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DATE: June 17, 2016
TO: Saint Paul Planning Commission
FROM: Neighborhood Planning Committee
SUBJECT: District 13 Union Park Community Plan

BACKGROUND

Early in 2014, District 13 (Union Park) began to create a new district plan that took into consideration the merger of Lex-Ham, Merriam Park, and Snelling Hamline in 2007. Union Park staff and interns collected feedback from residents through an extensive community engagement effort, including door knocking campaigns, tabling at community events, and an online survey. A draft Union Park Community Plan was prepared and presented to City staff in December 2015. Upon receipt of comments from City staff review, Union Park made revisions and presented the revised document to City staff in January 2016. The plan is scheduled for review at the Historic Preservation Commission on June 23, 2016 and the Transportation Committee on June 27, 2016.

During the staff review period, the Lexington-Hamline Community Council (Lex-Ham) began to review the Union Park Community Plan, and Lex-Ham residents opposed a proposed land use strategy on Selby Avenue between Snelling and Lexington. City Staff, Lex-Ham residents, and Union Park staff attended a Lex-Ham hosted meeting to discuss different zoning uses. No consensus was reached by the end of the meeting, so staff suggested that Union Park and Lex-Ham staff conduct further engagement with an addendum to the plan to follow. Union Park and Lex-Ham agreed with this suggestion and included their intent in LU 1.4, which will serve as a place holder until Union Park submits the addendum.

OTHER PLANS

The Lex-Ham Tomorrow Plan (2000), Merriam Park Community Plan (2003), and Snelling Hamline Community Plan (2007) should all be decertified as they are combined, revised, and superseded by this plan.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

The Neighborhood Planning Committee recommends that the Planning Commission take the following actions:

- Release the District 13 Union Park Community Plan for public review; and
- Schedule a public hearing regarding the District 13 Union Park Community Plan for August 5, 2016.

Attachments







1. District 13 Union Park Community Plan



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Acronyms and Abbreviations Used:

DSI: Saint Paul Department of Safety and Inspections
MnDOT: Minnesota Department of Transportation
PED: Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development
PR: Saint Paul Department of Parks and Recreation
PW: Saint Paul Department of Public Works
RC: Ramsey County
SPPA: Saint Paul Port Authority
SPPD: Saint Paul Police Department
SPPS: Saint Paul Public Schools
UPDC: Union Park District Council

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Photos

Special thanks to Union Park resident James Ebert for providing many of the community photos.
Photos in the Historic Preservation section are courtesy of the Minnesota Historical Society.

Study Area

The Union Park community is bordered by Lexington Avenue on the east and Summit Avenue on the south. Its boundary follows the Mississippi River northward to the western border of Saint Paul and along I-94 to Cleveland Avenue, where it jogs northward to University Avenue. Its northern border is University Avenue from Cleveland Avenue to Lexington Avenue.



Purpose of the Plan

The Union Park District Council is the product of the merger of the Merriam Park, Snelling-Hamline and Lexington-Hamline Community Councils, each of whom had their own neighborhood plans dated 2004, 2007 and 2001 respectively. The purpose of this plan is to consolidate an updated vision for Union Park, and to set forth the objectives and strategies to achieve this vision.



Overall Vision

Union Park is an urban District near the geographic center of the Minneapolis / Saint Paul metropolitan area. Within a relatively small area, it hosts strong residential neighborhoods with a 50 / 50 mix of owner-occupied and rental properties, a wide variety of 1,000+ businesses, three universities, and 150+ non-profits. Union Park enjoys a diverse economy with many local jobs and abundant transportation options. Heavy vehicular traffic to destinations in and beyond the neighborhood boundaries creates a challenge for balancing the needs of competing land uses and transportation modes. The goal of this District Plan is to find this balance to preserve desirable assets and neighborhood character while evolving to meet present and future needs.





Land Use and Economic Development

Union Park is a complex blend of unique commercial districts, industrial areas, and residential neighborhoods, at a variety of densities. The community includes several distinctive neighborhoods, each maintaining its own strong identity. Some areas of Union Park feature quiet, tree-lined streets with century-old houses and small apartment buildings, while shops and restaurants are generally located along busy corridors.

Excellent transit access was recently added along the northern edge of the District with the opening of the Green Line light rail connecting downtown Saint Paul to downtown Minneapolis, including four stops in Union Park. Beginning Spring 2016, the first Arterial Bus Rapid Transit route in the Twin Cities – the A Line – will provide frequent north-south transit service along Snelling Avenue. Several of the business districts in Union Park have experienced significant new development and are poised for even more, given this new transit.

In the northeast section of the District, there are several large shopping malls anchored by big box stores, while nonprofits, an affordable-housing high rise, and industrial uses line other sections of Union Park's northern border. South of I-94, commercial clusters line major arterials with a vibrant mix of retail and service-oriented, largely locally-owned businesses. Many buildings in this historic streetcar corridor are 100 years old or older. The District is anchored by multiple schools and three higher education institutions: the University of St. Thomas and Concordia University within the District's borders, and Macalester College immediately abutting Union Park to the south.

Recognizing that growth of commercial opportunities and the availability of jobs are vital to community prosperity, the plan seeks to balance land development with the preservation of peaceful, walkable, urban neighborhoods. And, as Union Park rapidly becomes more diverse, it will be important to welcome new immigrants and entrepreneurs to live and establish businesses in Union Park.





Land Use and Economic Development

Land Use Objectives and Strategies

LU1. Support land uses that preserve Union Park as a connected, walkable, mixed-use, sustainable neighborhood with a pedestrian-oriented, human-scale streetscape.

LU1.1 Maintain and establish zoning that encourages compact development in commercial areas and in mixed-use corridors; specifically, initiate and support zoning studies and adjustments, especially along Snelling Avenue and Marshall Avenue east of Snelling, to encourage more traditional neighborhood, mixed-use zoning where appropriate.

LU1.2 Encourage a balance of retail and service-oriented establishments, providing a variety of goods and resources within a close proximity to Union Park residents.

LU1.3 Promote development that provides safe, pleasant, and interesting pedestrian experiences, especially north of I-94, crossing I-94, and along major arterials such as Snelling, University, Hamline, Fairview, Cretin, Selby, and Marshall Avenues.

LU1.4 Union Park District Council, in conjunction with Lexington-Hamline Community Council, will initiate a community process to determine priorities for the future of Selby Avenue from Ayd Mill Road to Lexington Avenue that evaluates appropriate uses and zoning districts.

LU2. Preserve the well-kept, traditional feel and scale of the neighborhood.

LU2.1 Maintain and establish zoning that preserves lower-density, single-family homes and duplexes outside of mixed-use corridors.

LU2.2 Encourage the rehabilitation of existing structures, districts, and landscapes to preserve the historical character of residential and commercial districts.

LU2.3 Ensure that new development fits within the character and scale of adjacent neighborhoods.

LU2.4 Preserve and increase the number of trees and green spaces within the neighborhoods and within new development; promote the creation of pocket parks, community gardens, and other public and public-private spaces.

LU3. Encourage vibrant commercial development that takes advantage of the increased transit availability in Union Park.

LU3.1 Create a community vision for redevelopment of the Midway Shopping Center and Metro Transit Bus Barn Site north of I-94 between Snelling and Pascal Avenues, and work with the City, Met Council and the private property owner to develop and implement a master plan that reestablishes a connected street grid, incorporates public spaces, and realizes the community's goals.

LU3.2 Explore opportunities to increase density levels and promote new development along key corridors that support transit-oriented development, including along Snelling Avenue and Marshall Avenue between Snelling and Hamline Avenues, and on mixed-use transit routes, while maintaining the historic human scale of the neighborhood.



Land Use and Economic Development

Land Use Objectives and Strategies

LU3.3 Support the establishment of a unique identity for the Snelling and Selby shopping area to elevate it as a local destination and to help existing and new small, locally-owned businesses thrive.

LU3.4 Highlight and promote the diversity of goods and services accessible within Union Park.

LU4. Encourage economic development that balances the various land uses, cultural backgrounds, and income levels in Union Park.

LU4.1 Promote the recruitment and retention of a diverse array of small, locally owned businesses that provide a variety of goods and services and serve a range of income levels.

LU4.2 Encourage new multicultural enterprises along University Avenue and in and around other commercial nodes in Union Park, and explore the feasibility of an African market near Skyline Tower.

LU4.3 Encourage development in industrial areas that increases the number of job opportunities in Union Park.

LU4.4 Proactively engage with businesses and neighboring residents around common conflicts such as noise, parking, and traffic congestion to facilitate conversation and reach compromise.





Land Use and Economic Development

Land Use and Economic Development Objectives and Strategies

#	Strategy Summary	Responsible Parties	Timeframe
LU1	Support land uses that preserve a connected, walkable, mixed-use, sustainable neighborhood with a pedestrian-oriented, human-scale streetscape.	UPDC, PED, PW	1.1 Short term 1.2 Ongoing 1.3 Ongoing 1.4 Short term
LU2	Preserve the well-kept, traditional feel and scale of the neighborhood.	UPDC, PED	2.1 Short term 2.2 Short term 2.3 Ongoing 2.4 Ongoing
LU3	Encourage vibrant commercial development that takes advantage of the increased transit availability.	UPDC, PED, Metro Transit TOD Office	3.1 Ongoing 3.2 Long term 3.3 Ongoing 3.4 Short term
LU4	Encourage economic development that balances the various land uses, cultural backgrounds, and income levels.	UPDC, PED, SPPA	4.1 Short term 4.2 Ongoing 4.3 Long term 4.4 Ongoing



Transportation

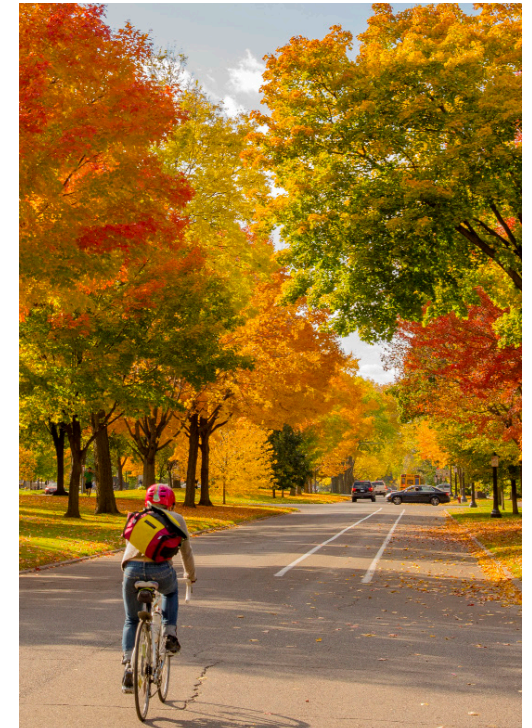
A walkable, bikeable community with good public transportation infrastructure is important to Union Park residents. According to Minnesota Compass data gathered between 2008 and 2012, 26.1% of residents reported that they used public transportation, biked, walked, worked at home, or used means other than a car to transport themselves to and from work, compared to the citywide average of just over 19%. Approximately 50% of the UPDC District Plan survey respondents mentioned the local businesses as valuable assets to the community and placed a high value on the ability to walk and/or bike to these business destinations.

At the same time, many survey respondents expressed concerns about crossing streets safely at controlled and uncontrolled intersections, poor sidewalk quality, inadequate lighting for pedestrians, a need for boulevards and green space, and a general lack of traffic calming measures on arterials. Many perceive City infrastructure and decision-making to be more car-centric, and would like to see a more balanced approach where all modes are considered. Community feedback called for public transit alternatives to the automobile, and the District has seen significant investment in public transportation with the opening of the Green Line LRT system on University Avenue and the soon to be implemented Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line on Snelling Avenue.

Despite the relatively high use of automobile alternatives for work commutes, and the expressed desire to walk or bike to area destinations, 88% of area households own one or more automobiles, and 46% own two or more vehicles. High traffic volume and access to parking are perceived as big issues in Union Park, particularly on or near main streets within the District.

The District has a major interstate (I-94) and a number of major thoroughfares within its boundaries, including University and Marshall Avenues running east and west on either side of I-94, and Cretin, Snelling, and Lexington running north and south through the District. The Marshall Avenue / Lake Street Bridge over the Mississippi River is the only crossing linking Minneapolis and Saint Paul for 1.6 miles to the north and 2.6 miles to the south.

Given the diverse uses of transportation corridors within Union Park, this plan promotes a multi-modal transportation strategy that will balance the needs of all modes of transportation within and through the District. It supports zoning and land use strategies that emphasize high-density development along major transit corridors. Last, but not least, it helps Union Park evolve as a community in the coming decade and beyond.





Transportation

Transportation Objectives and Strategies

T1. Encourage mass transit use and support the expansion of public transit offerings to maximize public investment in transit while reducing traffic congestion, pedestrian hazards, and pollution, and increasing social connectedness.

T1.1 Support improved connectivity to the Green Line by working with Metro Transit to increase Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and local route service options, improve transfers, and work with city, county and state agencies to enhance biking options and sidewalk walkability to transit.

T1.2 Support improved means for pedestrians and bicyclists to reach transit lines safely, and especially in intersections with public transit and high auto traffic, by exploring and promoting traffic calming strategies such as reduced speed limits, stop signs and signals, and signal priority, and infrastructure changes including pedestrian bridges.

T1.3 Support efforts to improve the appeal of public transit to a wider range of people by advocating for amenities such as quality (heated) and maintained bus shelters and benches, and ease of access to public transit information.

T1.4 Support efforts to ensure that modes of public transit are equally accessible to all users.

T1.5 Advocate for improved wayfinding for clear navigation to and via public transit, through means including directional signage to guide users to mass transit stops and connections.

T1.6 Promote measure to improve the pedestrian experience on bridges over I-94, through improved lighting,

safer sidewalks, and other measures in conformance with the Saint Paul bridge design standards.

T2. Support the implementation of the City of Saint Paul's bicycle plan in a way that maximizes effectiveness for all users of the right-of-way.

T2.1 Work with the City of Saint Paul to ensure that the bicycle plan is implemented in a way that provides a safe and efficient biking experience and that balances the needs of all users of the right-of-way, including on north/south routes through our District, and where the Saratoga Street segment should continue beyond Selby Avenue to points northbound.

T2.2 Develop a strategy to promote the development of additional bicycle routes over time to adapt to changing land uses and rider demand.

T2.3 Support efforts to encourage bicycle riding through the addition of bicycle parking and facilities, increased education, and bicycle-focused community events.

T2.4 Support efforts to create a safer biking environment by promoting strategies such as separated lanes, more visible striping, off-street bicycle paths, and lower vehicular speed limits on shared roads.

T3. Support initiatives and projects that promote walking and walkability, and increase pedestrian safety.

T3.1 Support efforts by the City of Saint Paul and other organizations to develop and implement a citywide pedestrian plan.



Transportation

Transportation Objectives and Strategies

T3.2 Encourage relevant government agencies to maintain crosswalks, add more high visibility crossings and stop bars at high-traffic intersections, and implement more effective pedestrian signalization strategies.

T3.3 Encourage relevant government agencies to maintain sidewalks to a high quality, install additional sidewalks where lacking, improve lighting along walkways, add boulevards along sidewalks, and remove snow and other obstacles when necessary.

T3.4 Promote measures to achieve greater pedestrian safety, to enhance the pedestrian experience, and to create an environment that fosters walking, by utilizing bumpouts, greenspace, placemaking, and public art, by enforcing truck routes, and by reducing speed limits.

T3.5 Promote increased education on pedestrian laws for all users of the right-of-way, and promote increased enforcement of pedestrian laws to enhance pedestrian safety.

T4. Provide information to residents about City proposals related to Ayd Mill Road and connect residents with means to engage with City decision-makers on the proposals.

T5. Explore infrastructure and placemaking options to improve safety and effectiveness for all users of particularly dangerous or uncomfortable intersections, including Snelling/University, Snelling/Selby, Cleveland/Marshall, Fairview/Marshall, Fairview/I-94, and Cretin/Summit/ Mississippi River Boulevard.





Transportation

Transportation Objectives and Strategies

#	Strategy Summary	Responsible Parties	Timeframe
T1	Encourage public transit use and support the expansion of public transit offerings to maximize public investment in transit while reducing traffic congestion, pedestrian hazards, and pollution, and increasing social connectedness.	UPDC, RC, MnDOT, Metro Transit, Smart Trips and other advocacy organizations	1.1 Short term 1.2 Short term 1.3 Long term 1.4 Long term 1.5 Ongoing 1.6 Ongoing
T2	Support the implementation of the City of Saint Paul's bicycle plan in a way that maximizes effectiveness for all users of the right-of-way.	UPDC, PED, PW, RC	2.1 Ongoing 2.2 Long term 2.3 Ongoing 2.4 Short term
T3	Support initiatives and projects that promote walking and walkability, and increase pedestrian safety.	UPDC, PED, PW, SPPD, MnDOT, RC	3.1 Short term 3.2 Ongoing 3.3 Ongoing 3.4 Ongoing
T4	Provide information to residents about City proposals related to Ayd Mill Road and connect residents with means to engage with City decision-makers on the proposals.	UPDC, PED, PW	Ongoing
T5	Explore infrastructure and placemaking options to improve safety and effectiveness for all users of particularly dangerous or uncomfortable intersection.	UPDC, PED, PW, MnDOT, RC	Ongoing



Parks and Recreation

Our parks and green spaces are one of our community's most valued resources, and our residents support a strong park system that connects them to their environment and their neighborhood. Union Park currently has twelve parks, ranging from Merriam Park, which covers four square blocks and includes the District's only active recreation center, to Meeker Island Lock and Dam Park, a wooded area along the Mississippi River that includes a dog run and is on the National Register of Historic Places.

Some parks in Union Park have been maintained more than others. For instance, Dunning Park received a Major League Baseball-sponsored baseball field, and is now one of the finest baseball and softball complexes within the City parks system, with Midway baseball providing programming for around 300 youths each summer along with high school and community games in the summer and fall. Merriam Park, on the other hand, which is a Saint Paul landmark home to century-old oak trees and one of only two skateboard parks in Saint Paul, has not received any significant investment for years.

Most of our parks – except for Dunning and the Hague Avenue Tot Lot – are located west of Snelling Avenue, which leaves the large area from Snelling to Lexington lacking in greenspace. As a restricted sports complex, Dunning includes only a small area of unstructured space. Residents in this area have expressed a strong desire for more communal gathering spaces, and a recent study of greenspace in this part of the District brought into focus the need to identify and develop parkland here. More broadly, Union Park residents value walkability, and greenspace should be incorporated when possible to enhance the pedestrian experience throughout the District.





Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Objectives and Strategies

PR1. Preserve and enhance existing parks.

PR1.1 Identify and pursue funding options for community supported improvements to Merriam Park, including a \$1.4 million recommendation to replace the playground, add a splash pad, upgrade the skate park, enhance the Prior Avenue entrance, improve field quality, and explore opportunities to modify the existing adjacent school building to serve park users as well as students.

PR 1.2 Complement infrastructure improvements around Iris Park by supporting improvement of the amenities within the park, including wayfinding to the adjacent Green Line station, and a potential tot lot on the south end of the park.

PR 1.3 Support improvements in Desnoyer Park that target the large number of families moving into the neighborhood, and collaborate with KidsPark and future tenants on projects and programs and encourage the consideration of shared building uses.

PR1.4 Promote safety enhancements and the maintenance in all our parks, including the addition of guardrails to the east side of the Hague Avenue Tot Lot and maintenance of the off-street Mississippi River Boulevard trail including the selective clearing of vegetation that block river views from the benches.

PR1.5 Encourage the planting of native plants in our community parks that require less water, care and maintenance while creating vital habitat for bees and other beneficial insects.

PR2. Promote the use of our parks and amenities and support community-building events.

PR2.1 Organize and hold at least one community event annually in Merriam Park, such as an ice cream social, to bring the community together for entertainment, education and engagement.

PR2.2 Support the nontraditional use of existing public spaces by planning and holding at least one event annually that closes a street for a nontraditional use such as a street fair or music event; encourage and support neighbors to have block parties for National Night Out or another date.

PR2.3 Promote resident participation in Merriam Park Recreation Center programming and support Recreation Center staff in the development of new programming; seek input from all of the residents of our community (homeowners, renters, businesses, and students) to assess programming demands.

PR2.4 Promote the use of all of our parks including the Meeker Island dog run; recruit and develop a network of neighbors to better utilize Aldine Park.

PR3. Support the development of new parks and green spaces.

T3.1 Support efforts by the City of Saint Paul and other organizations to develop and implement a citywide pedestrian plan.



Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Objectives and Strategies

PR3.2 Encourage the maintenance of public spaces by residents, including the Oxcart Garden and the small green space at the southwest corner of Snelling and Concordia Avenues.

PR3.3 Promote community development of pocket parks using environmental design strategies to enhance the safety and usability of underutilized parcels, including the northwest corner of Snelling and St. Anthony Avenues and the northeast corner of Snelling and Marshall Avenues.

PR3.4 Identify an existing or new park space to carry the name “Union Park.”





Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation Objectives and Strategies

#	Strategy Summary	Responsible Parties	Timeframe
PR1	Preserve and enhance existing parks and greenspaces.	UPDC, PR, PED, PW	1.1 Ongoing 1.2 Short term 1.3 Ongoing 1.4 Short term 1.5 Long term
PR2	Promote the use of our parks and amenities and support community-building events.	UPDC, PR	2.1 Ongoing 2.2 Ongoing 2.3 Short term 2.4 Short term
PR3	Support the development of new parks and greenspaces.	UPDC, PR, PED, PW, MnDOT Landscape Partnership Team, private partners	3.1 Ongoing 3.2 Short term 3.3 Ongoing 3.4 Short term



Housing

Housing is available to a broad range of income levels throughout the District – from million dollar mansions on Summit Avenue to affordable housing at Skyline Tower, with middle incomes served as well. This wide range of housing stock provides housing to a broad range of lifestyle situations: college and university students, young professionals living alone, families, empty nesters and retirees.

Union Park residents value their pedestrian-scale neighborhoods. Central to that dynamic are strong cores of well-maintained, older single-family homes along quiet, tree-lined streets, along with mixed-use corridors and nodes that provide multi-unit housing and a range of small, locally-owned businesses.

Change is taking place through three key trends. First, there is an increased market interest in mixed-use, high-density housing convenient to transit and commercial areas, creating some resident concern about preserving neighborhood character. Second, aging housing stock is creating concerns about home maintenance, energy efficiency, and affordability. Third, an increase in populations of students from St. Thomas, Macalester and Concordia living within the neighborhoods has increased concerns about student housing encroaching on single-family neighborhoods.

Thus, the focus of this section is to promote the preservation of the positive aspects of the District, while improving it. This plan seeks to maintain the District's unique character by promoting intelligent development, encouraging upkeep, preserving character, and adopting a collaborative approach to addressing student housing needs.





Housing

Housing Objectives and Strategies

H1. Preserve Union Park's pedestrian-scale neighborhoods, while promoting a range of housing types and affordability to meet the needs of people at different life stages with different housing needs.

H1.1 Support multi-unit mixed-use development in mixed-use corridors that can accommodate higher density levels, while minimizing impacts on adjacent lower density areas, and discourage multi-unit housing and retail uses that are incompatible with single-family residential areas.

H1.2 Support efforts to develop a wide range of housing affordability levels, promoting more affordable housing along major transit routes including Snelling Bus Rapid Transit and the Green Line Light Rail line.

H1.3 Support housing development designed to promote pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit activity.

H1.4 Study and periodically review the demand level forecasted for new housing stock of various types (multi-family, affordable, larger single-family), and promote programs and projects that are consistent with the measured demand.

H1.5 Encourage owner occupation of single-family and multi-family homes.

H1.6 Promote housing opportunities to populations of color.

H1.7 Study the implications of revising the Saint Paul zoning code to allow for accessory dwelling structures that can provide an additional housing option, particularly for intergenerational families.

H2. Preserve and improve the character and maintenance of Union Park's neighborhoods for the next 10 years and beyond.

H2.1 Explore opportunities to partner with local organizations that support housing rehabilitation and identify grant and loan programs to address deferred maintenance of properties in the District.

H2.2 Encourage rehabilitation of existing single-family homes where appropriate, support teardown only of substandard homes, and encourage remodeling and new construction of homes consistent with the character of the surrounding homes, while minimizing impact on the surrounding homes and neighborhood.

H2.3 Identify methods to encourage property owners to enhance energy efficiency of homes and rely more upon renewable energy sources.

H2.4 Develop incentives that encourage resident upkeep of structures and landscaping.

H2.5 Study methods to hold absentee property owners more accountable for properties (i.e., through imposing a requirement that local caretaker contact information be filed with the City).



Housing

Housing Objectives and Strategies

H2.6 Encourage property owners to identify and remove dead or diseased trees, remove tree stumps and replace lost trees in order to preserve the health of the urban forest.

H2.7 Enhance residential character by promoting additional greenspace for the community to gather and children to play.

H2.8 Promote methods to keep traffic on the major arteries to discourage cut-through traffic on residential streets.

H3. Recognize and accommodate student-housing needs while respecting the rights and concerns of all community stakeholders (students, families, colleges, landlords, businesses, etc.).

H3.1 Develop incentive programs that foster responsible student-renters and responsible landlords.

H3.2 Engage the University of St. Thomas, Macalester College and Concordia University in an effort to clearly define and accommodate their current and anticipated student-housing needs.

H3.3 Explore ways to engage and educate the community about the needs, rights, responsibilities, and concerns associated with student housing.

H3.4 Explore ways to promote college and university student involvement in community affairs.

H3.5 Prioritize the development of multi-unit student housing in mixed-use corridors over the expansion of single-family rental units in traditional neighborhoods.





Housing

Housing Objectives and Strategies

#	Strategy Summary	Responsible Parties	Timeframe
H1	Preserve pedestrian-scale neighborhoods, while promoting a range of housing types and affordability to meet the needs of people at different life stages with different housing needs.	UPDC, PED	1.1 Ongoing 1.2 Short term 1.3 Ongoing 1.4 Long term 1.5 Short term 1.6 Short term 1.7 Long term
H2	Preserve and improve the character and maintenance of neighborhoods for the next 10 years and beyond.	UPDC, PED, PW, DSI	2.1 Short term 2.2 Short term 2.3 Long term 2.4 Short term 2.5 Long term 2.6 Long term 2.7 Short term 2.8 Ongoing
H3	Recognize and accommodate student-housing needs while respecting the rights and concerns of all community stakeholders (students, families, colleges, landlords, businesses, etc.)	UPDC, PED, DSI, SPPD, University of Saint Thomas, Macalester College, Concordia University	3.1 Short term 3.2 Long term 3.3 Ongoing 3.4 Ongoing 3.5 Short term



Natural Resources and the Environment

The residents of Union Park value the friendly, walkable and community-oriented neighborhoods in the District. A healthy natural environment will help to maintain the overall character and well-being of the District, and support a strong sense of community. This plan aims to raise awareness of natural systems in our landscape, protect our water resources, reduce waste, and further the sustainability of our solid waste and energy systems.

Natural Resources Objectives and Strategies

NRE1. Align District Council involvement regarding urban runoff, stormwater best management practices, and water quality protection with Watershed District and City efforts.

NRE1.1 Develop a close working relationship with Capitol Region Watershed District to identify and utilize financial resources, technical assistance, and additional community partnering opportunities, including opportunities for large property owners (e.g. large campuses, churches, schools) to minimize the impact of stormwater runoff.

NRE1.2 Encourage the incorporation of green infrastructure or low impact design concepts in new development and redevelopment projects.

NRE1.3 Support opportunities and assistance for homeowners and small businesses to adopt measures that could be implemented to control stormwater runoff, including rain barrels, rain gardens, and downspouts directing away from pavement and other impervious surfaces.

NRE1.4 Promote and coordinate public education efforts to build citizen awareness of water quality issues. These might include storm drain painting, signage

and public art to bring awareness to water resources, and campaigns to encourage management of nutrient sources (i.e. proper disposal of yard and pet waste).

NRE1.5 Support opportunities and assistance for adoption of water efficiency and water conservation practices, including reduced lawn-watering practices on public and private properties.

NRE2. Align District Council involvement regarding green space with best environmental practices.

NRE2.1 Support the maintenance and development of urban green spaces, including the upkeep of public gardens and landscaping, and advocating for expanded community gardens and pocket parks.

NRE2.2 Promote the planting and care of new and existing trees to preserve and enhance urban tree canopy cover on public and private lands which provides ecological, social, and health benefits to the community and habitat for wildlife, including pollinators.

NRE2.3 Support and provide opportunities and assistance for low-impact management of the urban landscape, including limiting or eliminating excessive application of chemical pesticides and phosphorus and nitrogen fertilizers, controlling erosion and sedimentation when soil is exposed, and the use of native plantings.



Natural Resources and the Environment

Natural Resources Objectives and Strategies

NRE2.4 Promote efforts to make healthy local food accessible to our residents, including support of neighborhood community gardens.

NRE3. Support solid waste and energy consumption measures that promote environmental sustainability.

NRE3.1 Support initiatives to investigate consolidated trash hauler policies and practices.

NRE3.2 Identify parks and public spaces that do not have trash and/or recycling receptacles and work with the City to have them installed.

NRE3.3 Promote drinking fountains as part of streetscape and parks and recreation planning efforts.

NRE3.4 Support the expansion of commercial and business recycling.

NRE3.5 Promote and provide information for residents on organics recycling and community composting available at several Ramsey County Yard Waste Sites and other locations. Support the implementation of curbside composting service, and Saint Paul's zero-waste plan.

NRE3.6 Encourage resident participation in the City of Saint Paul's Citywide Clean Up events.

NRE3.7 Promote energy efficiency and support integration of alternative and sustainable energy sources into residential and commercial buildings, including community solar.





Natural Resources and the Environment

Natural Resources Objectives and Strategies

#	Strategy Summary	Responsible Parties	Timeframe
NRE1	Align District Council involvement regarding urban runoff, stormwater best management practices, and water quality protection with Watershed District and City efforts.	UPDC, PW, RC, MnDOT, Capitol Region Watershed District	1.1 Short term 1.2 Short term 1.3 Ongoing 1.4 Long term 1.5 Long term
NRE2	Align District Council involvement regarding greenspace with best environmental practices.	UPDC, City of Saint Paul	2.1 Ongoing 2.2 Ongoing 2.3 Long term 2.4 Ongoing
NRE3	Support solid waste and energy consumption measures that promote environmental sustainability.	UPDC, PR, PW, RC	3.1 Ongoing 3.2 Short term 3.3 Short term 3.4 Ongoing 3.5 Ongoing 3.6 Ongoing 3.7 Long term



Historic Preservation

Union Park is an area of rich historic relevance to the City and region, reflecting the history of urban settlement, transportation, education, religious heritage, social welfare, and business development. Accordingly, a focus on cultural heritage and historic preservation is a priority.

History provides perspective and enriches the experience of living in our neighborhoods. When history connects people, it provides sense of community, promotes neighborhood investment, and shapes future housing and development. We strive to maintain Union Park's residential and small business character, and to preserve the historic dimension of a livable city through our parks, public buildings, housing, sidewalks and streets, and familiar landmarks. Our goals align with the City's, and include ways to use historic preservation to further economic development and sustainability, and to provide education and outreach. A list of all historically designated and inventoried sites in the Plan area can be found in Appendix 3.





Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation Objectives and Strategies

HP1. Integrate historic significance into Union Park's housing, environmental, land use, and economic development decision-making processes, generally favoring preservation over demolition.

HP2. Identify, evaluate, designate, and preserve historic resources in the District.

HP2.1 Coordinate with the City's Heritage Preservation Commission and support and/or implement a survey to identify and evaluate the District's historic resources, including buildings, structures, objects, archaeological sites, districts, and landscapes, drawing on available funding sources such as the state Arts and Culture Heritage Fund.

HP2.2 Support the examination of the designation of qualifying historic resources, such as buildings, structures, objects, archaeological sites, historic districts, and landscapes as Saint Paul heritage preservation sites or historic districts.

HP2.3 Promote ongoing preservation and continued use of all designated sites in the Union Park District.

HP2.4 Collect and inventory information on the District's history, including historical books and articles, information about historical buildings and businesses, and biographical information on significant people who have lived in the District.

HP3. Support the development and provision of resources for property owners to maintain older homes and commercial buildings to preserve character-defining features of our neighborhoods.

HP3.1 Support opportunities for property owners to learn how to preserve and restore historic buildings and housing in historically appropriate ways, provide information on grant programs related to building preservation, and promote incentives for property owners to rehabilitate historic homes and buildings.

HP3.2 Encourage hardware and home stores in the area to make items available that are appropriate for historic housing.

HP3.3 Support efforts by the local business community to maintain the historical nature and scale of the area's commercial districts and along commercial corridors, and support preservation in redevelopment.

HP4. Increase resident awareness of the District's history and historical relevance of its built and natural environments.

HP4.1 Routinely share historically relevant information with residents through the District's communication channels, including its newsletter, website and social media.

HP4.2 Support and develop materials and events that promote the District's history, including actual and online guided or self-directed walking tours, and historical maps that highlight historically relevant elements (e.g. transportation routes, vegetation, population trends), events, and places.



Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation Objectives and Strategies

HP4.3 Encourage historical research by students at schools of all levels within the District, and identify student internships and projects that work to capture the District's history; provide historically relevant information to students within the District's schools.

HP4.4 Pursue an oral history project to document interviews of residents who have historical information to share.

HP4.5 Engage the Minnesota Historical Society and Ramsey County Historical Society in archiving the historical documents of the District and its predecessor organizations.

HP4.6 Promote the design and implementation of historical interpretive signage around the District along transportation routes including bicycle paths, sidewalks, streets, bus lines, train lines, working with Metro Transit when possible.





Historic Preservation

Historic Preservation Objectives and Strategies

#	Strategy Summary	Responsible Parties	Timeframe
HP1	Integrate historic significance into Union Park's housing, environmental, land use, and economic development decision-making processes, generally favoring preservation over demolition.	UPDC, PED, DSI	Ongoing
HP2	Identify, evaluate, designate, and preserve historic resources in the District.	UPDC, PED, HPC	2.1 Short term 2.2 Ongoing 2.3 Ongoing 2.4 Long term
HP3	Support the development and provision of resources for property owners to maintain older homes and commercial buildings to preserve character-defining features of our neighborhoods.	UPDC	3.1 Short term 3.2 Long term 3.3 Ongoing
HP4	Increase resident awareness of the District's history and historical relevance of its built and natural environments.	UPDC, SPPS, Minnesota Historical Society, Ramsey County Historical Society, City of Saint Paul, Metro Transit	4.1 Ongoing 4.2 Long term 4.3 Long term 4.4 Long term 4.5 Ongoing 4.6 Long term

Appendices

Appendix 1: Union Park Demographics

Data from MN Compass, ACS 2008-2012 Estimates.

Sex and Age				
	Union Park		Saint Paul	
Male	8,681	49.8%	139,220	48.6%
Female	8,746	50.2%	146,951	51.4%
Under 5 years	1,187	6.8%	22,483	7.9%
5-9 years	871	5.0%	19,612	6.9%
10-14 years	688	3.9%	18,532	6.5%
15-17 years	459	2.6%	11,667	4.1%
18-24 years	3,920	22.5%	39,418	13.8%
25-34 years	2,913	16.7%	49,026	17.1%
35-44 years	1,830	10.5%	35,755	12.5%
45-54 years	2,251	12.9%	36,019	12.6%
55-64 years	1,921	11.0%	28,628	10.0%
65-74 years	724	4.2%	12,736	4.5%
75-84 years	484	2.8%	8,288	2.9%
85 years and older	178	1.0%	4,007	1.4%
17 years and younger	3,206	18.4%	72,294	25.3%
18-64 years	12,835	73.7%	188,846	66.0%
65 years and older	1,386	8.0%	25,031	8.7%

Race and Ethnicity				
	Union Park		Saint Paul	
White	13,896	79.7%	160,127	56.0%
Of Color	3,531	20.3%	126,044	44.0%
Black or African American	1,564	9.0%	42,640	14.9%
American Indian or Alaska Native	<1%		<1%	
Asian or Pacific Islander	539	3.1%	43,168	15.1%
Other race	<1%		<1%	
Two or more races	356	2.0%	9,883	3.5%
Hispanic or Latino	982	5.6%	27,840	9.7%
Foreign born	1,325	7.6%	50,063	17.5%

Appendices

Appendix 1: Union Park Demographics

Data from MN Compass, ACS 2008-2012 Estimates.

Poverty Rates				
	Union Park		Saint Paul	
Poverty Status Determined	15,918		278,069	
Below Poverty Level	2,933	18.4%	63,319	22.8%
100-149% of poverty	1,405	8.8%	29,219	10.5%
150-199% of poverty	803	5.0%	25,046	9.0%
200% of poverty or higher	10,777	67.7%	160,485	57.7%

Cost-Burdened Households				
	Union Park		Saint Paul	
Total Housing Units	6,798		109,648	
Cost-Burdened Households	2,951	43.4%	44,730	40.8%
Owner Households	887	27.0%	16,500	28.9%
Renter Households	2,064	58.7%	28,230	53.8%

Household Income				
	Union Park		Saint Paul	
Total households	6,877		111,889	
Less than \$35,000	2,694	39.2%	43,739	39.1%
\$35,000-\$49,999	884	12.9%	15,819	14.1%
\$50,000-\$74,999	895	13.0%	19,667	17.6%
\$75,000-\$99,999	751	10.9%	13,029	11.6%
\$100,000 or more	1,653	24.0%	19,635	17.5%

Housing Units				
	Union Park		Saint Paul	
Vacant housing units	488	6.6%	8,764	7.3%
Occupied housing units	6,896	93.4%	111,889	92.7%
Owner-occupied	3,285	47.6%	57,343	51.2%
Renter-occupied	3,611	52.4%	54,546	48.8%

Average Household Size		
	Union Park	Saint Paul
Overall	2.3	2.5
Owner-occupied	2.7	2.6
Renter-occupied	1.9	2.3

Appendices

Appendix 1: Union Park Demographics

Data from MN Compass, ACS 2008-2012 Estimates.

Transportation Mode Share				
	Union Park		Saint Paul	
Workers (16 years or older)	9,746		137,465	
Car, truck, or van	7,195	73.8%	110,597	80.5%
Public transportation	843	8.6%	11,691	8.5%
Walked, biked, or other	1,708	17.5%	15,177	11.0%

Commute Time				
	Union Park		Saint Paul	
Less than 10 minutes	1,186	13.1%	14,704	11.2%
10-19 minutes	3,568	39.4%	47,222	36.0%
20-29 minutes	2,453	27.1%	34,204	26.1%
30 minutes or longer	1,847	20.4%	35,071	26.7%

Number of Automobiles Available per Household				
	Union Park		Saint Paul	
No vehicles	852	12.3%	16,637	14.9%
1 vehicle	2,862	41.5%	45,509	40.7%
2 vehicles	2,433	35.3%	36,725	32.8%
3 or more vehicles	749	10.9%	13,018	11.6%

Appendices

Appendix 2: District Plan Community Engagement

Timeline

March 2014 - March 2015

During this period there were a total of 436 people who responded to our initial survey in which we asked residents the following four open ended questions:

- 1) What do you like about the Union Park neighborhood that is essential to keep?
- 2) What might we do to improve in the Union Park neighborhood over the next 10 years?
- 3) What should we start or create in the Union Park neighborhood that isn't here now?
- 4) What should we stop doing in the Union Park neighborhood?

May 2015 - September 2015

During this period we had approximately 1,311 people express over 5,000 opinions through various events, online surveys, and door to door canvassing.

Events:

Merriam Park Library (ongoing engagement from 5/2015-8/2015)
Concordia University - 5/1/2015
Macalester College - 5/6/2015
University of St. Thomas - 5/19/2015
Skyline Tower Ice Cream Social - 6/9/2015
Izzy's Ice Cream - 6/19/2015
Bastille Day - 7/12/2015
Desnoyer Park Picnic - 7/14/2015
Lexington-Hamline Ice Cream Social - 7/19/2015
UST Neighborfest - 7/30/2015
Skyline Tower National Night Out - 8/5/2015
Midway Shopping Center Community Conversation - 8/11/2015
Celebrate Snelling - 8/20/2015
Central Baptist Block Party - 9/13/2015

Methodology

In addition to asking open ended questions about what people like or want to change about Union Park, our engagement over the summer of 2015 solicited input regarding their priorities through several different types of interactive activities outlined below:

Engagement Activity No. 1: I want to live in a community where...

Participants were asked to place three dots for their top three preferences from the following nine:

- 1) There is access to green space
- 2) I can walk or bike
- 3) There is public art
- 4) I can easily find a parking spot
- 5) There is access to transit
- 6) There is affordable housing
- 7) I can connect with my neighbors
- 8) There is access to healthy local food
- 9) There are fun places to go nearby

This activity was done at the Merriam Park Library and the University of St. Thomas.

Appendices

Appendix 2: District Plan Community Engagement

Engagement Activity No. 2: Fourteen Priorities

Participants were asked to place five dots for their top five preferences from the following fourteen:

- A. High-density, transit-oriented development in commercial areas and mixed-use corridors, especially along Snelling and Marshall Avenues and Selby Avenue east of Snelling.
- B. Rehabilitation of existing buildings to preserve the historical character of residential and commercial districts.
- C. A diverse array of small, locally owned businesses that provide a variety of goods and services and serve a range of income levels.
- D. Development in industrial areas that increases the number of job opportunities in Union Park.
- E. The expansion of public transit offerings and improved means to access public transit.
- F. Implementation of Saint Paul's bicycle plan, additional bicycle parking facilities, and safer bicycling routes.
- G. Measures to achieve greater pedestrian safety, including implementation of a citywide pedestrian plan.
- H. A wide range of housing affordability levels.
- I. Options for accessory dwelling structures on single-family home properties that accommodate broader uses including intergenerational families.
- J. Minimal teardown of homes, and remodeling and rebuilding of homes consistent with the character of the surrounding homes.
- K. Better accountability of absent property owners for their rental properties, and incentives for responsible landlords and renters.
- L. Development of urban green spaces, including public gardens and landscaping, healthy trees on public and private properties, and expanded community gardens and pocket parks.
- M. Water quality protection and storm-water management best practices
- N. A consolidated trash hauler system solution.

This activity was done at the Merriam Park Library, Izzy's Ice Cream, and through an online survey.

Engagement Activity No. 3: Four Sections

Participants were asked to rank their priorities for the fourteen statements by their section of the district plan. Four sections of the draft plan were used (Land Use and Economic Development, Transportation, Housing, and Natural Resources and the Environment). The statements are the same as the fourteen used in the other activity but participants are asked to prioritize them amongst their section.

This engagement activity was the most widely used. It was done at the Merriam Park Library, canvassing door to door, Bastille Day Block Party, Desnoyer Park Picnic, Lexington-Hamline Ice Cream Social, University of St. Thomas Neighborfest, Skyline Tower's National Night Out event, and Celebrate Snelling.

Land Use and Economic Development (A-D):

- A. High-density, transit-oriented development in commercial areas and mixed-use corridors, especially along Snelling and Marshall Avenues and Selby Avenue east of Snelling.
- B. Rehabilitation of existing buildings to preserve the historical character of residential and commercial districts.
- C. A diverse array of small, locally owned businesses that provide a variety of goods and services and serve a range of income levels.
- D. Development in industrial areas that increases the number of job opportunities in Union Park.

Transportation (E-G):

- E. The expansion of public transit offerings and improved means to access public transit.
- F. Implementation of Saint Paul's bicycle plan, additional bicycle parking facilities, and safer bicycling routes.
- G. Measures to achieve greater pedestrian safety, including implementation of a citywide pedestrian plan.

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Appendix 2: District Plan Community Engagement

Housing (H-K):

- H. A wide range of housing affordability levels.
- I. Options for accessory dwelling structures on single-family home properties that accommodate broader uses including intergenerational families.
- J. Minimal teardown of homes, and remodeling and rebuilding of homes consistent with the character of the surrounding homes.
- K. Better accountability of absent property owners for their rental properties, and incentives for responsible landlords and renters.

Natural Resources and the Environment (L-N):

- L. Development of urban green spaces, including public gardens and landscaping, healthy trees on public and private properties, and expanded community gardens and pocket parks.
 - M. Water quality protection and storm-water management best practices
 - N. A consolidated trash hauler system solution.
- This activity was done at the Merriam Park Library, Izzy's Ice Cream, and through an online survey.

Engagement Activity No. 4: Four Sections with Red & Green Dots

This is very similar to Engagement Activity No. 3 only this time participants were asked to only select their first and last preference (denoted by placing a green dot for their highest priority and a red dot for their lowest priority) for four sections of the draft plan (Land Use and Economic Development, Transportation, Housing, and Natural Resources and the Environment). The statements were the same as the fourteen used in the other activities.

Results

Results from Engagement Activity No. 2 demonstrate that participants generally have strong feelings about C and L:

- C.) A diverse array of small, locally owned businesses that provide a variety of goods and services and serve a range of income levels and
- L.) Development of urban green spaces, including public gardens and landscaping, healthy trees on public and private properties, and expanded community gardens and pocket parks

Results from Engagement Activity No. 2 also demonstrate that participants were less excited to respond to D and I and when they did they were both lower priorities:

- D.) Development in industrial areas that increases the number of job opportunities in Union Park. and
- I.) Options for accessory dwelling structures on single-family home properties that accommodate broader uses including intergenerational families.

