

Hamm's Brewery Complex Redevelopment Community Feedback

March 2024

What is this document? These recommendations serve as a summary of the input and reflections shared by community members and businesses in the Dayton's Bluff and Payne Phalen neighborhoods through a four-part workshop series convened by LISC Twin Cities to inform the future redevelopment of the Hamm's Brewery complex and site. These recommendations will be submitted to JB Vang Partners, Inc. ("JB Vang"), the tentative developer selected by the City of Saint Paul, to inform the redevelopment of the site. The report provides guidance on:

- preferred commercial uses and amenities on the site,
- preservation of the historic and cultural significance of the site,
- creating regular events and activities to draw people to the site and strengthen the commercial viability of the businesses,
- suggestions on ways to strengthen access and connections (multi-modal transportation) between the site and surrounding assets,
- requesting that the City of Saint Paul commission a parking study to assess the parking needs and options for the site,
- providing for continued engagement with community partners to ensure the success of the project, and
- Recommendations regarding the proposed housing on the site.

History of the Hamm's Brewery site

The flagship brewery of the former Hamm's empire was located in East Saint Paul which was established in 1860. Through constant expansion and improvements, the brewery soon became the largest in the state. The most notable expansion was the state-of-the-art brew house, built in 1893. In 1897, the wash house and part of the bottling plant were built, both of which

still stand. In its heyday the brewery was in an almost constant state of expansion from 1933 until 1948. They added a new powerhouse, bottling facilities, malt house, grain storage, stock houses, shipping docks, office space, garages, and more.

The brewery shut its doors in 1997 under the ownership of the Stroh Brewing Company. The property was sold to a real estate investor who in turn sold the southern half to the City of Saint Paul, including the original brew house. Under city ownership for the past 25 years a sizeable portion of the brewery remains abandoned, including the old brewhouse. Around 2013, the city began to sell off portions of the site (and buildings) to local businesses, including the Saint Paul Brewery, Urban Organics, and the 11 Wells Distillery. The northern portion of the brewery, located north of Minnehaha Avenue (and NOT a part of the City of Saint Paul owned land), is mostly inhabited by various businesses, including a trapeze school. (Source: Wikipedia)

City of Saint Paul: Developer Selection Process

Located in the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood, the original buildings of the Hamm's Brewery Complex which is owned by the City of Saint Paul's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) is a 4.8-acre property which provides the opportunity for a transformative development to add jobs and housing while connecting the community to nearby businesses and amenities, such as Swede Hollow Park and the Bruce Vento Regional Trail.

Located just one mile from downtown Saint Paul and close to multiple transit lines, the site is perfectly positioned to take full advantage of Saint Paul's growth while simultaneously reflecting and preserving an important piece of its history.

The Saint Paul HRA submitted a public Request for Proposals (RFP) to redevelop the city owned site in 2022. The stated goals in the RFP included:

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- Rehabilitate and revitalize the site and historic buildings enhancing the vitality of the East Side of St. Paul.
- Maximize housing and/or jobs for the community, including affordable housing.
- Enhance neighborhood connectivity and access to Swede Hollow Park, the Bruce Vento Trail and existing businesses within the Hamm's complex.
- Have a plan to engage and involve the community in the project.
- Prioritize equitable outcomes in the development process and proposed uses.
- Viable, experienced developer.

In anticipation of the city's RFP for the Hamm's Brewery site, key community organizations including:

- Dayton's Bluff Community Council,
- Payne-Phalen Community Council,
- Historic St. Paul,
- Eastside Neighborhood Development Corporation (ESNDC),
- Railroad Island Neighborhood Group,
- Eastside Area Business Association (ESABA),
- Eastside Freedom Library,
- Payne-Arcade Business Association, and
- Friends of Swede Hollow

worked together to provide a list of community goals for the site (see addendum B) which the HRA incorporated into the RFP interviews and selection process.

In January 2023, the HRA awarded JB Vang tentative developer status for the original Hamm's Brewery Complex. JB Vang's winning proposal reflected the following goals shared by the city and community:

Partnership, access and involvement

- Prior to submitting their proposal, JB Vang sought community input from ESABA, ESNDC, Dayton's Bluff Community Council (D4), Hmong American Partnership (HAP), HOPE Community Academy, Cultural Destinations and Indigenous Roots.
- The JB Vang proposal includes a commitment to implementing community involvement and engagement.

Equity and Community Benefits

- As a minority developer, one of JB Vang's main stated values is to promote and reinforce efforts of racial and economic equity. Their proposed development provides wealth building ownership opportunities including 6 owner-occupied row houses and marketplace setup for ownership opportunities.
- It also reflects goals in St. Paul's 2040 comprehensive plan, Hamm's Re-Use Study and Vision Plan, Dayton's Bluff District Plan, Near Eastside Roadmap, and Swede Hollow Master Plan.
- Their proposed development will serve a mixed-income, customer and visitor base from both the residential multifamily apartments and commercial business use perspectives.
- JB Vang intends to create a stakeholder group (ie. Legacy Non-Profit Owner of the commercial space) on generating community events and placemaking activities at Hamm's Brewery. This will ensure the site is activated all year to promote commercial businesses, host community events, and bolster the residential community.

Mix of uses, affordable

- The East End Apartment building plans to include approximately 157 affordable apartments, structured and surface parking, and 6 for-sale townhomes.

- The West End historic renovation project includes approximately 84 affordable artist lofts apartments and a commercial marketplace, with ownership opportunities for small entrepreneurs.
- Apartment rents will range from deeply affordable at 30% to 70% of Area Median Income (AMI).
- JB Vang proposes a 50-year commitment to maintain affordability.

Historic Preservation per Secretary of the Interior

- JB Vang plans to renovate the Hamm's brewery buildings to meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards for rehabilitation with the anticipation Historic Tax Credits can be utilized as a financing source to renovate the facility.

Sustainability, Connectivity and Public spaces

- Public infrastructure and greenspace improvements will link the development to Swede Hollow Park and the Bruce Vento Trail.
- Interior and exterior public spaces are planned.
- The development will meet the City of Saint Paul Sustainable Building policy requirements.

HRA Recommendation: JB Vang Proposal

- Committed to equitable outcomes.
- Large number and mix of affordable housing types.
- Mix of uses.
- Ownership opportunities.
- Experienced team.
- Creates community spaces.
- Historic renovation of Brewery.

Description of JB Vang’s redevelopment proposal for the Hamm’s Brewery site

JB Vang, along with its project partners, is leading the adaptive re-use of the 4.8-acre site located on a portion of what used to be the overall 34-acre Hamm’s Brewery complex. Once complete, this redevelopment will be home to a multicultural artist and residential hub with a thriving marketplace representative of the St. Paul community, and a wide variety of indoor and outdoor community gathering spaces.

JB Vang engaged in preliminary conversations with local community groups to generate key principles to guide the development team through the design process. These groups included the East Side Area Business Association (ESABA), East Side Neighborhood Development Co. (ESNDC), Indigenous Roots, and HOPE Community Academy. Three key concepts were generated through these conversations:

- Delivering more affordable housing options within the community.
- Creating ways for area businesses and residents to build equity and generational wealth.
- Create community gathering spaces for organizations to host cultural events.

JB Vang’s development concept will deliver a variety of affordable housing options including approximately 157 Family-Friendly Apartments and 86 Artist Lofts. Income rent limits for these rental units are proposed to utilize income averaging to provide a variety of income levels from 30% to 70% AMI. These buildings are also planned to include housing ownership options for residents structured at affordable purchase prices, helping area residents build equity in their community.

JB Vang is also proposing to build equity in small businesses through the creation of a mixed-use commercial marketplace supported by community programming spaces. This model will allow entrepreneurs the opportunity to build equity and generational wealth by giving direct ownership in the marketplace and avoid making monthly rent payments to a landlord. This structure will be independently financed and owned/managed by a Legacy Non-profit partner.

In addition to these two critical programming components to the site, JB Vang and the project team felt it necessary to provide ample green space, outdoor programming space, and trail connections on the site to create a passageway from the Swede Hollow Park, through collective businesses and residences on the Hamm's site and to the surrounding community.

JB Vang notes the final programming of the site, commercial project size, and residential unit mix is subject to change based on the financing sources secured by the developer which will include financing applications and requests to local and state agencies.

Affordable Housing: Family Friendly & Multiculturally Sensitive Design

This portion of the building would provide affordable housing options for a wide variety of area residents with a range of rents, unit sizes, and family-friendly design components. Specialized design components include ample storage to utilize bulk-food and other types of storage options such as large kitchen pantries and oversized refrigerators. Community amenities will include a clubroom, amenity deck with outdoor play space and grilling areas, makers space, fitness center, and office space.

Ownership Housing: Rowhouses

Six rowhouses will line Minnehaha Avenue along the first and second floors of the East End building, setting a pedestrian scale to the street. These are planned to be owner-occupied units set at affordable levels. This financing structure and affordability levels is dependent upon the financing sources awarded to the project by the Minnesota Housing and Finance Agency (MHFA) and/or the City of Saint Paul.

Parking

Approximately 290-320 parking stalls are planned at the site with a multilevel parking structure (easily accessible at grade) at the East End apartment building along with surface parking adjacent to both the East End and West End buildings. Approximately 70-80 stalls are planned for commercial users and visitors with the remaining stalls set aside for residential users. Final parking stall count and designated uses of stalls is subject to change based on community input, final construction/design detailing, and available sources of funding.

Input from the community also encourages the developer and/or local businesses to explore other surface parking lot options along the north side of Minnehaha Avenue.

Community Input Summary: Potential commercial uses and amenities for the Hamm's Brewery redevelopment site

1. Menu of options on preferred commercial uses and amenities on the site.

Commercial Uses:

- A. Complement and enhance the existing businesses in the area to underscore the unique identity of Saint Paul's East Side.
- B. The City of St. Paul commission a commercial market and economic impact study for the neighborhood, to include E 7th Street, Arcade, Payne Avenue, and surrounding business districts, and identify resources in coordination with the St. Paul Chamber of Commerce. The study should engage existing businesses to understand their future plans, and how to avoid cannibalization.
- C. Conduct a separate study about the viability of a marketplace proposed for the site.
- D. Create ownership opportunities for local entrepreneurs and businesses to ensure that assets stay in the community.
- E. Provide a flexible, incubator-style food court or Global Market option with an array of shops and stalls for local businesses to build clientele and serve as a community gathering space, to include food-trucks, farmers market, and other temporary options.
- F. Incorporate art galleries and maker spaces to enhance their economic success and embed art into the fabric of the project.

- G. Include neighborhood services as well as attractions that will draw people to the site such as an express bike shop, grocery store, hardware store, fix-it shop, drug store/pharmacy, bookstore, co-working space, movie theater, etc.

Amenities:

- A. Request that the City of Saint Paul commission a parking study and plan for the site. Because the parking needs on the site will intensify with the inclusion of multiple uses, work with the city, community partners and local businesses to seek out creative solutions to accommodate existing businesses, residents, employees, customers and visitors to the site to ensure successful operations. Explore the potential of a shared parking plan that anticipates the peak parking demands and maximizes parking space needs. It will be critical to work closely with the City of Saint Paul's planning process for Minnehaha Street redesign and public transit strategies in coordination with present bus routes and proposed Purple Line bus and other transit proposals in the area to strengthen access to the site. Existing businesses adjacent to the site (St. Paul Brewery, 11 Wells Distillery) that currently rely on the city-owned surface parking lot expressed concern over limited parking availability.
- B. Strengthen the walkability and pedestrian access to and on the site that link to surrounding trails (Bruce Vento) and commercial districts that include lighting, safety, ADA accessibility, bike racks and benches.
- C. Use the available space to include a community event space or gathering area to accommodate activities such as live music, performances, and other celebrations both inside and outside.
- D. Provide access to public amenities such as a bus stop, restrooms, EV charging stations, renewable energy strategies, signage and native kiosks.

- E. Protect and cherish the wildlife corridor and surrounding natural areas by including native trees, native and edible plants, daylight Phalen Creek, create pollinator gardens, and maintain the Bruce Vento trail as a regional trail.
- F. Include safety measures through thoughtful site design (CPTED design principles), lighting and security cameras.
- G. Maximize energy efficiency especially since east side residents pay a higher portion of their incomes for energy efficiencies than in most of the city. Weatherize solar, geothermal, and utilize public sources including the new Minnesota Green Bank.
- H. Include a playground.

2. Preserve the historic and cultural significance of the site.

- A. Incorporate interpretive signage and historic elements integrated throughout the site to honor and teach people about its historic significance, the community, and surrounding area.
- B. Actively and transparently engage and include the diverse communities that exist on the East Side.
- C. Incubate and include ethnic and cultural businesses and organizations on the site to achieve shared success of community aspirations. Living inclusion.
- D. Provide historic tours and cultural events that celebrate the East Side community.
- E. Display images of the history of the site and the diversity of its people.
- F. Harmonize Wakan Tipi Awanyankapi, the Hamm's Brewery redevelopment, and other initiatives to move forward together in a complementary way. We all do better when we all do better.

3. Build in regular events and activities to draw people to the site and strengthen the commercial viability of the businesses.

- A. Implement a city parking plan that builds and supports events that strengthens the viability of the site.
- B. Find ways to get people to return to the site over and over again through a series of events.
- C. Partner with community organizations to host special events that build community and economic opportunities. Make sure that there is adequate parking to accommodate the events.
- D. Create educational opportunities to learn skills and exchange expertise (e.g., repairs, maker spaces, etc.).
- E. Flexibility is key. Don't allow space to get stale. Allow for flexibility and options that create interest and responsiveness to community interests.
- F. Strengthen the East Side as a destination through unique businesses that build on anchors such as Hmong Village, Saint Paul Brewing, 11 Wells Spirits, and Morelli's that attract visitors.
- G. Implement a city parking plan for Minnehaha and the surrounding area that supports the mix of uses.

4. Strengthen access and connections between the site and surrounding assets.

- A. Participate in current planning processes to identify ways to enhance public transit access to the area (e.g. connections to the Purple BRT line stations, etc.), bike-sharing, trolley services to surrounding commercial districts, EVIE car share, and other multi-modal options.
- B. Establish stair/switchback trail access to the upper park area.

- C. Collaborate with the City of Saint Paul's Minnehaha Street redesign planning process to improve pedestrian safety, multimodal access, and parking solutions.
- D. Utilize the height of the buildings and the smokestack across the street (the smokestack is NOT a part of the City of Saint Paul owned land) to have destination signage, and other creative elements for wayfinding.
- E. Have an access plan for children to get to green space.

5. Provide continued engagement with community partners to ensure the success of the project.

- A. Provide advanced notice to community organizations (such as D4 and D5 councils) to present updates about the project before engaging in more formalized processes for Land Use Applications and the Site Plan Review process.
- B. The developer and/or City of Saint Paul should engage with the community on any potential environmental and/or historic reviews as may be required by HUD, SHPO, or other state or local agencies.
- C. Engage with the community and local existing businesses, including participant in this process, and conduct additional surveys and reports related to commercial market studies, marketplace viability study, parking plans, and traffic and business impact analysis. Provide updates to the community on these findings.

6. Housing

- A. Make sure that the needs of children living on the property are addressed (such as the playground and other supports)

- B. Have an access plan for children to get to green spaces safely, and that older children are able to access assets in the neighborhood.
- C. Give preference to East Side residents for housing opportunities.
- D. Reduce the footprint of the apartment building by potentially adding an additional floor.
- E. Consider expanding the homeownership opportunities on the site.
- F. Ensure the ownership housing is maintained (e.g. through a Home Owners Association).