

**2023 Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) Plan
Railroad Island Strategy Area**

*Within Payne-Phalen Neighborhood District #5 and
Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood District #4*

City of Saint Paul
1100 City Hall Annex
425 West Fourth Street
Saint Paul, MN 55102

12/22/2023



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MINNESOTA**

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NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION STRATEGY AREA (NRSA)

Railroad Island Strategy Area

Within Payne-Phalen Neighborhood District #5 and Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood District #4

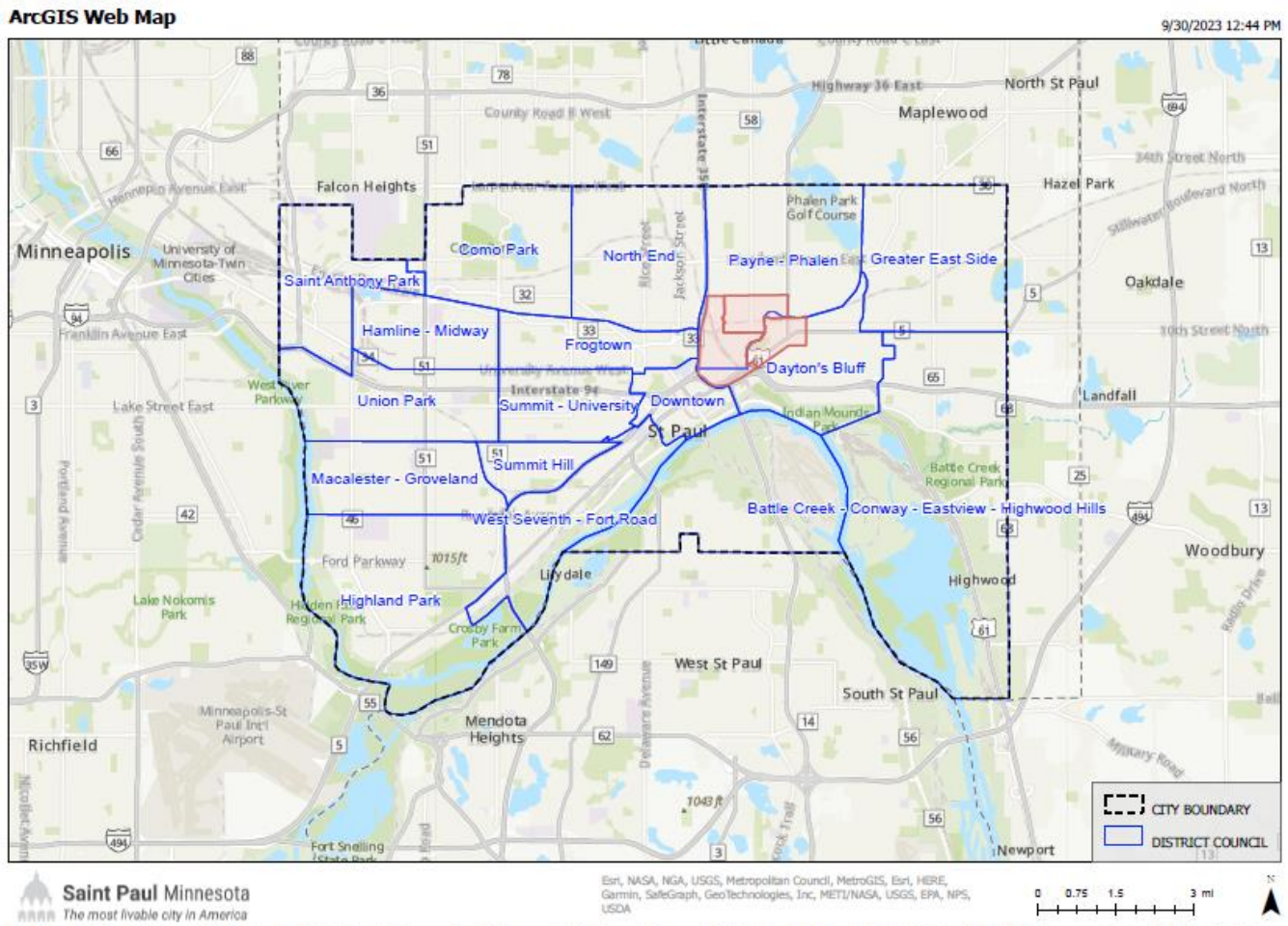
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Introduction

This neighborhood revitalization strategy is designed to provide tangible housing and economic improvements within 5-years in the Railroad Island community. This NRSA plan describes the Railroad Island area, its strengths and challenges and addresses each of HUD’s NRSA criteria including: Boundaries, demographic requirements, consultation, assessment, housing and economic opportunities, performance measurements, and leverage.

The Railroad Island community and adjacent Hamm’s redevelopment site is the focus of this Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) plan and is located in Saint Paul, Minnesota. The **Saint Paul Neighborhood District Map** below shows the 17 Saint Paul neighborhood districts in blue and the Railroad Island community in red.



Railroad Island includes land in two Saint Paul neighborhood districts including Payne-Phalen and Dayton’s Bluff, located in east-central Saint Paul. According to the 2020 US Census, the population in St. Paul is 311,527. Based on the 2020 US Census and MN Compass neighborhood population data, both neighborhoods are home to 52,624 residents, approximately 17% of the City of Saint Paul.

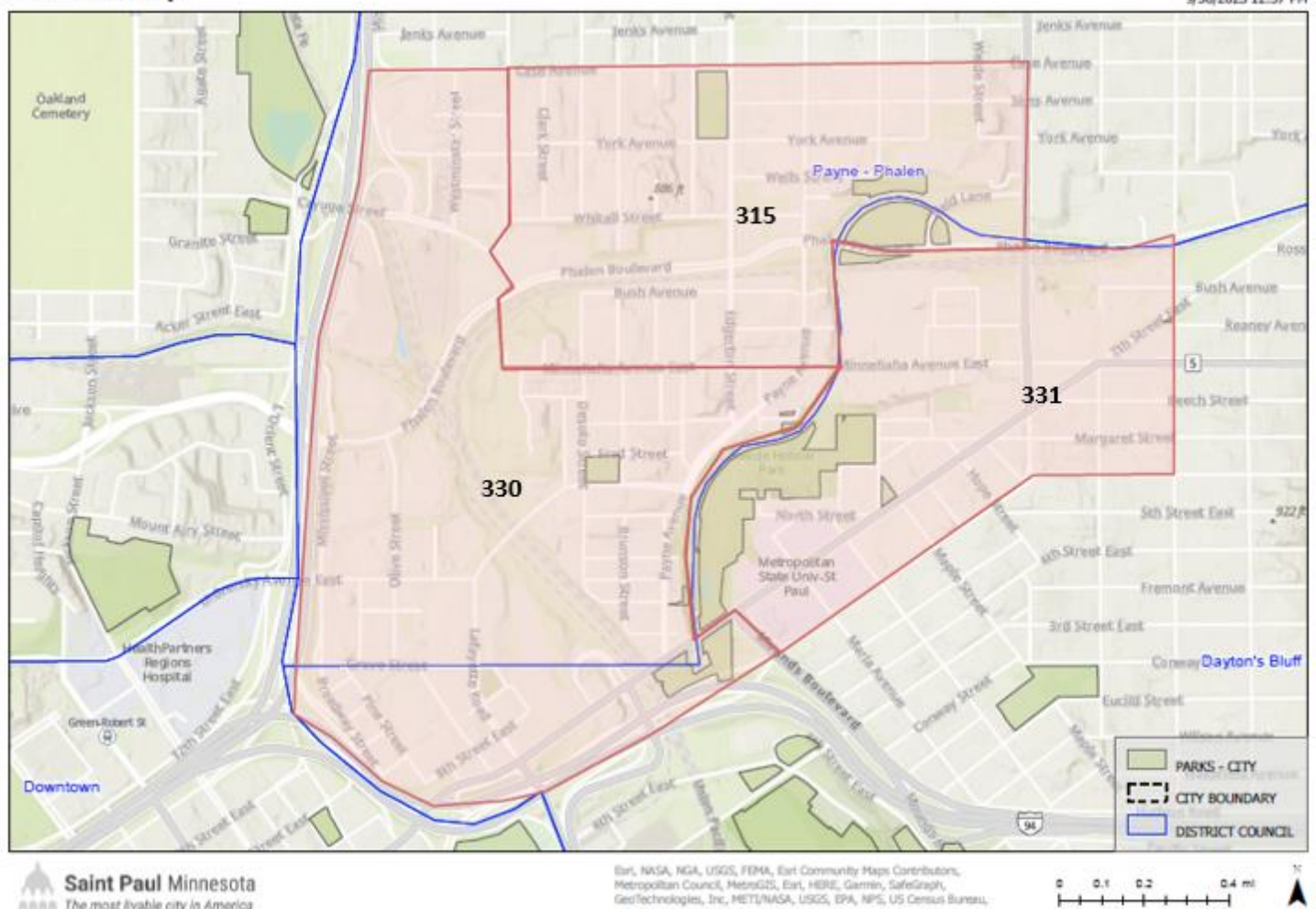
City and Neighborhood District Population		
City of Saint Paul Population		311,527
Neighborhood District	Population	% of City
Payne-Phalen	33,644	11%
Dayton’s Bluff	18,980	6%
Total 2 Neighborhoods	52,624	17%
Source: 2020 Census, MN Compass		

Boundaries - Railroad Island Strategy Area

Railroad Island is located in the south end of the two east side neighborhood districts described above. The Railroad Island strategy area is shown in the **Railroad Island Boundary Census Tract Map below**. To simplify population demographic analysis, staff utilized the Census tract boundaries to delineate the Railroad Island strategy area. The three Ramsey County, MN Census Tracts include 315, 330, and 331 shown in the map below.

For the purposes of this strategy area plan, the boundaries of Railroad Island are northern Case Avenue, eastern Arcade and Forest, southern 6th Street, and western Highway 35E. The historic Railroad Island area in the center of the Census Tracts, is approximately 180 acres, bounded by railroad tracks to the north and west, Swede Hollow to the east and East 7th Street on the south. The central and northwesterly portion of the neighborhood is residential. The primary retail areas are located on Payne Avenue and Arcade. The industrial uses are concentrated along Bush Street on the north end and between Hopkins Street, 35E, and East 7th Street on the south. There is substantial open space including Swede Hollow Park, Phalen Boulevard green space, Eileen Weida Playground, the bluff and slope areas further described in the Assessment section below.

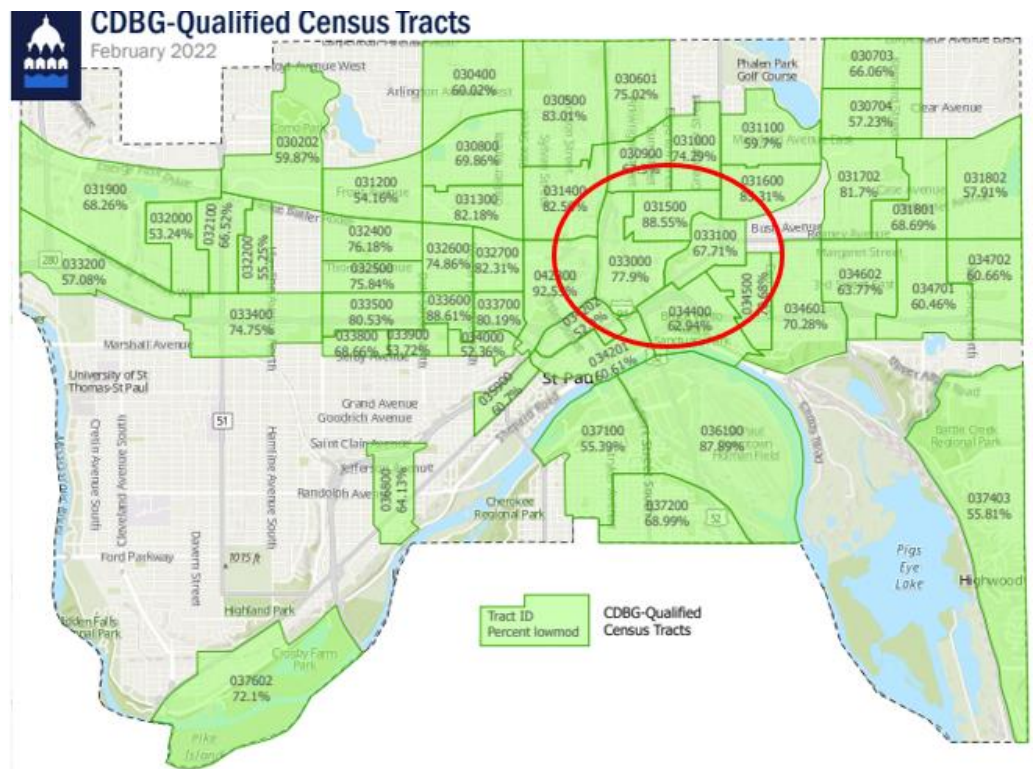
ArcGIS Web Map



Demographic Criteria

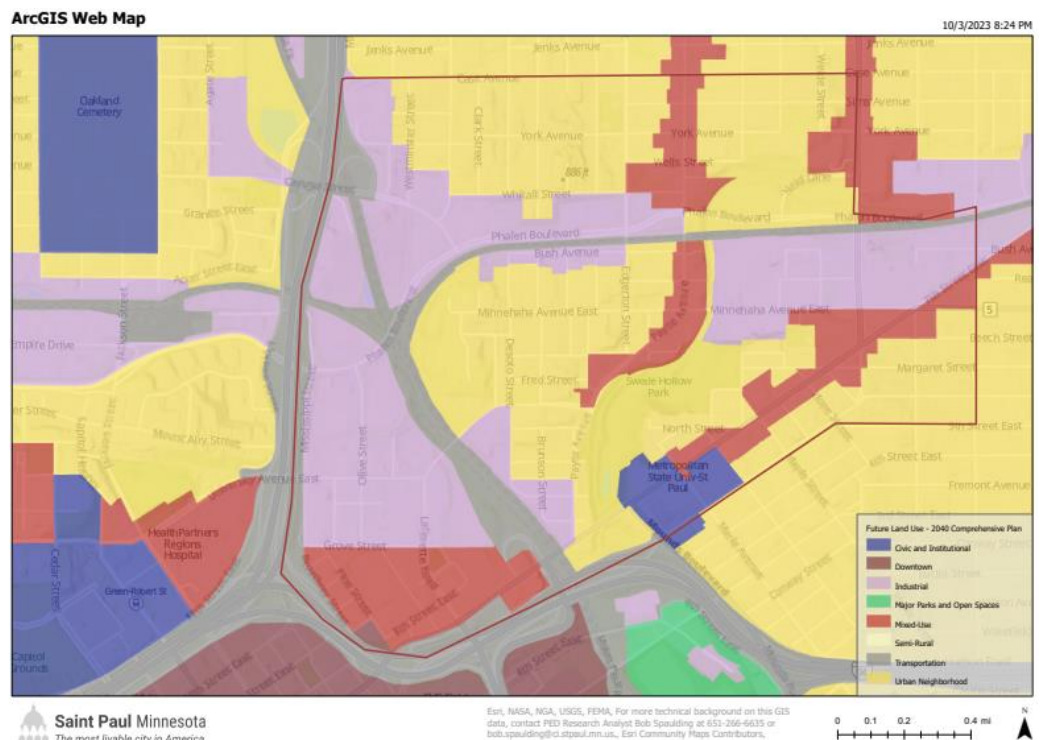
Income CDBG-Qualified Census Tracts

The **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)-Qualified Census Tracts 2022 Map** shows Census tracts with over 51% Low to Moderate Income (LMI) and CDBG qualified, including the Railroad Island area tracts 315, 330, and 331. The map is featured in the 2023 Saint Paul Annual Action Plan. Low-Moderate Income equals 80 percent of an area's median household income. The median household income for the Railroad Island community (Tracts 315, 330, 331) is \$46,143. Comparatively, Saint Paul's median household income is \$66,098.



Primarily Residential

Railroad Island community is primarily residential as shown in the **Railroad Island Land Use Map**. Approximately 70% of the community is designated residential urban neighborhood or mixed use. The remaining 30% is right-of-way transportation, institutional or industrial.



Consultation

Public Meetings

The following list of stakeholder groups were consulted in the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) plan process in various ways including an invitation to the neighborhood and public meetings to review the Railroad Island NRSA plan. The following meetings were held to solicit feedback on the draft NRSA plan. Staff sent the draft Railroad Island NRSA plan prior to the meetings and allowed time for the Councils and public to review the plan. A project webpage was developed on the City of Saint Paul website to share the draft plan. Comments received at the following meetings are recorded in Appendix A: Acknowledgments & Neighborhood Comments.

1. Railroad Island Neighborhood Group review meeting November 2, 2023
2. Public meeting November 20, 2023 hosted by the Dayton's Bluff Community Council District 4
3. Public meeting November 28, 2023 hosted by the Payne-Phalen Community Council District 5
4. Virtual public hearing November 30, 2023 during 30-day comment period (November 20- December 21, 2023)

Stakeholders

Redevelopment projects in Railroad Island have been resident led, planned for and developed in concert with Railroad Island's residents, through the following stakeholder groups. The following inventory of stakeholders was used to build a contact list for notification of the public meetings and soliciting feedback on the draft NRSA plan. Initial research was conducted to gather contact information and visit the websites of the stakeholder groups listed below. Existing plans such as the Saint Paul Consolidated Plan 2020-2024 and program materials were reviewed to compile the following list of key stakeholders and neighborhood groups that notified community residents and leaders.

Local non-profits and community-based organizations

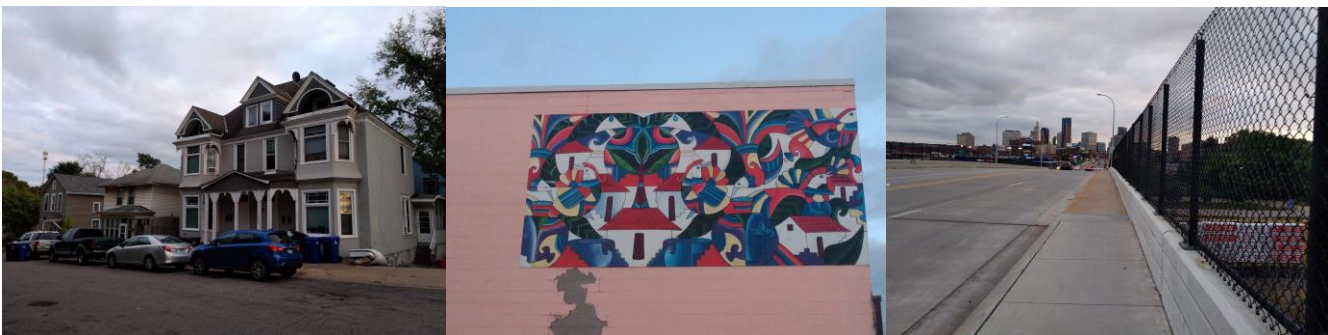
- I. [Railroad Island Neighborhood Group](#) – Consultation October 5, 2023
- II. [Payne-Phalen Community Council District 5](#) – Consultation September 26, 2023
- III. [Dayton's Bluff Community Council District 4](#) – Consultation November 13, 2023

Community Development Corporations (CDCs), Finance Institutions (CDFIs), and Organizations

- I. [Daytons Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services](#) - Consultation August 18, 2023
- II. [East Side Neighborhood Development Company](#) – Consultations July 5, 2023, October 2023

Government entities

- I. [Saint Paul City Council](#) – Wards 2, 5, 6, and 7
- II. [City of Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development Department](#) – Staff drafted this NRSA



Railroad Island Opportunities and Performance Measurements



As stated in the Introduction, the purpose of this Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) plan is to provide tangible housing and economic improvements within 5-years in the Railroad Island community. Furthermore, this NRSA is designed to promote the area's economic progress. The progress focuses on activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons by increasing affordable housing opportunities and expanding economic opportunities through activities that promote the substantial revitalization of the Railroad Island neighborhood.

As stated in the previous sections, Railroad Island community has a history of planning efforts in response to the historic disinvestment and evolving revitalization. Most of the opportunities listed below were drawn from previous plans and applications to continue the improvement and stabilization of the Railroad Island neighborhood.

The **Railroad Island Summary Opportunities Table** below and performance measures identify the results expected to be achieved. A full list of all plan goals is in **Appendix B: Railroad Island Other Opportunities Table**. The opportunities (goals, objectives, outcomes) and measures include physical improvements and social initiatives to improve affordable housing and economic progress stated in terms of measurable outputs and outcomes tied to the neighborhood's identified needs. The **Railroad Island Opportunities Tables** below identify housing and economic opportunities that can be measured and used to determine progress made.

Leverage

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding is the primary leverage tool resourced through this plan. The City of Saint Paul will identify benefit amounts for the Railroad Island and Hamm's redevelopment site area in the 2024-2025 Capital Improvement budget not yet finalized at the time of this plan development. Neighborhood organizations including Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services and East Side Neighborhood Development Company have existing CDBG contracts and have applied for funding for the next cycle next cycle through the 2024 [Capital Improvement Budget](#).

Leverage is a critical element of neighborhood revitalization and a goal of this NRS is to attract additional investment to Railroad Island community. As stated in the Saint Paul Action Plan (2023-2024), the City has identified State, local, and private resources expected to be available to leverage and/or match HUD funding to address priority needs and the objectives put forward in the Strategic Plan and this NRS for Railroad Island. These resources may include:

1. Local Housing Trust Fund
2. Sales Tax Revitalization program (STAR) – ½ cent sales tax for community development investments
3. Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) revenues
4. City Tax Increment Financing, Low-Income Housing Tax Credits Issuance of Housing Revenue and 501(c)3 Conduit Revenue Bonds
5. Continuum of Care resources
6. Private match for Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) investments
7. Private match for HOME capital investments
8. Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) business loans and brownfield remediation and development grants
9. Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA)
10. Metropolitan Council brownfield remediation and community development grants

Railroad Island Summary of Strategies and Opportunities Table



The following strategies and opportunities are consistent with Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) guidance from Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the City's Consolidated Plan. The metrics will be reported in the City's annual Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER).

	Goal, Strategy, Opportunity	Status	Target Date	Cost/	Performance Measure
				Funding/	
				Leverage	
Housing (H)					
1	Increase in homeownership rates	Ongoing	Ongoing		LMI households assisted, ownership rate comparison
2	Reduction in vacancy rates	Ongoing	Ongoing		Vacancy rate comparison
3	Increase in housing values with new construction housing units – Rivoli neighborhood units	Ongoing	Ongoing		Housing value comparison, # new units
4	Remove or rehabilitate blighted housing – Neighborhood purchase through county tax forfeit (See Appendix C: City Public-HRA Property Maps)	Ongoing	Ongoing		Blighted housing removed or Housing rehabilitation and infill - #s
5	LMI households assisted through housing rehabilitation and ownership programs	Ongoing	Ongoing		# LMI households assisted;
Economic Development Individual Income (EDII)					
6	New businesses assisted	Ongoing	Ongoing		# new businesses assisted
7	Existing businesses assisted	Ongoing	Ongoing		# existing businesses assisted
8	Jobs created or retained in area	Ongoing	Ongoing		# jobs created or retained in area
9	Remediate brownfields	Ongoing	Ongoing		Acres of brownfields remediated;
10	Business facades/buildings rehabilitated – Former Hamm’s Brewery redevelopment	Ongoing	Ongoing		business facades/buildings rehabilitated

Assessment - Railroad Island Area

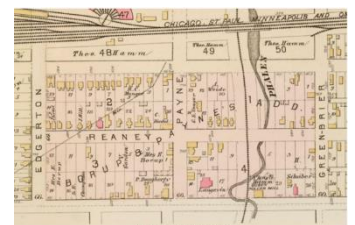
History

Early Saint Paul History

Burial mounds in present-day Mounds Park suggest the Saint Paul area was inhabited by the Hopewell Native Americans about 2,000 years ago. From the early 17th century to 1837, the Mdewakanton Dakota, a tribe of the Sioux, lived near the mounds.¹

Railroad Island History

In 1847, the first Railroad Island plat was developed in lower Payne Avenue area, named Brunson's Addition (**Brunson house and Brunson's Addition pictured right**). The neighborhood had pleasing views of Trout Brook, Phalen Creek and downtown, because no railroads had yet cut through the area. The area is approximately 180 acres in size and is bounded by railroad tracks on the north and west, Swede Hollow Park on the east and East 7th Street on the south. Railroad Island was one of a few early neighborhoods that developed just outside downtown Saint Paul in the 1850's. Initially it attracted fairly prosperous residents who liked the views of Trout Brook to the west. As a result, many Victorian houses were built in the area in the late nineteenth century on Burr, Brunson, Minnehaha, and Desoto.



With the arrival of railroads, with noise and smoke, many people decided to move to newer areas in the western part of the city. The encirclement of the neighborhood by several railroads is where it got its name. As the elite left, the community slowly developed into a blue collar area. Historically, the majority of the housing in Railroad Island was single-family and owner-occupied. A major influx of Italian immigrants came to Railroad Island around 1910, many from the Benevento region of Italy, near Naples. Numerous Italian restaurants and other specialty shops were developed in lower Payne Avenue.

The **Francis M. Williams House (pictured right)** at 656 Bush Avenue is on the Architecturally Historic Properties listing in St. Paul, RA SPC 0460. Francis M. Williams born 1858 in Minnesota, the son of David and Cynthia Williams both early pioneer farmers to the territory came to Minnesota in 1856. Francis and his brother moved to St. Paul in circa 1870. Francis purchased 5 adjoining (lots 6-10) in 1880 and built his home on Lot 10 Block 1 of Borup and Paynes Addition to St Paul in 1884 over looking Swede Hollow. The original address was 656 Fauquier Street that was later changed to Bush Avenue in honor of a 3M executive.



Railroad Island's past is linked to its present with its continued cultural diversity and wealth of opportunity. Employment losses have led to economic and social instability in the neighborhood. Owner-occupied housing slowly converted to rental units which generally has resulted in a lower level of maintenance of the neighborhood's housing. However, there are still many homeowners who savor the historic homes in the area. The importance of conserving historic buildings is an ongoing debate in the community. In some cases historic structures are abandoned and are potential fire and safety hazards. The cost of rehabilitation and the desire to preserve historical and cultural heritage are competing interests that affect area revitalization efforts. The Railroad Island area is defined by its past struggles and has a need to be resourced through investment capital.²

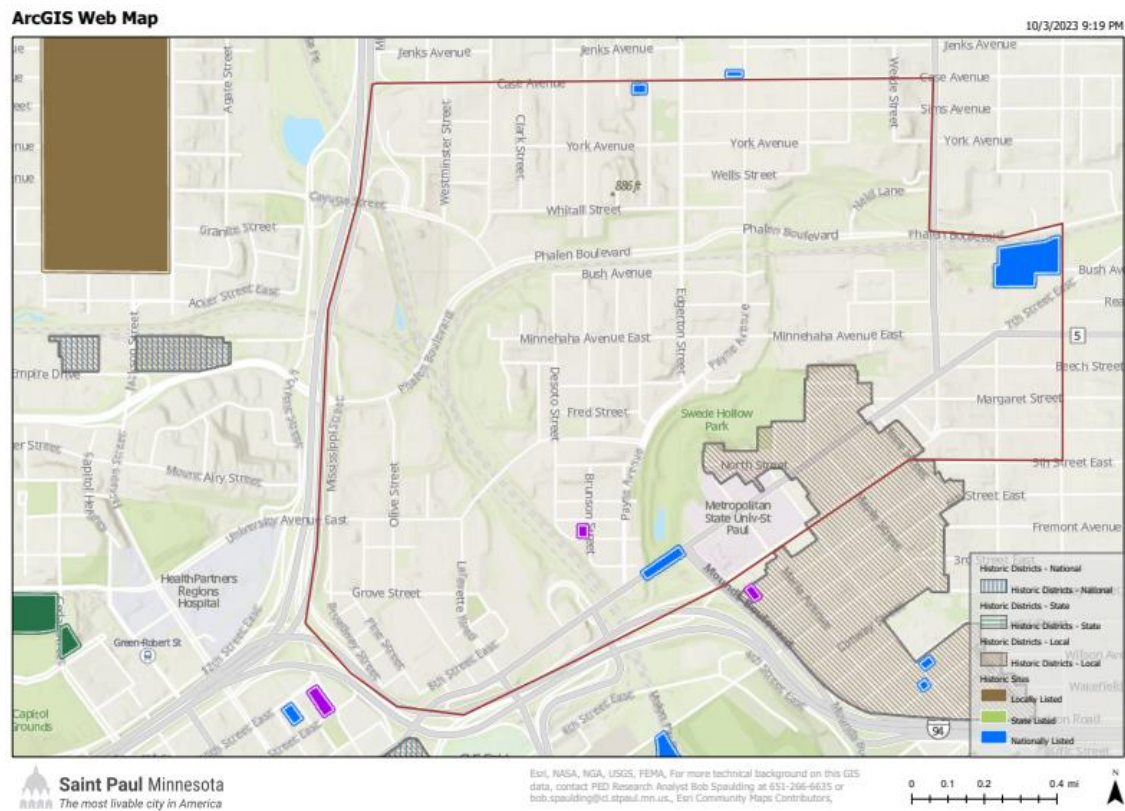
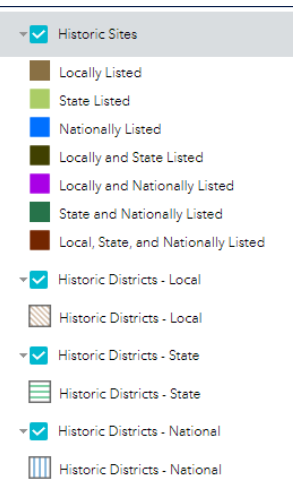
¹ Early Saint Paul history sources: Trimble, Steve (July 2, 2000). "A short history of indian mounds park". Neighborhood Pride Celebration, and Kunz, Virginia Brainard (1991). Saint Paul - The First 150 Years. The Saint Paul Foundation.

² Railroad Island history sources: Saint Paul Historical online: <https://saintpaulhistorical.com/items/show/292> and Damian Schaab, historian and neighborhood resident.

Historic District and Sites

Railroad Island area and neighboring downtown Saint Paul is rich with historic sites and districts shown in the **Historic Districts and Sites Map** below. The Dayton's Bluff Historic District is partially within the Railroad Island community in the southeast corner illustrated in brown crosshatch. The Dayton's Bluff Historic District was approved by the City Council in 1992. The creation of the Historic District recognizes the historical, natural, and architectural significance of the neighborhood. Dayton's Bluff is the name given to a towering limestone outcrop in the wide valley of Mississippi River in Saint Paul. The bluff is one of Saint Paul's most prominent geographic features.

Many of the streets in the district were oriented toward views of the Mississippi River and the city below. As the blocks of Dayton's Bluff were developed with diverse residential and commercial building styles, the steep, rolling terrain was retained. Historic homes still stand on hilltop sites with porches and prominent windows oriented towards views of the distant river bluffs. The Historic District boundaries include I-94 on the southwest and the northwest is bound by Swede Hollow ravine and the edge of the bluff.



It is important to conserve the historic buildings of this area, but the natural setting should also be conserved and enhanced. The first settlers of the area who sought large lots perched near the edge of the bluff highly valued their special view of the city. Today, the broad vistas of the river and downtown St. Paul remain among the reasons new residents are drawn to this unique neighborhood.

Exterior alterations, new construction, and demolition of buildings within the District boundaries are reviewed by the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission according to the guidelines explained in a Historical District Handbook. The Handbook is intended for the use of residents of the Dayton's Bluff Historic District, as well as all other St. Paul residents with an interest in the conservation of historic buildings. Source: Dayton's Bluff Community Council

Railroad Island Housing and Population



The following table shows Railroad Island area housing and population demographic comparison of 2010-2020. Sources of the following Railroad Island demographic trends were gathered from US Census 2020, ACS 2021 estimates, and 2010 Census data from a 2014 report titled "Hawthorne Ecovillage and Railroad Island: A Comparative Analysis". The 2010 data may have been calculated with a slightly smaller, two tract area as compared to the 2020 three tract data. Demographic trends revealed with the 2010-2020 Census 3-tract data comparison include the following findings.

1. Population in Railroad Island community grew 343 persons from 2010 (6,933) to 2020 (7,276)
2. Median age has decreased by 1 year from 2010 to 2020 (29)
3. Median income increased by \$2,086
4. Housing units increased 647 units
5. Persons per household increased slightly from 3.24 to 3.28
6. Vacant housing units decreased -7%
7. Rental housing units decreased -20%
8. Owner housing units increased 21%
9. Percent below poverty decreased -7%
10. Racial changes include a decrease in Caucasian, decrease in African American, and increase in Asian

Railroad Island Area					
Demographic	2010 Report	2010 3 Tract	2020 3 Tract	Report Change	Census Change
Population	5,095	6,933	7,276	2,181	343
Median Age	28.1	30.5	29.60	1.50	-1
Median Income	\$29,080	\$44,057	\$46,143	\$17,063	2,086
Housing					
Housing Units	1,326	1,574	2,221	895	647
Persons per household		3.24	3.28		0.04
Housing vacant units	27%	14%	7%	-20.0%	-7%
Housing rental units	46.9%	66%	46%	-0.9%	-20%
Housing owner units	37.8%	33%	54%	16.2%	21%
Poverty					
Below Poverty		33.7%	27.2%		-7%
Race					
White alone	35%	37%	33%	-2%	-5%
Black or African American alone	29%	30%	26%	-3%	-4%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	na	2%	2%		0%
Asian alone	23%	26%	30%	7%	5%
Native Hawaiian & Othr Pacific Islander alone	na	0%	0%		0%
Some Other Race alone	13%	0%	8%	-5%	8%
Population of two or more races	na	5%	1%		-4%
Source: 2020 US Census, 2021 ACS Estimates (Tracts 315,330,331), 2010 Census (Tracts 315,330,331), and 2010 data report Hawthorne Ecovillage and Railroad Island: A Comparative Analysis'					

Housing Market and Challenges

Railroad Island neighborhood is mostly residential and improving the housing stock is the number one goal of many redevelopment efforts in Railroad Island. Homes consist of a mixture of historic, large, Victorian style houses of varying maintenance, revitalized houses, and new construction homes (See photos below).

Housing Occupancy and Tenure

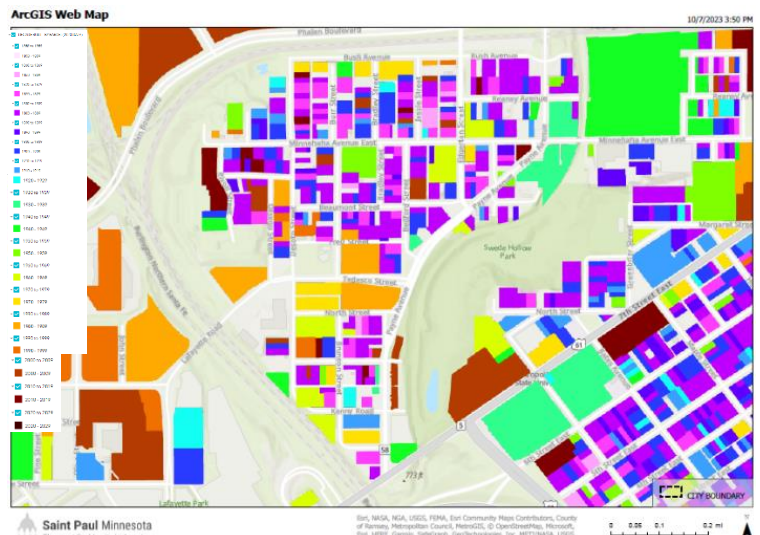
The table shows 2010 and 2020 housing unit occupancy and tenure. The data reveals that the number of rental units in the Railroad Island neighborhood decreased (-20%) from 2010-2020. Housing vacancy rate decreased (-7%).

Railroad Island Area (Census Tracts 315,330, 331)			
Demographic	2010	2020	Change
Housing Units	1,574	2,221	647
Housing vacant units	14%	7%	-7%
Housing rental units	66%	46%	-20%
Housing owner units	33%	54%	21%

Sources: 2010, 2020 US Census

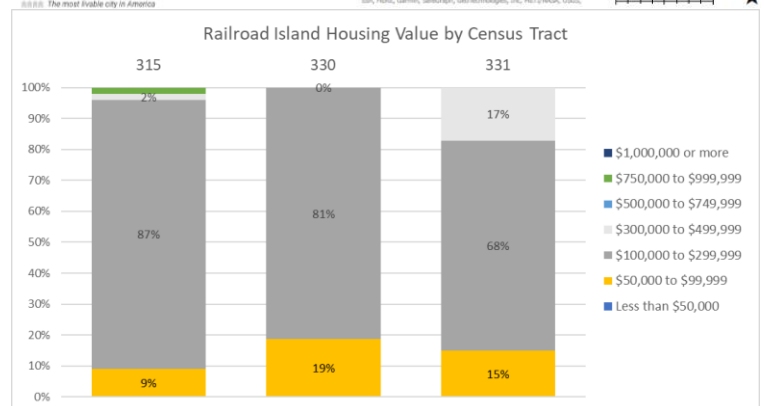
Housing Age

Most homes were built prior to 1940 shown in the **Structure Year Built Map** right, illustrated in pink, purple and blue. With most housing over 80 years old and 46% rental housing units; maintenance and stability are the critical housing challenges facing the community. In 2005, Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services conducted a housing condition survey for Railroad Island that revealed 88% of its residential structures need some type of repair. This highlights the critical need for extensive housing rehabilitation for the area. The topography of Railroad Island is another challenge that requires increased housing costs for retaining walls and level foundations.



Housing Value

The housing value for occupied housing units, in the 3-Census Tract Railroad Island Area is primarily \$100,000-\$300,000 shown in the graph right as follows: Tract 315 (87%), Tract 330 (81%), and Tract 331 (68%). Tract 331 contains 17% of housing units valued between \$300,000 to \$499,999. The average median housing unit value of all 3-Census Tracts is \$160,667.



Economy and Employment

The Railroad Island and east side neighborhoods have experienced many employment changes that have shaped the economy and character of the community listed below (Source: Previous plans, list on page 12). Despite the challenges, existing businesses provide an economic base and revitalization initiatives continue to improve the economy in the Railroad Island community.

In December 2023, a total of 440 businesses were registered active within the 3 Census tracts that form the Railroad Island strategy area. Of the total number, 365 are small-businesses that have up to 5 employees. The table right shows the number of businesses in the Railroad Island area categorized by the number of employees.

Changes and Challenges

1. Loss of major employers including: Hamm's (later Stroh's) brewery, 3M company, Whirlpool
2. Metropolitan State University located at the old St. John's Hospital site
3. 2018 **Beacon Bluff Industrial Spec development - Former 3M site (Pictured right)**
4. Additions of the Mexican Consulate, CLUES, **Cookie Cart Youth employment (Pictured right)** and several vibrant immigrant businesses to the neighborhood.
5. Creation of nearby Dayton's Bluff historic district
6. Redevelopment plans for former Hamms Brewery Site

Railroad Island Area Employers Summary	
#Employees	# Businesses
0 to 5 employees	365
6 to 50 employees	41
51 to 200 employees	7
201 to 500 employees	1
Over 500 employees	1
Sub-total	415
No Answer Provided	25
Total	440

Source: City of Saint Paul



Existing Businesses

Railroad Island existing businesses attract patrons, provide employment opportunities, and contribute to a vibrant community. Several of the businesses listed below reflect the neighborhood's historic roots. The long-standing businesses provide a solid foundation to grow the Railroad Island economy.

Morelli's Alimentari (Pictured right bottom), an Italian grocer located at the busy intersection of Payne and Tedesco. Morelli's has been open since Railroad Island attracted Italian immigrant families in the early part of the 20th Century. Yarusso Bros., another Italian standard from the 1930s is still owned by the Yarusso family. The Statue of Liberty lights the way inside for evening visitors.

Brunson's Pub on Payne Avenue is named after a longtime neighborhood resident and land surveyor of St. Paul. He built and lived in a house which is believed to be the oldest standing brick house in St. Paul, in Railroad Island.

Payne Avenue restaurants and markets within the neighborhood and nearby: La Palma Supermercado, East Side Pizza, Magnolia's, Eastside Thai, Mangos Mexican, Tongue in Cheek, Santa Fe, Caydence Records & Coffee, Karibu Grocery & Deli.



Major Employers



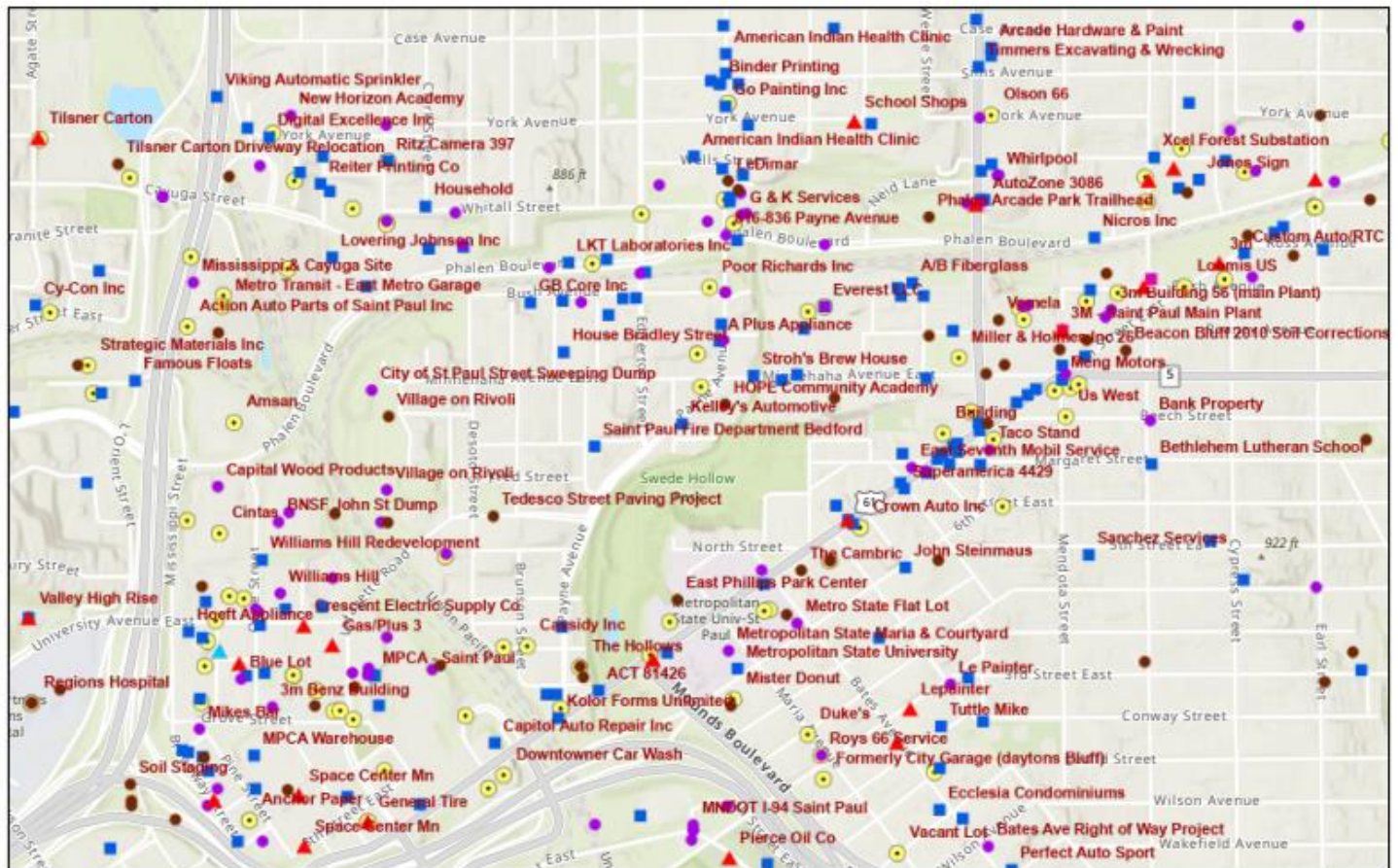
The list of major employers below records the top 50 registered active businesses with over 6 employees in the Railroad Island area as of December 2023. Approximately 440 employers are located within the Railroad Island strategy area in the 3 focus Census tracts. The following list shows the top 50 employers in the strategy area in 4 categories including: 6-50 employees, 51-200 employees, 201-500 employees, Over 500 employees.

Railroad Island Major Employers	
Minnesota Business Name	Number Employees
1 Advantage Plus, L.L.C.	Over 500 employees
2 Culture Home Healthcare Incorporated	201 to 500 employees
3 Anchor Paper Company	51 to 200 employees
4 CLUES Real Estate Holding Company	51 to 200 employees
5 Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio, Inc.	51 to 200 employees
6 Good vibes African Markets/deli LLC	51 to 200 employees
7 Hope Community Academy	51 to 200 employees
8 Medical Graphics Corporation	51 to 200 employees
9 Total Life Security	51 to 200 employees
10 American Indian Family Center	6 to 50 employees
11 Artistic Reflections	6 to 50 employees
12 Big Wood Timber Frames, Inc.	6 to 50 employees
13 Birch Tree Care	6 to 50 employees
14 Boots On The Ground LLC	6 to 50 employees
15 Capital Wood Products Company	6 to 50 employees
16 Carbone Pizza, Inc.	6 to 50 employees
17 Carpenters Training Institute	6 to 50 employees
18 Caztek Engineering	6 to 50 employees
19 Centromex. Supermercado	6 to 50 employees
20 East 7th Liquor, L.L.C.	6 to 50 employees
21 Eastside Thai Restaurant INC	6 to 50 employees
22 EIDS Cleaning & Consulting LLC	6 to 50 employees
23 ENOC Construction L. L. C.	6 to 50 employees
24 Far East Inc	6 to 50 employees
25 Glo Airtech	6 to 50 employees
26 Green House Recovery Center	6 to 50 employees
27 Heinz Law PLLC	6 to 50 employees
28 Higher Power Society	6 to 50 employees
29 Home Care Givers, Inc	6 to 50 employees
30 Insitu Technologies, Inc.	6 to 50 employees
31 La Primicia LLC	6 to 50 employees
32 Laservision USA, LP	6 to 50 employees
33 Latino Economic Development Center	6 to 50 employees
34 Listening House of St. Paul, Incorporated	6 to 50 employees
35 LKT Laboratories, INC.	6 to 50 employees
36 Medi-Tech Communications, Inc.	6 to 50 employees
37 National Chewy Association Inc.	6 to 50 employees
38 Ndop Humanitarian Relief Fund P. A.	6 to 50 employees
39 Nivon Wellness Center LLC	6 to 50 employees
40 North American Art and Mirror	6 to 50 employees
41 Oceans Home Care	6 to 50 employees
42 Phi Chay Thai Cuisine of MN Corporation	6 to 50 employees
43 Postma Air, LLC	6 to 50 employees
44 Princes Travel Services	6 to 50 employees
45 Quick Stop Market Inc.	6 to 50 employees
46 Rana Assets & National Acquisitions Corp	6 to 50 employees
47 Taqueria Los Ocampo 2, Inc.	6 to 50 employees
48 The Robinson Group, Inc.	6 to 50 employees
49 USA F, Inc.	6 to 50 employees
50 Windy's Collision Center, Inc.	6 to 50 employees

Brownfield Redevelopment








The Railroad Island community and surrounding neighborhoods have several brownfield redevelopment opportunities. The **MPCA Sites map** below shows identified Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) sites in the vicinity. Categorical types of brownfields shown in the map include: Multiple Programs, Air Quality, Hazardous Waste, Investigation and Cleanup, Stormwater, Tanks, and Water Quality.

MPCA Sites



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program

	Multiple Programs		Hazardous Waste		Tanks
	Air Quality		Investigation and Cleanup		Water Quality
			Stormwater		

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 mi
0 0.17 0.35 0.7 km

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As shown in the map, most sites are hazardous waste and investigation and cleanup. One strategy listed in the Summary Opportunities table in this NRSA is Brownfield remediation. The Railroad Island community and adjacent Hamm's Brewery site have engaged in many clean-up and remediation efforts in the past. Examples include the construction of Phalen Boulevard Parkway that replaced two junk yards and a solid waste transfer station.

Water Services Program

In early 2022, the City of Saint Paul announced it would spend \$14.5 million over a two-year span to remove lead drinking water pipes from private property. At the time of the announcement, Water Services estimated that as many as 26,600 St. Paul homes may have lead water service pipes (Star Tribune, Walsh, March 28, 2022). The city of St. Paul has [a map that allows property owners to look up their homes](#) to see whether they have lead water pipes. Anyone in St. Paul who has immediate concern about lead is urged contact Water Services at 651-266-6350 and request a lead testing kit.

Historic Disinvestment and Evolving Revitalization



Compared to the surrounding neighborhoods in Saint Paul, Railroad Island shows signs of poverty and disinvestment. Many residents are low-moderate income and the housing stock includes some unmaintained properties. The current status of Railroad Island in comparison to City of Saint Paul is shown in the Census 2020 comparison table below.

Comparison Highlights:

1. Median household income lower in Railroad Island (\$46,143) versus Saint Paul (\$66,098)
2. Persons per household in Railroad Island is higher (3.28) than Saint Paul (2.40)
3. Median Age is higher in Saint Paul (32.5) than Railroad Island (29.6)
4. Percent housing rental units are slightly higher in Saint Paul (49%) than Railroad Island (46%)
5. Racial mix is more diverse in Railroad Island than Saint Paul

Railroad Island Plans

Railroad Island has been the subject or mentioned in several neighborhood plans listed right. The plans have led to several revitalization actions and positive change in the community further described below in the revitalization section.

Plans contain recommended goals and strategies in housing, infrastructure, economic, and social improvements. Focused community planning and dedicated residents and organizations have improved the Railroad Island neighborhood.

The redevelopment of Railroad Island has been resident led and resident empowering. For example, a local real estate partner, ABC Realty, has a mission to address the racial homeownership gap. They market DBNHS' houses to BIPOC households, on an ongoing basis. The urban green space, created in Village on Rivoli, described below, and the youth training the site supports, helps to address neighborhood youth employment challenges, while creating a place for all of Railroad Island residents to use collectively.

Railroad Island Area (Tracts 315,330,331) Compared to Saint Paul - 2020 Census			
Demographic	Saint Paul	RRI	Difference
	Higher		
Population	305,877	7,276	--
Median Age	32.5	29.6	2.9
Median Income	\$66,098	\$46,143	\$19,955
Housing Units	127,392	2221	--
Persons per household	2.40	3.28	0.87
Housing vacant units	10%	7%	
Housing rental units	49%	46%	3%
Housing owner units	51%	54%	3%
Race			
White alone	51%	33%	18%
Black or African American alone	17%	26%	9%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1%	2%	1%
Asian alone	19%	30%	11%
Native Hawaiian & Othr Pacific Islander alone	0%	0%	0%
Some Other Race alone	5%	8%	3%
Population of two or more races:	8%	1%	7%
Source: 2020 US Census, 2021 ACS Estimates			

Railroad Island Plans

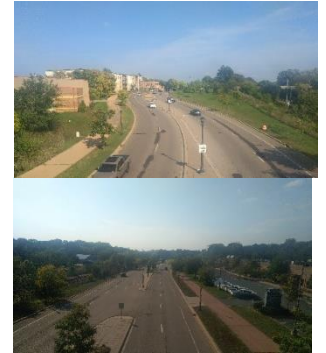
1. [Railroad Island Small Area Plan \(1994\)](#)
2. [Phalen Corridor Development Strategy \(2001\)](#)
3. [Railroad Island Master Plan Report \(2002\)](#)
4. [Phalen Corridor Middle Section Amendment \(2004\)](#)
5. [Hamm's Brewery Reuse Study and Vision Plan \(July 2004\)](#)
6. [Northeast Corridor Development Plan \(2005\)](#)
7. [2005 Railroad Island Housing Condition Survey](#)
8. [Phalen Corridor Atlantic Amendment \(2006\)](#)
9. [Railroad Island Updated Area Plan \(2007\)](#)
10. [Dayton's Bluff District Plan \(2009\)](#)
11. [The Beacon Bluff \(3M site\) Development Concepts \(2009\)](#)
12. [Near East Side Roadmap \(2012\)](#)
13. [Eco-Village Railroad Island Comparative Analysis \(2014\)](#)
14. [Payne Avenue Street Improvements \(2014\)](#)
15. [Francis-M.-Williams-House history report](#)
16. [On Railroad Island article, Minn Post \(2013\)](#)
17. [Swede Hallow Park Master Plan \(2019\)](#)
18. [Railroad Island a Hopeful Future](#)

Recent Revitalization



Ongoing and recent revitalization activities have been taking place in the Railroad Island neighborhood and in the periphery communities for over two-decades. The reinvestment has provided vibrant hope in the community with need still evident in the assessment above. Since the original Small Area Plan for Railroad Island was approved in 1994, positive changes have occurred on Railroad Island including the following highlights.

1. Hope Community Academy, a charter school, moved into the Hamm's Brewery administration building, and recently completed an expansion of their facility
2. Hamm's Site initiatives: 2004 Reuse plan, Stroh's Brewery, community offices, more information below
3. Brownstones of Swede Hollow were built and are now more than 50% occupied by residents who were attracted to this area from other parts of the Twin Cities
4. Yarusso's Italian Restaurant recently completed a renovation and expansion
5. Small business center was built at the intersection of Hopkins and Payne
6. Full-service grocery store, La Palma Supermercado, opened in 2005
7. **Phalen Boulevard** was completed and pedestrian and bicycle trail connections improved **(Pictured Right)**
8. Nearby Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary opened
9. Many blighting influences that had negative effects on property values, have been removed
10. A large slag heap has been replaced with the Williams Hill Business Center
11. Two junk yards and a solid waste transfer station have been replaced by Phalen Boulevard Parkway, and **Westminster Junction Business Center (Pictured Right)**
12. December 2021, City of Saint Paul established the 30% AMI Deeply [Affordable Housing Fund](#) to invest \$37.5 million into increasing the supply of housing affordable to those at or below 30% of the Area Median Income, utilizing American Rescue Plan Act State and Local Fiscal Recovery Funds.



Railroad Island neighborhood has experienced recent revitalization however, there is still economic and housing needs. By taking action in several key areas, the community can become a more vibrant neighborhood that attracts new residents and encourages current residents take pride in the area, improve their properties and become involved in the community. To move to the next level, strategies and goals have been identified in the opportunities section of this plan.

Housing Investment

Railroad Island is the closest East Side neighborhood to downtown. The desire to live close to the downtown area has helped to spur housing redevelopment efforts in the Railroad Island community. Over the last decade, the City has worked with Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Service (DBNHS) in developing and rehabilitating over 40 units of ownership housing. The new homes are affordable to a range of income levels, and 51% of the homes are owned and occupied by people at or below 80% of the area's median income.



2023 Village on Rivoli Status (Pictured Right)

The Village on Rivoli is part of the larger Railroad Island Housing Initiative. The goal of the Initiative is to build and sell 100 new ownership housing units in St. Paul's Railroad Island neighborhood. Since the Initiative began, DBNHS has completed and sold 55 new ownership units in Railroad Island. The Village on Rivoli Pocket Neighborhood consists of 17 lots surrounding a common area greenspace and is in the third phase. When the Village on Rivoli is completed it will consist of 38 single family homes. Neighborhood plans to build housing on this site go back nearly 40 years. The Village on Rivoli site was once a contaminated wasteland. The revitalization can be attributed to the perseverance, over many decades, of the Railroad Island residents and DBNHS' resident Board members. Recommended housing strategies that should be employed to build on the successes of the past decades are listed in the housing opportunities section of this plan.

Former Hamm's Brewery Site Revitalization

The former Hamm's Brewery Site is a designated 'Opportunity Site' in the Saint Paul 2040 Comprehensive Plan. The Theodore Hamm Brewing Company was established in 1865 on Saint Paul's East Side. The brewery grew through the late 19th and early 20th centuries, becoming an iconic Saint Paul employer and influencing the development of the surrounding Dayton's Bluff neighborhood. In the latter half of the 20th century, the brewery was sold multiple times before finally operating as Stroh's from 1983 until the brewery's closure in 1997. The oldest remaining brewery buildings south of Minnehaha Avenue sat vacant after the closure of the brewery. In 2003, the Saint Paul Housing Authority purchased 8.79 acres of the former Hamm's Brewery Complex. The property purchase was meant to preserve and expand Swede Hollow Park, and to acquire buildings on site for redevelopment.

Early photo of Hamm's Brewery top right and recent photo, middle right

In 2004, the City of Saint Paul and collaborative partners developed the Hamm's Brewery Reuse Study and Vision Plan. The plan includes site history and historic designation analysis, existing conditions, economic analysis, reuse scenario recommendations and implementation strategies. The former Hamm's Brewery site is central to the historic district designation awarded in 2010 (Reference 2004 Proposed Historic Designation Area Map, right).

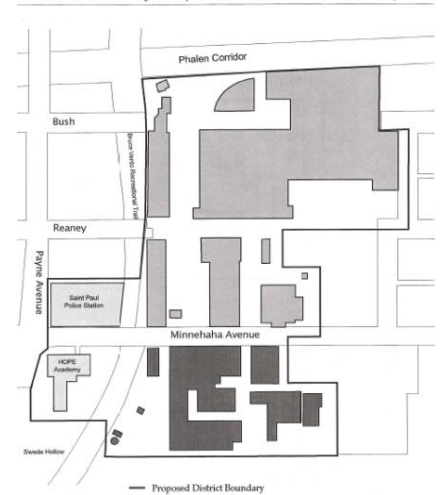
2023 Development Progress and Concept

Four sites have been sold and redeveloped within the former Hamm's Brewery Complex in the past decade. Most recently, in January 2023, the Housing & Redevelopment Authority authorized JB Vang, a MN corporation, to tentatively develop a 4.8 acre site for adaptive re-use. Once complete, the concept redevelopment will include affordable housing options, a thriving marketplace, and a wide variety of indoor and outdoor community gathering spaces (Concept plan below).

Hamm's Development Fall Quarterly Report, dated October 19, 2023, included progress in grant applications completed for over one million dollars and drafted grant applications for another two million dollars. Among the many redevelopment initiatives happening at the Hamm's site, the report highlighted progress in the Marketplace entrepreneur opportunity. Specifically, Marketplace design plans and breakout pricing have been received and meetings with Legacy Partners (Non-profit partner co-managing the project) are on-going, which include formalizing financing and ownership structure.



Hamm Brewery Proposed Historic District Map



Neighborhood Voice Hamm's Redevelopment



In 2022, a joint statement was developed to address neighborhood sentiment regarding the redevelopment of the former Hamm's Brewery site.³ The collaborative statement was signed by representatives of the following six organizations: Dayton's Bluff Community Council, Railroad Island Neighborhood Group, East Side Neighborhood Development Company, Historic Saint Paul, East Side Area Business Association, and Payne-Phalen Community Council. The 8-page joint statement was addressed to the City of Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority and contained the following community values, aims and objectives.

Summary of Community Values, Aims and Objectives

1. Relevance to the East Side: Enhance the East Side community and share the benefits of growth within the community. The redevelopment should be a destination that attracts locals and visitors, acts as a springboard for further positive neighborhood revitalization, and bolsters existing projects underway.
2. Equity, Social Justice and Community Benefits: Call to make serious and long-lasting investments that will erase the existing poverty and sustain prosperity for future generations. Benefits of development should benefit the existing community, align with Saint Paul's 2040 comprehensive plan, and use an equity scorecard in review of proposals, and inclusive of all incomes with mixed uses and activities accessible and affordable to all.
 - a. On the matter of housing: Call to build affordable housing and abide by a residential linkage policy that ensures long-term affordability and sustaining wealth-building residential opportunities such as homeownership.
 - b. On the matter of employment, education, and wealth creation: Call to create and sustain wealth-building employment, work, and entrepreneurial opportunities for residents now and in the future, abide by an employment linkage policy, build in affordable commercial space in support of business development.
3. Site, Situation, and Prominence of the location within the surrounding area: Call for developer to:
 - a. Assist with daylighting Phalen Creek and incorporate the creek in the redevelopment
 - b. Restore and rehabilitate Swede Hollow Park
 - c. Include a public observatory at the top of the building with views of the City, Phalen Creek Valley and Mississippi River Valley.
4. Restoration and rehabilitation of existing historic buildings, character, and site features: Preserve the historic value of the site and maintain the visual continuity of the site. Consider reuse of the wells on the southwest corner and preserve the historic feature in the interpretation of importance and value of water.
5. Land use, building uses, and spaces: Encourage creative uses of the complex that is a source of neighborhood pride such as museum space and cultural space.
6. Sustainability, connectivity and environmental justice: Call to foster environmental resiliency and sustainability in energy production (renewable-solar, hydrothermal), building materials, impact on water sources (aquifers and creek), impact to local wildlife and flora, focus on active transportation and links to public transportation hubs to reduce single-occupancy vehicle dependence.
7. Improving public use and ensuring ongoing community access: Ensure that key spaces within the complex will be recreated for public use and will have easy, free, and ongoing public access with detailed recommendations on page 7.
8. Moving forward by building upon the community efforts already underway: Build upon existing plans such as 2004 Hamm's Brewery Reuse Study, 2009 Dayton's Bluff District Plan, 2012 Near East Side Roadmap, and 2019 Swede Hollow Master Plan. Existing projects such as Purple Line, EV Spot Network, daylighting Phalen Creek, Wakan Tipi Interpretive Center, preservation and enhancement of the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary.

³ Joint Statement RE: Request for Proposals for the Hamm's Brewery Complex, April 29, 2022.
Railroad Island NRSA 12/22/2023

Transit

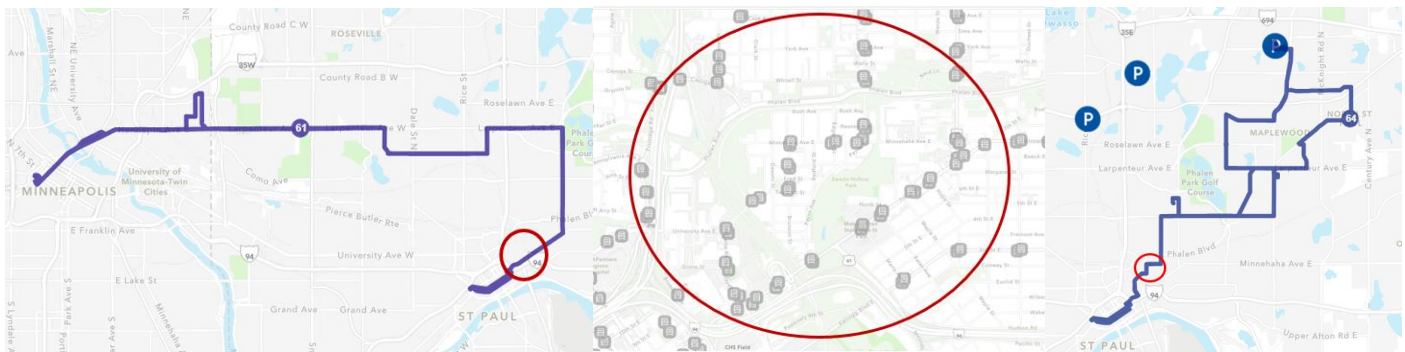
Transportation in historic Railroad Island is a challenge in all modes including vehicle, pedestrian and transit. The railroad tracks block direct traffic to-from the north, west, and south and the bluff in Swede Hollow blocks direct traffic to-from the east. Payne Avenue, Tadesco/Lafayette Road, and a small portion of 7th Street provide the only direct connections to-from the Railroad Island community, circled in the **Metro Transit Route 61 and 64 Maps** below.

Bus transit is available to-from Railroad Island with two routes #61 and #64. Route #64 (Payne - Maryland - White Bear Av - Maplewood Mall) shown in the maps below. Bus route #64 travels southwest and northeast through the Railroad Island neighborhood. The bus carries passengers, approximately 7 miles, in between two major destinations, including downtown Saint Paul and Maplewood Mall. Route #61 travels a similar direction through the Railroad Island community, along 7th Street and Arcade and provides transportation to downtown Minneapolis.

Bus Route 61 Map

Railroad Island Area Bus Routes

Bus Route 64 Map



Metro Transit is planning future Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) routes including the [purple line](#), along Phalen Boulevard between Union Depot in downtown Saint Paul and downtown White Bear Lake. The planned 10-mile bus rapid transit [gold line](#) will connect St. Paul, Maplewood, Landfall, Oakdale, and Woodbury and is scheduled for service in 2025.

Other Transit/Ride Sharing Opportunities: Uber, Lift, bike and scooter short term rentals, Evie Carshare, EV Spot Network (access to electric vehicles), and Hour Car.

The following quote describes the historic Railroad Island community that is surrounded mostly by railroads. This Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) document encompasses a larger 3-Census tract area for demographic analysis purposes and to include a key redevelopment site adjacent to the historic Railroad Island neighborhood. The quote provides contextual evidence of the transportation challenges that exist in the area.

Railroad Island is one of those disorienting places. On a map, it looks like a pork chop: Payne Avenue curving around its east side and separating it from Swede Hollow Park, Phalen to the north, the railroad forming the western edge, and about a block of East 7 Street on the south. I try to walk the perimeter of the pork chop, and it doesn't quite work. Steep hills toss streets where they're unexpected or squish them together, and the railroad ravine limits foot traffic to the west. The railroads that give Railroad Island its name run parallel to Phalen and then curve south. About 30 baby trees have been planted on a bluff overlooking the western tracks. Because downtown St. Paul is invisible unless you're close to East 7th, and due to Swede Hollow's steep drop-off on the other side of the tracks, it's easy to feel enclosed and islanded. (On Railroad Island, MinnPost, 2013)

Transit & Streetscape Visions

The 2012 Near East Side Roadmap Plan outlined a vision for the Phalen Boulevard, 7th Street and Arcade Avenue commercial corridor including future transit stations shown on the **Vision Map** below. The plan states, “East 7th St and lower Arcade Street area is more than its individual businesses. It is a distinct area that has a unique identity of small, retail and convenience service businesses.” The plan goes on to recommend business collaboration and capacity development to improve marketing the district and improve the area economy.

Since the 2012 vision, the intersection of Payne and 7th was altered to improve sightlines and ease congestion. As of December 2023, the Arcade Street redesign is in the final stages of planning and is anticipated to be re-constructed by the end of 2025.

The following map identifies transit, streetscape, and property development opportunities and visions for the southeastern edge of Railroad Island neighborhood. One highly analyzed and planned redevelopment site is the former Hamm’s Brewery property north of Bruce Vento Trail and Metro State University. The Hamm’s Brewery property is further described below.



Several transportation recommendations for the Railroad Island community are stated in previous plans including detailed streetscape improvements for the surrounding streets. Goals within the 2012 roadmap include a safe, clean, attractive, and vibrant streetscape. Improvements to E. 7th Street include more pedestrian friendly design, and a greater consistency of design along the street with an intention to achieve a critical mass of active uses and foot traffic. The walkable commercial district would benefit from a defined beginning (Maria) and end (Forest), and should engage local customers and regional multi-modal traffic.

Community Assets and Education



Opportunities abound in the community assets and education in Railroad Island and surrounding communities. Railroad Island is mostly residential however the surrounding East Side neighborhood and city of Saint Paul offer several nearby community facilities and resources.

Libraries, Parks, Community Facilities

The Payne-Phalen neighborhood that surrounds Railroad Island is rich with cultural assets including libraries, parks, schools, religious institutions, and community facilities described below. Greater Saint Paul is also bursting with community assets and amenities accessible to Railroad Island community residents.



Arlington Hills Community Center

<https://sppl.org/locations/ar/> Features library, recreation center, park, after-hours book return, charging locker, computers, handicapped accessible, homework center, lucky day collection, parking lot, pop-up meeting kits, study room, Wi-Fi.

Eastside Freedom Library

<https://eastsidefreedomlibrary.org>

The East Side Freedom Library (ESFL) has its home in the former Arlington Hills library, one of St. Paul's historic Carnegie library buildings at 1105 Greenbrier Street, located in the Payne-Phalen neighborhood. The ESFL's mission is to inspire solidarity, advocate for justice and work toward equity for all.



Dayton's Bluff Metropolitan University Library

<https://sppl.org/locations/DB/>

Part of the Saint Paul public libraries system, the Metropolitan University Library offers access to library services and meeting rooms.

Bruce Vento and Gateway Trails

A 6 mile lightly trafficked loop trail located near downtown Saint Paul and Railroad Island that features a lake and is good for all skill levels. The trail is primarily used for hiking, walking, trail running, and bird watching and is best used from February until December.



Weida Park

Weida Park's primary feature is a rectangular, lit field perfect for games of soccer, Ultimate Frisbee, lacrosse, and more. The park also contains a basketball court, picnic tables, BBQ grills, and a playground area.

Swede Hollow Park

A unique green space with a rich history located in the Dayton's Bluff and Railroad Island neighborhoods. Swede Hollow Park is enjoyed by many residents and visitors looking for a green escape in an urban setting. The park is named after the historic residential neighborhood that formed in the late 1800s as part of today's Railroad Island and Dayton's Bluff community.

Arlington-Arkwright Park

Spread across over 20 acres of land, Arlington Arkwright Park is home to a dog park, skate park, baseball field, soccer field, outdoor basketball court, two tennis courts and a picnic area.





Wilder Recreation Center

Wilder offers educational programs, after school activities, open gym, tot-times, family events, youth and adult athletics, field rentals, rental space for parties, meetings, and events, and so much more.

Lockwood Park

Lockwood Park underwent a renovation in 2016. Improvements included new swings, picnic tables, play areas for ages 2-5 and 5-12, bike rack, shade trees, benches, and a resilient play surface.



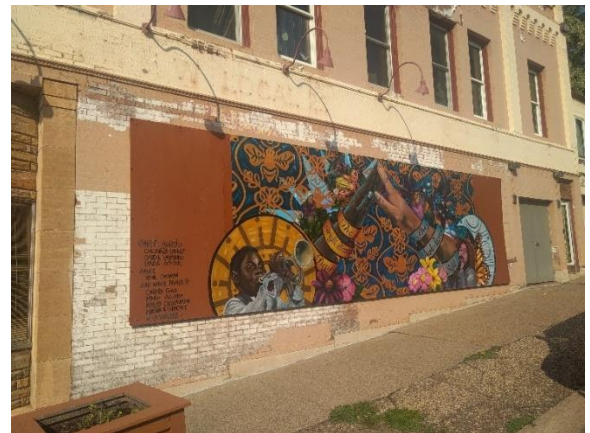
Schools and Foundations

Nearby Schools: Phalen Lake Elementary, Cleveland Quality Middle School, City Academy High School, Hope Academy.

Foundations: The Bush Foundation , Wilder Foundation , Saint Paul Festival & Heritage Foundation.

Art and Events

One of the liveliest of St. Paul's main street commercial districts is East Side's Payne Avenue. Payne Avenue hosts multi-cultural restaurants and businesses and features lively events and community art. Murals line the avenue from 7th Street to Marigold. The [East Side Art Council](#) supports many art galleries and studios along Payne Avenue including East Side Art Gallery. Several events, art exhibitions, community gatherings, performances, and fairs take place on Payne Avenue. The [St. Paul Art Collective](#) runs and supports projects, initiatives, and events that increase the awareness of artists, their work, and their cultural contributions including the Saint Paul Art Crawl. A 2020 article unveiled the east side economic development strategy in its title, "The heart of St. Paul's East Side, Payne Avenue is being reborn as an arts district."



Colleges and Universities

Saint Paul is home to the following sixteen colleges and universities. The closest, Metropolitan State University is located within walking distance of Railroad Island at 700 East Seventh Street.

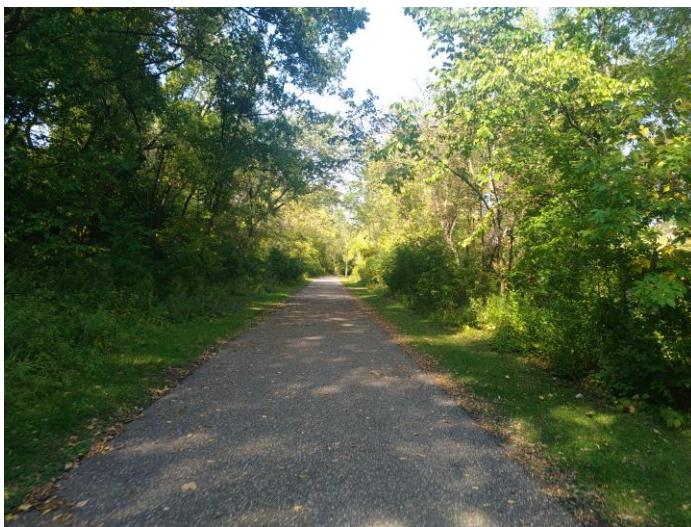
- I. Century College
- II. Inver Hills Community College
- III. Mpls Community & Technical College
- IV. Saint Paul College
- V. Metropolitan State University (Pictured Right)**
- VI. University of Minnesota
- VII. Bethel University
- VIII. Concordia University
- IX. Hamline University
- X. Macalester College
- XI. St. Catherine University
- XII. The College of St. Scholastica
- XIII. University of Northwestern
- XIV. University of St. Thomas
- XV. William Mitchell College of Law
- XVI. McNally Smith College of Music



Environmental Assets – Trail Connections

In addition to the parks described above several trail systems exist and are planned in and around Railroad Island including the Bruce Vento Regional Trail system. A passive greenspace will be created on the Rivoli Bluff Street Sweeping Site (on the western end of Minnehaha near Rivoli). Swede Hollow Park has new pedestrian trails that connect with three regional walking and biking trails, which are the Gateway trail, the Phalen-Keller Trail, and the Mounds Park/Great River Road trail, as well as to the Bruce Vento Nature Center, and to downtown St. Paul. The community seeks to work with governmental entities and neighborhood-based organizations, such as the District 5 Community Council, District 4 Community Council, and the Friends of Swede Hollow, to maintain and improve the parks and trails.

The pictures below show the Swede Hallow segment of the Bruce Vento Trail. Recent historical markers have been placed along the trail that illustrate the evolving diverse history of the Railroad Island and Swede Hallow community. One plaque explains that Swedish immigrants named this area ‘Svenska Dalen’ – Swede Hallow. Another plaque describes the Italian influence and immigration to the Railroad Island community.



Appendix A: Acknowledgments & Neighborhood Comments



Thank you to all attendees of the public meetings and consultations that contributed their time and knowledge to this neighborhood strategy area plan. The following neighborhood comments were recorded from the public meetings listed below and in the consultation section of this plan.

Railroad Island Neighborhood Group review meeting November 2, 2023

Comments:

1. Consultation: Add project webpage, update the public hearing date of November 30, 2023 hybrid meeting during the comment period
2. RRI history: Discussion and offer to verify with local historian
3. Historic District and Sites map: Add purple and green to the legend
4. Housing and Population: Add 2010 data of 3 census tracts, add poverty level
5. Economy and Employment: Add Karibo at Minnehaha / Payne. Discussion of adding list of businesses
6. Hamm's Brewery Site Revitalization: Discussion regarding developer
7. Summary Opportunities Table: #1 – increase in homeownership rates – remove reference to DBHS lease to own program
8. Other Opportunities Table: Request for review and status.

Dayton's Bluff Community Council District 4: Public meeting November 20, 2023

Comments:

1. Boundaries: Correct narrative from 5th Street to 6th Street
2. Add-in information regarding Saint Paul water quality and lead testing program
3. Discussed how this NRSA affects the Hamm's Redevelopment. This NRSA allows augmentation of the redevelopment initiatives and added flexibility in HUD investments. Specifically, CDBG targets affordable housing and job creation activities.
4. Economy & Employment: Discussed addition of list of businesses/employers
5. Transit: Add purple line and gold line construction
6. Appendix B: Railroad Island Other Opportunities Table: Discussed adding purpose of the table as a historic inventory of previous plans, or potentially removing the 2023-2024 Action Plan items, or adding historic or active to the status column.

Payne-Phalen Community Council District 5: Public meeting November 28, 2023

Comments:

1. Throughout: Correct council and neighborhood name to Payne-Phalen Community Council
2. Page 10 Housing Age: Add map key
3. Staff written comments:
 - a. Incorporate the *Hamm's Joint Statement on Community Values*
 - b. Review and incorporate the following plans: City of St. Paul, *St. Paul for All* 2040 Plan, City of St. Paul Climate and Resilience Plan, City of St. Paul, The Anti-Displacement Plan and Community Wealth Building Study, City of St. Paul, Swede Hollow Master Plan, The City of St. Paul EV Spot Network
 - c. Incorporate community engagement, planning and updates that have taken place with reference to: MnDOT's Arcade Street and West 7th Street project, The Purple Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Eastside expansion of EV Spot Network and Evie Carshare, Daylighting Phalen Creek, East Side Housing Justice
 - d. Work with the Hamm's Developer on further consultation scheduled in January-February
 - e. Follow-up on the NRSA process.

Virtual public hearing November 30, 2023 during 30-day comment period (November 20- December 21, 2023)

Appendix B: Railroad Island Other Opportunities Table

The following other opportunities table is organized by topic areas in the fourth column including: Housing (H), Economic Development Individual Income (EDII), Transportation (T), Parks, Trails, Open Space (PTOS), Community Facilities and Programs (CFP) and by source in the third column. The following opportunities, goals, and strategies are identified through previous Railroad Island neighborhood plans, City of Saint Paul plans, and current consultations with stakeholders. The following is a partial list of community-derived opportunities for neighborhood improvements taken from some of the 18 sources enumerated on page 12.

Railroad Island Other Opportunities Table Topics: Housing (H), Economic Development Individual Income (EDII), Transportation (T), Parks, Trails, Open Space (PTOS), Community Facilities & Programs (CFP)				
#	Goal, Strategy, Opportunity	Source	Topic	Status
1	H1 Encourage better maintenance of the existing housing stock through enforcement and incentive programs.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	H	
2	H2 Address the issues of vacant housing and absentee landlords through laws and enforcement.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	H	
3	H3 Encourage new housing in the community with city grants and revolving funds.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	H	
4	H4 Preserve the affordability of housing in the area by creating new ownership opportunities for a range of income levels.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	H	
5	H5 Encourage new single-family housing to be built on lots that are at least 40 feet in width and 5,000 square feet in lot area; discourage lot splits that create lots that do not meet the minimum standard for the zoning district.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	H	
6	H6 Rivoli Bluff would benefit from an influx of new owner occupied housing. New development and rehabilitation should consider the design guidelines contained in the full Railroad Island Plan – Appendix G. Below the bluff, redevelopment of housing or other uses should occur as soil condition permits.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	H	
7	H7 Provide financial assistance to residents to maintain and improve their homes (especially improvements in energy-efficiency) and to improve the aesthetics of the homes while maintaining their historic character.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	H	
8	H8 Strengthen city code enforcement to discourage nuisance properties.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	H	
9	H9 Explore the demolition and industrial redevelopment of housing located on Bush near Payne Ave.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	H	
10	H10 Study the potential need to change the duplex zoning to single-family in order to deter the conversion of single-family houses to duplex and curb the increase in rental units.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	H	
11	H11 Explore a program to move historic structures currently located on substandard lots (less than 40 feet wide or 5,000 square feet in area) to vacant buildable parcels in or near the neighborhood. Economic feasibility should be a part of the evaluation for suitable structures for relocation.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	H	
12	H12 Promote the renovation of historic buildings so that they meet new code standards, while encouraging new construction.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	H	
13	H13 Improvements in the appearance of housing and its character, including retaining singlefamily residential units and preserving their historic architecture. Rental housing should be designed for that purpose and existing single family buildings should not be subdivided to increase the density of housing.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	H	
14	H14 District 4 requests that higher density residential developments be designed consistent with the City's residential design standards and with parking strategies that encourage residents to use transit, including, but not limited to, reduction in the numbers of on-site parking spaces and creation of a parking management plan that prevents spillover parking in the neighborhoods and assists residents in using transit where adequate service is	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	H	

Railroad Island Other Opportunities Table
Topics: Housing (H), Economic Development Individual Income (EDII), Transportation (T), Parks, Trails, Open Space (PTOS), Community Facilities & Programs (CFP)

	available. Public Works will work with the district council and the developer on issues related to on-street parking for the project and street design.			
15	H15 Provide input from City code enforcement officials that District 4 can use to establish programs, such as the Good Neighbor Program, to address residential neighborhood problems.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	H	
16	H16 Identify problem properties and, in collaboration with District 4 and applicable neighborhood block clubs, develop strategies for addressing issues associated with them.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	H	
17	H17 Provide District 4 with information about Invest Saint Paul, the City's neighborhood improvement and maintenance strategy. This includes information about rehabilitation of vacant buildings and construction of new buildings on vacant sites, as well as the criteria used to determine whether vacant buildings should be rehabilitated or demolished. Seek input from District 4, as appropriate.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	H	
18	H18 Continue to provide District 4 with information about pending actions against vacant properties under the City's nuisance ordinance so that the district council may comment regarding proposed actions for the property.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	H	
19	H19 The District Council will work with developers to identify possible sites within the neighborhood to which a structure could be moved if the structure cannot be reused or cannot be incorporated into a proposed development. If demolition or rehabilitation of a structure is unavoidable, the District Council encourages "deconstruction" techniques to be used to salvage whatever materials possible for reuse.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	H	
20	H20 Prepare a study of residential districts within District 4 to determine if, and where, duplex districts should be rezoned to single family districts. Based on the conclusions of the study, work to rezone areas that are currently zoned for duplexes so that these housing units may be returned to their original use.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	H	
21	H21 Homeless prevention assisting approximately 125 households with tenant-based rental assistance (TBRA)/rapid re-housing (RRH); 3,000 persons in overnight shelters; and 400 persons with supportive services to help keep households housed.	Saint Paul Action Plan 2023-2024	H	
22	H22 Development of new affordable housing with an estimated 15 rental units and 5 homeowner units;	Saint Paul Action Plan 2023-2024	H	
23	H23 Preservation of existing affordable housing - rental housing rehabilitation an estimated 26 rental units;	Saint Paul Action Plan 2023-2024	H	
24	H24 Preservation of existing affordable housing – homeowner housing rehabilitation an estimated 51 owner units;	Saint Paul Action Plan 2023-2024	H	
25	H25 Acquisition, demolition, and clearance of property an estimated 17 structures;	Saint Paul Action Plan 2023-2024	H	
26	EDII 1 Increase in employment rates	2016 Example HUD Notice	EDII	Ongoing
27	EDII 2 Increase in median household income	2016 Example HUD Notice	EDII	Ongoing
28	EDII 3 LMI persons direct benefit activities – Support public services including fair housing activities, community engagement, domestic violence prevention, criminal restorative justice, health care, employment training, conflict resolution, and emergency shelter	2016 Example HUD Notice, SP Consolidated Plan	EDII	Ongoing
29	EDII 4 New Market Tax Credits	DBHS Consult	EDII	
30	EDII 5 Youth employment incubators	DBHS Consult	EDII	
31	EDII 6 Support the establishment of commercial uses that serve the neighborhood and/or would attract people to the neighborhood.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	EDII	

Railroad Island Other Opportunities Table
Topics: Housing (H), Economic Development Individual Income (EDII), Transportation (T), Parks, Trails, Open Space (PTOS), Community Facilities & Programs (CFP)

32	EDII 7 Support local businesses; encourage them to stay in Railroad Island and maintain and improve their properties/businesses and to become involved in community activities.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	EDII	
33	EDII 8 Work with residences and industrial/commercial establishments to soften the edge between residential properties and industrial and commercial uses through landscaping, decorative fencing as a visual barrier, and other techniques to provide a buffer.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	EDII	
34	EDII 9 Attract new businesses to create employment opportunities in the area; work with existing businesses to retain jobs.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	EDII	
35	EDII 10 Provide support for recreational services, job training, and employment opportunities for area youth.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	EDII	
36	EDII 11 A revitalized business district, focused on East 7th Street, Lafayette Park, and the Hudson/Earl intersection, represented by an active business organization, that provides a full range of good and services.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	EDII	
37	EDII 12 Prepare a zoning study of existing commercial districts within District 4 to determine if the Traditional Neighborhood District is appropriate, particularly to promote mixed use development in these areas.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	EDII	
38	EDII 13 Implement the policies and recommendations for the Lafayette Park business area as described in the Northeast Corridor Development Plan	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	EDII	
39	EDII 14 Promote the reuse, instead of demolition, of existing commercial buildings.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	EDII	
40	EDII 15 Promote the shared use of existing surface parking lots; oppose expansion of existing surface parking lots. District 4 supports the use of permeable or semi-permeable paving in parking lot construction and the use of rain gardens to reduce runoff.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	EDII	
41	EDII 16 The Department of Safety and Inspections shall enforce regulations regarding the operations of retail stores; specifically, the issues of waste disposal, advertising, and parking.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	EDII	
42	EDII 17 Collaborate with District 4 to expand and implement existing façade improvement programs.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	EDII	
43	EDII 18 Utilize the East 7th Street Design Guidelines during the site plan review process for proposed projects involving new and remodeled businesses.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	EDII	
44	EDII 19 Work with District 4 to strengthen the business district through the following: C8.1. Determine the feasibility of creating a small business incubator; search for potential sites.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	EDII	
45	EDII 20 Ensure that new commercial development includes a mixture of uses and is integrated into the existing fabric of the commercial district in which it is located; new development would adhere to the building design standards in Section 63.110 of the Zoning Code. Include community input as part of the development process.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	EDII	
46	EDII 21 Assist District 4 in partnering with an existing Community Development Corporation on programs that support business development.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	EDII	
47	EDII 22 Work with District 4 to attract businesses that provide a full range of goods and services, including a bank.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	EDII	
48	EDII 23 Youth Employment will benefit approximately 258 persons.	Saint Paul Action Plan 2023-2024	EDII	
49	EDII 24 Economic development and job growth will benefit 3 businesses with façade improvements, creation of approximately 5 jobs, and an estimated 2 businesses will be assisted.	Saint Paul Action Plan 2023-2024	EDII	
50	EDII 25 Achieve a mix of existing businesses and new light industrial uses in the development of industrial sites	2006 Phalen Corridor Development Strategy	EDII	
51	EDII 26 Retain and enhance the buffering of homes on the west side of Johnson Parkway	2006 Phalen Corridor Development Strategy	EDII	
52	EDII 27 Strengthen the mixed use area on the south side of East Seventh Street	2006 Phalen Corridor Development Strategy	EDII	

Railroad Island Other Opportunities Table
Topics: Housing (H), Economic Development Individual Income (EDII), Transportation (T), Parks, Trails, Open Space (PTOS), Community Facilities & Programs (CFP)

53	EDII 28 City and the Port Authority seek federal and state funds to clean up polluted industrial sites, known as “brownfields,” so that new businesses can be developed on the sites. The requirement for award of these funds is tax base revitalization and job creation. Cleanup of polluted lands is followed by development of businesses that meet the standards set by the Port Authority for numbers of jobs related to the size of the development and for wages.	2006 Phalen Corridor Development Strategy	EDII	
54	EDII 29 Cleanup of contaminated properties: Collaborate with the St. Paul Port Authority in its efforts to secure grant funding for the cleanup of contaminated sites, including but not limited to, grants awarded by the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development and the Metropolitan Council.	2006 Phalen Corridor Development Strategy	EDII	
55	EDII 30 Land uses and zoning: Provide for the redevelopment of properties with commercial and industrial uses that provide significant employment, particularly newly-created employment opportunities. Change the zoning of property in the area in accordance with Map B – Proposed Zoning (Map A depicts current zoning). Zoning for commercial and industrial uses is intended to attract high-quality businesses and to focus redevelopment in a manner compatible with surrounding properties. Work with public and private entities to implement the land use plan shown on Map C – Proposed Land Use.	2006 Phalen Corridor Development Strategy	EDII	
56	EDII 31 Building and site design: Enforce building and site design guidelines, as outlined below, to guide development in the Phalen/Atlantic area and ensure high-quality design. Intensive land uses, more extensive site coverage, and taller buildings are tolerable if the sites are developed with attention to site and building design.	2006 Phalen Corridor Development Strategy	EDII	
57	T1 Improvements on Payne Avenue from Minnehaha Avenue to East 7th Street, recommendations for Payne Avenue improve walkability, connections to Swede Hollow Park and overall quality of life (See Appendix D: Payne Avenue Improvements Maps and list of 15 strategic enhancements)	Payne Avenue Street Improvements (2014)	T	
58	T2 Detailed improvements from Beaumont Street to East 7th Street.	Payne Avenue Street Improvements (2014)	T	
59	T3 Improving pedestrian and vehicular access through new alignment strategies for Payne Avenue and adjoining cross streets.	Payne Avenue Street Improvements (2014)	T	
60	T4 Improving parking for businesses and addressing future development.	Payne Avenue Street Improvements (2014)	T	
61	T5 Three focus areas: • The commercial area between Beaumont Street and Tedesco Street • The Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) parcel between Kenny Street and Woodward Street • The Railroad Island Entertainment District on south Payne Avenue	Payne Avenue Street Improvements (2014)	T	
62	T6 Technical drawings for submittal to the City of Saint Paul – CIB fund?	Payne Avenue Street Improvements (2014)	T	
63	T7 2012 Roadmap detailed streetscape improvements Vision Map above in Streetscape visions section. Goals: A safe, clean, attractive, and vibrant streetscape.	2012 Near Eastside Roadmap	T	
64	T8 Improvements to E. 7th Street include more pedestrian friendly design, a greater consistency of design along the street with an intention to achieve a critical mass of active uses and foot traffic. The walkable commercial district would benefit from a defined beginning (Maria) and end (Forest), and should engage local customers and regional multi-modal traffic.	2012 Near Eastside Roadmap	T	
65	T9 Encourage railroad companies to create landscaped buffer areas and remove debris from railroad properties.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	T	

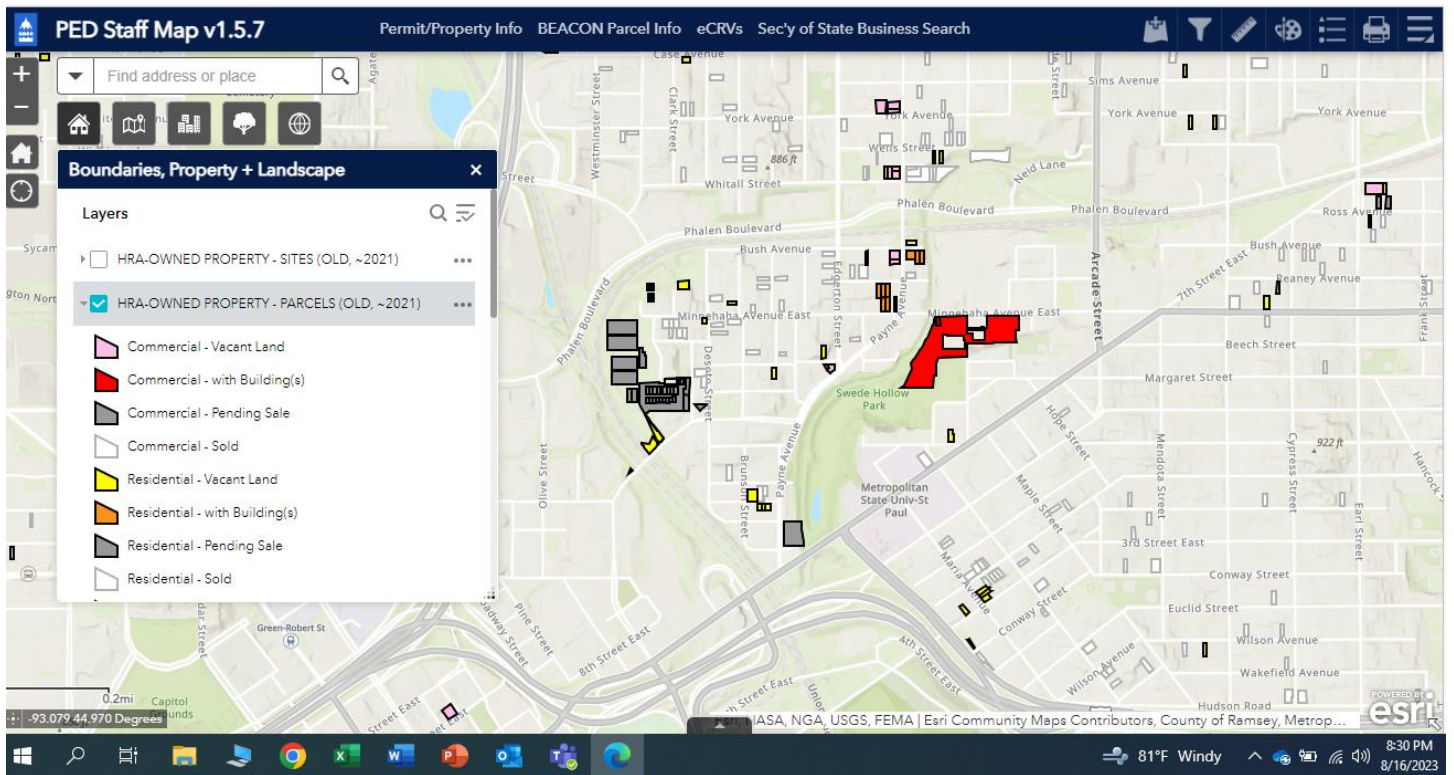
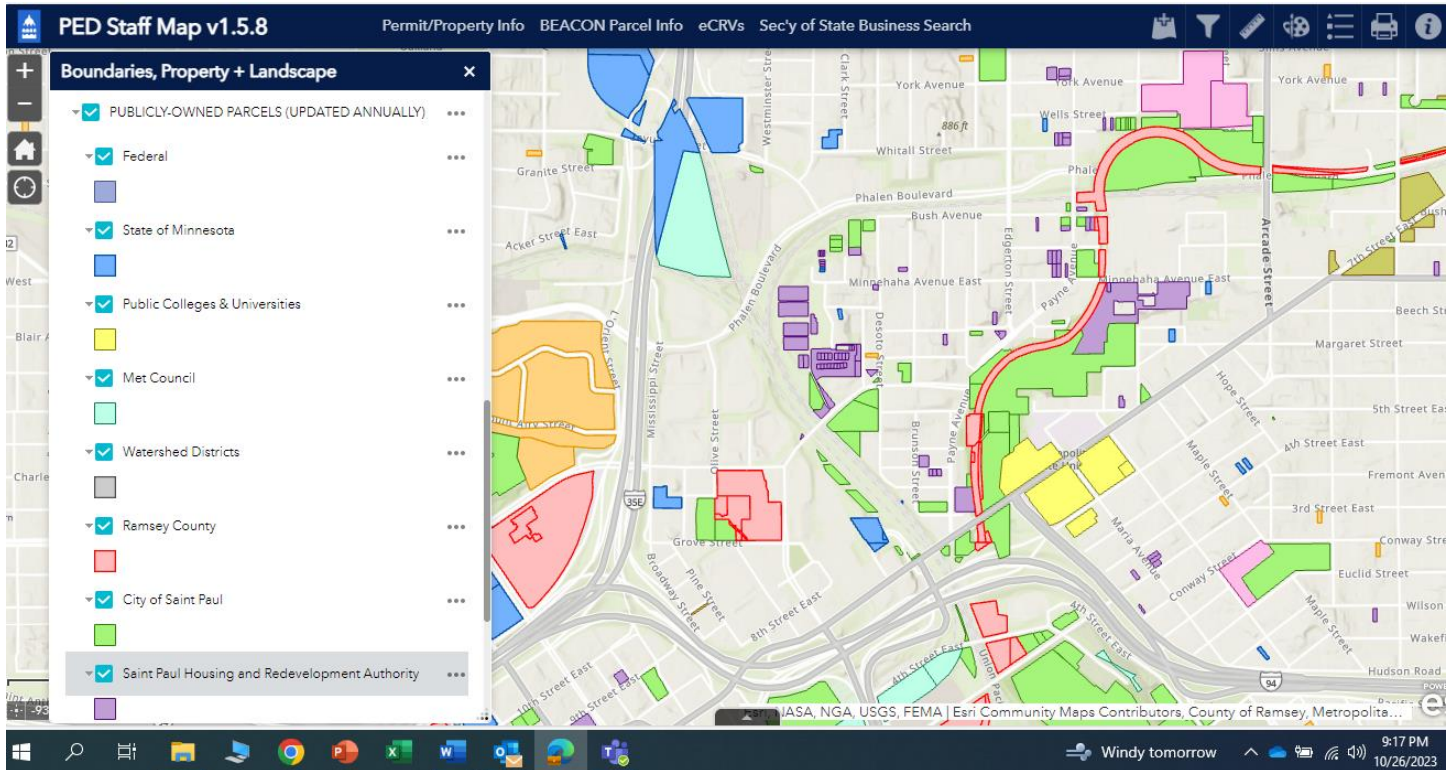
Railroad Island Other Opportunities Table
Topics: Housing (H), Economic Development Individual Income (EDII), Transportation (T), Parks, Trails, Open Space (PTOS), Community Facilities & Programs (CFP)

66	T10 Reconstruct Payne Avenue from East Seventh Street to Phalen Boulevard, incorporating recommendations of a neighborhood task force on streetscaping improvements such as a historic lighting system, traffic calming features, greenery, and pedestrian and bicycle safety features such as revised traffic signals, new sidewalks, bump-outs and a planted center median. Payne Avenue Bridge over the railroad tracks (Bridge #62544) should also be improved to incorporate historic style lighting, decorative rails, and visually interesting piers and beams. The community will work with Public Works to develop a reconstruction plan, develop a maintenance plan, and adopt the above-standard improvements or establish an above standard maintenance district.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	T	
67	T11 Reconstruct the East 7th Street bridge that connects Railroad Island to Downtown St. Paul to be more attractive and pedestrian-friendly and to correspond with the bridge across the Bruce Vento trail immediately to the north.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	T	
68	T12 A comprehensive multi-modal transportation system that incorporates transit, well-paved streets and opportunities for pedestrians.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	T	
69	T13 Enhance, stabilize and sustain the economic, social and physical prosperity of Saint Paul's East Side. Its focus is industrial development and jobs. Construction of a new road, Phalen Boulevard, in the rail corridor that stretches from I-35E, near downtown, to the Lake Phalen area will open up approximately 100 acres of under-utilized land for industrial development. Area includes land within approximately 1/4 mile either side of Phalen Boulevard, which runs along a rail corridor between I-35E and Phalen Village	2006 Phalen Corridor Development Strategy	T	Phalen Blvd constructed
70	PTOS1 Pursuing neighborhood bike path	DBHS Consult	PTOS	
71	PTOS2 Create visual connections in the neighborhood by establishing a network of linked open spaces and gardens and establish a plan to maintain them.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	PTOS	
72	PTOS3 Encourage guided walking tours in Swede Hollow Park to introduce the reclaimed park to residents. Emphasize not only the historic significance of the park, but also its current status as a uniquely rich and beautiful urban park.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	PTOS	
73	PTOS4 Create a "lookout" over Swede Hollow Park with an historic marker, which will be located across from the intersection of Tedesco Street and Payne Avenue. An organization in the community will adopt and maintain the marker.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	PTOS	
74	PTOS5 Protect all parks and publicly owned green spaces from non-park related development and/or neglect.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	PTOS	
75	PTOS6 Create better signage to mark trail entrances and distance.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	PTOS	
76	PTOS7 Transform vacant land into "pocket parks" which can be used for a variety of recreational activities or community gardens or opportunities for new owner occupied housing or needed commercial parking. The pocket parks should be designed with CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) standards and maintained by the community.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	PTOS	
77	PTOS8 Public places, such as parks, that are available for planned or spontaneous activities that engage residents. Spaces in the community which are attractive and welcoming.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	PTOS	
78	PTOS9 Be compatible with the park-like character of the area, which includes Lake Phalen, Johnson Parkway and Ames Lake, with an arrangement of storm ponding	2006 Phalen Corridor Development Strategy	PTOS	
79	CFP1 Increase in educational attainment	2016 Example HUD Notice	CFP	Ongoing
80	CFP2 Provide improved or new access to public facilities	2016 Example HUD Notice	CFP	Ongoing
81	CFP3 Solar garden	DBHS Consult	CFP	
82	CFP4 Star Funding	DBHS Consult	CFP	

Railroad Island Other Opportunities Table
Topics: Housing (H), Economic Development Individual Income (EDII), Transportation (T), Parks, Trails, Open Space (PTOS), Community Facilities & Programs (CFP)

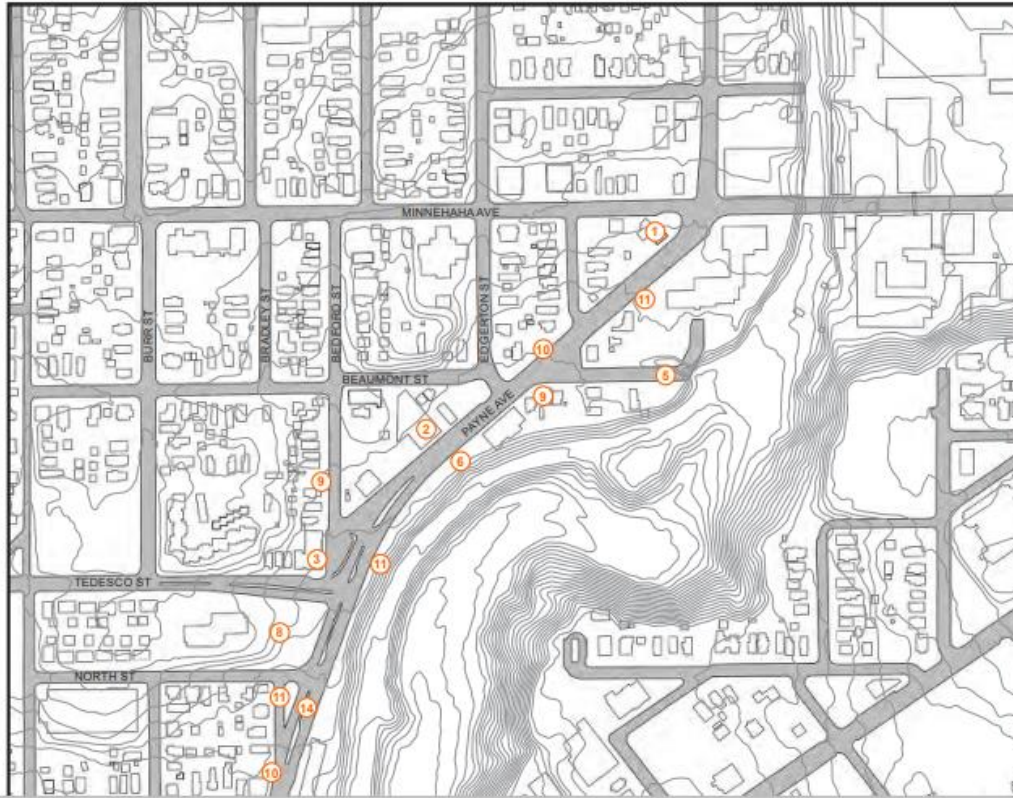
83	CFP5 Promote anti-littering campaigns involving residents, homeowners, and business owners and employees.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	CFP	
84	CFP6 Work with the community to explore potential uses for the vacant properties on Payne Avenue from Kenny to East Seventh Street, including the possibility of purchasing State Supply to allow for creation of a more attractive gateway to the area.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	CFP	
85	CFP7 Railroad Island community supports development of a cultural center in the Hamm's Brewery space, as well as other potential facilities such as a museum dedicated to the Swede Hollow area, a café and exhibit space for local artists, an area that could serve the need for community meeting spaces, a performance space, etc.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	CFP	
86	CFP8 Provide wireless connections for internet users.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	CFP	
87	CFP9 Work with the City on strategies to keep area streets clean and attractive.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	CFP	
88	CFP10 Promote social integration across cultures and ages through community events that showcases the various cultures represented on Railroad Island.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	CFP	
89	CFP11 Bring together residents, businesses, community activists and law enforcement to create and implement strategies for making Swede Hollow Park welcoming to families and individuals of all ages. The goal would be to eradicate public drunkenness, drugs, littering, as well as shanties and tents used by the homeless in and around Swede Hollow Park.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	CFP	
90	CFP12 Involve neighbors of all age groups in the community through volunteerism. Facilitate intergenerational volunteer opportunities to enhance the community.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	CFP	
91	CFP13 Establish partnerships with local businesses, schools, institutions, churches, and civic groups to promote community involvement.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	CFP	
92	CFP14 Provide adequate police staffing to provide safety in the neighborhood as well as enforcement of laws for nuisance crimes such as those mentioned above.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	CFP	
93	CFP15 Provide support for establishment and maintenance of Block Clubs and Neighborhood Watch programs.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	CFP	
94	CFP16 Establish an attractive and unique "gateway" to Railroad Island that reflects its multicultural history. The theme of the gateway design should be carried through Payne Avenue when the street is reconstructed. The community will work with the City during the design process; an active community-based organization will maintain the above standard improvements by establishing an above-standard maintenance district.	2007 Railroad Island Plan	CFP	
95	CFP17 Promotion of the livability of the neighborhood by enhancing its appearance through cleanliness, crime prevention and rectifying code violations.	2009 Dayton's Bluff District 4 Plan	CFP	
96	CFP18 Public service needs will benefit approximately 3,000 persons;	Saint Paul Action Plan 2023-2024	CFP	
97	CFP19 Community engagement and outreach to underserved populations will benefit an estimated 181,300 persons;	Saint Paul Action Plan 2023-2024	CFP	
98	CFP20 Public facilities and infrastructure improvements benefiting approximately 23,015 persons;	Saint Paul Action Plan 2023-2024	CFP	

Appendix C: Public-HRA Property



Appendix D: 2014 Payne Avenue Improvements Maps

Payne Avenue & Railroad Island: Key Community Strategies



Based on the workshop, the community developed a set of key strategic enhancements they would like to implement on Payne Avenue. This map shows the placement of those enhancements along Payne Avenue.

1. Develop gas station site
2. Increase parking for La Palma
3. Increase parking for Morelli's
4. Increase parking for Minnesota Music Cafe
5. Improve access/visibility of Swede Hollow entrance - City of Saint Paul Parks Interpretive Signage Standard
6. Enhance green space across from La Palma
7. Improve visual & physical access to Swede Hollow
8. Better utilization of Labor Plaza open space
9. Improve appearance of properties
10. Add more trash & recycling bins
11. Add lighting improvements: more pedestrian lighting in a consistent style
12. Create gateway at East 7th Street
13. Develop HRA parcel
14. Remove medians - they are hard on delivery trucks and snow plows
15. Develop neighborhood identity/branding