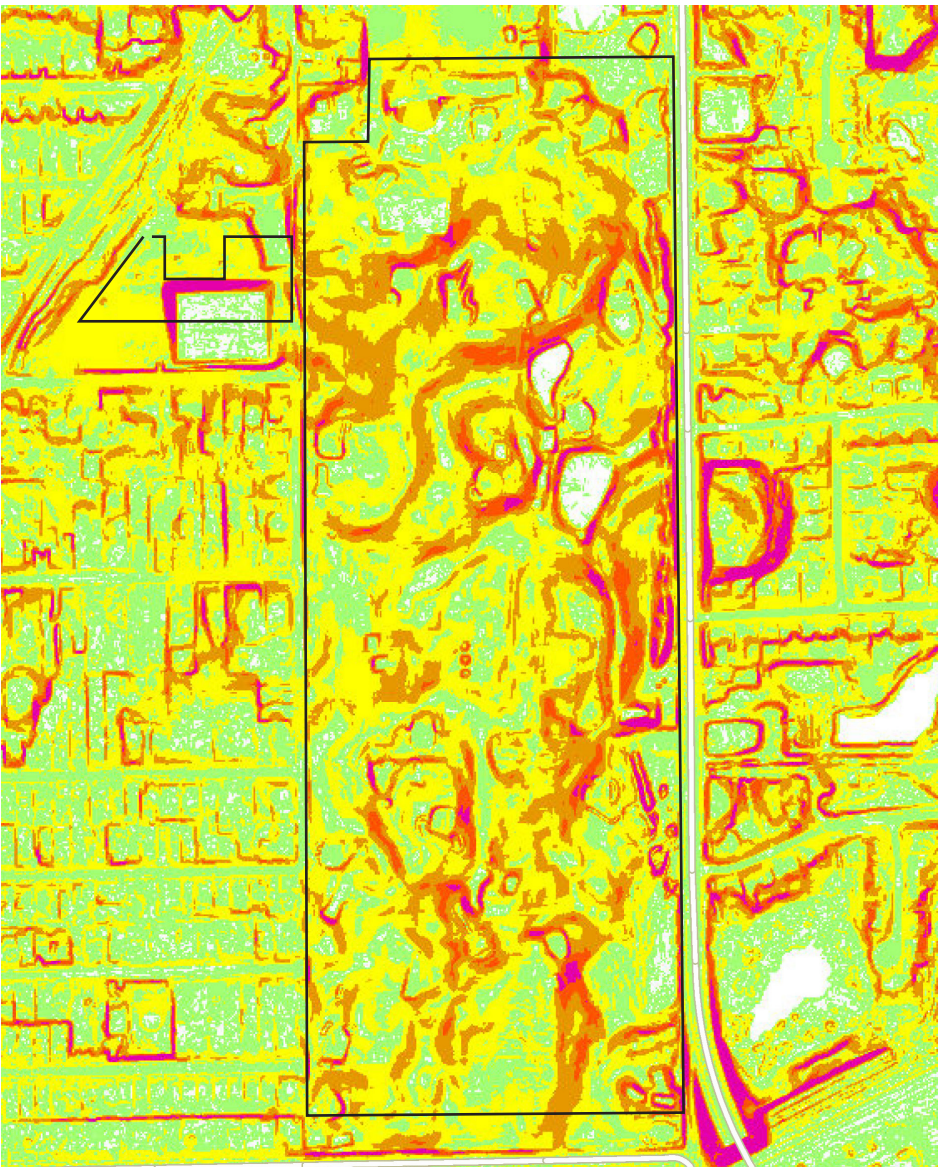
Many of the smaller plateaued areas on the site south of the high point are associated with the tee boxes and greens.

Other steep areas are along McKnight Road. When McKnight was built to modern standards, it was lowered, thereby requiring a retaining wall and steeper slopes along the site's eastern edge.

Development of the site will require extensive soil remediation, removal, and new topsoil brought onto the site. It is anticipated that land preparation will alter the topography considerably in places, and minimally in others.

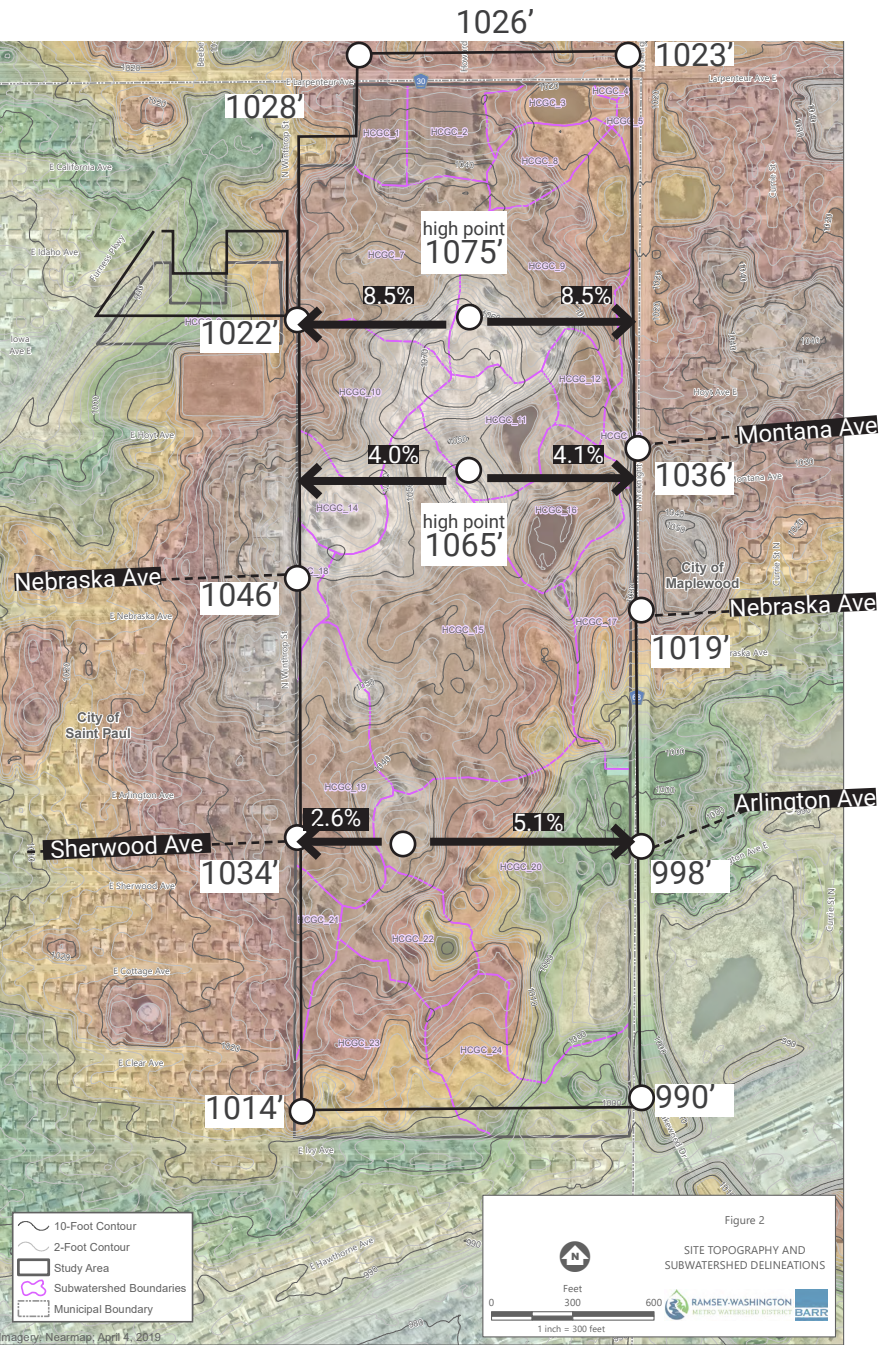


**TOPOGRAPHY**  
There is significant grade change throughout the Hillcrest site, 1075' in the north of site to 992' in the south. Most notably, the site is home to the highest point in the City of Saint Paul.



**SLOPE ANALYSIS**  
There is significant slope variation throughout the site, ranging from <5% to >30%. This presents unique challenges to the location of land use that demand large flat sites for development..





**SLOPE MATCH**

Any changes in the site slope is restricted by the slopes of the surrounding area. This is particularly important for placement of the rights-of-way.

**Wetlands**

Following the topographic patterns of the site, wetlands are primarily located in low elevations along the eastern edge of the site. The wetland areas are generally vegetated with a combination of native and non-native species.

A level 2 wetland delineation report was conducted in Spring 2020. A total of ten wetlands were identified and delineated. All potential wetland areas (mapped hydric soils, NWI signatures, and low depressional areas) were reviewed on-site and either delineated or determined to be upland.

Pending further environmental assessment, it is probable that most of the wetlands will require dredging and remediation to remove mercury contamination

WETLAND INVENTORY (FROM WETLANDS DELINEATION REPORT, JULY 2020)			
Name	Size	RWMWD Management classification	Circular 39 Wetland Type
Wetland A	.68 ac	Manage C	Type 5
Wetland B	.43 ac	Not Assessed	Type 3
Wetland C	.93 ac	Manage B	Type 3
Wetland D	.79 ac	Manage C	Type 3
Wetland E	.49 ac	Not Assessed	Type 6*
Wetland F	.13 ac	Not Assessed	Type 3/6
Wetland G	.39 ac	Not Assessed	Type 5
Wetland H	.41 ac	Not Assessed	Type 4
Wetland I	.04 ac	Manage C	Type 5
Wetland J	.05 sc	Manage C	Type 1

[Click Here for a link to Wetlands Delineation Report](#)

[Click Here for a link to Wetlands and Existing Conditions Report](#)

\*wetland E Type 6 designation modified to Type 7 per MWCA TEP (Oct. 2019)



**WETLANDS**

There are estimated to be 5.6 acres of wetlands on site of varying type. These wetlands are a significant site resource for their habitat, storm water mitigation, and site feature potential. Further, wetland regulations will inform potential development areas.



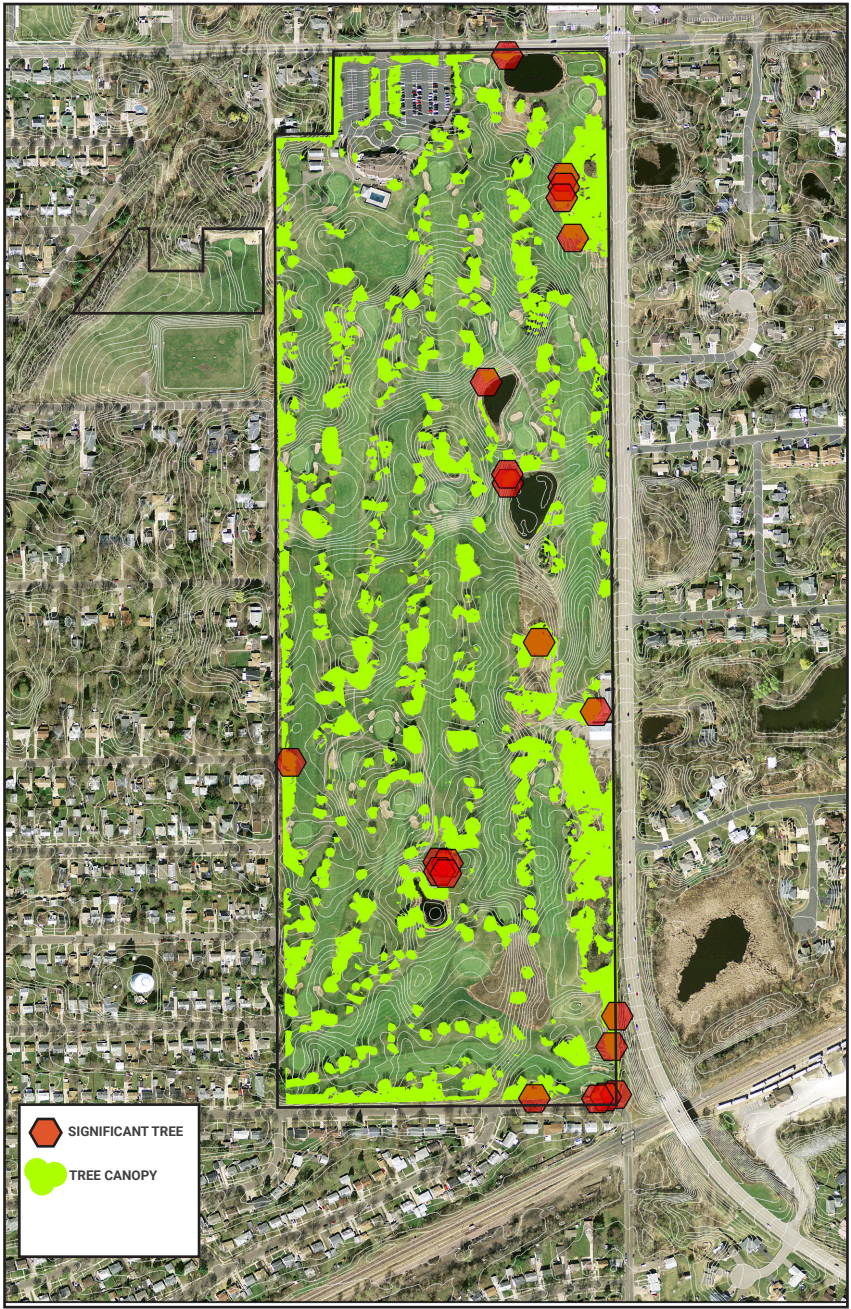
Tree Canopy

The site contains a substantial amount of mature tree canopy. In addition to adding habitat, beauty, and community character, the mature trees provide a high level of pollution mitigation in this urban area through removing CO2, particulates, and ozone. Twenty one trees, mostly mature oaks, have been identified by the City’s consultants as significant to the site for their ecological benefits, health, age, and size. The oak stands located in the upland hill slopes are generally located near wetland areas with potential wet mesic prairie restoration opportunities. (source: Hillcrest Evaluation of Existing Conditions Prepared for Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District February 2020, Barr Engineering) Although protection of significant trees is desirable, most trees will need to be removed in the course of pollution remediation and site preparation.

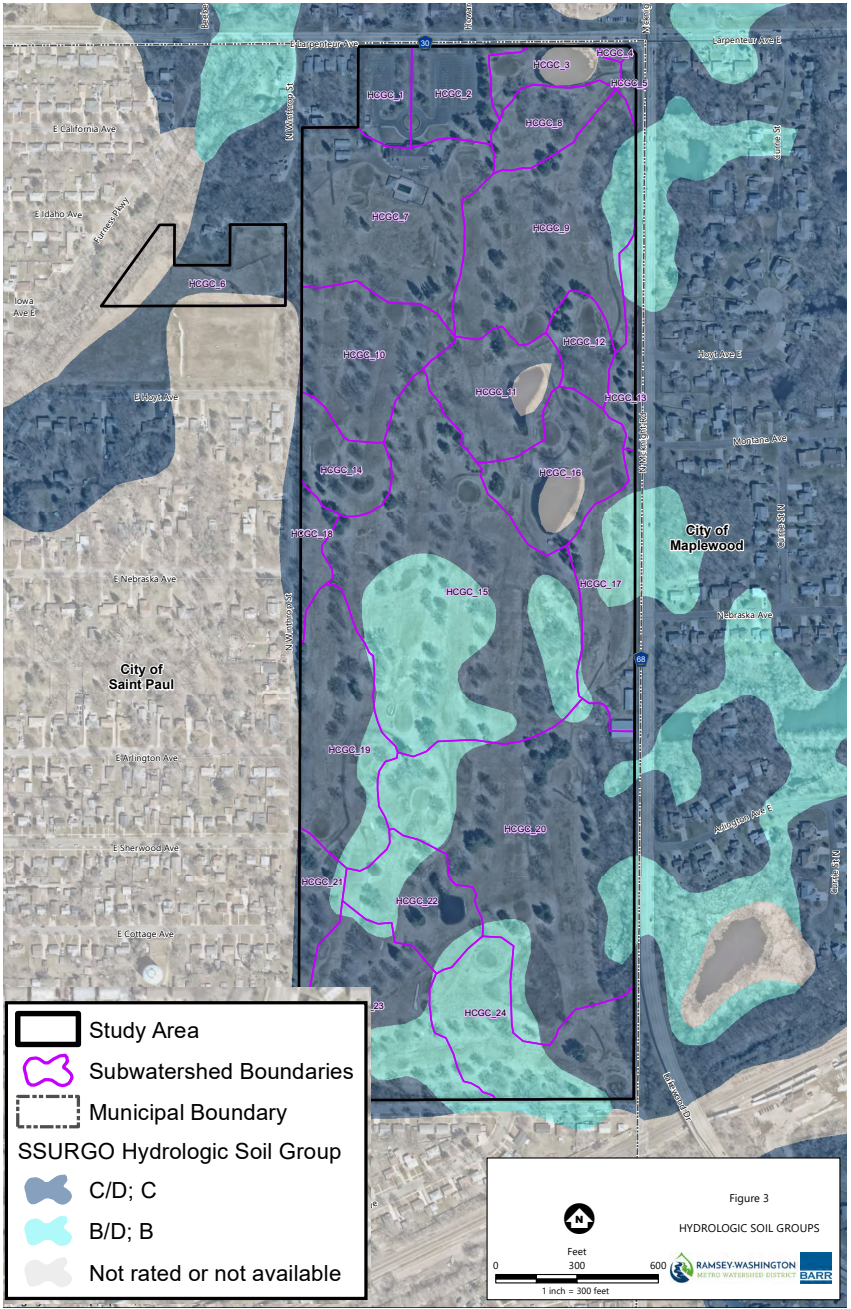
Soils

Although polluted with mercury near the surface, the site’s soils are of significant ecological value, since mass grading did not occur to establish the golf course, and native soil profiles are generally intact (source: Hillcrest Evaluation of Existing Conditions Prepared for Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District February 2020). The site is predominately covered with high clay soils - class C/D. These soils have low infiltration rates, which will impact the stormwater management opportunities on the site.

[Click Here for a link to the Stormwater Report](#)



**TREE CANOPY**  
Trees originally planted when the golf course was initially built have matured and become a significant resource to the site. It is estimated that the site has roughly 33% tree canopy coverage – 36 acres of full canopy coverage. Of those, 21 trees have been identified as significant.



**SOILS**  
The Hillcrest site is mostly comprised of clay soils -group C/D, C- with select areas silty - BD,B- soils. Clay soils have low rates of stormwater infiltration.



Climate

Trends

Consistent with worldwide trends, Minnesota is expected to see significant changes to climatic conditions in coming years; with the climate getting warmer and wetter. The average maximum daily temperature in the state is expected to raise 3 degrees, the frequency of extreme heat events is expected to increase by 200 percent, and the number of days below freezing is expected to decrease by 8 percent by 2040 (EPA, 2020). These shifting temperatures will mean changes to the overall energy use patterns of communities. While the increase in temperatures will reduce the overall number of heating days, rising temperatures and projected extreme heat events will increase the need for cooling of occupied buildings. The average yearly number of cooling degree days is expected to increase by 44 percent while the number of heating degree days is expected to decrease by 10 percent by 2040. New development should prioritize reduction of overall energy consumption through integration of sustainable energy systems and identify methods, both active and passive, that could help reduce overall energy needs.

Similar to temperature patterns, overall precipitation is expected to rise 6 percent, with 57 percent increase in the frequency of extreme precipitation events, by 2040 (EPA, 2020). These increases would significantly impact the overall stormwater burden on region’s natural areas and infrastructure. The site’s development can take steps to mitigate these climate impacts, such as reducing flooding off site, and making communities more resilient in the face of changing climatic conditions. (See Sustainability Chapter and Parks & Open Space Chapter.)

Energy Impacts

The changing climate conditions will also mean changing energy needs of communities. While the increase in temperatures will reduce the overall number of heating days, rising temperatures and projected extreme heat events will increase the need for cooling of occupied buildings. New development should prioritize reduction of overall energy consumption through integration of sustainable energy systems and identify methods, both active and passive, that could help meet these changing needs.



ADVISORY COMMITTEES

This Plan was created under the direction of the City of Saint Paul, in collaboration with stakeholders from the community. The process was guided by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Community Advisory Committee (CAC).

The TAC consisted of approximately 20 staff members from the City of Saint Paul, Ramsey County, Metro Transit, St. Paul Regional Water Services, the Ramsey Washington Watershed District, and the City of Maplewood, all public agencies with an interest and decisionmaking authority on the site and/or infrastructure surrounding it

The role of the TAC was to provide input to the formation of the Plan and to review the draft layouts and text prior to community engagement for technical and regulatory feasibility. The TAC met approximately monthly throughout the project discussing topics such as land use layouts, street and trail layouts and design, wetlands, transit needs, stormwater design, park needs, ownership and maintenance expectations, art, economic development trends, code interpretations, and more.

The CAC was formed in 2019 though an application process. The composition of the CAC included residents from both Saint Paul and Maplewood, as well as representatives from the business community, and individuals with a particular expertise in housing and multimodal transportation.

The role of the CAC was to help shape the Plan and to provide input in the public engagement process. Early in the process the CAC adopted a set of Community Priorities. These twenty three Priorities can be found on [page 22](#) of this document.





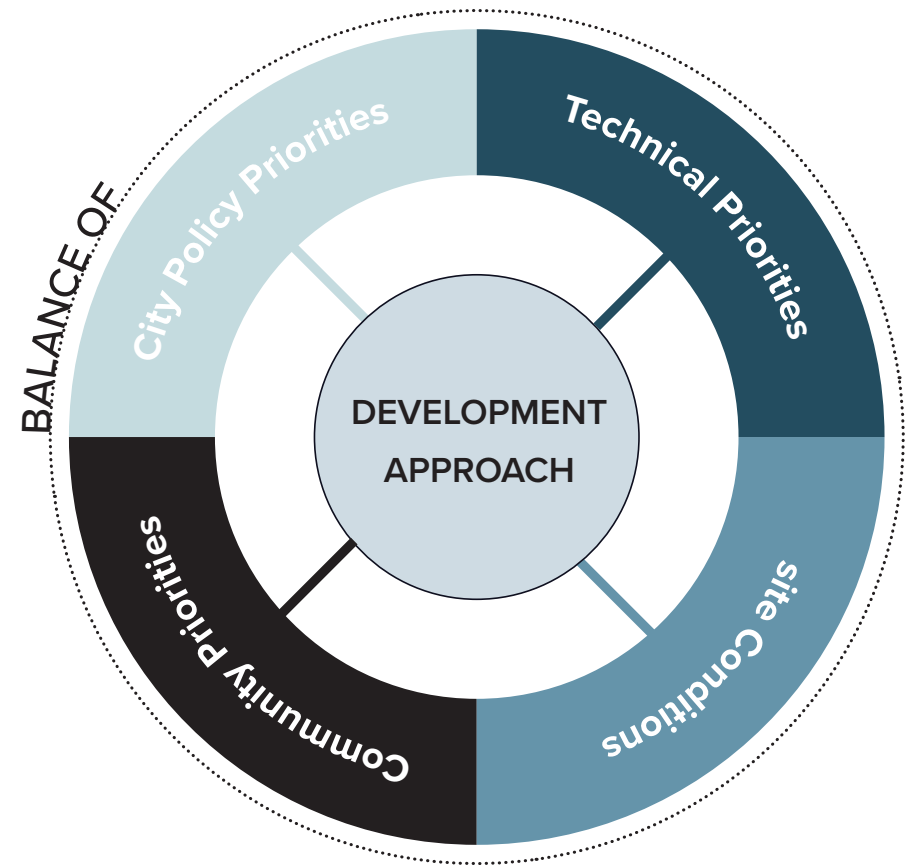
DEVELOPMENT APPROACH

Throughout Phase 1 of the planning process, the City and consultant team worked with the various stakeholders to establish the guiding policies, community and technical priorities, and site conditions. As with most redevelopment projects, the Hillcrest Master Plan follows a development approach that attempts to satisfy all four of these factors.

The technical priorities and City policy priorities were established by a Technical Advisory Committee in conjunction with the St. Paul Port Authority (SPPA) drawing on adopted plans and other sources. The community priorities were affirmed by the Community Advisory Committee, as informed by broad community engagement. The community priorities are listed on [page 22](#).

Among these priorities are key policy priorities of +/- 1,000 jobs; +/- 1,000 households; +/- 20 acres of parks, trails and open space; and establishment of a neighborhood node. These priorities guided creation of draft development approaches.

Throughout Phases 2 and 3, the team invited stakeholders to evaluate different approaches and scenarios against these policies, priorities and site conditions. Site layouts were adjusted after feedback from stakeholders.



**+/- 1000 JOBS**

The SPPA endeavors to bring approximately 1,000 jobs to the site in the form of light industrial, production, and modern manufacturing.



**+/- 1000 HOUSEHOLDS**

Housing at Hillcrest will likely occur in a range of styles, sizes and types - including, townhouses, apartments, cooperative living arrangements - to accommodate a diverse community of residents.



**20 ACRES OF PARKS, TRAILS, AND OPEN SPACE**

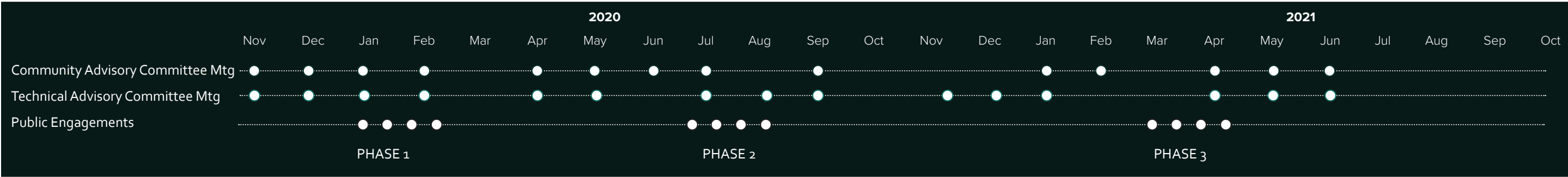
Open space will be owned by the City and the developer or future tenants and will be a combination of City Park space, passive park space, ecological restoration and privately owned publicly accessible spaces.




**NEIGHBORHOOD NODE**

Compact, mixed use area that provides shops, services, neighborhood-scale civic and institutional uses, recreational facilities and employment close to residences.


PROCESS




### Phase 1 : Background and Priorities




**IN PERSON COMMUNITY FORUM**  
160 attendees




**POP UP MEETING (X3)**  
60 attendees



**ON LINE SURVEYS**  
22 responses



**TOTAL**  
+/- 220 engagements




The purpose of Phase 1 Engagement was to introduce the public to the project, to give background information, and to listen to participants visions and concerns for redevelopment of the site. Discussions were generally structured around community character, living/housing, working/jobs, and overall community priorities. **The primary themes that emerged in this round of engagement are summarized in the Community Priorities Section of the this master plan.**


[Click here for a link to Community Priorities](#)

[Click here for a link to Phase 1 Engagement Report](#)


### Phase 2 Engagement: Design Alternatives




**SOCIAL PINPOINT AND ON LINE SURVEYS**  
480 responses



**POP UP MEETING (X4)**  
85 attendees



**ON LINE COMMUNITY MEETING** 93 attendees




**TOTAL**  
+/- 178 engagements

Phase 2 Engagement occurred late summer 2020, during the coronavirus pandemic. Special care was taken to ensure safety and access for participants. The only in person engagements were conducted via pop up meetings. which were also designed to reach the BIPOC community.


[Click here for a link to Initial 4 Approaches](#)

[Click here for link to Phase 2 Public engagement Report](#)


### Phase 3 Engagement: Two Finalist Scenarios




**SOCIAL PINPOINT AND ON LINE SURVEYS**  
136 responses



**POP UP MEETING (X8)**  
168 attendees



**ON LINE COMMUNITY MEETING** 150 attendees



**TOTAL**  
+/- 312 engagements

Phase 3 Engagement occurred in Spring 2021, during the coronavirus pandemic. Special care was taken to ensure safety and access for participants. The only in person engagements were conducted via pop up meetings. which were also designed to reach the BIPOC community.

[Click here for a link to the Finalist Scenarios](#)

[Click here for a link to the Phase 3 Public Engagement Report](#)

[Click here for a link to the Phase 3 Engagement Details](#)



COMMUNITY PRIORITIES



Housing and Neighborhoods

- New development should **respect the quiet nature** of the existing neighborhood. Whereas we recognize that new development may open up our neighborhood, we value our trees, quiet streets, access to nature, and sense of a neighborhood. New development should not eliminate these qualities.
- Provide a **mix of housing options** on the Hillcrest site. This may include smaller single-family homes including two-three bedrooms for young families, cottages, twin and town homes, duplexes, live/work homes, affordable homes (many types), senior options (assisted and independent living cottages), and starter homes, all with yards and green space a priority.
- New housing should consider **emerging and existing family types** – such as multi-generational, extended, and single person households, cooperative housing arrangements, and intergenerational mixes.
- Housing (design and type) should **encourage pride in ownership** and in community.
- Housing should emphasize an interaction with other residents and with nature.
- Neighborhoods should be walkable with connections to nearby parks, schools, public transportation and other amenities.
- New development should help complete the Greater East Side by providing jobs, health services, pedestrian-accessible commercial and retail uses, and new housing that the East Side currently does not have.



Transportation and Access

- The site (and the area) need better public transportation connections. Therefore, the site should be developed in a manner that enables improved transit and encourages the use of public transportation.
- Avoid connections to the west that carry fast and high volumes of vehicular traffic. Connections into the site, if any, from the west, should be carefully designed so as to avoid excess traffic flow through the neighborhood. Many neighborhood streets do not have sidewalks, so pedestrian safety is a priority. If traffic is increased, provide sidewalks.
- Extend trails into the site, creating a pedestrian and recreational connection that allows people from the neighborhood to access the site, public spaces and businesses.
- Analyze the public services that will be necessary to provide for public safety such as additional fire and police, or a new elementary school.



Jobs, Employment, and Businesses


- New jobs on the site should be for a diverse working class, providing sustainable living wage jobs and have local hiring goals; stable jobs for skilled labor for all education levels, and not with high turnover rates.
- Ideally, new jobs would be green jobs.
- Development on the site should strengthen existing businesses and also support the growth of small, local, and entrepreneurial businesses. This can include (but is not limited to) provisions and allowances for home (and garage) based businesses, affordable commercial workspaces, co-working and collaboration spaces, incubators/accelerators and startup retail including small shops and kiosks.
- Any retail should be pedestrian-accessible, not automobile-based strip commercial. Attract distinctive small businesses like a coop grocery market, ice cream shop, small cafes, and entertainment venues.
- Industrial/manufacturing building types should integrate with the neighborhood’s character and be located on the edges of the site near higher volume streets like Larpenteur and McKnight.



Open Space, Community Space and Nature

- Preserve and respect the unique topography and features of the site and maintain healthy mature trees. The rolling hills, wetlands and trees are valuable resources that define the site, perform important ecological functions, and for many are a part of childhood memories. Incorporate them into park space, gardens, wetlands and other amenities usable year-round to distinguish the site.
- The development should have ample green space, open space, and park space to support the needs of the people who will be living and working there and meet the City’s green space and park requirements. These spaces should be connected to surrounding neighborhoods and Beaver Lake with multi-use trails and sidewalks.
- The site should have ample community spaces for people to gather and get to know each other and break down barriers – community center, swimming pool, picnic space, splash pad and playgrounds for young families, natural reserve for kids to explore, dog park and other public or semi-public elements that help create community. Also places for activities like community/educational gardens and a farmers market, and programming such as art in the park and community murals.





# MASTER PLAN



A primary component of this Plan is the arrangement and distribution of a variety Land Use categories that meets the market demand for housing and employment, fulfills the provisions in Ordinance 19-39 (see page 9) for summary) , are compatible with its surroundings, and ensures orderly and sustainable growth.

To that end, the Plan integrates residential, light industrial, open spaces with each other and with the surrounding areas to create a new neighborhood that is distinct from its surroundings but still well connected to them.

The new neighborhood will be distinct because it will have higher density housing and a considerable amount of jobs proximate to each other. Whereas these uses are often deliberately separated from each other with large buffers and distance, the Land Use Plan arranges light industrial and housing uses next to each other. With careful attention to development patterns, orientation of buildings and parking lots, design of public realm, and circulation patterns, The Plan creates a pattern whereby light industrial uses and housing can co-exist in proximity to each other.

Consistent with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan this master plan locates a dense mix of compatible uses at the neighborhood node, on the north portion of the site at the intersection of Larpenteur and McKnight Road - where it is most accessible to the surrounding community. The neighborhood node contains a new 5-acre City Park surrounded with dense housing, a modest amount of retail, and a portion of the light industrial employment area. The node is well connected to surrounding areas through street and trail extensions. The neighborhood node should contain amenities and spaces that appeal to all users in order to enhance social, economic, and cultural connections between a wide variety of people.

Housing is a key component to the Plan calling for approximately 1,000 new housing units in a range of housing types that meet the emerging needs of the community. In order to ease the transition to the new development, lower or medium density housing is located on the west edge of the site, adjacent to the Hayden Heights neighborhood. New housing will be compatible, though not identical, to the single-family homes in Hayden Heights.

Select streets are extended into Hillcrest and the blocks are reoriented north south to create a narrow series of blocks with medium or lower density housing that face onto both Winthrop and Howard Street (the main north - south street). Care should be taken to ensure the design of housing on these blocks is respectful to the existing conditions to their west. This can include lower profile (2 story) buildings facing Winthrop and providing vehicular access to the blocks from it's perpendicular streets or alleys.

Higher density housing is located around the neighborhood node, where there is better access to transit, adjacent to a new park. As the population of the East Side continues to change, developers are encouraged to consider their existing and emerging needs – for example inter-generational housing, and alternative ownership models for a younger demographic are likely to be in demand as the community changes. Younger and older demographics. 1- person households, esp. older single women, are growing nationally, and two-person ownership housing geared at seniors but not exclusive to them, could be an important market rate product here.

Light industrial uses are the other main component of the Plan. The East Side has lost several thousand middle class low barrier to entry jobs over the past 50 years. By repositioning this site as one with a considerable

amount of employment, the City has the rare opportunity to bring jobs close to its residents and address employment disparities between whites and people of color that exist in Saint Paul.

In order to position the site to attract new employers to the site, the Plan maximizes McKnight Avenue frontage for light Industrial land uses. Doing so will offer high visibility land to prospective employers willing to pay market rate for such property. Locating light industrial on McKnight Road also reduces the transportation impacts of this land use. By creating large light industrial blocks (with a flexible provision for an east west trail connection through them) the property owner has flexibility as to how they are developed.

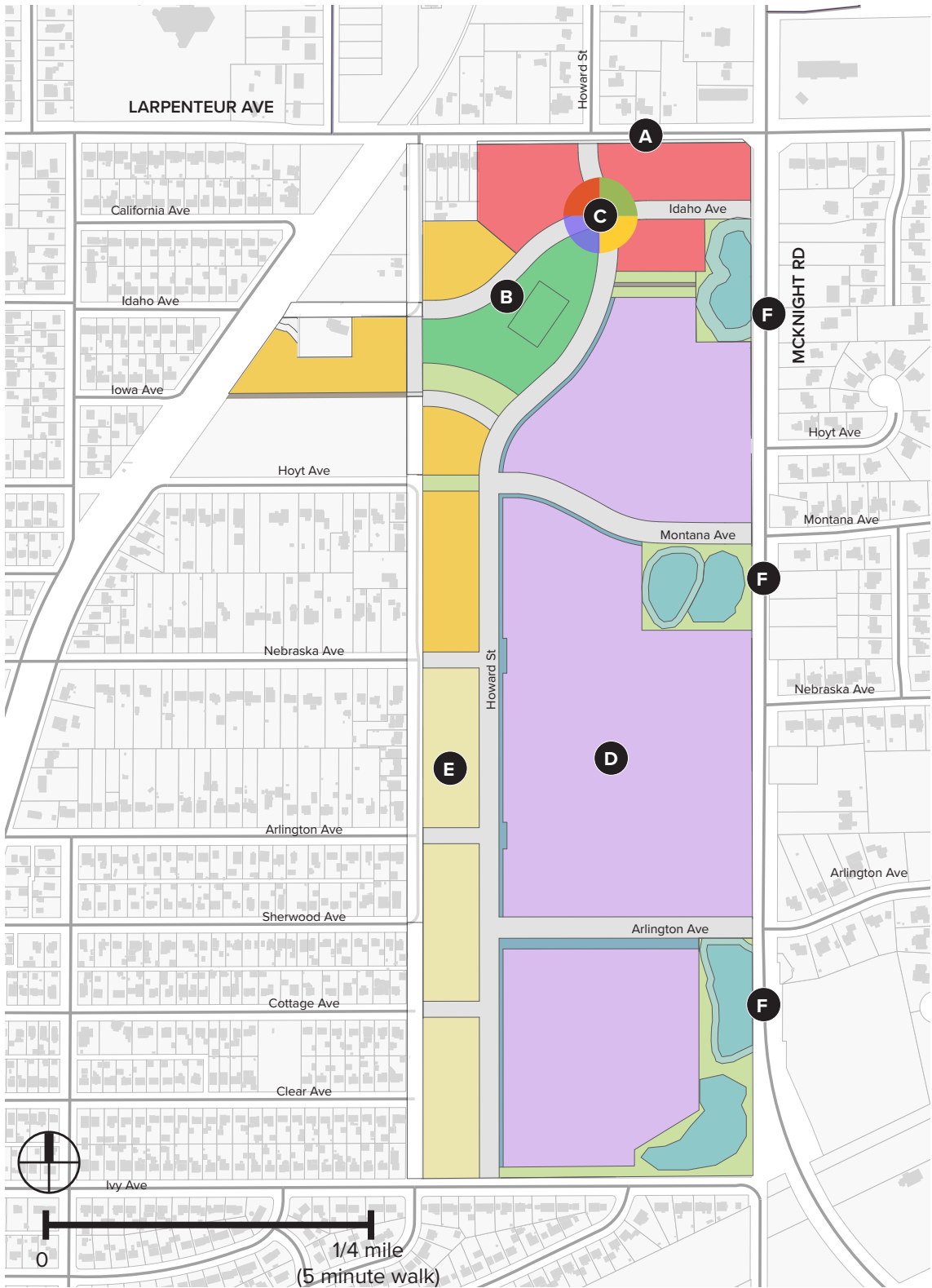
The following table shows the approximate number of housing units and jobs that can be provided by this Plan.

APPROXIMATE DEVELOPMENT		
LAND USE	TOTAL HOUSING UNITS AND JOBS	
Lower Density Residential (+/-20 units/acre x 9 acres)	+/-180	+/- 960 units
Medium Density Residential (+/-40 units/acre x 9 )	+/-360	
Higher Density Residential (+/-60 units / acre x 7 )	+/-420	
Light Industrial (+/-15-23 jobs/acre x 54 )	+/-810-1242 jobs	

POLICIES

- LUAP-1:** Encourage high-paying jobs with low barriers to entry in light industrial areas, preferably with higher job densities (20+ jobs/ acre)
- LUAP-2:** Encourage indoor community space to be established as part of private development near the neighborhood node.
- LUAP-3:** The Land Use Diagram on the following page shall govern land use layout except as otherwise specified by the Zoning Chapter.

LAND USE CATEGORIES



Key Elements of the Plan

- A** Higher density housing located at the primary corner of McKnight Road and Larpenteur, near the location of the designated Neighborhood Node.
- B** A City Park, owned and operated by the City located at the Neighborhood Node. Park to be designed for active recreation, gatherings and events that facilitate community building.
- C** A Neighborhood Node is located on the north side of the site where a variety of compact and relatively dense uses come together in a walkable environment
- D** Large flexible Light industrial blocks along McKnight Road.
- E** Lower and Medium density housing along the seam with the existing neighborhood to the west.
- F** Wetlands along McKnight Road are incorporated into the district stormwater system and are leveraged as a public asset as passive open space.

	Lower Density Residential	9 ac
	Medium Density Residential	9 ac
	Higher Density Residential	7 ac
	Light Industrial	54 ac
	City Park	5 ac
	Buffers and Passive Space	7 ac
	Wetlands	6 ac
	District Stormwater/Landscape Buffer	2 ac
	Trail not in the ROW	.3 ac
	Right of Way	14 ac
	Neighborhood Node	



**A: HIGHER DENSITY HOUSING (+/- 60 UNITS/ ACRE)**  
Higher density housing around the node provides new housing options and support for transit and retail.



**B: CITY PARK**  
The park at the neighborhood node can become a place for community gatherings, cultural events and both programmed and unprogrammed recreation.



**C; NEIGHBORHOOD NODE**  
Located on the north side of Hillcrest, the neighborhood node brings together several uses in close proximity to each other to create a place for gathering and activity.



**D: LIGHT INDUSTRIAL**  
Light Industrial uses are located along McKnight and the Howard Street (the spine road) where they have direct and easy access to regional roadways.



**E: LOWER DENSITY HOUSING (+/- 20 UNITS/ACRE)**  
Townhouses & small apartments help transition the scale of development from the Hayden Heights neighborhood to new development at Hillcrest.



**F: PASSIVE SPACE**  
The wetlands and stormwater areas throughout the site can become places for habitat to flourish and for people to access quieter spaces.



ART AND PLACEMAKING OPPORTUNITIES

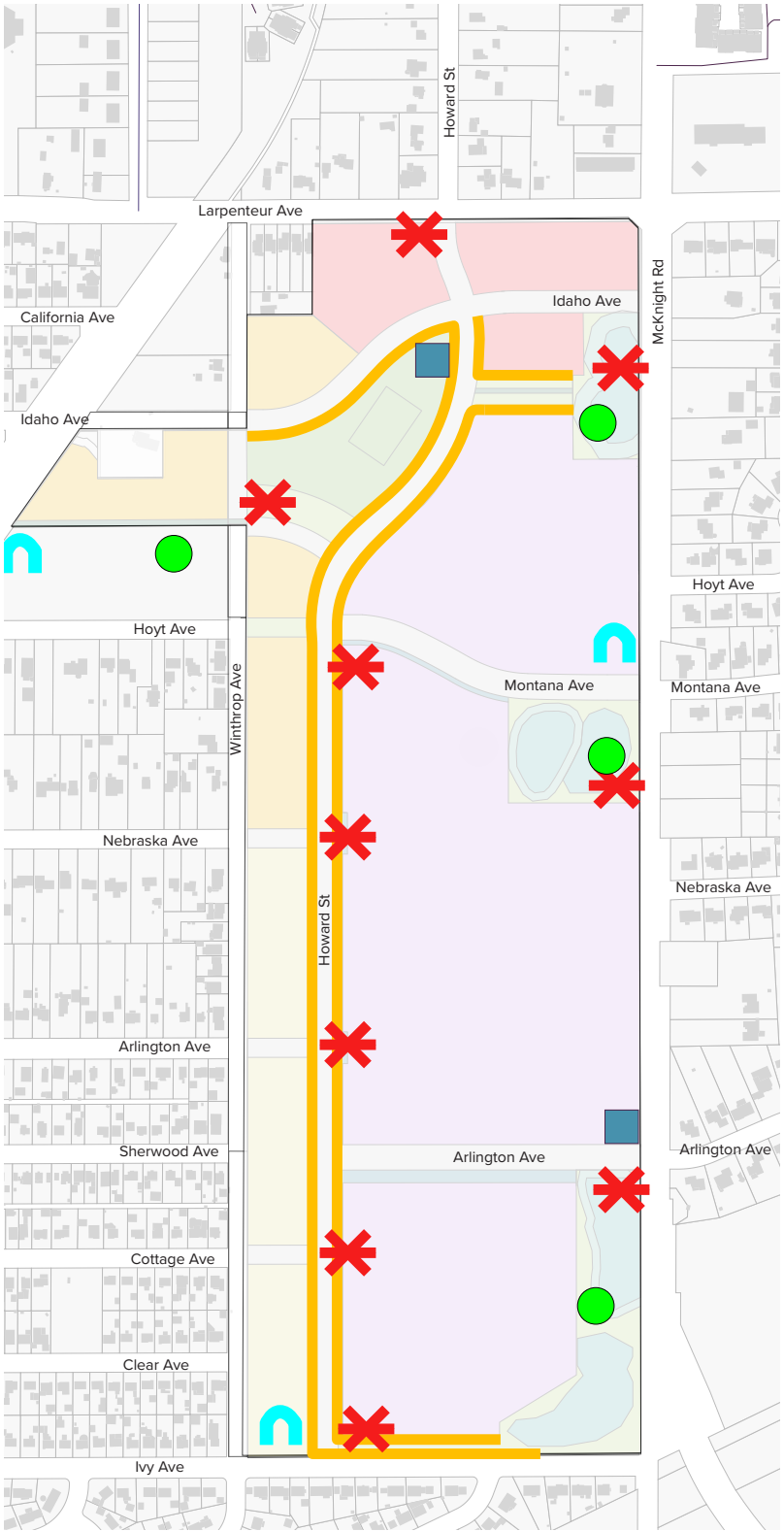
The City of Saint Paul’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan and the 2009 Public Art Ordinance emphasizes the values of aesthetics, innovation, equity and sustainability. Public art is not required by this Plan but it is encouraged.

The City’s [2009 public art ordinance](#) states, “the city council believes that planning and development decisions should give aesthetic and social value equal weight with any project’s functional and economic values. Public art strengthens public places and promotes Saint Paul’s identity as a livable and creative city and a desirable place to live, work and visit.” Planning for public projects like the Hillcrest Master Plan should involve artists from the earliest stages of conceptual design through implementation. An artist served on the planning team for the Hillcrest Master Plan.

Eligible City-funded capital projects to be operated by the City dedicate one percent (1%) of the project costs for art. Additionally, one-half percent (1/2%) of the City’s total Capital Improvement Budget is appropriated for maintenance and restoration of art. No eligible projects are identified at this time, but may be in the future.

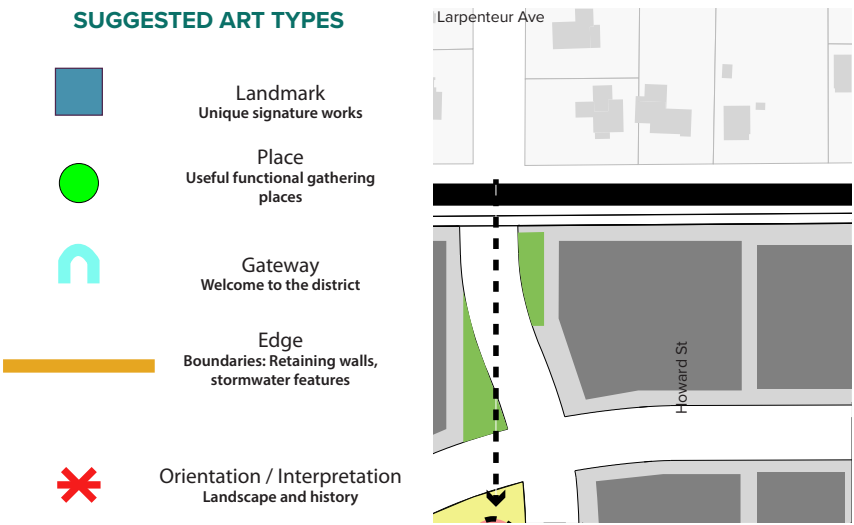
The ordinance goes on to define public art to include “publicly accessible original art that enriches the City and evokes meaning. It may include permanent visual art, performances, installations, events and other temporary works, preservation or restoration of unique architectural features, ornamentation or details. It may also include artist-designed infrastructure and structures themselves. Public art should consider the site, its context and audience. Public art may possess functional as well as aesthetic qualities; it may be integrated into the site or a discrete work.”

The proposed Guiding Principles on this page build upon the aesthetic cultural, historical, and social values expressed by residents throughout the engagement process, during the community forum, pop-up meetings and online surveys, and in priorities identified by the Community Advisory Committee. Although public art is not required by this Plan, the Guiding Principles will inform any art that is considered. The accompanying map suggests locations for different approaches to art and potential locations. See the following pages and the Appendix for art examples.



- ### Guiding Principles

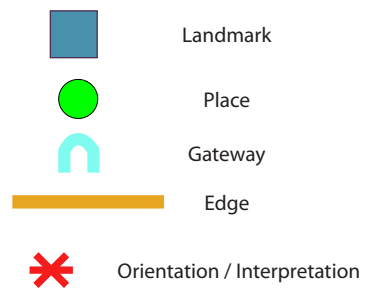
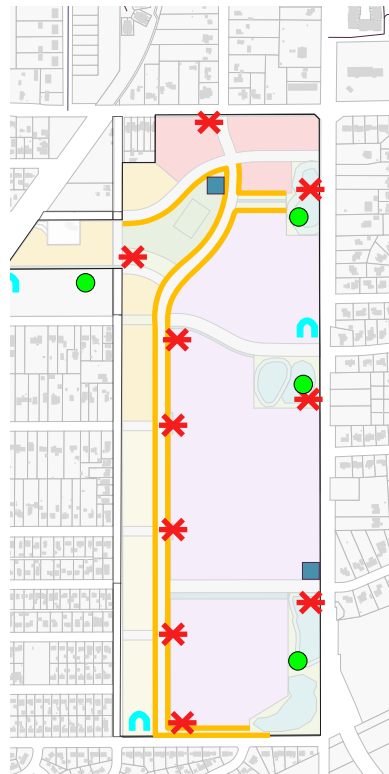
  - Art signifies, unifies and connects public spaces and adds to the overall character of Hillcrest.
  - Art is present throughout, not just in one location.
  - Artful places enable the community to gather and get to know each other; a range of scales of places are provided to accommodate multi-generational gatherings, smaller groups, and individuals.
  - Artful places are inviting to diverse users, functional and useful.
  - Public and private spaces are defined and demarcated by the landscape (wetlands, green space, trails) and art.
- Art at the entrance to trails and along trails, on retaining walls, and in the streetscape, provides orientation and safely guides movement.
  - Landform art and plantings connect people to nature; peacefulness and quiet are maintained through buffer zones and unique topography.
  - Community is engaged and involved in aesthetic decision-making leading to investment in the outcome, pride-in-place, and ongoing support, maintenance and care of art and public places.
  - Employment for artists, musicians, artisans and performers is part of the jobs program, recognizing local skills and talent.



**PLACEMAKING AT THE NODE**  
A slight shift in Howard Street opens up the view to a gateway to the Park and creates enhanced / widened sidewalks for amenities and stormwater

[Click Here for a link to additional Public Art Examples](#)



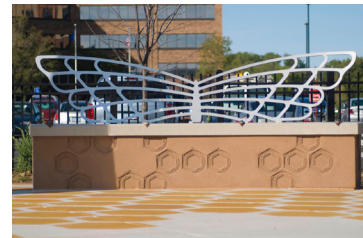


## LANDMARK

Unique signature works



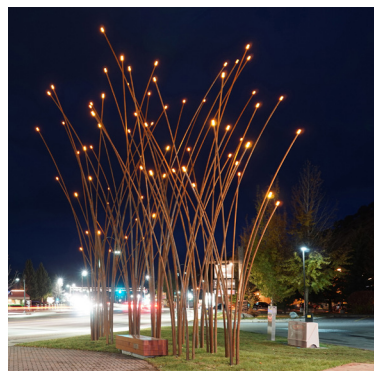
Holly Young Kincannon, Blackbird



Foster Willey, The Bee Way



James Brenner, Convergence



John Fleming, Willow Grove



Jeffrey Barber, Cottontail on the Trail



Karl Unnasch, Bloodroot (day, night)



## PLACE

Useful functional gathering places



Whitesavage & Lyle, Maple Leaf



Lloyd Hamrol, Roxhole



Lorna Jordan, Waterworks Grotto



Herbert Bayer, Waterworks Park



4RM+ULA, Ten x Ten, Roger Cummings, Seitu Jones, Rondo Commemorative Plaza



Jill Sebastian, Philosophers Stones

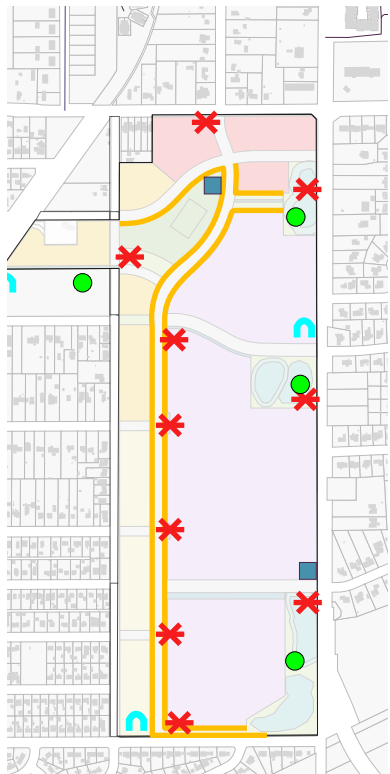


Matthew Geller, Nautical Swing








Kinji Akagawa, Prairie Islands





#### LEGEND/KEY

-  Landmark
-  Place
-  Gateway
-  Edge
-  Orientation / Interpretation

## GATEWAY

Welcome to the district



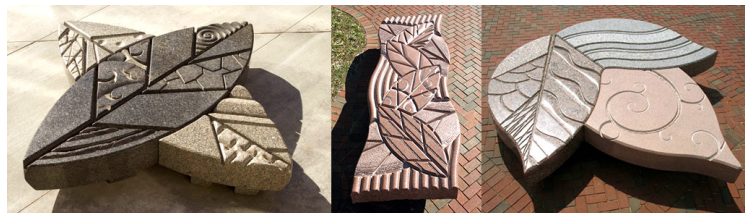
Mary Lucking, Take the Long Way Home



Artist Unknown



Whitesavage & Lyle, Triumph of the Vegetables



Paul Sires, Three Benches



Lisa Elias, Arbor and Railings



Blessing Hancock with Poetry by Junauda Petrus, Nicollet Lanterns

## EDGE

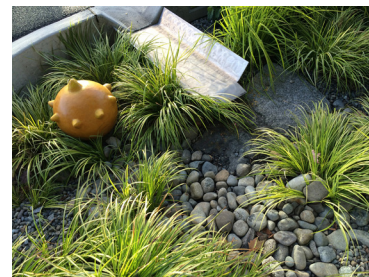
Boundaries: Retaining walls, stormwater features



Anjelica Pozo, Winding Wall of Fairfax History



Carolyn Braaksma, Grasses (detail)



Elizabeth Connor, Sweet Suite



Ann Hamilton and Michael Mercil, Selby Avenue Bridge



Vicki Scuri and Mark Spitzer, Green Ribbon (vegetated MSE walls)



Lori Greene, Berbere

## ORIENTATION / INTERPRETATION

Landscape and history



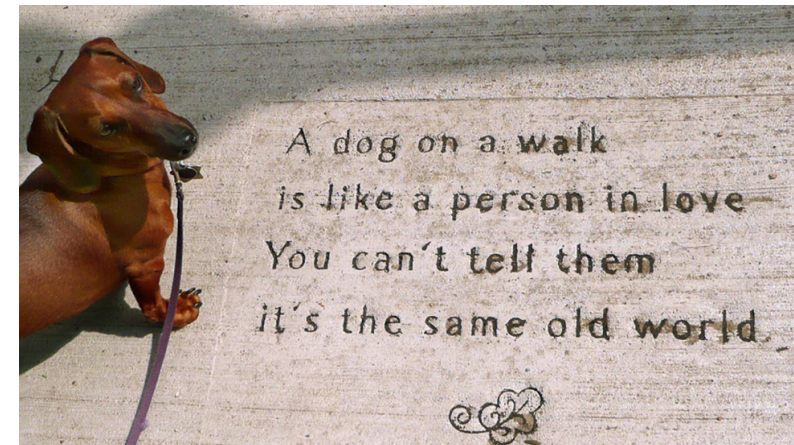
Betsy K Schulz, Harbaugh Seaside Trail



Jon Isherwood, Sotol Duet



Donovan Design, Titterud Park



City of Saint Paul Sidewalk Poetry Program



The backbone to the transportation component of the Plan is a right of way network made up of a hierarchy of streets that improves access to the site while supporting the Land Use and Parks/Open Space, Stormwater, and Public Arts components of the Plan. Special attention is given to creating a street and trail system that is equitable, safe, sustainable, and well connected. The proposed system improves access to the site, balances the needs of all users and protects the Hayden Heights neighborhood from truck traffic and unsafe conditions.

With over half of the developable land on the Hillcrest site dedicated to light industrial uses, it is important to ensure trucks have easy access to McKnight Road and do not traverse through the Hayden Heights neighborhood. Therefore, the Plan proposes two roads (one at Arlington Avenue and another at Montana Avenue) as the primary access points to the site. Industrial properties will have direct access to these two roads which in turn have direct and easy access to McKnight Road. McKnight Road connects conveniently south to Interstate 94 and north to MN 36 In addition to providing immediate access to McKnight Road, the remainder of the streets in the development are designed to prevent truck traffic from entering the neighborhoods.

The main organizing element in the Plan is a spine road: Howard Street that connects the length of the site from Larpenteur Avenue to Ivy Avenue. Howard Street is the only north south street in the development and will therefore be the main connection to the node, the edge of the park, as well as the primary address for much of the residential and light industrial development. It will also need to accommodate truck traffic and therefore should have a limited number of curb cuts to support a good pedestrian experience.

Howard Street will be designed as a mixed use-address, with a trail along its edge adjacent to a

linear district-stormwater feature. This feature will become an opportunity for habitat, public art, wayfinding, and other amenities. Extra attention to the design of Howard Street will also allow it to serve as a buffer between housing and light industrial land uses

While truck traffic will be discouraged from circulating through the existing neighborhoods, it is important for people in the existing neighborhoods to be able to access the new jobs, new neighbors, and new amenities developed at Hillcrest. Therefore, the existing street network in the Hayden Heights neighborhood is partially extended into the redevelopment to Howard Street.

The Neighborhood Node on the north side of the site should be the most accessible and easy to get to location on the site. It will have a mix of uses that are active throughout the day and week and therefore it should be well connected in all directions. The Plan recommends providing easy access for transit riders, pedestrians, cyclists, as well as people driving to the node.

While streets are an important component of the transportation at Hillcrest, trail connections will provide additional access and circulation within and beyond the site. The Hillcrest site sits adjacent to several existing and proposed local and regional trails and bikeways. Providing access to trails can help support healthy lifestyle by making walking and bicycling a safe and easy alternative to driving.

Building connections between the site and the trails along McKnight Road and Furness Parkway will ensure residents in Hillcrest can easily access nearby destinations such as Beaver Lake, Hayden Heights Park and Recreation Center, and the Heights Elementary School. Connecting the trails will also allow employees on site to access work by bicycle which will decrease traffic on local streets.

POLICIES

***T-1: Establish a hierarchy of streets and trails to help manage movement and to provide access to properties.***

The rights-of-way throughout Hillcrest will be the connective element of the public realm. Particular attention will be given to designing streets that are safe for those who are most vulnerable – including the elderly, the young, and those without cars. In addition, the rights-of-way will be designed to help create a healthy and green environment with adequate tree cover, stormwater features, and pollinator-friendly plantings where possible. Finalized dimensions will be approved by the Department of Public Works. Details and explanation of the Street Types are found on [pages 30 to 34](#).

***T-2: Plan for public art into the design of the streetscape***

The design of the public rights-of-way is an opportunity to use art and creativity to celebrate the diverse cultures of the East Side and the unique physical features of the site. In addition, as a place where light industrial uses will exist alongside housing, it is also an opportunity to celebrate the unique mix of uses in the redevelopment. Consideration should be given to using street furnishings, retaining walls, seating, bus shelters, lighting, and landscape design as opportunities for artful expressions that celebrate the uniqueness of the people and the place.

***T-3: Provide the highest level of transit service to the entire Hillcrest development***

Currently the site is not served by any bus lines, and there are two bus lines within 1/4 mile. The City should continue to work with Metro Transit and other mobility services to increase public access to the site. Consideration should be given to extending existing lines to the site or to create high quality connections to planned BRT or LRT lines.

***T-4: Create a multi-modal hub at the neighborhood node on the north side of the site.***

The Neighborhood Node should be developed as a multi-modal hub – a place where people can transfer from one mode of travel to another. Multi-modal amenities such as bus shelters, car share parking / charging, and all-weather bicycle storage should be prioritized within and adjacent to the neighborhood node. The amenities could be provided on both private and public property.

***T-5: Discourage vehicular speeding on adjacent neighborhood streets.***

The site is designed to discourage cut-through traffic and speeding, while still providing access to the site from the surrounding neighborhoods. Off-site improvements may also be needed to promote safety of all street users.

***T-6: Support extensions of the sidewalk network east of McKnight Road to connect to new pedestrian crossings at controlled intersections.***

***T-7: Tree trenches or other means of visible green infrastructure are encouraged in the landscaped boulevards. Such designs can perform stormwater functions in the same space as landscaping, for more efficient and ecological land use***

***T-8: Limit the number and negative impact of curb cuts by:***

***•Developments on the same block should be arranged to share general vehicle and truck access driveways, except as topography and other obstacles make infeasible; and***

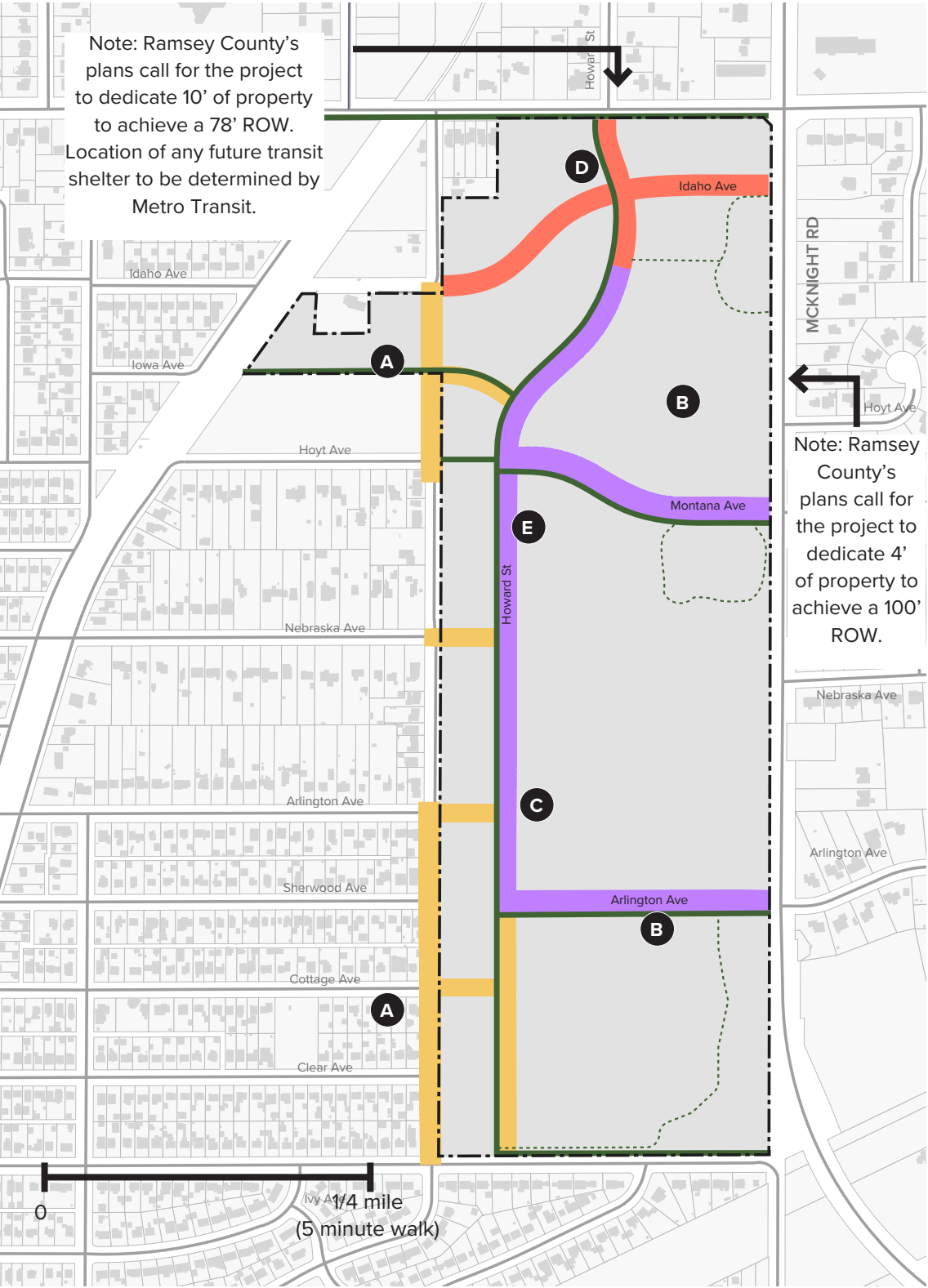
***•Driveway access to all development east of Winthrop Street should be from east-west streets to the extent feasible, rather than from Winthrop St or Howard St; industrial development may also directly access McKnight Road if permitted by Ramsey County.***

A mid-block driveway or alley is encouraged to serve residential development between Winthrop and Howard Streets.

These principles will improve safety and comfort for non-motorized transportation, and limit traffic impacts on the neighborhood to the west.”



STREET TYPES

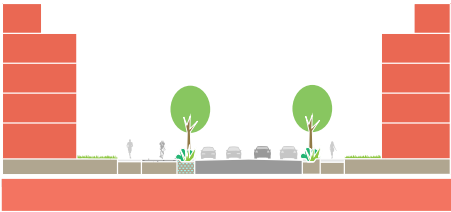


Key Elements of the Plan

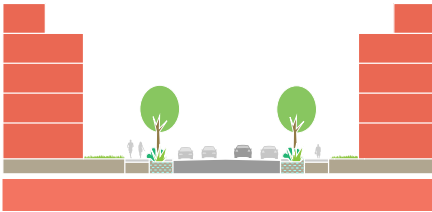
- A** Winthrop extension to the north matches the existing design of Winthrop. To the south may be narrowed and placed as far east as possible in the right-of-way.
- B** Two industrial roads enter the site from the east and provide direct access to McKnight Road for industrial traffic. This will prevent significant impacts to adjacent neighborhood roads.
- C** Howard Street accommodates residential, commercial, and industrial traffic to various degrees. It also supports non-motorized traffic with a multiuse trail along its western edge.
- D** Streets around the node are designed with on street parking, and generous sidewalks. Pedestrians are supported through protected crossings, buffered expanded sidewalks, and amenity areas.
- E** Trucks permitted on all streets; however, the Light Industrial streets will be designed with wider lane widths and turning movements. Access to Industrial properties from Howard is permitted, but not encouraged.



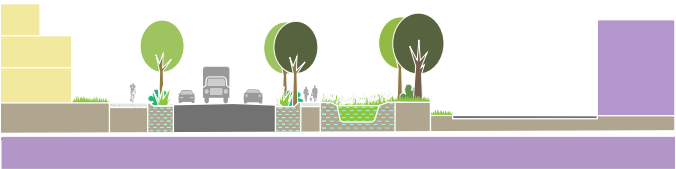
- NEIGHBORHOOD NODE STREETS (HOWARD AND IDAHO)
- LIGHT INDUSTRIAL STREETS - HOWARD / ARLINGTON / MONTANA
- NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS
- TRAIL
- PEDESTRIAN PATH



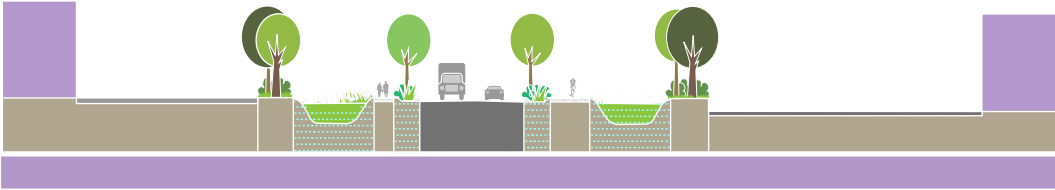
NODE - HOWARD STREET



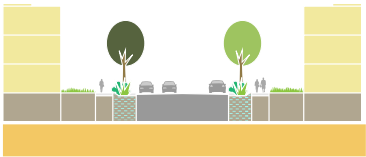
NODE - IDAHO AVE



LIGHT INDUSTRIAL - HOWARD STREET



LIGHT INDUSTRIAL - ARLINGTON AND MONTANA AVE



NEIGHBORHOOD - TYPICAL



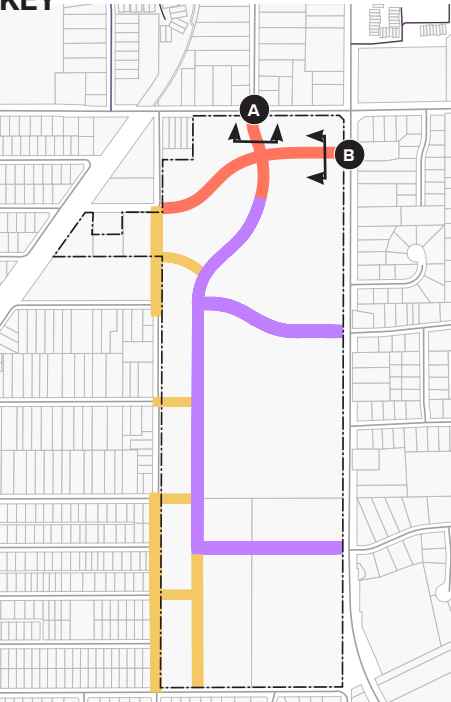
NEIGHBORHOOD - IOWA AND HOWARD

NOTE 1: Street sections are typical and may need to be modified due to topographic challenges and other factors

NOTE 2: trails along streets will be within the street rights-of-way and will be designed and constructed with the streets

STREET TYPES: NEIGHBORHOOD NODE

KEY

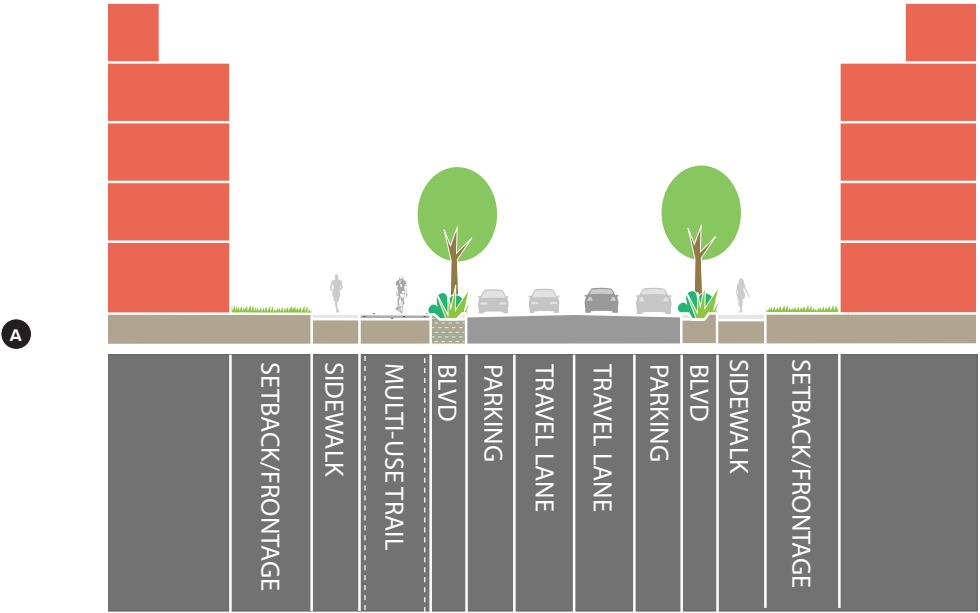


NOTE:  
For new developments and where opportunities are available to create additional setback, site designs should accommodate wider sidewalks with generous Boulevard/ Furnishing Zones. Source: Saint Paul Street Design Manual (p.23)

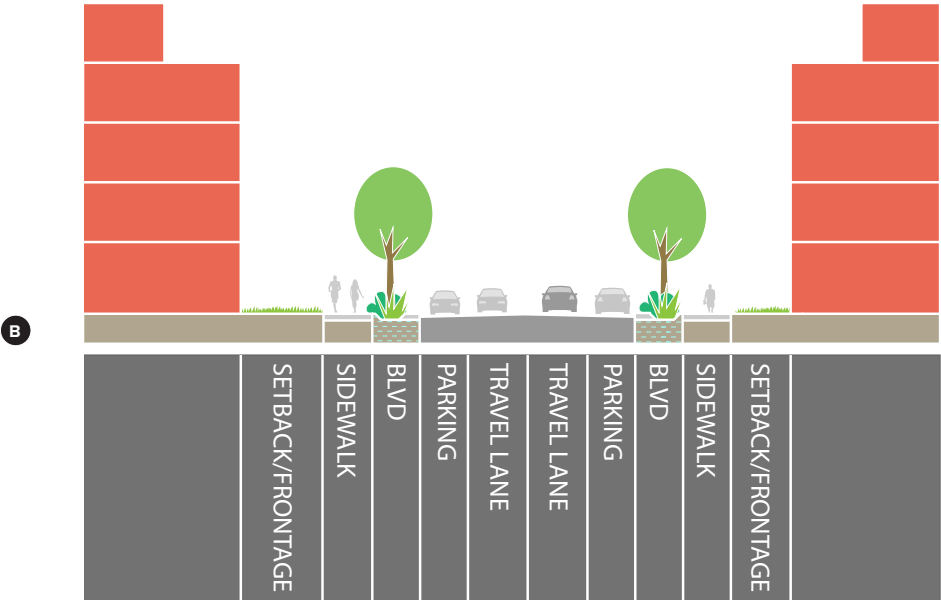
NODE - HOWARD		
DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA		
Minimum	Typical	
	82 ft	Right of Way Width
36 ft	38 ft	Pavement Width (includes gutter)
6 ft	8 ft	Sidewalk Width
6 ft	8 ft	Boulevard / Furnishing Width
2 ft		Frontage Zone
10 ft	12 ft	Two way bike trail
DESIGN FEATURES		
» On-street parallel parking		
» Intersection Bump-outs where feasible		
» Street and Pedestrian-Scale Lighting		
» Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)		
» Tree-trench BMP's		
» Street trees spaced 30'-40'		

NODE - IDAHO		
DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA		
Minimum	Typical	
	70 ft	Right of Way Width
36 ft	38 ft	Pavement Width (includes gutter)
6 ft	8 ft	Sidewalk Width
6 ft	8 ft	Boulevard Width
2 ft		Frontage Zone
DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA		
» On-street parallel parking		
» Intersection Bump-outs where feasible		
» Street and Pedestrian-Scale Lighting		
» Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks)		
» Tree-trench BMP's		
» Street trees spaced 30'-40'		

NODE - HOWARD STREET

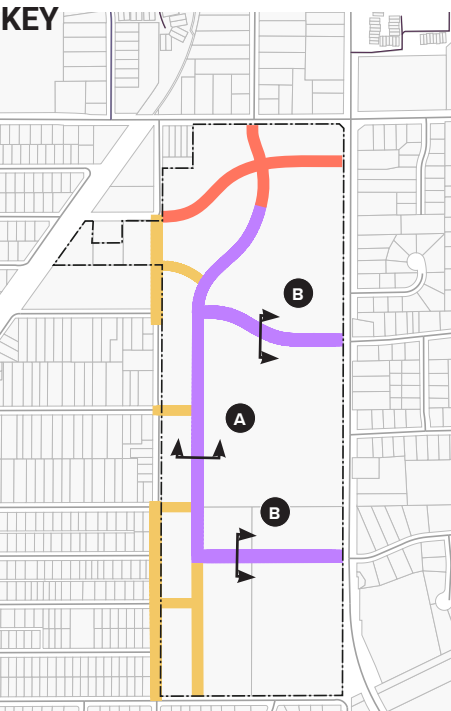


NODE - IDAHO AVE



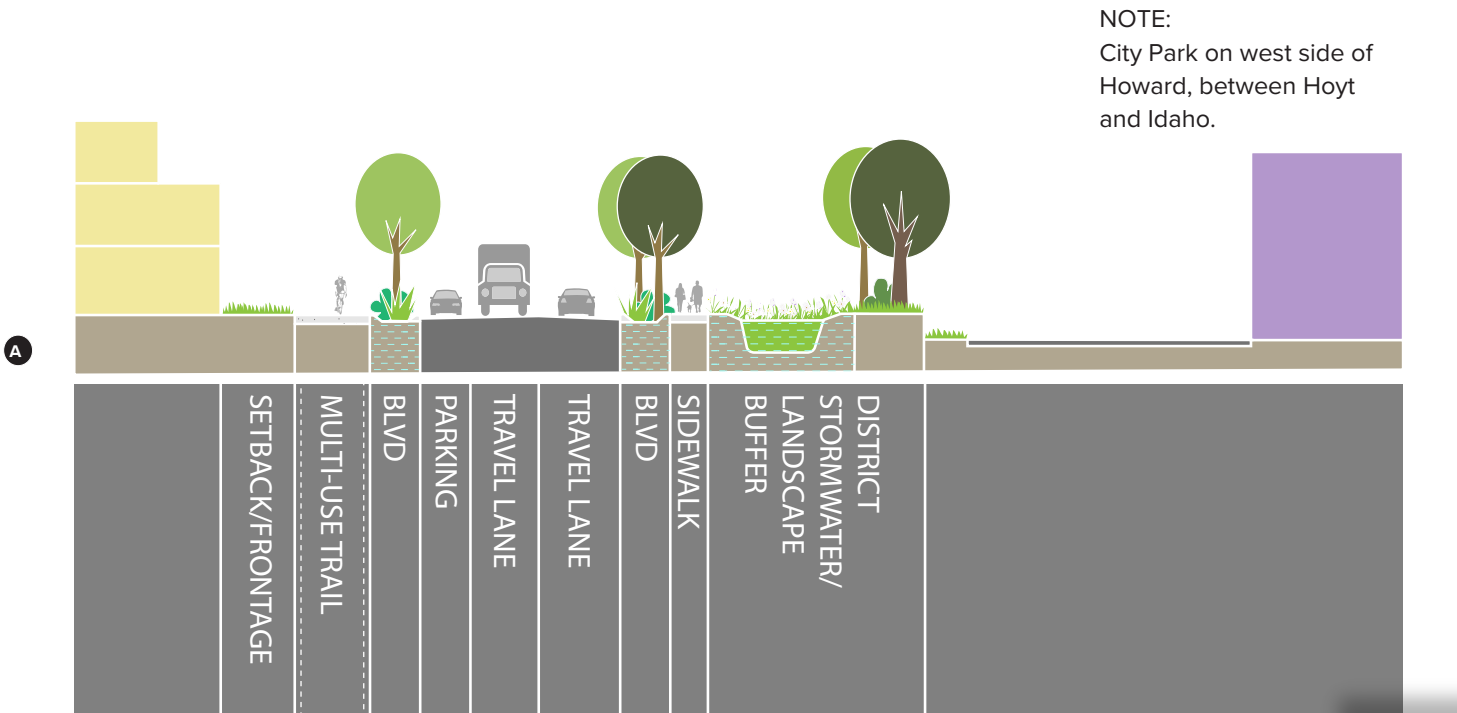
NOTE:  
City Park on south side of Idaho west of Howard Street

STREET TYPES: LIGHT INDUSTRIAL



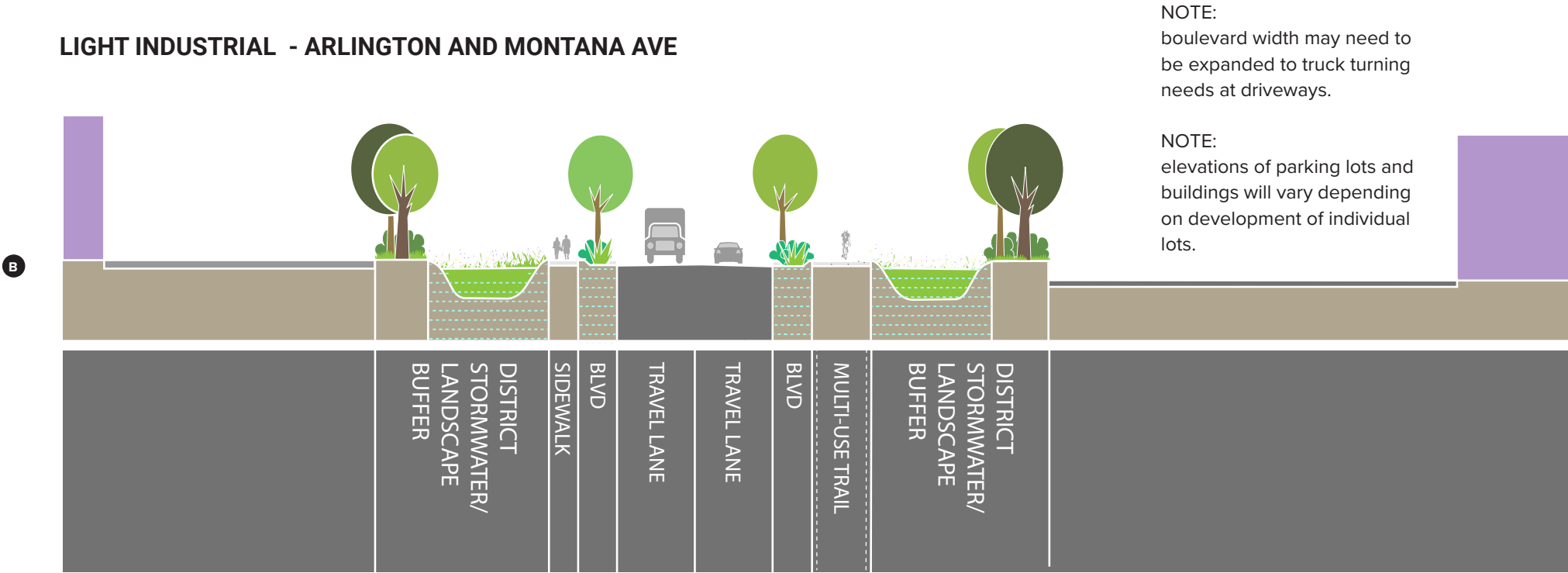
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL - HOWARD		
DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA		
Minimum	Typical	
	80 ft	Right of Way Width (does not include District Stormwater/Landscape Buffer)
36 ft	40 ft	Pavement Width (includes gutter)
6 ft	6 ft	Sidewalk Width
6 ft	8 ft	Boulevard / Furnishing Width (see note)
2 ft		Frontage Zone (west side only)
10 ft	12 ft	Multi-use Trail
25 ft	25 ft	District Stormwater / Landscape Buffer
DESIGN FEATURES		
» District Stormwater / Landscape buffer feature along east side of street		
» On-street parallel parking on west side of street		
» Intersection bumpouts where feasible		
» Street and Pedestrian-Scale Lighting		
» Tree-trench BMP's		

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL - HOWARD STREET



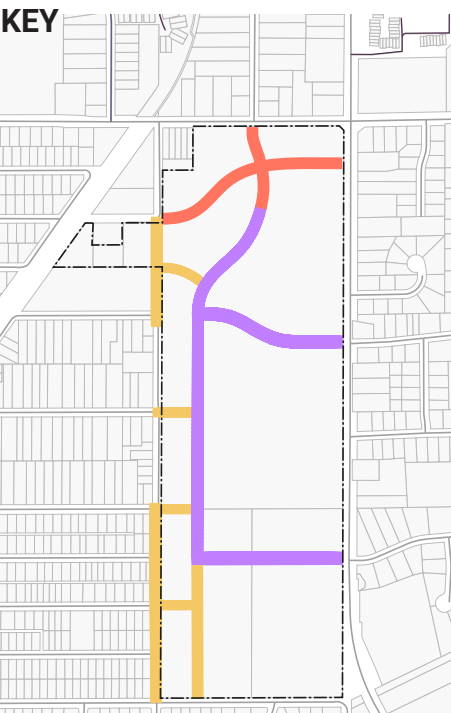
LIGHT INDUSTRIAL - ARLINGTON AND MONTANA AVE

LIGHT INDUSTRIAL - ARLINGTON AND MONTANA		
DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA		
Minimum	Typical	
	80 ft	Right of Way Width (does not include District Stormwater/Landscape Buffer)
32 ft	40 ft	Pavement Width (includes gutter)
6 ft	6 ft	Sidewalk Width
6 ft	8 ft	Boulevard / Furnishing Width (see note)
10 ft	12 ft	Multi-use Trail
25 ft	25 ft	District Stormwater / Landscape Buffer
DESIGN FEATURES		
» District Stormwater / Landscape buffer		
» Intersection bumpouts where feasible		
» Street and Pedestrian-Scale Lighting		
» Tree-trench BMP's		



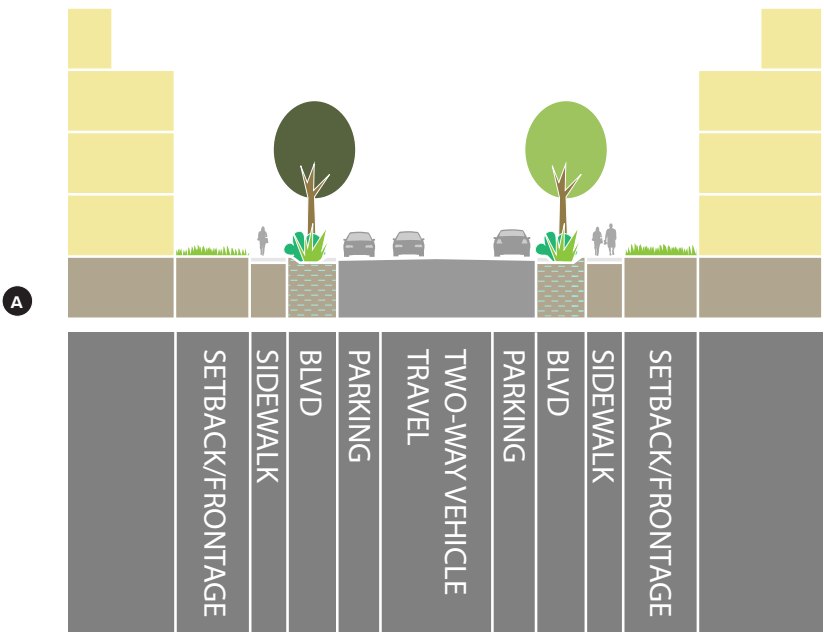


STREET TYPES: NEIGHBORHOOD STREETS



NEIGHBORHOOD - TYPICAL		
DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA		
Minimum	Typical	
	60 ft	Right of Way Width
29 ft	32 ft	Pavement Width (includes gutter)
6 ft	6 ft	Sidewalk Width
5 ft	8 ft	Boulevard / Furnishing Width
0 ft	2 ft	Frontage Zone
DESIGN FEATURES		
» On-street parallel parking in front of new residential		
» Intersection bumpouts where feasible		
» Street and Pedestrian-Scale Lighting		
» Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks) adjacent to residential		
» Tree-trench BMP's		

NEIGHBORHOOD - TYPICAL



NOTE  
Refer to land use plan for housing density.

NOTE:  
Off site green space on west side of Winthrop, between Hoyt and south west corner of City Park.

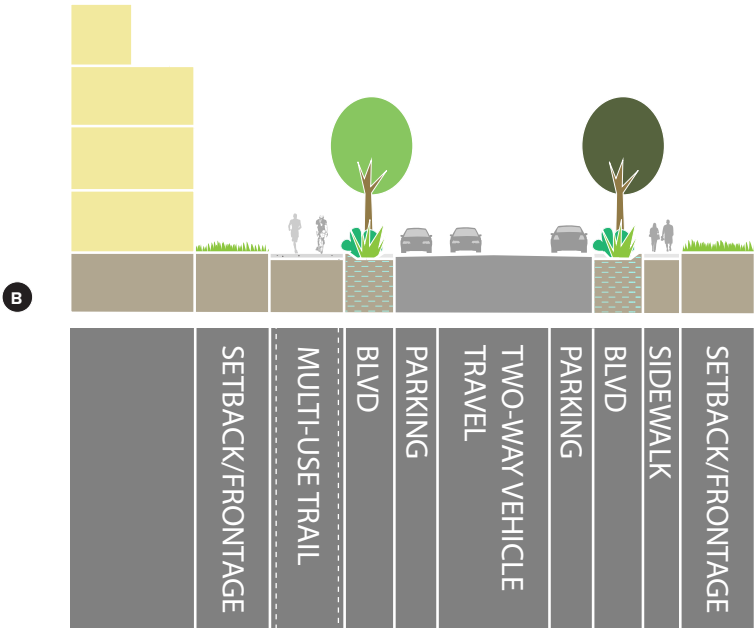
NOTE:  
City Park on east side of Winthrop south of Idaho.

NOTE:  
Winthrop Street south of Sherwood may swing east within the right-of-way as feasible, if its centerline aligns with Orange's centerline at Ivy. This is the only portion of Neighborhood Streets expected to potentially be at the minimum dimensions for pavement, sidewalk, and boulevard widths.

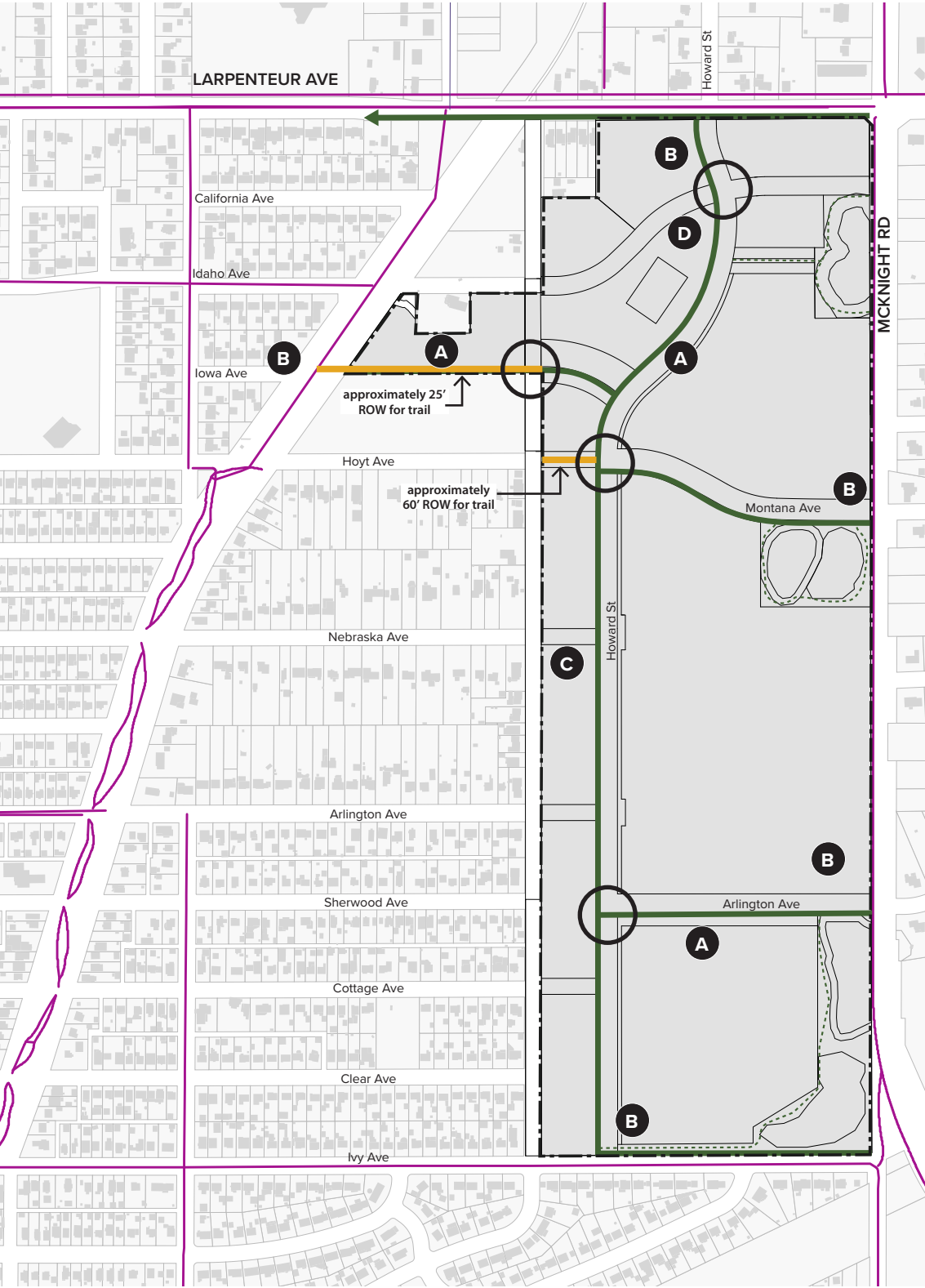


NEIGHBORHOOD - IOWA AND HOWARD

NEIGHBORHOOD - IOWA AND HOWARD		
DIMENSIONAL CRITERIA		
Minimum	Typical	
	66v ft	Right of Way Width
32 ft	32 ft	Pavement Width (includes gutter)
6 ft	6 ft	Sidewalk Width
6 ft	8 ft	Boulevard / Furnishing Width
10 ft	12 ft	Multi-use Trail
0 ft	2 ft	Frontage Zone
DESIGN FEATURES		
» On-street parallel parking in front of new residential		
» Intersection bumpouts where feasible		
» Street and Pedestrian-Scale Lighting		
» Streetscape Furnishings (seating, planters, trash receptacles, bicycle racks) adjacent to residential		
» Tree-trench BMP's		



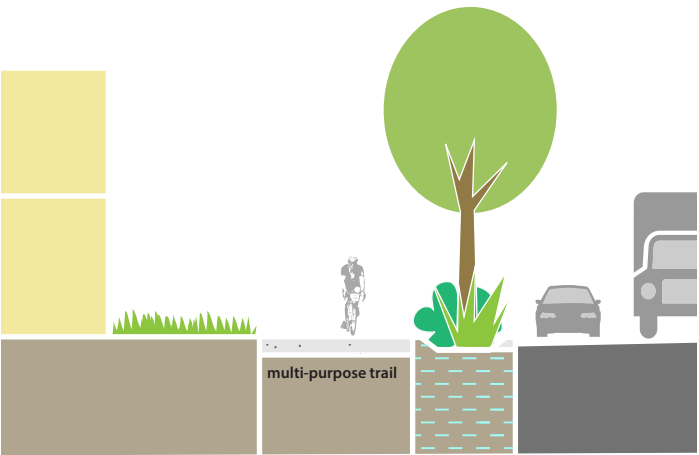
TRAILS



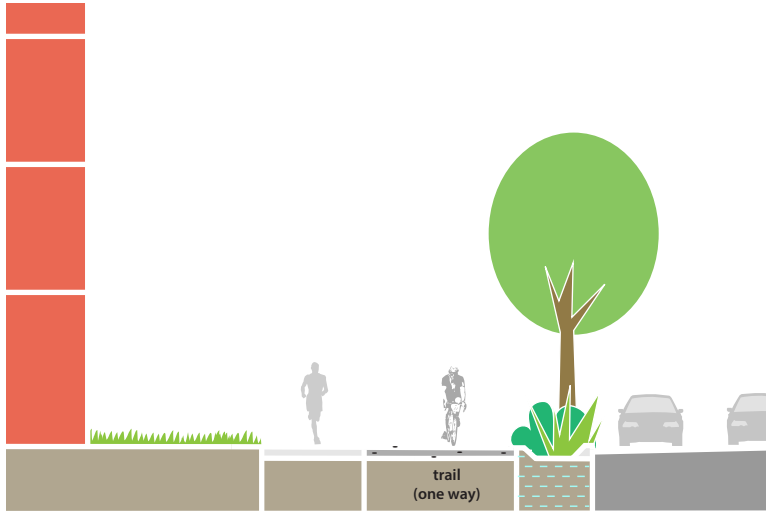
**Key Elements of the Plan**

- A** With the exception of two trail segments (indicated on map in yellow) all trails are located along the street.
- B** Trails within the site connect to trails on McKnight and Furness as well as bike facilities on Larpenteur. The Public Art component of the Plan indicates these as locations for “Gateway” art.
- C** The trail along Howard will have very few driveway interruptions and will be a direct connection to the City Park.
- D** Trail on Howard at the Node will be between the curb and sidewalk, thereby eliminating conflicts with building encroachments (door swings).

- TRAIL not along the Street
- TRAIL along the Street
- OFF SITE TRAIL OR LANE
- PROTECTED INTERSECTION CROSSING
- PEDESTRIAN PATH



**TRAIL ON HOWARD, SOUTH OF THE CITY PARK**  
The trail along Howard will be located on the west side of the street, in front of residential buildings. Driveways along Howard should be minimized to reduce conflict with the trail. The trail will be 10’ wide with a 1’ clearance zone on both sides. Buildings along the trail must be set back from the trail to avoid obstructions such as door swings onto the trail.



**TRAIL (BIKE FACILITY) ON HOWARD, AT THE NODE**  
The trail along the west side of Howard through the node will be located between a boulevard and a sidewalk, adjacent to potential mixed-use buildings. The trail will have a 2’ clearance zone on both sides. Buildings will have to be setback from the property line to ensure obstructions such as cafe tables and door swings do not encroach on the sidewalk.



As they are throughout the City of Saint Paul, Parks and Open Spaces will be an important component to the success of the Hillcrest Redevelopment. Ordinance 19-39 sets the expectation that the property owner will deliver 5 acres of park space as a City Park as well as 15 acres of publicly accessible passive open green space that can also function accommodate existing and mitigated wetlands, as well as stormwater retention. The Plan arranges that acreage so it is connected, functional, accessible, and valuable to the entire community.

The Plan locates the City Park on the northern portion of the site in the middle of the neighborhood node and surrounded with a mix of uses, including the most dense housing in the development.

This park will be an important contributor to the vitality of the neighborhood node because it will be activated by the many different people who will be living and working in its proximity. The City Park will include space and amenities for both structured activities and informal play. The park will also be a key opportunity to highlight public art and community culture as it can host events and gatherings throughout the year.

Howard Street is a key component to the overall open space system. The Plan utilizes a shared, stacked green infrastructure approach along Howard Street to create a zone between residential and light industrial uses that supports active recreation, public art, habitat, tree canopy, and stormwater management. The design of Howard Street will include a 25' multi-purpose district stormwater/landscaping buffer along its eastern edge. This feature will perform a variety of functions including managing stormwater, supporting habitat, providing canopy coverage, improving the quality of the trail experience, and providing an opportunity for public art.

POLICIES

***POS-1: Integrate the existing wetlands that are being preserved into the development by utilizing them as passive open space and as a stormwater feature for rate control.***

***POS-2: Create opportunities for privately owned public spaces at key locations.***  
In addition to the publicly owned spaces throughout the site (such as parks and trails) the Plan encourages land owners to create privately owned public spaces (POPS) that support the needs of the community and the property owner. These POPS throughout the site should be easily accessible by the public, outward facing, and support the public realm.

***POS-3: Construct a green infrastructure stormwater system at a district scale that is integrated with trails, passive open space, public art and other amenities.\****  
The preferred district stormwater system concept, along the east side of Howard Street and south side of Arlington Avenue, is illustrated on [page 37](#). Some of the site's stormwater will feed into the district system, and some of the site's stormwater will be handled through other means. The system design details, including proper size/extent, how water is directed to it, and ownership/maintenance are not established by this plan and will require significant collaboration between the City and private entities. The district stormwater design implemented could differ significantly from the preferred concept.

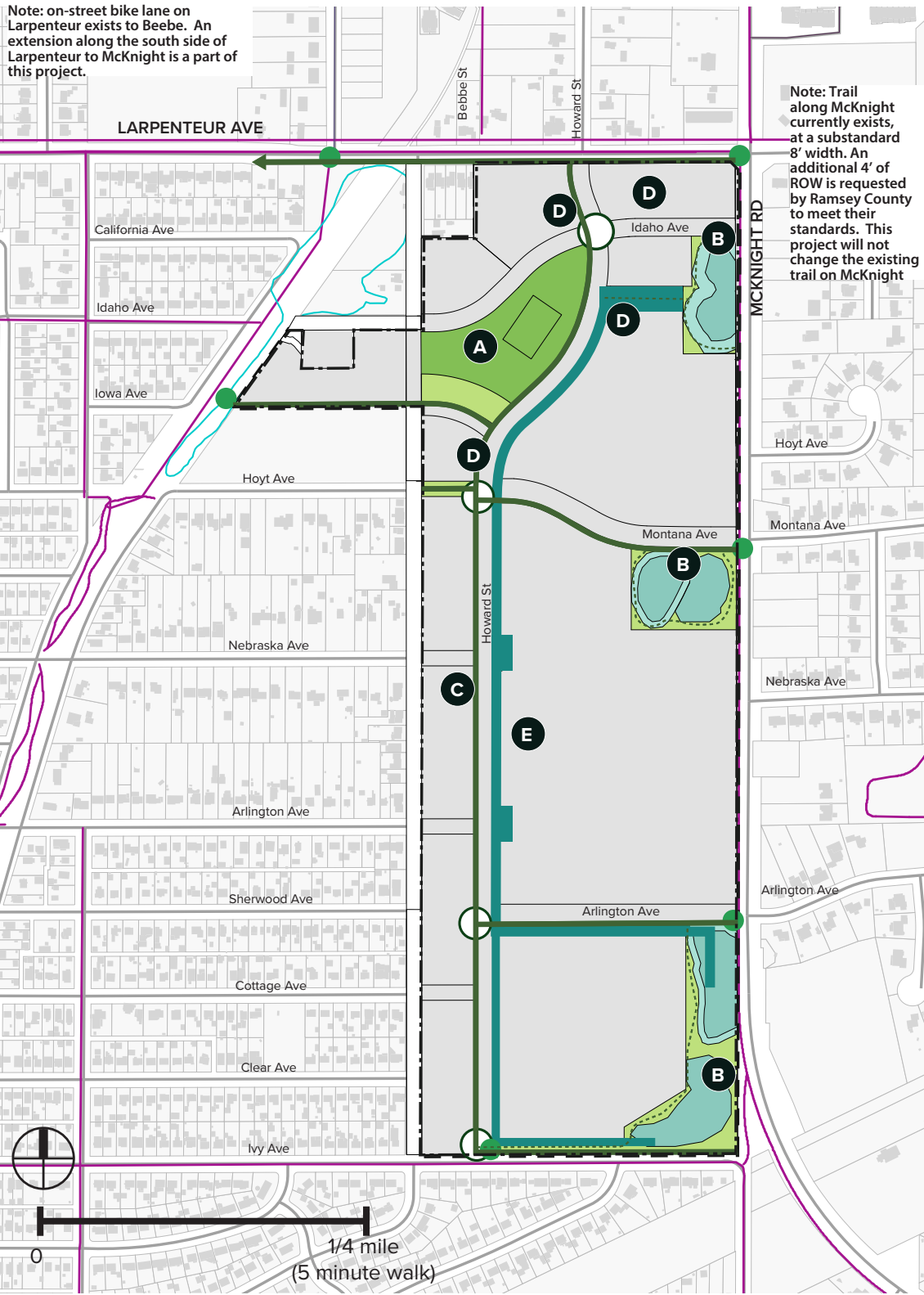
***POS-4: Use public art and artists to activate public spaces and help highlight and celebrate unique features of the development, including the culture of the East Side.***  
An important differentiator of the Hillcrest development will be its ability to celebrate what is unique about the place. Public art and artists should play a significant role in helping to define and bring attention to those qualities. The design and development of the public realm should include a broad range of opportunities to incorporate public art and to host cultural events. This can include (but is not limited to) the design of retaining walls, use of landscape art to highlight topography, stormwater features, pavilions, and play structures.

***POS-5: Encourage provision of community garden space either on the site or nearby off-site.***  
Community gardens could be in passive open space not needed for wetlands or stormwater, on undeveloped lots (temporarily, until they are developed), or on portions of adjacent land owned or controlled by Saint Paul Parks and Recreation.

**NOTE**  
Policies indicated with an asterisk\* may be dependent on funding considerations.



PARKS AND OPEN SPACES



Key Elements of the Plan

- A** A 5-acre public city park is a central feature to the community node. The City will determine the park's design through a public process
- B** Wetlands located along the eastern edge of the site, provide opportunities for passive open space, informal trails, and habitat.
- C** A trail system connects through the site in all directions linking into adjacent existing trails including the Furness trail to the west, McKnight Trail to the east and southeast, and Larpenteur to the north.
- D** Small privately-owned public spaces (POPS) are encouraged adjacent to buildings throughout the site and especially at highly trafficked and/or highly visible locations.
- E** The District Stormwater feature along Howard Street becomes a linear connector across the site.

- CITY PARK
- DISTRICT STORMWATER/LANDSCAPE BUFFER
- PASSIVE OPEN SPACE
- WETLAND
- OFF-STREET TRAIL
- EXISTING OR PLANNED BIKE FACILITIES (OUT OF PROJECT SCOPE)
- INFORMAL TRAIL LOCATED IN PASSIVE OPEN SPACE
- PROTECTED INTERSECTION FOR TRAIL CROSSING
- EXISTING + NEW TRAIL CONNECTION POINT



DISTRICT STORMWATER AS GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE



CITY PARK



WETLANDS AS PASSIVE OPEN SPACE



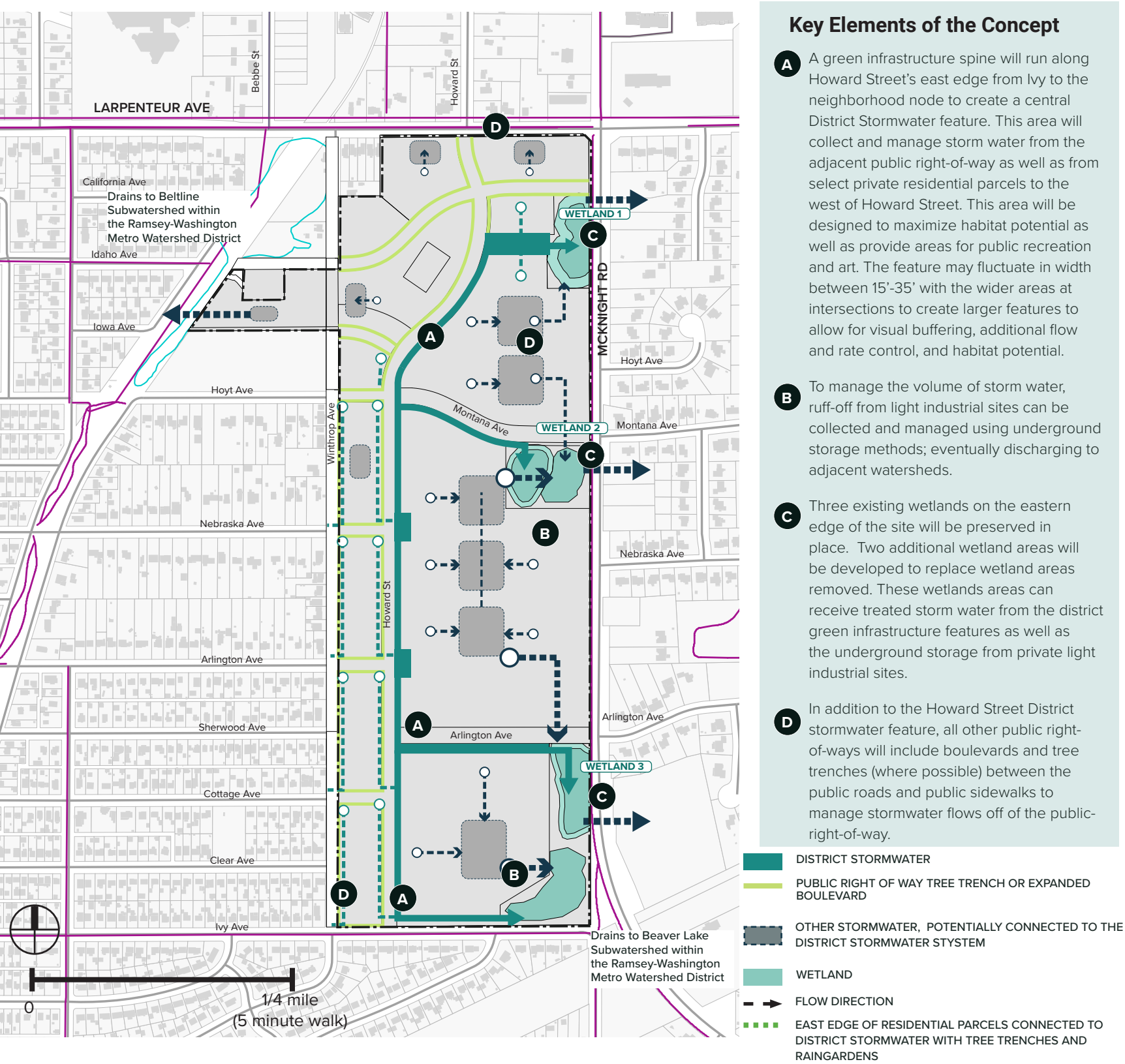
COMMUNITY EVENTS



PRIVATELY OWNED PUBLIC SPACE (POPS)



PREFERRED DISTRICT STORMWATER CONCEPT



**A : DISTRICT STORMWATER**  
A green infrastructure spine will run between Howard Street and private light industrial parcels.



**A : DISTRICT STORMWATER**  
At key areas along district stormwater spine, the feature may widen to allow for additional rate and volume control, habitat, and recreation potential.



**B : UNDERGROUND STORAGE**  
Highly impervious light industrial and residential sites may use underground storage methods to effectively manage the sites' stormwater loads.



**C : WETLANDS**  
Three existing and two new wetland areas will provide flow and rate control for treated stormwater from the District Stormwater feature.



**D: TREE TRENCH A**  
Tree trenches are encouraged to be located between the public road and public sidewalk. In low-density residential or in areas without adjacent parking, the tree trenches will be designed to maximize growing area and stormwater volume.



**D: TREE TRENCH B**  
Tree trenches are encouraged to be located between the public road and public sidewalk in the neighborhood node. In areas adjacent to medium and higher density residential development and/or in areas with adjacent parking, the tree trenches will be designed to support safe pedestrian circulation.



Sustainability and resiliency are core city values. The *2040 Comprehensive Plan* states that: “[Saint Paul is] a city that understands the importance of environmental stewardship of our abundant natural, historic and cultural resources, and ensures that future growth protects those resources.” At Hillcrest, we have an opportunity to plan for best practices in sustainable development to benefit the health of residents, workers and ecological systems, and mitigate negative contributors to climate change.

In recent years, the City of Saint Paul has adopted numerous policies, plans, and ordinances that aim to make the City more sustainable and resilient. In addition to the Comprehensive Plan quoted above, the *Climate Action and Resiliency Plan* (2019) set ambitious goals of reducing carbon emissions citywide by 50% by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. The *Strategic Framework for Community Resiliency* (2015) has a guiding principle to incorporate climate change adaptation into relevant local and regional plans and projects. Finally, the City’s innovative Sustainable Building Ordinance (2018) sets high sustainability-related standards for projects receiving more than \$200,000 of city funding.

As site owner and partner, the Saint Paul Port Authority (SPPA) has a mission to create quality job opportunities, expand the tax base and advance sustainable development. The SPPA is independently seeking pre-certification at the platinum level in the U.S. Green Building Council’s (USGBC) LEED for Cities and Communities (v4.1, Plan and Design) program. The certification process takes a holistic view of district-scale function and evaluates a wide variety of components including transportation, energy, and water use. Hillcrest would be among the first site to receive this designation. The City

supports this effort, and many of the goals and policies that follow complement those contained in the LEED for Communities certification structure. The SPPA also has a record of working with industrial, light industrial, and commercial users to develop innovative covenants that advance sustainability on a project-by-project basis. The City anticipates this valuable work will continue and prove to be an effective implementation tool for the policies found in this chapter.

The policies in this chapter expand on current requirements and do not duplicate existing state and local regulations that contribute to sustainability. For example, there are city, state, and watershed district requirements for stormwater treatment and discharge, Saint Paul Regional Water Services requirements for potable water monitoring, and zoning requirements for trees and in parking lots. An expanded list of sustainability-related regulations and tools has been developed and is included as an Appendix to this plan.

[Click Here for a link to Sustainability Implementation](#)

POLICIES

The following goals and policies are intended to reduce negative environmental impacts related to development and create a healthier site for the people of the neighborhood. All policies apply to public and private projects unless otherwise specified.

Implementation for policies indicated with an asterisk\* may be dependent on funding considerations.

Topic 1: Carbon-neutrality site-wide.

POLICIES

**S-1: Support site-wide strategies that reduce carbon emissions, such as alternative transportation options, well-connected and varied land uses, and meeting city-wide waste and diversion goals.**

**S-2: Strongly support registering and LEED-certifying all buildings greater than 5,000 square feet.**

**S-3: Strongly encourage all buildings to benchmark and report annual energy usage for all buildings using the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager and the process outlined in Chapter 440 of the Legislative Code.**

**S-4: Meet energy demand using renewable energy sources to the greatest extent feasible, prioritizing on-site generation.**

**S-5: Restrict natural gas service to systems or devices for which an equivalent all-electric system or design is unavailable, impractical, not cost effective, or is determined to present an equity gap.**

**S-6: Pursue the integration of ground source energy systems such as geothermal energy at the site and/or district scale to reduce energy demand.\***

**S-7: Build electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) infrastructure to meet anticipated need, with the goal of installing Level 2 charging stations (240V) for at least 2% of all public and publicly-accessible parking spaces.**

**S-8: Construct private parking structures to be EV-Capable if the equipment is not installed when built.**

**S-9: Explore the possibility of incorporating a community solar garden.**

**S-10: Use trees along exterior building walls to provide shade and cooling except where solar access is needed for photovoltaic panels.**

**S-11: Plan for increased energy needs for cooling and potential on-site backup power.**

**S-12: Should more than \$200,000 of City financing be applied to part or all of the site, the City’s Sustainable Building Ordinance will apply.\***

**NOTE**  
Implementation for policies indicated with an asterisk\* may be dependent on funding considerations.



**Topic 2: Integrate development with the ecology of the site.**

**POLICIES:**

**S-13:** Foster a robust urban ecology through complimentary elements such as robust tree canopy, green streets/corridors, and native vegetation.

**S-14:** Design to be hardy, primarily native, and connected.

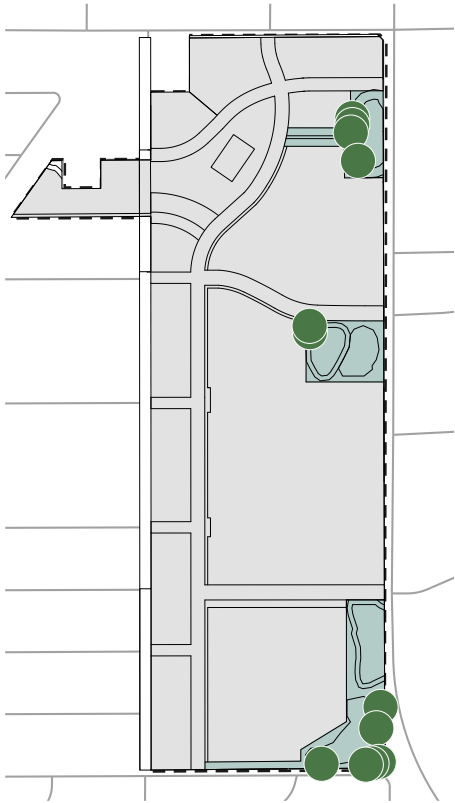
**S-15:** To the greatest extent feasible and working around development, retain existing healthy native trees and vegetation.

- Plant trees at a rate that, at maturity, will sequester at least as much carbon as was sequestered at the time the golf course was closed and meet the tree canopy goal identified in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan (LU-19).
- Plant species of trees and other vegetation that can adapt to anticipated climate change in the region and provide a variety of benefits such as pollution and habitat. Tree species selection is subject to approval by the City Forester.
- Use biologically diverse native prairie plantings instead of turf where feasible, with low-maintenance turf preferred when it is necessary.
- Design considering long-term maintenance needs.
- Plant at least fifty (50) percent of all landscaped area that is not turf or hardscape with species native to the state.
- Exotic invasive species are prohibited, such as European buckthorn and Tartarian honeysuckle.

**S-16:** Wherever possible, connect new landscape areas to neighboring planted areas to increase its contiguous size.

**S-17:** Reduce light pollution to the greatest extent allowed by ordinance and the Department of Public Works.

- S-18:** Mitigate the effects of the urban heat island through tools such as surface treatments, tree canopy, green roofs, etc.
- S-19:** Monitor outdoor air quality with metrics publicly displayed in key residential, commercial, light industrial, and sensitive areas.
- S-20:** Prepare a plan for vacant private parcels to be ecologically valuable and stable until developed.
- S-21:** Explore opportunities for community gardens.
- S-22:** To the greatest extent feasible considering contamination and working around development, retain existing healthy native trees and vegetation (see Figure below).



EXISTING HEALTHY NATIVE TREES  
ADJACENT TO WETLANDS

**Topic 3: Responsible material and waste stream management.**

**POLICIES**

- S-23:** Pursue circular economy and eco-industrial strategies within employment-focused areas to reduce waste and increase efficiency of natural resource use.
- S-24:** Divert a minimum of 50% construction and demolition waste from buildings and strive for at least 75%.
- S-25:** Model embodied carbon for all construction per industry standards and building materials and techniques that lower embodied carbon to the greatest extent feasible.

**Topic 4: Effective, integrated, and visible stormwater treatment.**

**POLICIES**

- S-26:** Treat stormwater as a resource and maximize its co-benefits such as passive recreation and habitat creation.
- S-27:** Make the majority of stormwater infrastructure visible through a natural, “light touch” aesthetic that helps define the identity of the site, provide unique public and private amenities, and maximize use of land.
- S-28:** Use economies of scale where possible to make stormwater improvements more cost-effective.
- S-29:** Encourage roof catchment and reuse for irrigation needs.

Housing meets a fundamental need and is in short supply throughout the region, including in the Hillcrest area. According to a 2020 market study commissioned by the Saint Paul Port Authority for this project, there is a substantial amount of Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) in the site’s market area, but demand continues to exceed the supply, with rental housing vacancy rates under 3 percent and the area’s supply of for-sale homes well under two months over the past two years.

The market study also notes that existing market-rate rents in the area are at a level considered affordable to renters earning 80 percent Area Median Income (AMI), which is roughly equivalent to 79,000 for a family of four in 2021.

Because median income for Saint Paul renters is approximately \$40,000, there is a strong need for affordable housing in the community, and development of the Hillcrest site should include affordable housing to meet the community needs in the Hillcrest area, consistent with Comprehensive Plan policy goals to improve access to affordable housing citywide.

These city-wide policy goals set out aggregate production targets as follows:

- For City/HRA-assisted new rental units, the Comprehensive Plan aspires that at least 30 percent will be affordable to households earning 60 percent of the AMI, of which at least one third will be affordable to households earning 50 percent of the AMI, and at least one third will be affordable to households earning 30 percent of the AMI.
- For City/HRA-assisted new ownership units, the Comprehensive Plan aspires that at least 20 percent will be affordable to households earning up to 80 percent of the AMI, and an additional 10 percent will be affordable to households at 60 percent of AMI.

These goals are calculated on a city-wide basis, though housing developed at Hillcrest provides an important opportunity to strive toward meeting the City’s affordability goals.

In addition to the above affordability targets, this master plan offers the below housing type priorities for achieving a broad mix of housing types on the site:

**Priority one: Rental housing, non-age-restricted**

This category includes affordable general occupancy apartments and market-rate general occupancy apartments. Affordable rental housing should be integrated throughout higher-density residential areas, and include units to serve large families.

**Priority two: For-sale homes**

This category includes for-sale multifamily (e.g., townhomes, rowhomes, detached townhomes) and for-sale single-family detached homes, with a greater emphasis on the former to provide for a diversity of missing middle ownership housing to the area and Saint Paul. Affordable ownership options should be integrated with market rate ownership options, and include units to serve large families.

**Priority three: Age-restricted housing (ages 55+ or 62+)**

This category includes independent living for-sale and rental options and senior housing with various service levels, and at a mix of affordability levels. Demand will continue to increase in the next two decades for this type of housing.

Affordable housing generally requires public funding or financial assistance, and none have been secured to date for this site. See Other Implementation Chapter for potential sources.



To implement the Land Use designations in Chapter X, the City will rezone the site from R2 One-Family Residential to several zoning districts, each with a master plan (“M”) designation:

- T1M Traditional Neighborhood District
- T2M Traditional Neighborhood District
- T3M Traditional Neighborhood District
- ITM Transitional Industrial District.

The new zoning districts will be shown in a map attached to the ordinance that will generally correspond with the map and land use designations on [page 25](#) of this Master Plan as follows:

- T1M: “Lower-Density Residential” T2M: “Medium-Density Residential”
- T3M: “Higher-Density Residential”
- TM: “Light Industrial”

Areas labelled “City Park” or “Buffers and Passive Space” on the Land Use map will be zoned with the districts in which they are located. (See Land Use chapter for land use categories.) The zoning districts will extend to the street centerlines and will be adjusted with the street centerlines in the platting process.

The Zoning Code, including land use regulations and development standards, will apply to new development within the Hillcrest Master Plan area, except as specified in this master plan, including the Modifications section of this chapter and the following provisions that either adjust or clarify zoning requirements:

- No required minimum or maximum front yard setbacks for buildings in the ITM zoning district. This will allow for larger landscaped areas along sidewalks, art space along side-walks, and stormwater amenities to be potentially implemented in pursuit of more pleasant street frontages for pedestrians and other users.
- In the portion of the ITM zoning district area east of any stormwater feature and east of the Howard Street right-of-way, there shall generally be an approximately 10 feet wide landscaped area, with trees and shrubs, located west of any retaining wall or slope down to industrial buildings and associated parking lots. Such landscaped area may be eliminated for short stretches where any stormwater feature is wider than typical.
- Landscape plans shall be coordinated along the length of Howard Street through the site, under guidance of the City Forestry division.
- The entirety of Howard Street within the site is considered a “pedestrian-oriented area” for the purpose of IT Transitional Industrial district design standards.
- Block lengths may be as shown in the Land Use chapter, potentially modified as per the section below.
- For the purpose of meeting floor area ratio minimums, any single-story commercial buildings may be considered part of the same zoning lot as adjacent residential or mixed-use buildings on the same platted block in the same zoning district, regardless of whether there will be multiple owners or a single owner of said buildings.
- For the purpose of the Traditional Neighborhood district design standard for door and window openings, Howard Street and Winthrop Street shall be considered collector streets.
- The existing street network need only be extended into the site to the extent shown in the Transportation chapter.
- On-street parking need be provided only as shown in the Transportation chapter.
- Sidewalk widths shall be as prescribed in the Transportation chapter.
- There may be up to four rows of surface parking (two drive aisles) in front of buildings in the ITM Transitional Industrial District if there is at least four extra feet of perimeter landscaping width beyond the requirements of City Code Sec. 63.314.
- Murals and other art upon industrial buildings can satisfy the requirements of City Code Sec. 66.542(a)(2) in lieu of facade articulation if the Department of Safety & Inspections determines that the art has a similar visual impact from the street and can be adequately maintained.

ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATIONS

The following section provides parameters for potential “minor modifications” to the adopted Hillcrest Master Plan that may be approved administratively, as per Legislative Code Sec. 66.344(c). The following will be considered “minor modifications” if the Planning Administrator finds the specific changes consistent with the Master Plan’s intent:

- Changes of land use category (see Land Use Plan on [page 25](#)) for less than 11.2 acres (10% of total site area), provided that the cumulative changes from the originally approved master plan also do not exceed 11.2 acres.
- Movement of a street or trail by up to 100 feet (centerline-to-centerline distance), provided it does not result in a block size of greater than 600 feet outside the industrial district, and does not move intersection locations at the site’s exterior.
- Reduction or addition of trails if recommended by the City Engineer, provided it does not result in a block size of greater than 600 feet outside of the industrial districts.
- Reduction or expansion in the width of rights-of-way to accommodate (or eliminate) vehicular turn lanes, on-street parking, utilities , sight triangles or other right-of-way elements, if recommended by the City Engineer.
- Reduction or expansion of the widths of street travel lanes, trails, sidewalks, boulevards, or other right-of-way design elements, if recommended by the City Engineer.
- Any expansion of active or passive park space.
- Any additional or adjusted wetlands preservation, including buffers, required by wetlands regulatory authorities

The above list is not all-inclusive. The Planning Administrator shall have the right to determine other modifications to be “minor” under Legislative Code Sec. 66.344(c).

It is expected that the project will be constructed in phases based on market demand. Not all infrastructure will be constructed in the first phase. Development of any lot shall include the water, sewer, stormwater, and transportation infrastructure necessary for its use, along with site development permits and other requirements under City Code. A Comprehensive Site Preparation and Infrastructure Plan that addresses water, sewer, stormwater, all transportation elements, energy systems, gas, and electrical must be approved through the City’s Site Plan Review process prior to any vertical development, excluding any development related to energy infrastructure.

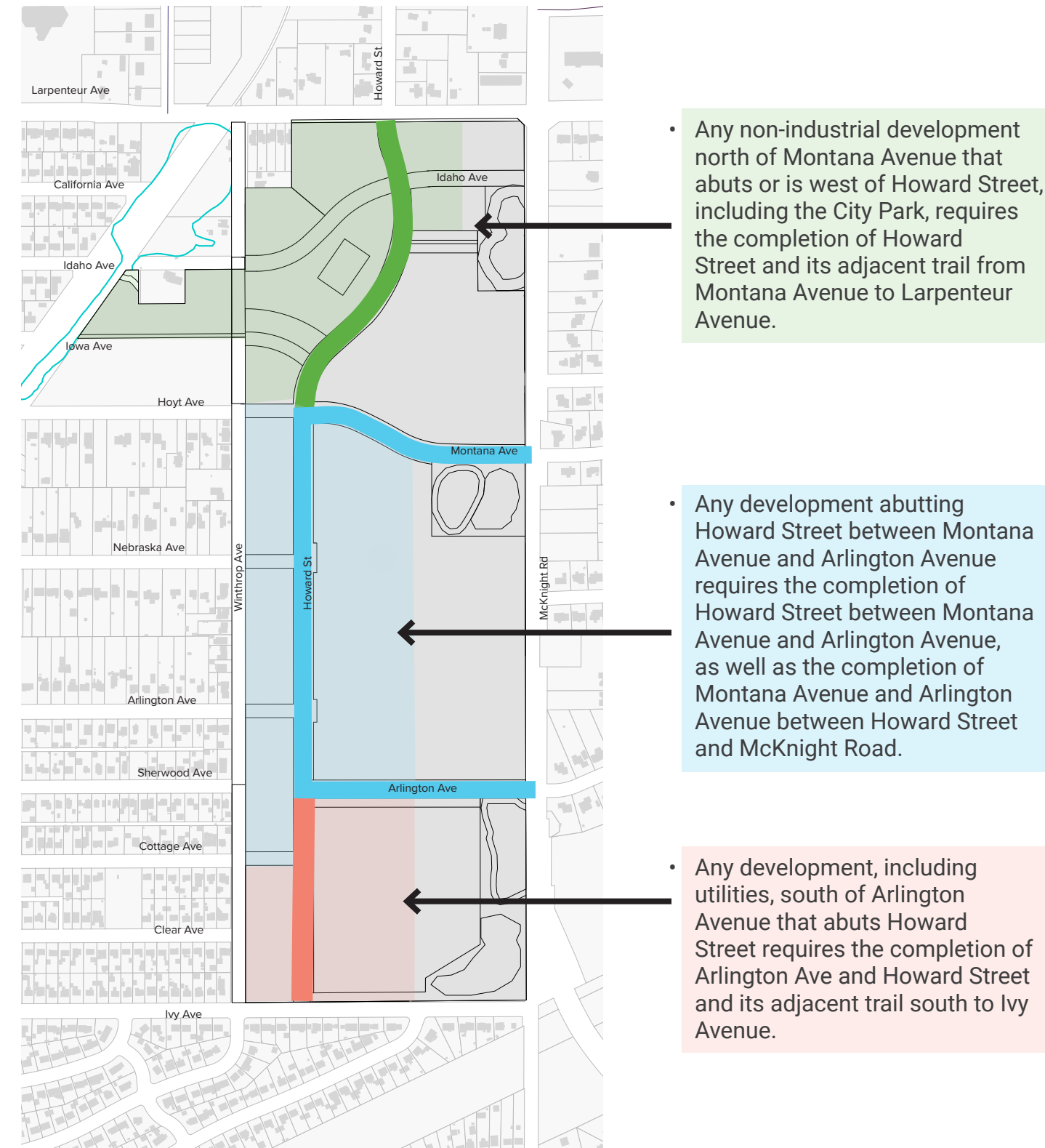
Additionally, the following will govern provision of transportation infrastructure in order to provide a functional network:

- Any development north of Montana Avenue that abuts or is west of Howard Street, including the City Park, requires the completion of Howard Street and its adjacent trail from Montana Avenue to Larpenteur Avenue.
- Any development abutting Howard Street between Montana Avenue and Arlington Avenue requires the completion of Howard Street between Montana Avenue and Arlington Avenue, as well as the completion of Montana Avenue and Arlington Avenue between Howard Street and McKnight Road.
- Any development, including utilities, south of Arlington Avenue that abuts Howard Street requires the completion of Arlington Ave and Howard Street and its adjacent trail south to Ivy Avenue.
- The entire east-west trail along Larpenteur Avenue to Beebe Road must be completed when any lot abutting Larpenteur Avenue is developed.
- Winthrop Street from Sherwood Avenue to Ivy Avenue must be completed when any lot abutting Winthrop Street south of Hoyt Avenue is developed.

- Winthrop Street from Idaho Avenue to Hoyt Avenue must be completed when any abutting lot is developed.
- Winthrop Street north of Idaho Avenue does not need to be developed along with any part of this site’s development – it could be implemented by itself in the future.
- Any expansion of the existing trail in the McKnight Road right-of-way is not required in any phase of this development. It could be undertaken by others.
- Any soil remediation and wetland mitigation required by regulatory authorities may move forward at any time without necessarily triggering the need for other infrastructure.
- All construction and phasing plans are subject to review and approval by the Departments of Public Works, Safety and Inspections, and Parks and Recreation, as applicable. Prior to submittal of any plat application, the applicant will obtain written approval of all right-of-way dimensions from Public Works.



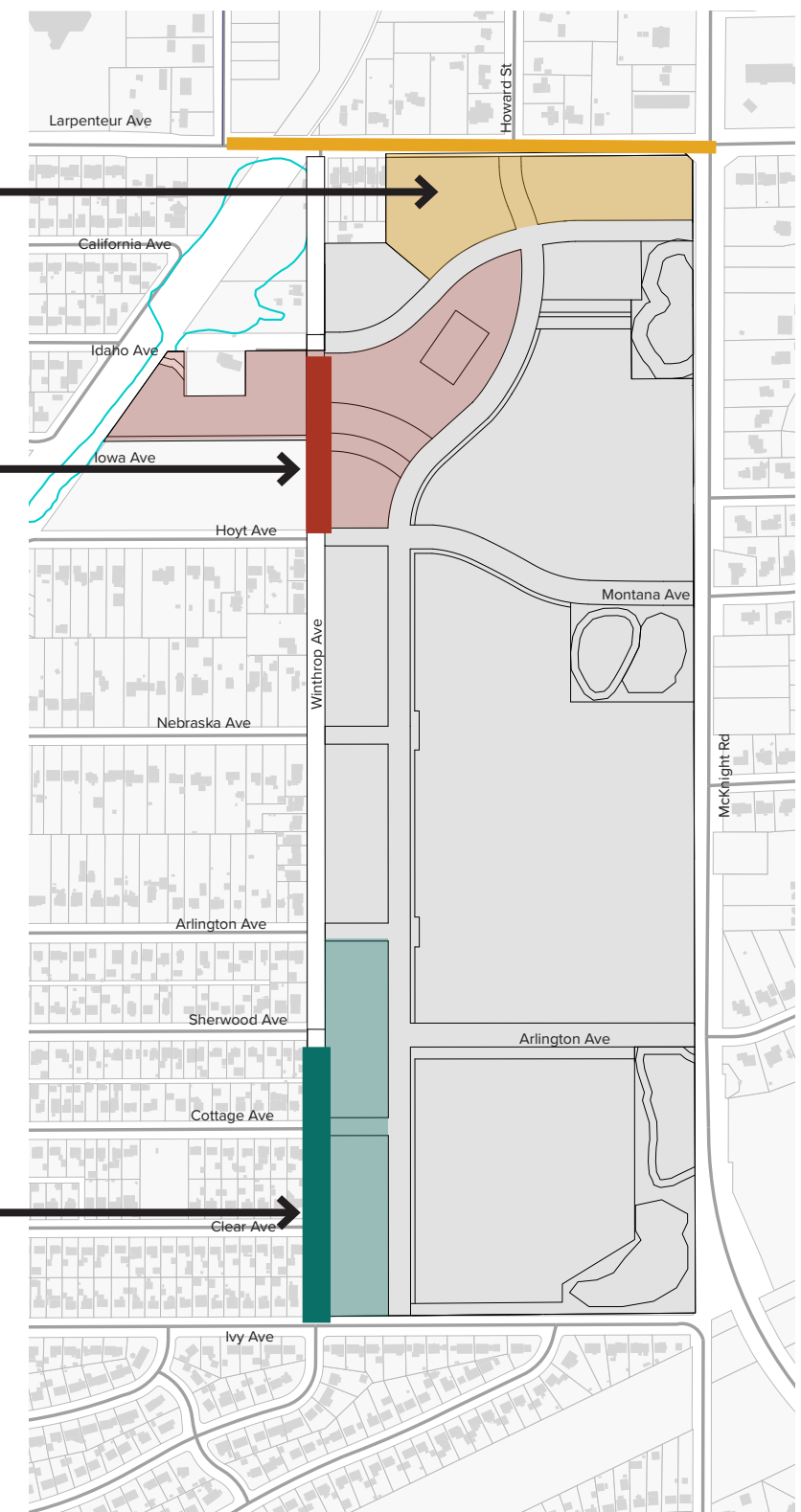
# TRANSPORTATION PHASING



- The entire east-west trail along Larpenteur Avenue to Beebe Road must be completed when any lot abutting Larpenteur Avenue is developed.

- Winthrop Street from Idaho Avenue to Hoyt Avenue must be completed when any abutting lot is developed.

- Winthrop Street from Sherwood Avenue to Ivy Avenue must be completed when any lot abutting Winthrop Street south of Arlington Avenue is developed.



Development of the Hillcrest site will be governed by the policies, site layouts, and street sections of this Plan, except as potentially modified (see Zoning chapter). For the most part, land sales are expected to pay for the site’s basic development. However, there may be a need for additional funding to implement this Plan, especially the district stormwater and sustainability policies marked with an asterisk (\*) in the preceding chapters, and for any affordable housing, public art, or to fully develop the City Park. The following lays out potential funding sources to fully implement this Plan. Some sources are more likely to be obtained than others, and none are certain at this time. City financing for the development has not been budgeted and is not anticipated for most project elements.

District Stormwater

- **Ramsey-Washington Watershed District grant.** Funds might be available, and will need to be applied for.
- **Developer contribution.** Since stormwater needs to be addressed by individual properties to the extent it is not handled via a district system, the cost savings could be passed on to the site’s developer or sub-developers.

Sustainability Measures

- **Foundation grants.** Some charitable foundations have prioritized sustainability.
- **Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) grants.** These grants are very competitive.
- **Federal grants.** Funding to implement green energy projects has been considered several times recently by the federal government.
- **Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing.** SPPA has used PACE financing before and may be able to do so for certain aspects of clean energy on this site.

Affordable Housing

- **Section 8 vouchers.** Federal money is disbursed by the Saint Paul Public Housing Authority as Section 8 vouchers that pay part of qualifying renters’ monthly rent at certain privately held apartments that accept the vouchers. (Section 8 waiting lists are typically very long.)
- **Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC).** Federal tax credits that are awarded to developers in St. Paul by the Housing & Redevelopment Authority and Minnesota Housing Finance Agency in exchange for their maintaining affordability for 30 years at a specified level (20/30/50/60/80% AMI). The developer provides 10-year tax benefits (credits and deductions) in exchange for equity capital to the development from their investors.
- **Tax Increment Financing (TIF).** If approved by the City and HRA, a project for which an Affordable Housing TIF district is established, would receive tax increment assistance to reimburse eligible costs to fill a financing gap in the project. The tax increment assistance would be paid to the Developer from the taxes generated from the increased value of the properties within the TIF district over the life of the TIF district (up to 26 total years). Eligible projects would be income restricted, as follows: rental projects would require either 20% of the units assisted be restricted at 50% AMI or 40% of the units assisted be restricted at 60% AMI; ownership projects would require that 95% of the assisted units be sold to income qualifying households at 115% AMI. Is subject to the City having citywide TIF capacity within its self-identified limits.
- **Donations.** For example, Habitat for Humanity constructs for-sale affordable homes that use volunteer labor, donated supplies, donated land/land sale write-downs, and monetary donations to offset construction costs to keep the homes affordable to qualified buyers.
- **Other nonprofits.** Nonprofit housing development entities may also provide affordable housing. For example, Lutheran Social Services has partnered on several local affordable housing developments.
- **Special allocations from various levels of government.** There are occasional government allocations that fund affordable housing, such as the recent Emergency Rental Assistance or American Rescue Plan funds from the federal government.

Art

- **Eligible City-funded capital projects’** 1% allocation, per Public Art Ordinance.
- **Developer contribution.** The developer or sub-developers may wish to provide art to enhance their properties and/or as a means to meet zoning code requirements.

City Park

The Parks and Recreation Department will plan for the City park’s design and programming, as informed by community engagement, after the master plan is complete. \$2.5 million dollars have been committed by SPPA to develop the City Park. 2.5M is not estimated to be sufficient to implement the City Park depicted in this plan. Additional project resources will need to implement the City Park as depicted/contemplated.



## HILLCREST COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

December 17, 2021

Saint Paul Planning Commission:

On behalf of the Hillcrest Community Advisory Committee (CAC), we would like to convey the CAC's comments on the draft Hillcrest Master Plan being brought forward for your consideration. Our CAC consisted of 11 members appointed by Mayor Carter, including residents of both Saint Paul and Maplewood, and subject matter experts on housing, transportation, and business. Our membership is diverse and reflective of the area's demographics. Our responsibilities included connecting other people from the community in the process, providing constructive input, and raising issues and opportunities for the project. We met 18 times from October 2019 through December 2021, discussing the site background, community engagement, and other topics contained in the attached master plan. Early in the process we affirmed 20 community priorities to guide the plan, which came from careful evaluation of the community engagement results and study of the demographics and data provided to the CAC. On December 14, 2021, the CAC authorized this letter to be sent on their behalf.

Generally, we support the master plan's direction. In particular, we appreciate how the master plan:

- **Achieves the development goals of approximately 1,000 jobs and 1,000 households.** The master plan sets helpful priorities for affordable housing provision on the site, both rental and ownership. We are encouraged that many of the employment opportunities will provide low barrier to entry living wage jobs.
- **Takes community input into proper account.** Engagement was intentionally demographically representative of the area, aided by special events created to intentionally reach targeted groups. We adapted to the virtual environment during the pandemic.
- **Recognizes the site as a neighborhood node**, with a concentration of activity and destinations provided within walking distance of new and existing neighbors. This includes the new City park at the node, with good access to it from all directions.
- **Provides walkability to support public health** with its sidewalks and trails connecting through the site to and from the surrounding area. The walking network is well integrated into the neighborhood.
- **Has thoughtful transportation connections to the west**, with jogs at Howard Street to discourage cut-through traffic across the site.
- **Encourages community agriculture to provide healthy food.** Currently, the neighborhood is a healthy food desert.

Also, as the master plan suggests, we encourage Metro Transit to consider providing public transit to the site to take advantage of synergies with this transit-oriented development.

Our biggest concerns with the draft master plan are that:

- **There is too much range given for administrative modifications** to the plan, including but not limited to: land uses and trails, tree replacement, type of housing, and placement of all uses as presented in the master plan, which could be changed to a degree we are not comfortable with. We hope to see the actual development be reflective of what is in the plan.
- **Important plan aspects regarding sustainability and art are asterisked as being funding dependent.**
- **We will miss the site's high point and the trees, but recognize that the development will remove many of them due to the remediation of the site's pollution.**

We understand that this master plan could change through the Planning Commission and City Council public processes, but we feel confident that this letter is a reflection of our committee's position on the master plan.

Thank you for your consideration of our input.

*Anne DeJoy*

Anne DeJoy  
Co-chair

*Linda Martinez-Higgins*

Linda Martinez-Higgins  
Co-chair



city of saint paul  
planning commission resolution  
file number \_\_\_\_\_  
date \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, Zoning Code § 61.801, based on Minnesota Statutes § 462.357, Subd. 4, provides that amendments to the Zoning Code may be initiated by the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, the 2040 Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan identifies the former Hillcrest Golf Course as an opportunity site with potential features such as higher-density mixed-use development or employment centers with increased full-time living wage job intensity; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul commenced a master planning process in 2019 to determine the future uses and layout for the site; and

WHEREAS, the site needs to be rezoned from R2 one-family residential district to less restrictive districts such as ITM Transitional Industrial- Master Plan, T1M Traditional Neighborhood- Master Plan, T2M Traditional Neighborhood- Master Plan, and T3M Traditional Neighborhood- Master Plan in order to implement the Comprehensive Plan's future land use guidance and to implement the draft master plan's proposed designated land uses; and

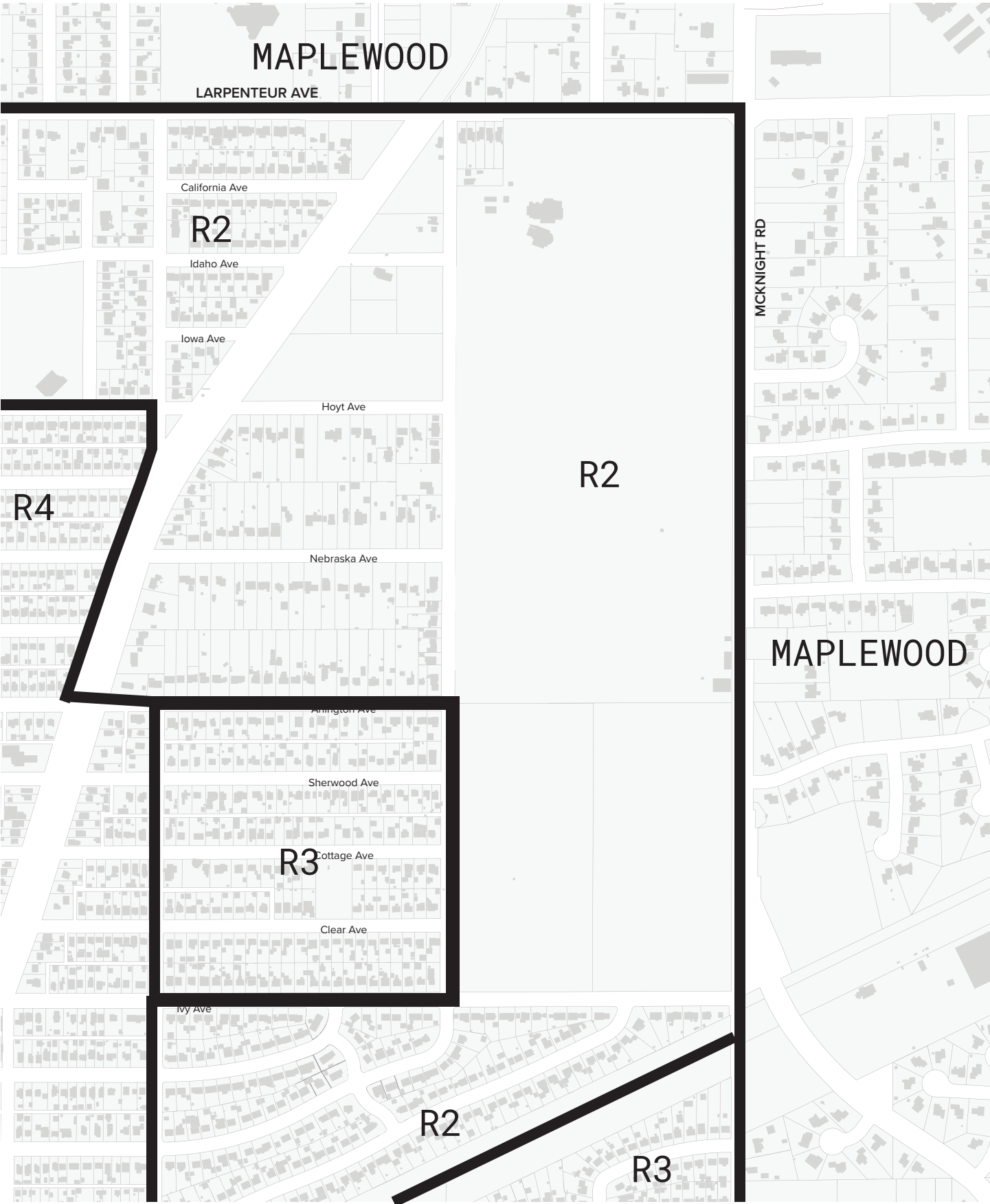
WHEREAS, the site needs to be rezoned to districts with a master plan ("M") designation in order to allow for the adoption of a master plan for the site's developments.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, under provisions of Minnesota Statutes § 462.357 and Legislative Code § 61.801, that the Planning Commission initiates the Hillcrest Site Rezoning Study to consider rezoning of the site from R2 one-family residential district to other districts; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission releases the Hillcrest Site Rezoning Study for public review and schedules a public hearing for March 4, 2022.

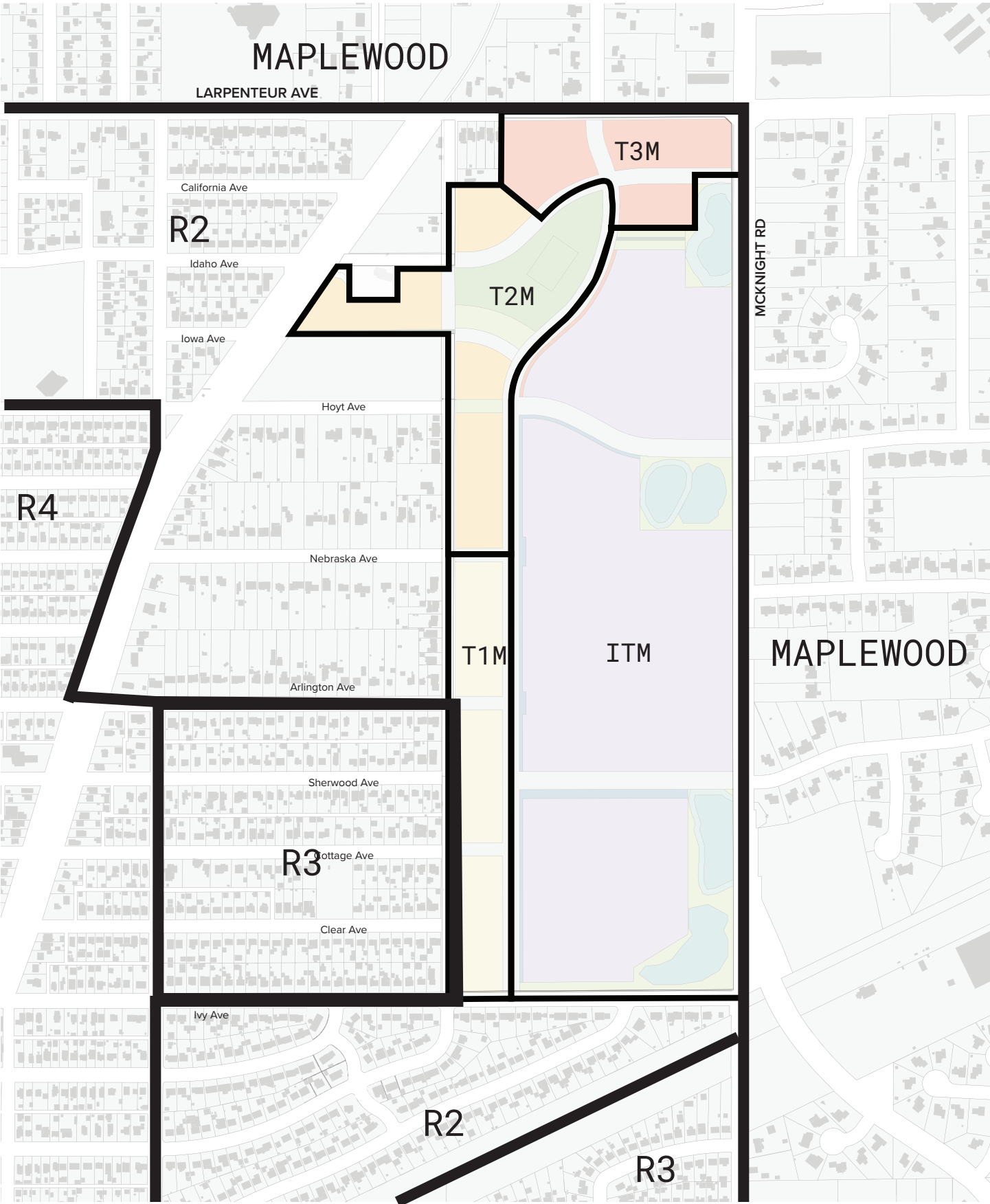
moved by \_\_\_\_\_  
seconded by \_\_\_\_\_  
in favor \_\_\_\_\_  
against \_\_\_\_\_

# EXISTING ZONING





# EXHIBIT A: PROPOSED ZONING



city of saint paul  
planning commission resolution  
file number \_\_\_\_\_  
date \_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, Zoning Code § 61.801, based on Minnesota Statutes § 462.357, Subd. 4, provides that amendments to the Zoning Code may be initiated by the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, the 2040 Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan identifies the former Hillcrest Golf Course as an opportunity site with potential features such as higher-density mixed-use development or employment centers with increased full-time living wage job intensity; and

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul commenced a master planning process in 2019 to determine the future uses and layout for the site; and

WHEREAS, the master plan process identified a need to allow relief from specified zoning regulations via the master plan in a way that improves its implementation of Comprehensive Plan policies and the zoning code intent; and

WHEREAS, the master plan process identified zoning code issues regarding building materials and freestanding signage in light industrial areas that are problematic citywide and might benefit from zoning amendments that apply to all such developments; and

WHEREAS, the Saint Paul Zoning Code, found in chapters 60 through 69 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code, is established to promote and to protect the public health, safety, morals, aesthetics, economic viability and general welfare of the community; and

WHEREAS, the 2040 Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan, in Policy LU-7, calls for using “land use and zoning flexibility to respond to social, economic, technological, market and environmental changes, conditions and opportunities” such as those identified by this project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, under provisions of Minnesota Statutes § 462.357 and Legislative Code § 61.801(b), that the Planning Commission initiates the Hillcrest Site Zoning Code Study to consider amendments to the Zoning Code to allow freestanding signs to serve tenants throughout a business park, to update allowable building materials in the IT Transitional Industrial district, to allow flexibility from zoning code provisions to be incorporated into a master plan, and any other connected regulations contained in the Zoning Code; and

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, that the Planning Commission releases the Hillcrest Site Zoning Code Study and proposed amendments for public review and schedules a public hearing for March 4, 2022.

moved by \_\_\_\_\_  
seconded by \_\_\_\_\_  
in favor \_\_\_\_\_  
against \_\_\_\_\_



# Draft Zoning Code Amendments related to the Hillcrest Master Plan

December 30, 2021

## Chapter 64. - Zoning Code—Signs

### ARTICLE I. - PURPOSE AND DEFINITIONS

#### Sec. 64.103. A.

*Advertising sign.* A sign ~~which~~that directs attention to a business, profession, commodity, service or entertainment ~~which~~that is conducted, sold or manufactured elsewhere than on the premises upon which the sign is placed. It shall be considered as a nonaccessory sign except that an advertising sign on a professional sports facility with permanent seating for more than ten thousand (10,000) spectators shall be considered as accessory. Billboards are a form of advertising sign. Advertising signs located on transit stop stations, courtesy benches and newsracks are regulated under other chapters and are not subject to the requirements of this chapter. Sports facility sponsorship signs are a special type of off-premise sign and are subject to different regulations from advertising signs. A freestanding sign anywhere within a business park or industrial park that directs attention solely to businesses within the park is not considered to be an advertising sign.

#### Sec. 64.103. B.

*Business park sign.* A freestanding business identification sign at a primary entrance to a business park or industrial park under single management that directs attention to businesses within the park.

### ARTICLE IV. - 64.400. GENERAL PROVISIONS

#### Sec. 64.401. - All signs.

(p) *Business park signs.* One business park sign is permitted per primary entrance to a business park or industrial park, not exceeding one hundred fifty (150) square feet in area and a height of fifteen (15) feet above ground level. This sign area is excluded from the maximum gross surface display area per lot.

## Chapter 66. - Zoning Code—Zoning District Uses, Density and Dimensional Standards

### ARTICLE V. - 66.300. TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DISTRICTS

#### Sec. 66.344. Traditional neighborhood district planning requirements.

- (b) *Master plan.* For a contiguous area of at least fifteen (15) acres in traditional neighborhood districts, a master plan may be provided for review and recommendation by the planning commission and approval by city council resolution. The master plan may be already in existence, or it may be prepared by city staff or by the applicant or developer. A traditional neighborhood area for which a master plan has been adopted by the city council shall be designated as a T1M, T2M, T3M, and/or T4M district. The master plan may include additional regulations or provide specified relief from zoning regulations if the plan as a whole results in

improved implementation of the comprehensive plan and of the zoning code's intent. The master plan may include the following information.

## ARTICLE V. - 66.500. INDUSTRIAL DISTRICTS

### Sec. 66.542. Required conditions in the IT transitional industrial district.

- (a) *Design standards.* Development shall be consistent with the following design standards unless the applicant can demonstrate that there are circumstances unique to the property that make compliance impractical or unreasonable:
- (3) *Materials and detailing.* Buildings shall be constructed of high-quality materials, including, but not limited to, brick, stone, textured cast stone, tinted masonry units, concrete, glass and architectural metal. The following materials are generally not acceptable:
- Unadorned ~~plain or painted~~ concrete block ~~or panels~~;
  - Corrugated metal, unless used as a limited architectural element rather than for entire walls;
  - Reflective glass; and
  - Vinyl, fiberglass, asphalt or fiberboard siding.

Building designs should seek opportunities to express the nature of the industrial activity within, in keeping with the other requirements of this section and respecting the necessary business functionality.



# 2040 Comprehensive Plan Amendment

## Transportation Chapter

**Policy T-31.** *Outside of areas being developed for industrial uses, Establish (or re-establish) the right-of-way grid with block lengths of 300 to 600 feet as redevelopment occurs on large sites in order to increase neighborhood connectivity and accommodate pedestrian-oriented, higher-density development.*