



# Victoria Park **Master Plan**

Adopted by the Saint Paul City Council  
April 2005

Amended by the Saint Paul City Council  
April 2007

Amended by the Saint Paul City Council  
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# Victoria Park Master Plan

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## INTRODUCTION

Victoria Park, Saint Paul's newest mixed-use urban village, comprises the Koch and ExxonMobil properties at W. 7th and Otto streets. When completed, the approximately 65 acres will contain nearly 840 units of housing and a small amount of commercial space along a significant transit corridor. Victoria Park will be a pedestrian-friendly, transit-oriented community that provides a range of housing choices and prices; a new neighborhood park; a system of connected neighborhood streets for bicycles, pedestrians and cars; and an improved connection to the Mississippi River. Redeveloping the Koch Mobil site into Victoria Park will "reweave" the urban fabric and reconnect a portion of the community to its neighbors.

## BACKGROUND

The Victoria Park Master Plan is the result of several meetings between the City, developer, neighborhood residents, W. 7th/Fort Road Federation and Planning Commission. There is a great deal of consensus that what is being proposed appropriately implements the design guidelines first set out in the Brewery/Ran-View Small Area Plan, and meets the development program of a mixed-use urban village with a range of housing types and prices; a system of interconnected streets to accommodate cars, bikes and pedestrians; and an open space network that takes best advantage of the site's location in the Mississippi River valley.

The Victoria Park Master Plan covers the entire 65 acres of the new urban village, even though the rezoning to TN3 will occur in two phases.

## PLANNING PRECEDENTS

This Master Plan has several planning precedents, which are the result of almost ten years of work on the part of neighbors, property owners, City staff, the developer team and other stakeholders. The Brewery/Ran-View Small Area Plan and the Koch Mobil Redevelopment Project Area Plan are summarized below.

### *Brewery/Ran-View Small Area Plan*

In October 2000, the City Council adopted the area plan summary of the Brewery/Ran-View Small Area Plan, which includes the Koch Mobil site. The Plan recommends that the site be developed with a mix of residential and commercial/office uses consistent with the following guidelines:

1. Most of the site should be devoted to the construction of approximately 400-600 new housing units. A limited number of additional units may be accommodated on the site, within the parameters of the guidelines, if project financing requires it. New units should offer a variety of housing types, especially those designed to meet the needs of smaller households; a mix of building designs and construction materials; and a mix of housing prices to accommodate a variety of household incomes. The general goal is to create an economically, demographically and physically diverse community.
2. Neighborhood-scale commercial/office uses should be constructed in the area bounded by W. 7th Street, Otto Avenue and Montreal Circle in a pattern similar to that in the surrounding commercial area. Buildings should be built up to the street, be two-to-three stories in height, and include spaces on the upper floors that may be used for housing and/or office uses. Parking should generally be provided behind buildings or below ground, and all access should be off of W. 7th Street. Approximately 100,000-150,000 square feet should be devoted to the commercial/office space and its related parking, landscaping and access.
3. The design of the entire site should be pedestrian-oriented and heavily-landscaped. The site plan should be defined, as much as possible, by a traditional street grid. Blocks should have alleys

so that garage doors do not face the street. Residential structures should have minimal setback, and landscaping should play an integral role in defining public spaces.

4. The site should be carefully connected with the balance of the neighborhood, city and region. The site's internal circulation system (for pedestrians, cars and bikes) should connect to and facilitate the use of public transit on W. 7th Street. There should be attractive, safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Mississippi River and regional trail system.
5. The community should continue to be involved in advising the Saint Paul Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) and City Council on key issues throughout the redevelopment process, including land use controls, design guidelines and on-going design review. The plan called for a 40-acre study to facilitate redevelopment of the site with a mix of housing and neighborhood-scale commercial uses.

#### ***Koch Mobil Redevelopment Project Area Plan***

Support for redevelopment of the Koch Mobil site as a mixed-use, medium-to-high density, transit-oriented neighborhood has been reinforced through subsequent planning and urban design efforts. The Koch Mobil Redevelopment Project Area Plan, adopted by the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) in October 2001, supports the development vision and design guidelines laid out in the Brewery/Ran-View Small Area Plan. The Redevelopment Plan was found to be in conformance with the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan.

#### ***Fort Road Corridor Development Plan***

The Fort Road Corridor Development Plan endorses the recommendations of the Brewery/Ran-View Small Area Plan, and adds the following recommendations:

1. An improved pedestrian connection and streetscape along Otto Avenue should include a continuous sidewalk, street trees and pedestrian-scale lighting.
2. As part of the Koch Mobil site redevelopment, there should be enhanced pedestrian connections to W. 7th Street, Shepard Road and the river valley.
3. Although not specifically recommended in the Fort Road Corridor Development Plan due to timing concerns, TN3 was seen as the appropriate new zoning classification for the entire Koch Mobil site. Several of the tenets of TN3 are directly applicable to Victoria Park, and are illustrated in this Master Plan:
  - a. a mix of uses, including residential, commercial, civic and open space, in close proximity to one another;
  - b. a mix of housing styles, types and sizes to accommodate households of varying sizes, ages and incomes;
  - c. a system of interconnected streets and paths that offer multiple routes for motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists, and are connected to existing and future streets;
  - d. a system of open space resources and amenities, and incorporation of environmental features into the design of the neighborhood.

## THE VICTORIA PARK MASTER PLAN

### *A Changing Plan Over Time: The Realities of Implementation*

The Victoria Park Master Plan was first adopted in 2005, the result of a collaborative planning process between the community, master developer (Brighton Corporation) and City of Saint Paul. At that time, the housing market was strong, and all partners were confident in the ability of the market to respond to the community's vision of a predominantly residential, mixed-use urban village. However, soon thereafter, the housing market suffered a serious downturn, which has persisted for several years. In addition, a 2009 legal settlement with Exxon Mobil required a significant change in future land use for more than half of the Victoria Park Urban Village from mixed-use residential to park. These events necessitated a rethinking of the future land uses and street network envisioned in the original master plan, and the plan has been modified over time to reflect new realities. In general however, the core design and planning principles, as well as the neighborhood elements noted below remain relevant to guide the general land use and urban form of the neighborhood.

### *Core Design and Planning Principles*

The Master Plan is based on a core set of design and planning principles:

1. The site is urban in character, in terms of block size, block arrangement and density.
2. A connected street network will accommodate pedestrians, cars and bicycles; connect with adjacent streets; and set the urban form of the neighborhood.
3. A central public green is an important gathering place for the neighborhood and fits into a larger system of public and private open spaces (creating the neighborhood's "green structure").
4. There is a range of housing types, prices and styles.
5. The neighborhood is well-designed so that relatively-high densities

are provided in medium-rise, human-scaled buildings.

6. Access to the Mississippi River is provided through maintaining view corridors and overlooks, as well as physical access to the regional trail along Shepard Road.
7. Building facades frame public spaces and relate to the street, with parking underground or tucked under the building.
8. Stormwater management is achieved through engineered means to allow for urban densities throughout the site.
9. Environmental remediation is the first step in returning this site to a vibrant mixed-use community.
10. Phasing will occur to maximize market absorption, manage costs, and allow the neighborhood to grow and evolve over time.

### *Neighborhood Elements*

Victoria Park will contain:

1. A street and block system where blocks are generally 300' by 300'.
2. A hierarchy of street types, including primary and secondary neighborhood streets, and alleys. The primary neighborhood streets will have a 60-foot right-of-way, with 36' curb-to-curb, sidewalks, and parallel parking on both sides of the street. The secondary neighborhood streets will have a 60-foot right-of-way, with 32' curb-to-curb, sidewalks, and parallel parking on one side of the street. Alleys will be 14' wide, and be used for service and parking access. Most alleys will be private. All public streets will have standard lantern-style lighting scaled to the pedestrian.
3. A diverse residential unit mix of several building types (unit numbers approximate):
  - 60 units of senior assisted living
  - 90 units of senior independent living
  - 90-bed nursing home (representing 15 units)
  - 245 market-rate rental apartments
  - 30 units in accessory structures (i.e. garages)

- 233 condominium units
  - 25 single-family detached units
  - 165 townhome units
  - 20 units in mansion-style buildings
4. An elderly housing campus designed to be urban in character, connected to the street and integrated with the larger neighborhood.
  5. 5,000 square feet of retail in a mixed-use building along W. 7th Street.
  6. Building heights that range from 2-10 stories. (Note: Some of the maximum building heights planned for the neighborhood will require conditional use permits and variances. The appropriate locations for these buildings is indicated on Plate 7.)
  7. A central green, 300' by 600', that will function as a large recreational and gathering space for residents and visitors.
  8. A series of smaller green spaces that will be privately owned but connected to the central green.
  9. Views of the river valley along public rights-of-way.
  10. All required parking provided completely underground; tucked under units (but above-grade); detached from or attached to the principal dwelling, but always in the rear of the lot; and on-street.

### **Victoria Park Design Guide**

Saint Paul Riverbluff LLC and the W. 7th/Fort Road Federation jointly prepared a set of infrastructure and architecture design guidelines for use by developers and architects in Victoria Park. The design guidelines are published in *Design Guide: Victoria Park, A St. Paul Riverbluff Neighborhood*, dated October 2004. The Design Guide is premised on three expectations:

1. Victoria Park will be an integrated urban neighborhood, with a cohesive streetscape framed by harmonious, high-quality buildings

- of various types.
2. Design creativity and a variety of architectural expressions are welcomed and expected.
  3. Design solutions should be compatible with the urban context of the neighborhood.

A design committee comprising representatives of the master developer (Saint Paul Riverbluff LLC) and the W. 7th/Fort Road Federation will use the Design Guide to provide feedback during the schematic design phase. The Design Guide contains guidelines for streets and alleys, bike and pedestrian circulation, open space, parking, lighting and signage, building configuration, exterior building materials, fenestration and height. These guidelines are generally consistent with the Traditional Neighborhood District design standards in Sec. 66.343. (Where they are inconsistent or conflict with the TN design standards, the TN design standards will prevail.) It is important to note that the Design Guide is an agreement between the developer and greater W. 7th community, and as such is an important companion document to the Victoria Park Master Plan. The Design Guide has not, however, been formally approved by the City of Saint Paul and is not a part of this Master Plan.

### **Plan Elements**

The Victoria Park Master Plan is primarily a set of illustrative plates that will guide subsequent, more detailed site planning for the new urban village. The plates are:

#### **Plate 1 Community Context**

Significant public infrastructure features (streets, railroads, parks, etc.); natural, geographic and topographic features; and major concentrations of residential, industrial and commercial land use are shown. Victoria Park is uniquely situated between

the Mississippi River and W. 7th Street corridors. It will be developed in a street and block pattern similar to the existing neighborhoods surrounding it. An active rail line, the Canadian Pacific, runs through the planned neighborhood.

**Plate 2 Existing Conditions**

Victoria Park is currently a vacant site on a flat plateau on top of the river bluff. A portion of the site has been filled to prepare it for first-phase development. Contamination boundaries are approximate. The Koch Mobil Environmental Assessment Worksheet contains extensive information about the type and location of contamination, and planned remediation activities to meet the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency's requirements. Soil remediation activities are underway and will continue into the future. While some areas will have permanent use restrictions on them due to contamination (shown in purple), others will be completely remediated over time and will have no use restrictions (shown in orange). All housing sites will be remediated to MPCA standards for residential use. Other site constraints include a utility easement that runs through the site for a regional sanitary sewer line and location within the Mississippi River Critical Area.

**Plate 3 Public Realm**

Victoria Park is designed with the same street and block pattern as Saint Paul's traditional urban neighborhoods. All streets are public, with the exception of a private drive to serve the riverbluff condominium tower at the intersection of Otto Avenue and Shepard Road. All public streets will have on-street parking on one or both sides, sidewalks, street trees and historic lantern lighting. Otto Avenue is recommended for an on-street bike lane(s) to connect the neighborhood

to the Samuel Morgan Regional Trail along Shepard Road. A central green will be built as a new City park, while bluff space will be privately-owned but accessible to the public. A transit stop is proposed for the corner of W. 7th Street and Otto Avenue.

**Plate 4 Street Classification System**

The street system has two components: primary streets and alleys. Primary streets are 36' in width (curb-to-curb) and have a 60' right-of-way. All public streets have on-street parking on both sides, sidewalks, street trees and historic lantern lighting. The alley segments allow for a 14-16' drive path within a 20' right-of-way.

**Plate 5 Public Utilities Plan**

City water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer lines will sit within street rights-of-way. A regional sanitary sewer line runs diagonally through the site. Detailed design of city utilities has been done for Phase 1 only; subsequent phases will be designed as development occurs.

**Plate 6 General Land Use Areas**

Sec. 66.344 of the Zoning Code requires that master plans for TN3 districts of 15 or more acres contain, at a minimum, a mixed residential area and open space areas. They may also contain areas designated as mixed use and edge/transition. This plate identifies where all four of these elements are located in Victoria Park.

**Plate 7 Building Type**

A range of housing types will be built in Victoria Park, from single-family detached units to higher-density apartments. This range in building type will also provide a range in unit

size and price point. Townhomes are the predominant type. All buildings will relate to the street, with individual unit and common building entrances directly from the sidewalk. Precedents are shown for each building type to suggest the general approach to materials, configuration, height and relationship to the street.

**Plate 8 Building Heights**

In conjunction with the range in building types, heights in Victoria Park will range from 2-10 stories, with most buildings in the 2-4-story range. Some of the maximum building heights planned for the neighborhood will require conditional use permits and variances. This plate simply shows where taller heights are appropriate. In general, taller buildings are planned along W. 7th Street, on the industrial edge to the west and at the edge of the bluff.

**Plate 9 Parking Plan**

All streets will have two-sided on-street parking. Off-street parking will be provided in detached garages (for single-family homes), underneath buildings (for condominiums, apartments, senior units and mansion homes) and in tuck-under garages (for townhomes). A small amount of surface parking behind buildings or hidden in the center of a block is indicated for guests and employees.

**Plate 10 Illustrative Plan**

This plate brings the public realm and building type plates together, and is the essence of the Victoria Park Master Plan. Future land use for the area in blue will be determined once the extent of remediation at this location is established.

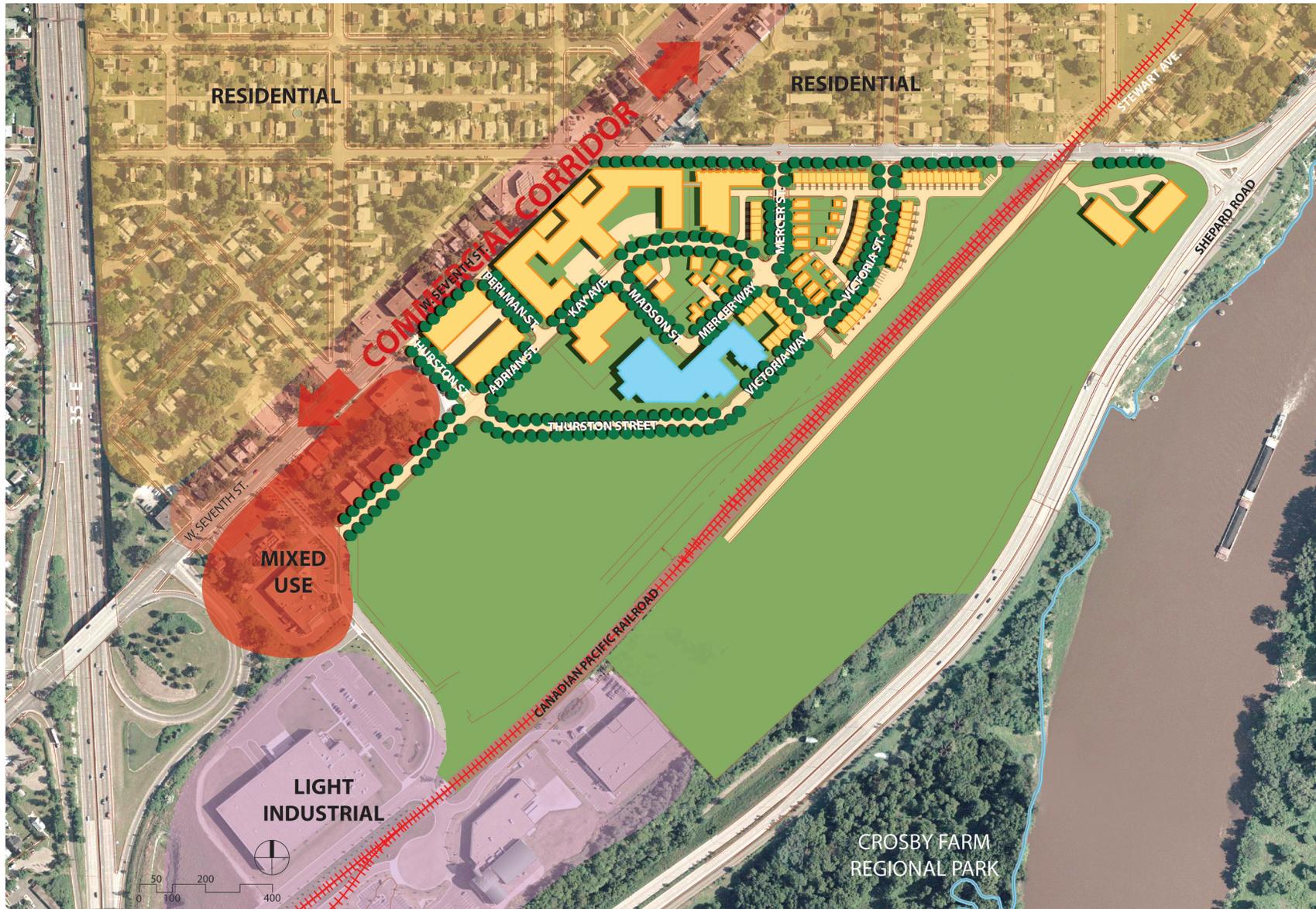
**Plate 11 Development Phasing Plan**

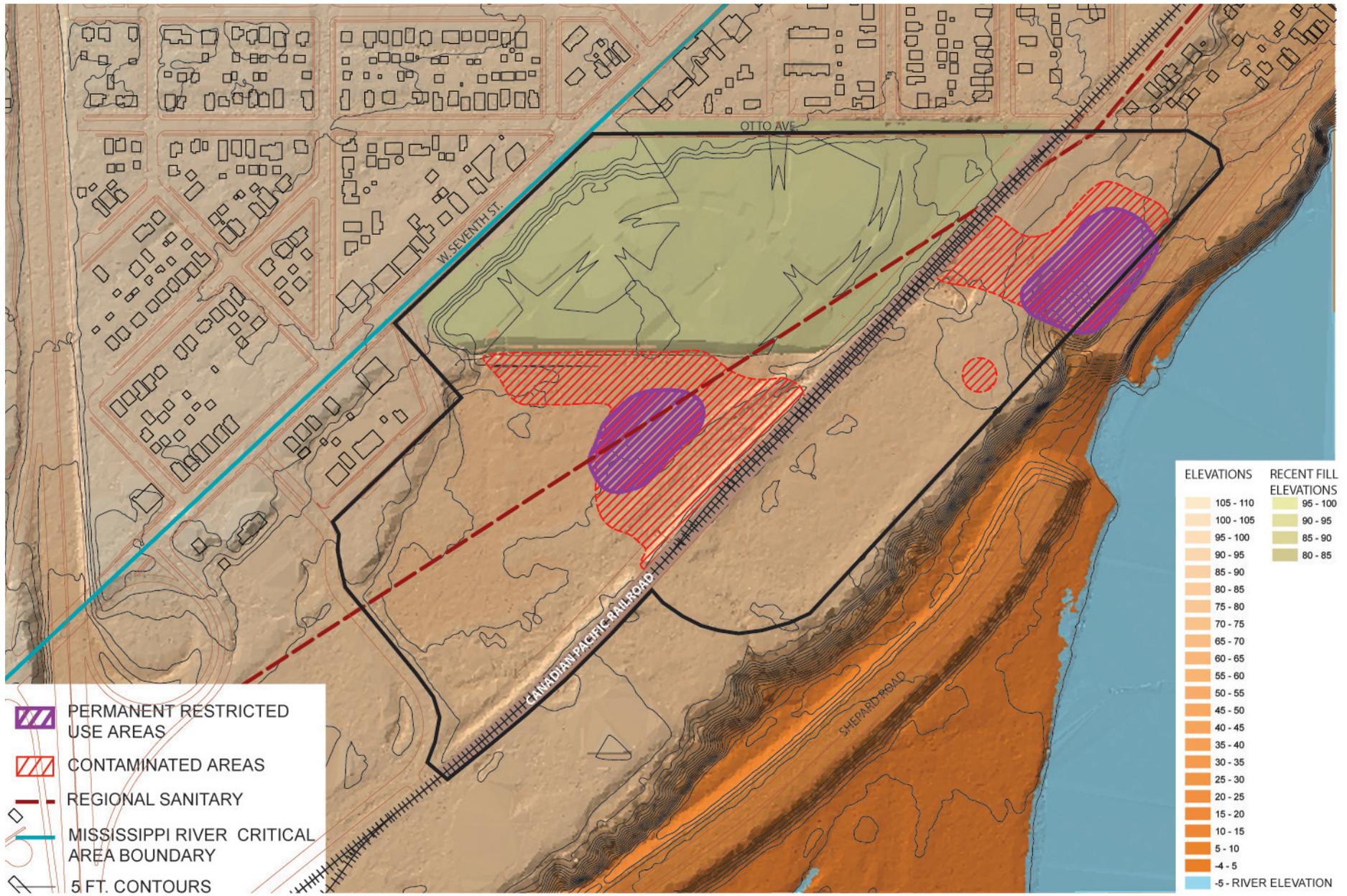
Private development in Victoria Park will occur in phases to maintain flexibility and respond to market demand. Public improvements will be built concurrent with private development.

**Plan Modifications**

Sec. 66.345(c) of the Saint Paul Zoning Code provides for changes to the Victoria Park Master Plan. Minor modifications may be requested by the property owner or developer, and are subject to approval by the Planning Administrator. Minor modifications include, but are not limited to, changes of less than ten percent in land area designated in a specific category, provide such changes are consistent with the intent of the Master Plan.

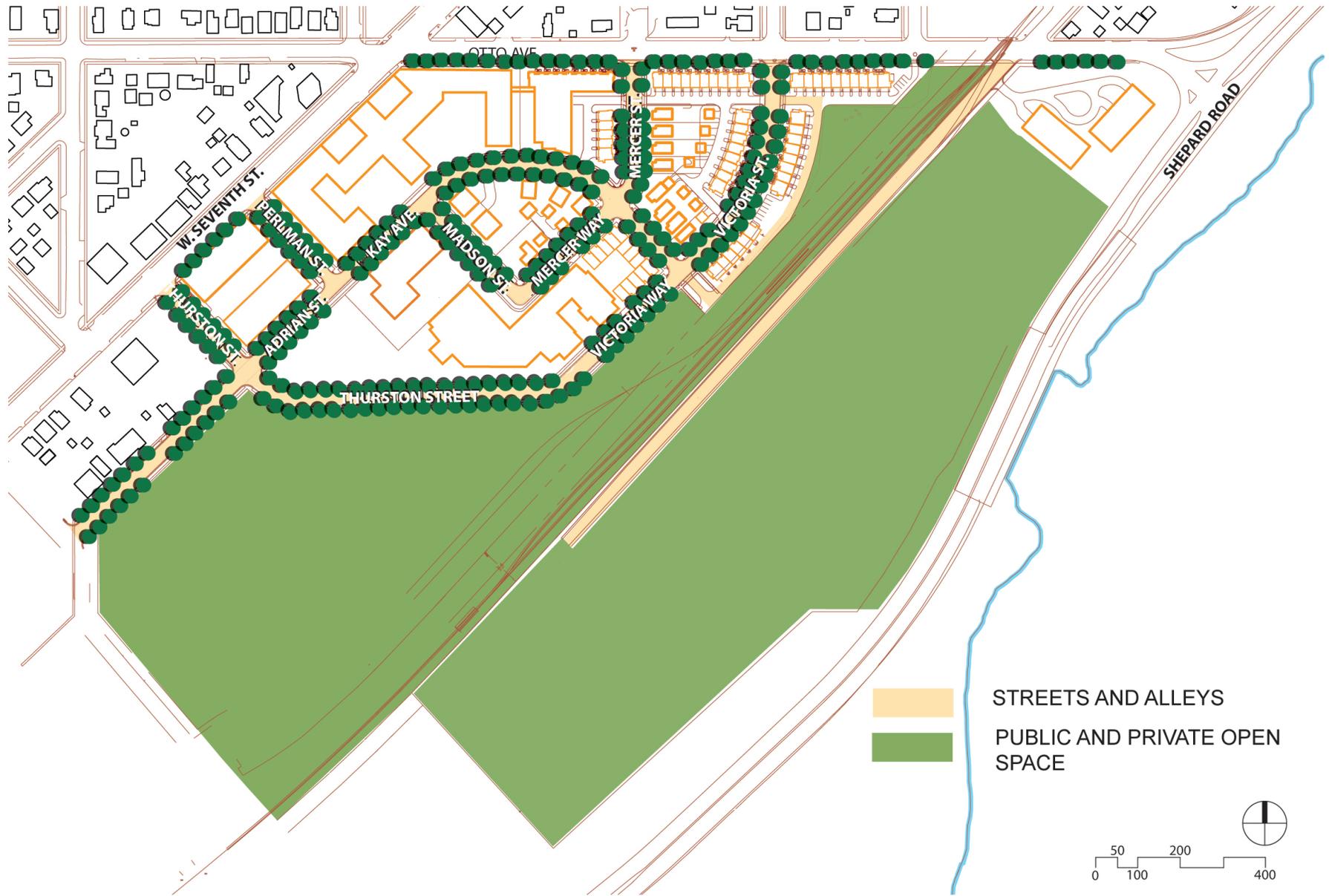
Major modifications may be requested by the City Council, Planning Commission, or any person having an ownership or leasehold interest in property that is the subject of the proposed modification. They are subject to approval by the City Council following Planning Commission review and recommendation. Major modifications include, but are not limited to, changes of ten percent or more in land area designated in a specific category, creation of a new public street or removal of a public street segment, removal of a park or open space area, or addition or removal of an entire block.

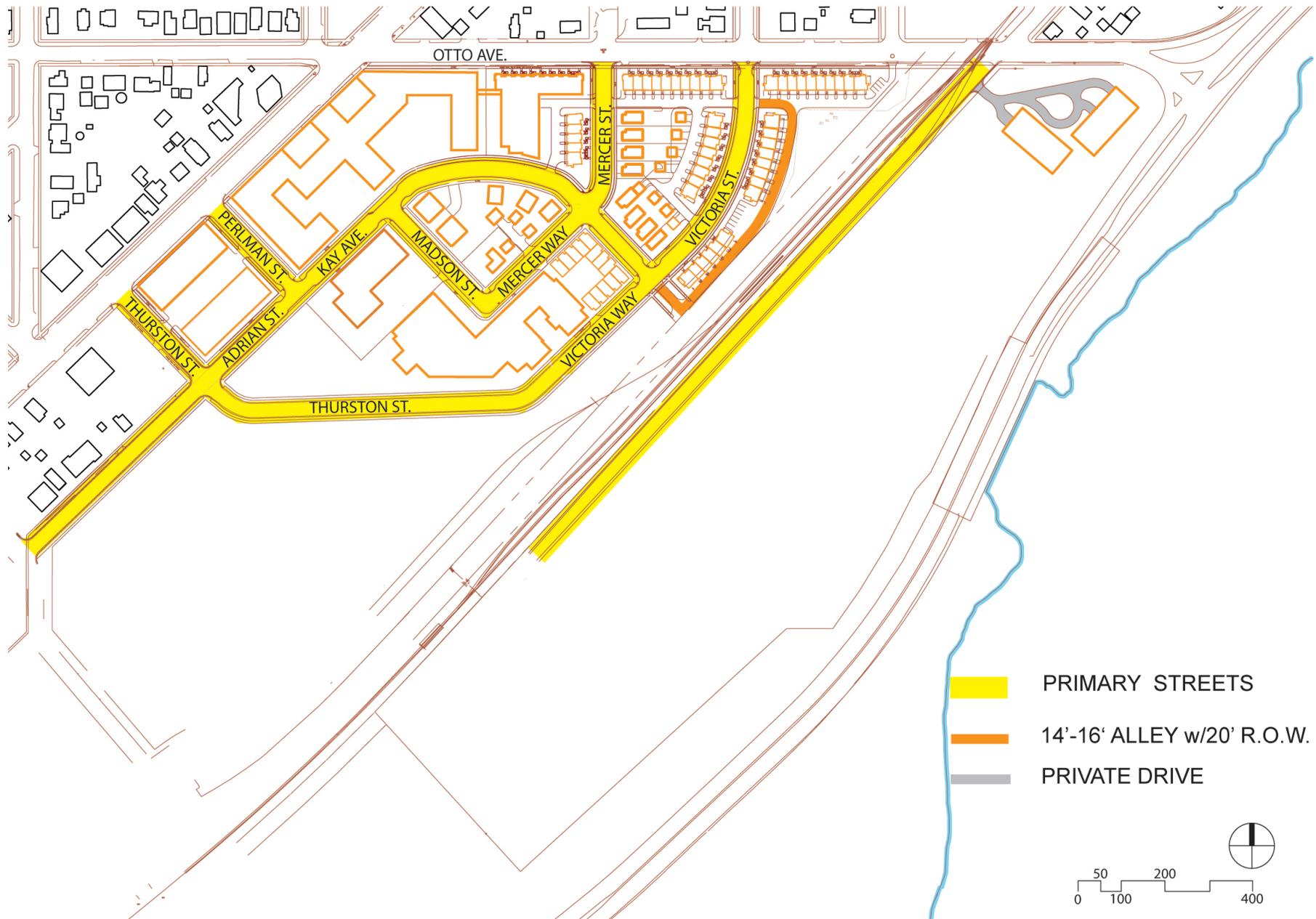


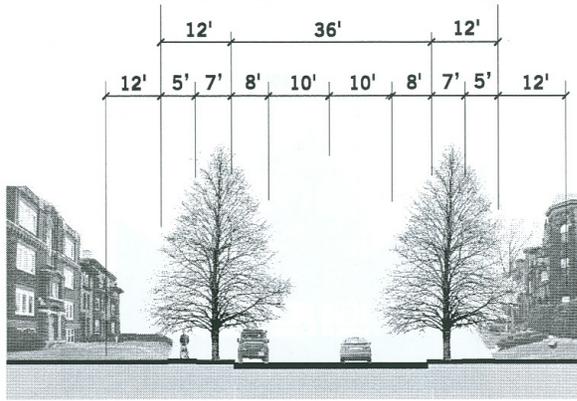


**Victoria Park Master Plan**

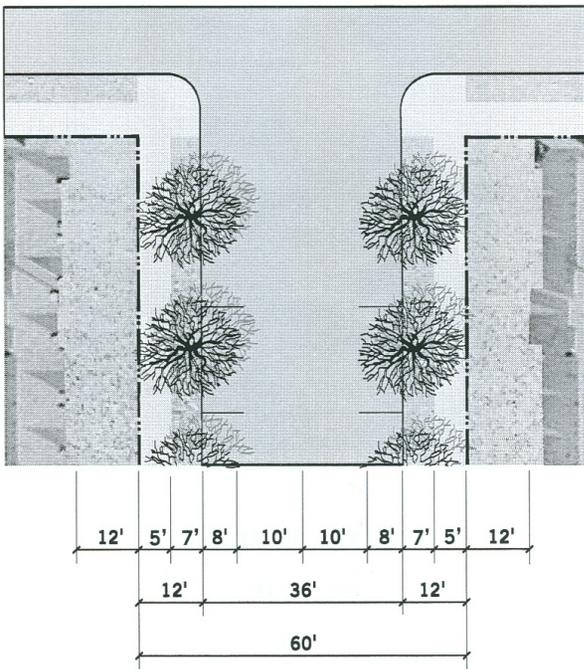
**Plate 2  
Existing Conditions**



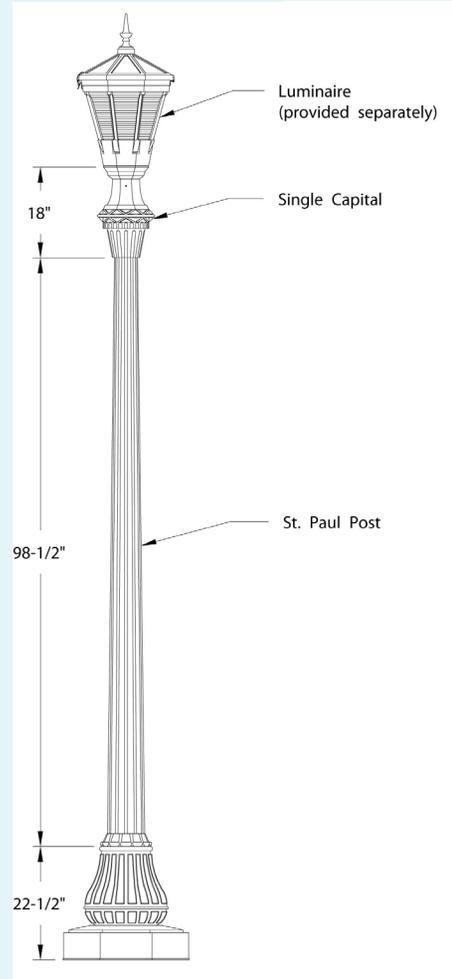


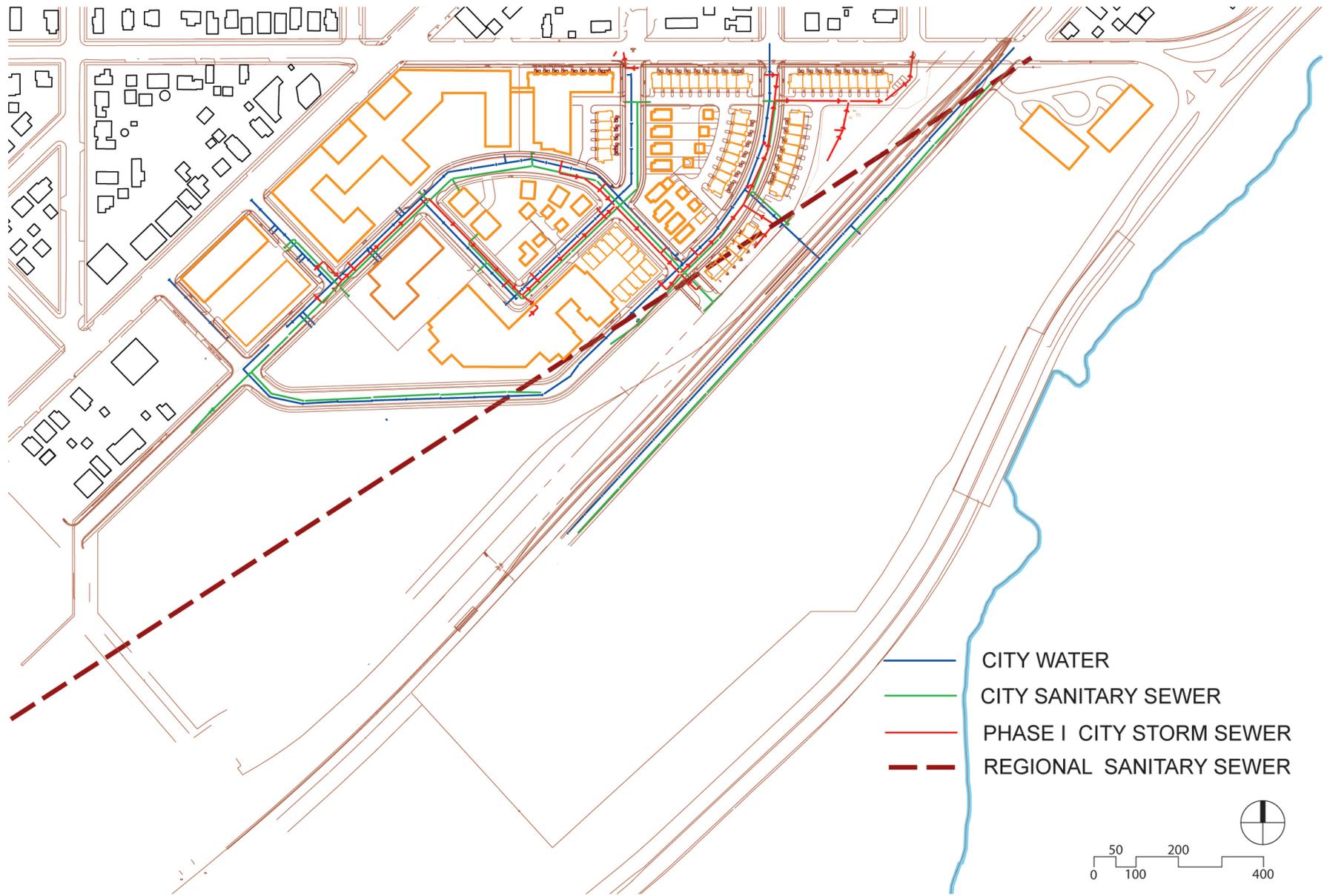


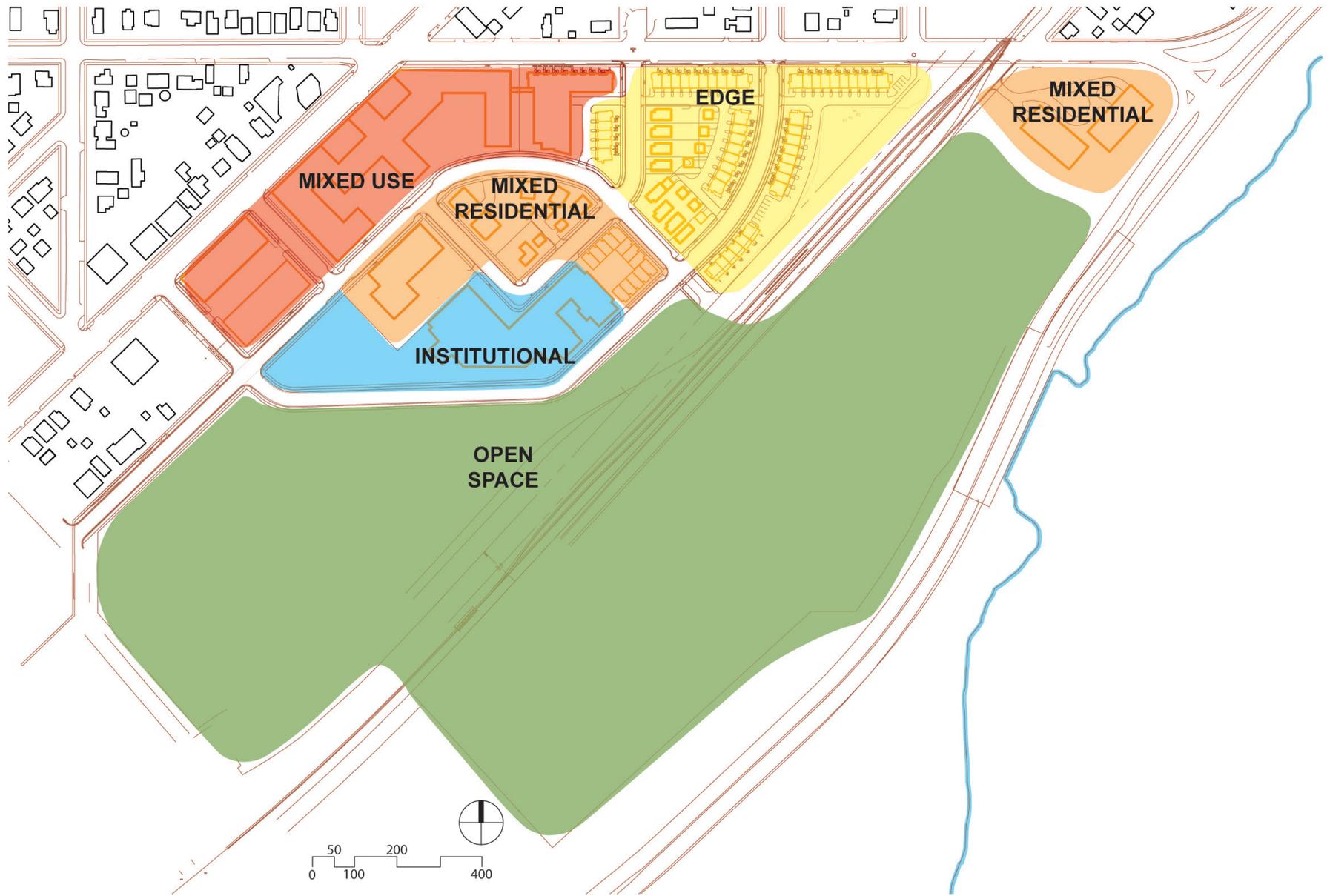
**PRIMARY STREET SECTION**

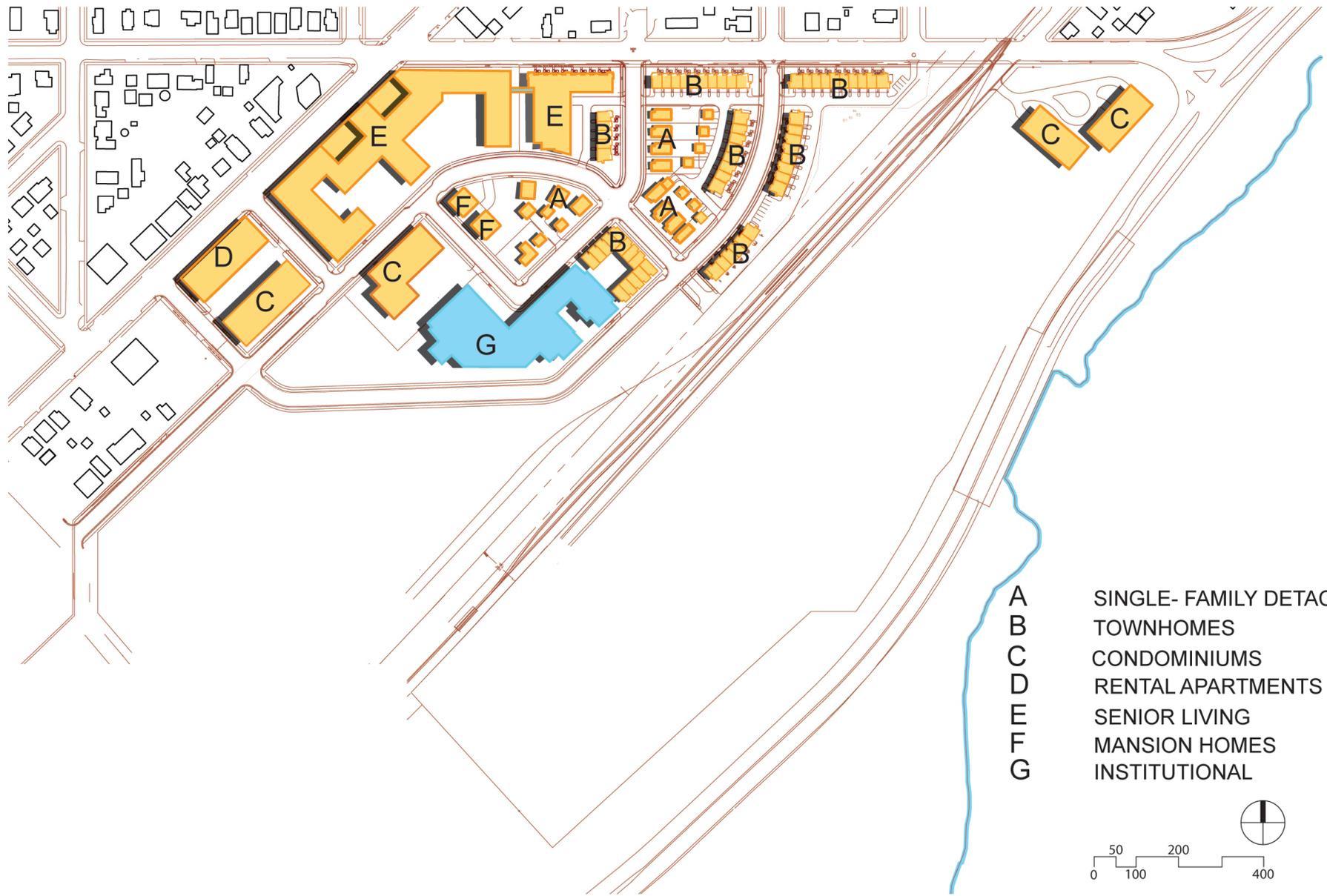


**PRIMARY STREET PLAN**

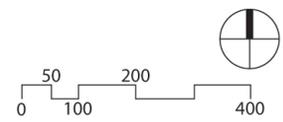








- A SINGLE- FAMILY DETACHED
- B TOWNHOMES
- C CONDOMINIUMS
- D RENTAL APARTMENTS
- E SENIOR LIVING
- F MANSION HOMES
- G INSTITUTIONAL

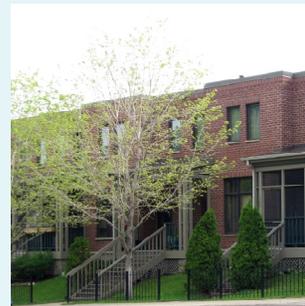


### Single-Family Detached



These homes will resemble the traditional single-family homes in Saint Paul's existing neighborhoods. Exterior building materials will be predominantly masonry. Off-street parking will be provided in garages; larger garages may have accessory units above them.

### Townhomes



These homes will be attached ownership units with individual entries for each unit. Stairs will go directly from the sidewalk to the front door, and will be part of a small landscaped front yard. The higher-density townhomes along the bluff will have balconies and outdoor courtyards. Exterior building materials will be predominantly brick, and the buildings will be vertical in orientation. Tuck-under at-grade parking will be provided.

## Condominiums



These buildings will contain ownership units with a common entry. Balconies and large window openings will help identify individual units. Exterior building materials will be predominantly brick, and the buildings will be vertical in orientation. Parking will be provided underneath each building.

## Rental Apartments



These buildings will contain both affordable and market-rate units. They will provide smaller units, 800-1200 square feet. Elevator access will be provided to all floors, including the underground parking. Exterior building materials will be predominantly brick, and the buildings will be vertical in orientation.

## Senior Living



These buildings will offer a range of housing choice from independent living to assisted living to nursing home care. They will be 3-4 stories in height and vertical in orientation, with elevator access to all floors (including parking). The first floor will have a more storefront appearance on W. 7th Street. Resident parking will be provided underground, while a small amount of guest and employee parking will be provided behind the building. Exterior building materials will be predominantly brick.

## Mansion Homes



These buildings will resemble large single-family structures, but will include 5-8 units per building. They will be 2-3 stories in height with a common entry and interior entries to each unit. Exterior building materials will be predominantly brick, stone and stucco. Parking will be provided underneath each building.

