

Dayton's Bluff

District 4

District Plan

2007

– Adopted 10.15.2007 –

Introduction

The purpose of a district plan is to guide both city staff and residents in a collaborative plan for a neighborhood. Dayton's Bluff first assembled a district plan in 1978. That plan was updated in 1986 and has been our adopted plan for the last 20 years. Needless to say, Dayton's Bluff has seen enormous changes since 1986. Both the age of the previous plan, and a city process for decommissioning plans over 10 years of age, led the Dayton's Bluff District 4 Community Council to commission a new district plan in 2004. A steering committee was formed to create a new planning document. This is the product of that effort.

This plan arose from a rigorous and painstaking process of information gathering, analysis, and finally a written conclusive plan. The first step was to examine the previous plan and talk with city planners about their desired outcome. We then created an exhaustive survey that was distributed in the local, hand-delivered newspaper, the District Forum. To ensure that we would reach the many communities who make up Dayton's Bluff, we provided versions of the survey in English, Spanish, and Hmong. To increase the response rate from communities of color, we delivered some surveys by hand to targeted areas and establishments. We also delivered by hand and by mail an additional 400 surveys to selected blocks, including return postage for convenience. The goal was to reach as many people as possible.

Next we held three neighborhood meetings in the geographical north, south, and western portions of the Bluff. There we elicited commentary from any residents who cared to attend. We also held focus groups with local Dayton's Bluff businesses and Metropolitan State University.

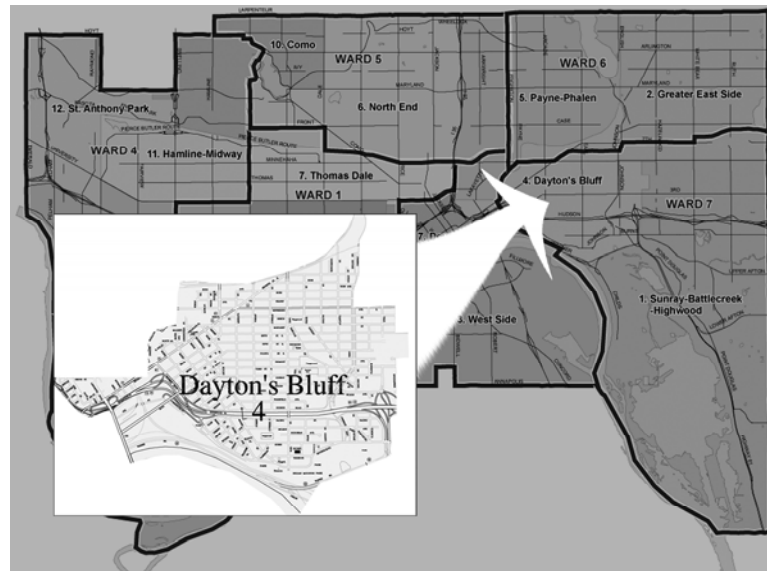
Another source of information was the Geography Department at Macalester College. The advanced GIS class and Professor Carol Gershmehl assisted us by preparing maps of the myriad data available such as census data, school attendance records, land use, zoning, and more.

All of this input was assembled and evaluated. We did statistical analysis of the survey responses and pulled out common concerns raised. We broke down responses based on racial and ethnic groups, length of residency, and home ownership status to ensure that we didn't overlook any special interests. We then used the results to write this document.

The District Council intends for this document to inform the community of the goals that were expressed by the community itself. It should guide the growth and development of the Bluff. We also hope to direct the City of Saint Paul planning for our neighborhood toward outcomes that are desired by our residents. The biennial bonding method that the city uses to fund projects makes this document vital to the future of Dayton's Bluff because it looks to this plan for inspiration and direction. The specific goals and visions outlined in this plan should focus the change which

is sure to occur in the neighborhood in ways that will be positive for the community. This plan is not presented as a replacement for or in contradiction to other previously adopted area plans, such as the Lower Dayton's Bluff 40-acre study, the East 7th Street Design Guidelines, the Riverview Transit Corridor study, and others. Rather, it is intended to complement those documents. The responsibility for implementing the goals in this plan lies with the Dayton's Bluff District 4 Community Council, the City of Saint Paul in collaboration with the District Council, and residents of the neighborhood. Please use this document to further those goals and to improve the Bluff!

The Dayton's Bluff neighborhood is St. Paul Planning District 4. On the east, it extends as far as Birmingham but is primarily along Johnson Parkway. On the north, it is primarily defined by the Bruce Vento Regional Trail/Phalen Boulevard. On the west, it extends as far as 35E but is mostly an irregular boundary including Lafayette Office Park and the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary. On the south, it is essentially the Mississippi River.



Dayton's Bluff is one of the largest districts in St. Paul in terms of population. The 2000 census lists its population as 17,758. Its population has grown by 15% since 1990, 10% faster than the rest of the city. It is one of the areas of St. Paul that has a high density of children. The number of school age children increased by 55% in the last 10 years. Part of this increase is due to more working adults (over 12%) moving into the area with their families. This comes at the same time as the number of older adults dropped by 23%.

What has been happening appears to be a change in the neighborhood from the historically white residents to an influx of younger, multi-ethnic families. In the last 10 years, our numbers of white residents dropped from 83% to 52% of the total population while the Asian (19%), Black (12%), Latino (11%) and American Indian (2%) populations all grew. Most of the groups doubled their size in terms of

percentages, and Asians almost tripled. This has meant a dramatic change in almost every aspect of neighborhood life. For instance, 28% of residents now speak a language other than English at home, and businesses catering to Hispanic and Hmong residents have flourished along East 7th Street and across the East side of St. Paul.

The change reverses a long-standing trend going back half a century of decreasing population and almost non-existent minority populations. The area used to focus on blue collar manufacturing jobs in the area industries, such as 3M, Whirlpool, and Globe Roofing, but these have decreased greatly, with work focusing instead on professional/managerial positions, service industry jobs, and sales and office work. As of 2000, only 19% of employees in the area worked in manufacturing. The neighborhood has increased its residents with high school degrees from two thirds in the 1980s to three quarters currently. The increase in the number of college-educated residents has almost doubled from 7% in the 1980s to 13% in 2000. These increases bring the area closer to city-wide averages and allow for the job shift above.

Dayton's Bluff still lags behind in terms of family income. The median household income in the area was \$34,465, compared to \$38,774 in the city as a whole. This reflects a higher than average number of residents below the poverty level, 21%, as compared to the city average of 16%. Unfortunately, this is an increase in the poverty level since 1980, when it was 11% in the neighborhood, and 10% in the city as a whole.

If you would like to review more of this ethnographic information, much of the data represented here is available in the maps in the appendixes.

Following a brief history of Dayton's Bluff, this plan contains five major sections that we feel address the main areas of interest and concern in the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood:

- Commercial and economic development
- Community life, public spaces, and recreation
- Housing and residential life
- Neighborhood safety and livability
- Transportation, traffic, and parking

Each individual section includes:

Background:

The current state of the neighborhood.

Vision:

The environment we want in the future.

Goals and strategies:

The specific actions we believe will lead to our vision.

History

Dayton's Bluff contains one of the widest varieties of history of any Twin Cities' neighborhood. The landmarks found in its historic district and the community around it could tell the story of the development of St. Paul. Mounds Park, for instance, has the only six remaining burial sites of an early group that came to the area more than a thousand years ago.

Kaposia, a large Dakota Indian village, existed below Dayton's Bluff from the late seventeenth century until the mid-nineteenth century. Its residents lived along the river and performed their burial rites on the cliffs above. They were followed by the Metis (mixed bloods) and European-American farmers—often former Fort Snelling soldiers who tilled the land in the late 1830s and 1840s.

The development of Dayton's Bluff as a “suburban” residential location began in the 1840s. The area was named for Lyman Dayton, an early pioneer real estate operator who owned extensive properties and built a home on the Bluff in the 1850s. The community became part of what historians call “the walking city” and was started so early that many of its streets were laid out parallel to the Mississippi River rather than in a north/south manner.

Feed, flour, and lumber mills were built in the area in the 1850s to take advantage of Phalen Creek as a source of water power. When a railroad was built north of East 7th Street in the late 1860s, more industries, including Hamm's Brewery, grew up along its corridor. Soon a railroad depot called “Post's Siding” was built at present-day Earl Street and East 7th Street, and a community of workers surrounded the industries. It was the start of what would be a long history of manufacturing in the community.

Because of its attractive landscape and scenic vistas, many wealthy residents chose to construct handsome estates on large lots. A sizeable group of prosperous German-Americans clustered together. However, the Bluff was never an exclusive enclave of the rich. A St. Paul paper of the time noted that “in the eastern part of the city, on Dayton's Bluff . . . several hundred dwellings have been erected.” Most of the homes were “of the medium class, for the use of mechanics and employees of the numerous factories that are springing up.”

The 1880s through the early 1900s was a time of prosperity. The streetcar arrived and the neighborhood expanded. New development, both commercial and residential, sprang up near the streetcar line, which went up East 7th Street and ended at Duluth Street. The era saw the arrival of new industries, including lumber companies, farm equipment companies, Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing (3M), and Seeger Refrigerator, which later became Whirlpool.

Housing continued to expand south of East 7th Street, and the streetcar company built a branch line from East 7th Street over Maria Avenue to today's Hudson Road, then down Earl Street to Burns Avenue. It was a fairly common sight in the summer to see chartered streetcars taking out-of-town visitors to the scenic vistas of the new Indian Mounds Park.

In the 1920s, families establishing their homes in the Dayton's Bluff area were a mixture of moderate and middle income families of both blue and white collar workers. Irish residents joined the earlier residents, primarily Yankees and Germans. At one time, there were six German-speaking congregations and one large Irish Catholic church. In the early days, there was an extensive Irish settlement in the Lower Bluff area.

The community's prosperity continued until 1929, although many of the elite had moved away to other sections of the city. The use of the automobile began to affect Dayton's Bluff, making outlying sections such as Mounds Park and the Johnson Parkway area more accessible. The new transportation also brought gas stations, automobile-oriented businesses, and a need to widen streets. A growing population meant more classrooms, grocery stores, movie theaters, and other amenities.

The Great Depression of the 1930s hit the area hard. Many people were unemployed, local stores lost revenues, and people who owned large mansions could no longer afford to keep them up. Many of the larger homes were subsequently split up into small apartments or rooming houses. However, the economy picked up during the war years as 3M, Seeger, and other area businesses geared up to become an important part of the country's military effort.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the areas east of Johnson Parkway were quickly filled in on East 7th Street and either side of East 3rd Street. But the growing suburbs started to draw many of the young in St. Paul away from the inner city areas. The community was aging. The population of Dayton's Bluff is estimated to have declined 20% between 1970 and 1985. Home values and household incomes dropped. Throughout these two decades, the number of minority residents remained less than 10%.

The economic situation also underwent a shift and certain parts of the neighborhood lost the former middle class base; the area became a mostly white, working class enclave. Still, many older institutions, such as churches, hospitals, and schools were remodeled or expanded. New organizations were formed in this era, including Parkway Little League and the Dayton's Bluff District 4 Community Council.

Unfortunately, the loss of manufacturing jobs began to hit St. Paul and the East Side in the 1970s. The neighborhood's Whirlpool plant shut down in 1985. This was followed quickly by the closing of Stroh's Brewery and St. John's Hospital, and by cutbacks at 3M. There was a major slip in the value of industrial property in the area and increased vacancy rates for commercial properties.

Eventually, there was a rebound. Between 1990 and 2000, the population decline ended and the number of residents actually grew to almost 18,000. The number of senior citizens decreased significantly while younger families with children increased greatly.

During the same period, race and ethnicity began to change. The white population decreased from 83% to just over 50%. The Asian population grew dramatically to 19% of the community. African American and Latino populations grew to around 12% each and, while small, the American Indian population doubled. Area businesses clearly reflect the community's growing diversity.

Some of the changes have strained the community's resources. Crime has been a concern, but a network of block clubs has been created as a response. The housing stock is old, but a Dayton's Bluff Historic District has spurred home renovation and attracted many new residents. The District Council continues to provide leadership and vision for the neighborhood.

New amenities have been created and old spaces reused. For instance, Hamm Park was recently redeveloped and the old Mounds Theater has been renovated to serve as a local cultural center. Metropolitan State University has developed at the old St. John's Hospital site. Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio (CLUES), an important Latino organization, has constructed a new headquarters on East Seventh that also houses a Mexican Consulate. Several non-profit groups work to improve the community.

The neighborhood has responded to many different developments throughout its long existence and will continue to do so as it enters the 21st century. Building on a proud history, residents look forward to a bright future, guided by the 2007 Dayton's Bluff District Plan.

Commercial and Economic Development

Background

The commercial areas of Dayton's Bluff have roots in the streetcar era when residents lived near work, shopped close to home, and residential and business uses shared the same building. Surveys and meetings reflect the desire of residents to have a full range of goods and services available within the neighborhood, both for convenience and also because of the realization that strong businesses have a positive impact on the community. Given the proper care and attention, this area is poised for a resurgence of strong and varied local businesses.

Historically, Dayton's Bluff had a strong commercial and industrial business community. The national trends away from factory-style production jobs haven't missed the Bluff. The closing of the Whirlpool plant, Globe Roofing, and Hamm's Brewery, along with the downsizing of 3M, have changed local employment opportunities. Most employers in Dayton's Bluff are now smaller businesses and entrepreneurs focusing on service industries. The labor pool of residents has also changed since the loss of the factory jobs. According to the 2000 census, the occupations of Dayton's Bluff residents are as follows:

- 23% managerial or professional
- 25% sales and office work
- 23% production and transportation
- 21% service jobs.

To help small businesses get off to a good start, the District Council has offered the Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Micro Entrepreneur Training and Support Program twice a year since 1993. Bringing back the vitality of the commercial and business community will create more jobs for residents of Dayton's Bluff and bring in investment in the commercial areas.

Markets for commercial endeavors have increased in recent years due to the development of new housing and educational facilities. For example, a new building housing the Metropolitan State University Library and Dayton's Bluff Public Library opened in 2004 on East 7th Street, drawing both students and residents to that area. The Latino social and behavioral health services provider, CLUES, also constructed a building several blocks away on East 7th Street, where the Mexican Consulate opened in 2005. Plans are in place to construct condominiums on the former Hospital Linen site on East 7th Street between Bates and Maple in the next year. Likewise, the Port Authority has acquired the former Globe site with intentions to clean up the pollution and redevelop the property. These developments will attract an increasing number of people to East 7th Street and its businesses.

The other concentrated business area is Lafayette Park, which has seen some great development recently with the construction of a number of government office buildings and other endeavors. It is much more of a business park than a traditional commercial corridor like East 7th Street. Its distance from the rest of the neighborhood means that it hasn't been a focus for neighborhood planning in the past, but it is unique with many opportunities for future growth.

Along with the new buildings going up along East 7th Street, many of the original commercial buildings of the neighborhood are still in good shape and in use more than a century later. With façade work and other exterior improvements, these lovely older commercial buildings could again be focal points of the street. The District Council is currently working with Historic St. Paul and the North East Neighborhoods Community Development Corporation on grants and loan programs for façade improvements in Dayton's Bluff.

During neighborhood meetings and in surveys, many residents have cited easy access to downtown St. Paul and the freeway system as a major strength and competitive advantage for Dayton's Bluff residential and business areas. The inverse is also true—with the right mix of shops, restaurants, and services, Dayton's Bluff can become a regional shopping and dining destination for people from other areas of St. Paul. An excellent example is the well-known Swede Hollow Café on East 7th Street, which attracts customers from downtown St. Paul and other neighborhoods.

Although we are experiencing many positive successes, there is still much work to be done. Concerns about business and commercial activity along East 7th Street include the speed of traffic, the appearance of commercial establishments, and the vitality of the businesses themselves. Personal safety and the perception of crime is an issue for businesses and some customers have reported they do not feel safe. Two-thirds of respondents polled by the survey done for this plan felt that the business district had a poor image and reputation. To address these issues, the area needs a wide variety of high quality businesses. The need for a bank, in particular, is very important for business investment and for residents to have access to financial services. Businesses that are primarily poverty-driven, like check-cashing outlets, pawn shops, and rent-to-own stores, should be discouraged, as should concentrations of corner stores that can cause problems for neighbors. Taking these steps and others to address these important issues will allow the business community in Dayton's Bluff to become a regional attraction and to serve the many needs of the residents of our neighborhoods.

Leadership needs to come from the business owners themselves. For many years, Dayton's Bluff had very active business organizations, such as the Dayton's Bluff Commercial Club and the East 7th Street Business Association. Initiatives like the Flower Pots on 7th program, which is intended to improve the appearance of the streetscape and renew a sense of pride, have encouraged others and many businesses want to work at building a strong East 7th Street Business Association to meet the needs of the current business community. Working with locally owned businesses as the core of this group, the District Council can help re-energize this important constituency of the neighborhood.

Commercial and Economic Development

Vision

The Dayton's Bluff neighborhood requires a revitalized business district with an active business association that will project a more positive image both of and for local businesses. Although there are other small businesses scattered around the area, effort should be focused principally along East 7th Street, around the intersection at Hudson Road and Earl Street, and in Lafayette Park. The businesses should offer a full range of services. In return, the community will strive to provide an environment with low petty crime and will encourage façade and building beautification, and training and networking opportunities for local business people. Dayton's Bluff businesses should reflect the variety of cultures that make up our neighborhood. Local and minority-owned businesses will lead the revitalization of the district. New commercial buildings should fit both the traditional streetscape and existing design guidelines. The result will be a destination for both visitors and people living in the area, and a vibrant business community.

Commercial and Economic Development

Goals and Strategies

CED1. To improve the image and reputation of the business district of Dayton's Bluff, the District Council will:

CED1.1. Make the area more attractive visually by pursuing grants to provide funding for improvements in the appearance of our business district (for example, the façade improvement project), while continuing and expanding other beautification projects on the commercial corridors.

CED1.2. Ensure that new and remodeled businesses on East 7th Street follow existing design guidelines, city codes, and overall stylistic fit in the neighborhood regarding aspects such as height and scale restrictions, materials, parking, signage, and so on. These guidelines include, but are not limited to, the East 7th Street Design Guidelines, the Dayton's Bluff Special District Sign Plan, and all applicable city codes.

CED1.3. Encourage the reuse rather than demolition of existing buildings that comply with the preceding guidelines, and discourage the expansion of surface parking lots.

CED1.4. Create a comprehensive policy for corner/convenience stores that addresses issues of density, waste disposal, advertisements, parking, products sold, and so forth.

CED1.5. Work to relocate poverty-driven industries like check-cashing outlets, pawn shops, and rent-to-own stores.

CED2. To encourage more local startups and attract new businesses to Dayton's Bluff, the District Council will:

CED2.1. Facilitate and collaborate with the East 7th Street Business Association, and find ways to involve the community with this organization.

CED2.2. Provide entrepreneur training, workshops, and seminars on efficient business practices.

CED2.3. Explore use of a facility to serve as a small business incubator.

CED2.4. Encourage the establishment and support of local and minority-owned businesses, and identify locations for such businesses.

CED2.5. Support the creation of small businesses and startups by establishing development guidelines that implement size restrictions on formula businesses and ensure a mix of uses. The District Council will identify opportunities for future development that follow the East 7th Street Design Guidelines and include community input.

CED2.6. Work to re-zone commercial nodes as Traditional Neighborhood (TN) zones to allow for mixed uses.

CED2.7. Partner with, or create, a Community Development Corporation to make funds available to Dayton's Bluff businesses for development.

CED2.8. Study the Lafayette Park business area to determine its needs and develop a plan for its continued growth.

CED3. To encourage residents to patronize area businesses, the District Council will:

CED3.1. Work to attract a full range of businesses and services to Dayton's Bluff, especially a bank. We will support research and identification of target markets for such businesses.

CED3.2. Encourage a more accessible East 7th Street by making it more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly.

CED3.3. Promote Dayton's Bluff businesses using the District Council Web site and the District Forum.

CED3.4. Identify and promote unique, local "magnet" locations and gathering places for residents and visitors, such as restaurants, cafes, arts facilities, and so on.

CED3.5. Encourage businesses to pay a living wage such that employees can and want to support those businesses.

Community Life, Public Spaces, and Recreation

Background

Community Life

One of the ways to define community life is by the interaction of residents with community events and in public areas outside of their homes and neighborhood businesses.

Public Events

There are several annual neighborhood events in Dayton's Bluff, such as:

- National Night Out, which has grown in size yearly to thousands in 2006.
- The Dayton's Bluff Home Tour, which hosted hundreds of visitors in 2005.
- The Dayton's Bluff Preservation Evening event held in conjunction with the home tour.
- The fall Neighborhood Cleanup.
- Garden Tours, which typically involve 15 to 20 people.
- The plant swap and sale.

In addition, there is a changing calendar of cultural events, including plays, movies, and musical events at the Mounds Theater, exhibits and lectures at Metropolitan State University, and, of course, events hosted by schools, churches, and neighborhood organizations.

Events in Dayton's Bluff, however, sometimes suffer from a lack of publicity. Whenever possible, announcements are made in the two community newspapers, but often the schedule for printing and delivery makes the timing too late. Currently, there are no public bulletin boards, kiosks, or other spaces open to neighborhood residents for postings or flyers.

For years, Dayton's Bluff was home to the Festival on the Bluff which was replaced by the Summer Fest and, later, several different kinds of music festivals. The most recent have lost money and appear no longer viable. Yet there is intense interest and enthusiasm among residents to develop another festival, both as a benefit to those who live in the area and as a draw to those who live outside the area.

Neighborhood Participation

Neighborhood participation is always a good indicator of the quality of community life. Thanks to a history of strong and diligent community organizers, Dayton's Bluff has benefited by many grassroots efforts, ranging from neighborhood organizations working to develop housing to groups creating and stewarding park areas.

There are approximately 40 block clubs within Dayton's Bluff although they vary in size and frequency of meetings. Not all of them are active at the same time. One of them, however, the Margaret Recreation Center Block Club, has become a non-profit organization.

Other non-profit organizations that grew out of neighborhood activism include the Upper Swede Hollow Neighborhood Association, the Friends of Swede Hollow, and Hopewell Communications.

Schools

Dayton's Bluff contains many schools, including the following:

- Dayton's Bluff Achievement Plus Elementary
- American Indian Magnet School Elementary
- World Culture Magnet School Elementary
- Harding High School
- Trinity Elementary
- St. John's Lutheran Elementary
- East Side Lutheran School

There is high turnover at Dayton's Bluff public schools, but this is due primarily to the large number of rental properties and often attendant transient population. Close to half the students in Dayton's Bluff attend school outside of the neighborhood or are home-schooled.

The District Council involves itself in school matters by having a representative on the school site councils.

Public Spaces and Recreation

Currently there are many public gathering spaces for community residents. Among the most common are the larger parks (Mounds Park, Swede Hollow Park, and the new Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary), neighborhood recreation centers, and, more recently, facilities connected with Metropolitan State University.

Public Parks

Mounds Park commands one of the most breathtaking views in the city, overlooking the Mississippi River, Holman Field, the downtown business district, and government buildings. Besides this unique view, Mounds Park has historical significance due to ancient Native American burial mounds. Signage explaining the history and significance of this land is woefully inadequate. Although work has been done in recent years to upgrade the playground area and pavilion, residents and visitors continue to note inadequate lighting and poorly maintained streets and sidewalks. Plantings are installed but not cared for. Once the site of annual neighborhood festivals, the park now hosts few organized, public events.

Swede Hollow Park became a city park in 1976. Much of the success of Swede Hollow Park is due to neighborhood activists in the Friends of Swede Hollow organization.

A recent addition to the Dayton's Bluff area parks systems is the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, located below the bluffs of Mounds Park. The Bruce Vento Regional Trail now connects Swede Hollow to Phalen Park and, while there is a connection between the Vento Nature Sanctuary and Mounds Park, the City of St. Paul and the Lower Phalen Creek Project are working to improve the trail between the two with the goal of putting in steps.

All of these parks have interesting histories and geological aspects, but none have interpretive centers or significant explanatory signage.

In addition, these parks share a common need to combat invasive plant species and encourage more native plantings. While the Swede Hollow Park has a volunteer group—the Friends of Swede Hollow—and the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, being new, is the current focus of much attention, Mounds Park seems to have fallen into disrepair, with little maintenance being done.

It is currently impossible to move among the parks using walking or biking trails. Even when driving, there is little signage to direct visitors to the parks themselves, and particularly to parking lots.

Recreation Centers and Other Playground Areas

Currently, there are only two recreation centers operating in Dayton's Bluff: the Margaret Community Recreation Center (1109 Margaret Street), and the Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center (790 Conway Street, co-located with Dayton's Bluff Achievement Plus Elementary). The Mounds Park Recreation Center is being used for city maintenance equipment. This is a particular loss because it is near several apartment buildings with high concentrations of children.

The community is separated by Interstate Highway 94, with only four bridges of varying usefulness connecting the two areas. With both functioning recreation centers on the north side of the freeway, they are essentially out of the range of children living on the south side.

Planning and activities are good, but more staff is needed for supervision of children. There is also a perception that programming for girls is inadequate. There is limited adult programming but opportunities exist for people of the community to become more involved.

The Parkway Little League is a successful non-profit organization that started in the 1950s and serves hundreds of Dayton's Bluff young people with their summer little league baseball program.

Other Public Areas and Open Spaces

There are opportunities for additional park and greenspace areas at the 3M site and the Globe site. Other open portions of properties exist but are often bought for development. When development is done in any area of the community, incorporating greenspace into the area should be considered. Large areas of privately owned vacant property, such as at Metropolitan State University and the 3M site, should be encouraged to remain clear.

There are some areas along East 7th Street that feature trees, planters, benches, and historic lighting, but more should be added. There is substantial on-street parking and many large-scale, unhidden and unscreened parking lots with little effort put into beautification of such lots. Signage is standard rather than customized to the neighborhood.

There is little public art within Dayton's Bluff and that is clustered, and there are few public gardens. Three popular gardens are the Children's Garden at East 3rd Street and Maria Avenue, the garden adjoining the Swede Hollow Café on East 7th Street, and the adjoining rain garden. Public gardens at the gateways to the neighborhood would help distinguish these areas.

Gateways to the Neighborhood

The three often acknowledged gateways of the western end of Dayton's Bluff are:

- East 7th Street from downtown St. Paul
- East 6th Street from I-94
- East 3rd Street from downtown St. Paul

A fourth is seldom identified as such, but has as big an impact on visitors to the area: the Mounds Boulevard area between East 7th Street and Plum Street. In fact, Plum Street can be thought of as a sub-gateway. A large portion of this area is marked by a featureless wall of concrete, seen from downtown and the freeway.

Although some crosswalks are marked, the preponderance of vehicle traffic is intimidating and even dangerous for pedestrians, particularly just before the entrance to east-bound I-94 off Mounds Boulevard. There are neither traffic lights nor painted crosswalks, yet vehicles frequently are already building up speed at that point.

All four areas could be significantly improved in terms of appearance and functionality. All four frequently suffer from excess trash. The exit from I-94 occasionally attracts panhandlers standing only a few feet away from traffic, making stops at the traffic lights uncomfortable for many drivers.

Less obvious, but still considered gateways on the other side of the neighborhood are East 7th Street, Minnehaha Avenue, Burns Avenue, and Johnson Parkway/East 3rd Third Street. Although not as visible as those from the downtown area and freeway, these streets are the major thoroughfares for residents on the eastern side of Dayton's Bluff and, as such, could also benefit from improvements to appearance and traffic calming measures.

There is little signage to identify and advertise the neighborhood of Dayton's Bluff, and essentially none to indicate sub-neighborhoods, such as Upper Swede Hollow, the Lower Bluff, and Mounds Park. The Lower Bluff features one of St. Paul's six historic districts, yet there are few if any signs promoting that fact.

Dayton's Bluff is one of the oldest neighborhoods in St. Paul. Isolated areas feature lantern lighting that reflects the historic nature of the area, but many more streets could benefit from such lighting.

Community Life, Public Spaces, and Recreation

Vision

In the next ten years, the community of Dayton's Bluff should become a vibrant neighborhood where residents have a multitude of opportunities to meet and interact with family, friends, and neighbors at a variety of indoor and outdoor events. Venues should be available for a wide range of activities, including cultural, recreational, and sporting events. While major events must be planned well in advance and widely publicized, the neighborhood environment should also encourage smaller scale and spontaneous gatherings.

Public parks should be well-maintained and staffed, and easily accessible by pedestrians and bicyclists, with clear and obvious pathways connecting neighboring parks and trails, including access to the Mississippi riverfront trails. All recreation centers should be fully staffed and equipped to serve their original purpose. A recreation center or playground should be within safe and reasonable walking distance for every child in Dayton's Bluff.

Gateways to the neighborhood should be welcoming—attractive, safe, and easy to navigate. As the first image of Dayton's Bluff presented to visitors, these areas should be well marked and invite passers-by, most commonly motorists, to slow down and really see the area.

Community Life, Public Spaces, and Recreation

Goals and Strategies

CLPSR1. To promote and increase the sense of place in Historic Dayton's Bluff, the District Council will:

CLPSR1.1. Work with the city to improve the appearance of gateway areas in particular, finding ways to make those areas more attractive and inviting by using, for example, urban design techniques, banners, graphics, plantings and historically sensitive signage.

CLPSR1.2. Encourage the city to continue twin lantern lighting from Minnehaha Avenue down East 7th Street

CLPSR1.3. Campaign to install lantern lighting in additional residential areas, particularly in the Historic District and streets adjoining gateway areas, particularly when lighting is replaced or street construction and major maintenance is done.

CLPSR2. To improve the general appearance and cleanliness of the neighborhood, the District Council will:

CLPSR2.1. Support the annual neighborhood cleanup, which includes neighborhood-wide and local block club cleanups. The District Council will continue to apply for and use micro grants to supply dumpsters for local use.

CLPSR2.2. Encourage public and private groups to provide and empty trash receptacles in business and high traffic areas, such as on East 7th Street, Old Hudson Road/Earl Street, and Pacific Street/Earl Street.

CLPSR2.3. Promote more visually attractive surface parking lots. For example, the District Council will encourage businesses and other organizations in Dayton's Bluff to landscape front parking lots in accordance with the East 7th Street Design Guidelines.

CLPSR2.4. Expand the East 7th Street Design Guidelines to all of Dayton's Bluff.

CLPSR2.5. Be open to the use of non-violent offenders to perform public service tasks in the neighborhood.

CLPSR3. To increase and improve upon existing gardens and greenspaces, the District Council will:

CLPSR3.1. Maintain and support groups involved with gardens and greenspaces, including the following:

- A strong neighborhood garden club with programs and activities that include Greening Dayton's Bluff garden tours, front yard gardening, and the annual Garden Contest, which gives awards for outstanding gardens.
- A standing Greenspace committee to deal with and make recommendations concerning greenspaces in the community, monitor the development and conditions of existing public greenspace areas, and develop/promote events and projects, such as the plant swap.

CLPSR3.2. Provide education about and encouragement of rain gardens, particularly in new developments.

CLPSR3.3. Find and secure a location for a community garden area (for example, Pacific Street along I-94), possibly with additional smaller sites.

CLPSR3.4. Encourage the city to put in flowers and, when trees are replaced, flowering trees on Johnson Parkway.

CLPSR3.5. Organize residents to clean and maintain public and private bluff areas, working with city parks employees and other organizations. One aspect of such maintenance is to remove invasive species.

CLPSR4. To further enhance our parks and open spaces, the District Council will:

CLPSR4.1. Work to make the parks more accessible in the following ways:

- Recommend that riverfront development plans include connections to Mounds Park and the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary through steps and trails.
- Find ways to make the parks more accessible to people on foot, on bikes, in vehicles, and using mass transit. In particular, the District Council will work to make parks more accessible to disabled citizens.

CLPSR4.2. Work to increase the amenities and attractions at our parks, including the following:

- Recommend establishment of an interpretive center in the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary to focus on the area's natural and human history, including information on Mounds Park, Swede Hollow Park, and other historic locales.

- Encourage programming (for example, Tai Chi) by park staff and other public groups.

CLPSR4.3. Expand park and greenspace areas in the following ways:

- Advocate for increased services (such as increased maintenance, additional paths, and so on) and expansion (such as new plantings and revitalization of existing plantings) of city parks and open public spaces.
- Advocate the preservation of all existing park land, open public land, and privately owned/accessible greenspace (such as Parkway Little League).
- Consider proposing a new park, between East 3rd Street and Conway Street at Mounds Boulevard, on the site where the Lyman Dayton home was once located.

CLPSR4.4. Work with park personnel and the community to make the neighborhood parks more attractive and safe in the following ways:

- Encourage the creation of a “Friends of the Park” group for neighborhood parks which do not currently have such groups and encourage other park volunteer activities (such as park stewardship).
- Invite those responsible for parks to meet with the District Council to discuss plans for the facilities.
- Encourage the addition of signage in the parks, including multi-lingual signs identifying recreation areas, the trail system, and park maps at entrances.
- Recommend the posting and enforcement of parks hours and rules.

CLPSR4.5. Encourage and participate in a publicity campaign to increase usage of our parks.

CLPSR5. To increase the amount and quality of public art, the District Council will:

CLPSR5.1. Encourage private businesses to follow public art guidelines of the State of Minnesota.

CLPSR5.2. Seek funding for public art from foundations.

CLPSR6. To increase the number and quality of community events, the District Council will:

CLPSR6.1. Partner with other organizations to develop, organize, and run community festivals and events.

CLPSR6.2. Promote cultural and intercultural events, such as the home tour, an art fair, and ethnic-themed events.

CLPSR6.3. Maintain a standing Arts and Culture committee.

CLPSR7. To act as a resource center for community residents, the District Council will:

CLPSR7.1. Act as a clearinghouse for information, such as that listed below, at the District Council Web site, in District Forum newspaper articles, materials available at the District Council offices, and so on.

- Identify neighborhood resources available to the community, such as the library, free movies, and so on.
- Provide a social service inventory, and information for public health and well being in the neighborhood, such as early childhood care programs, home health care for seniors, and Meals on Wheels.
- Provide materials on subjects such as domestic abuse, drug abuse, and crime prevention—for victims and others who want to know how to spot and handle such situations.
- Work to provide multilingual and culturally specific information and resources.

CLPSR7.2. Continue to provide a packet of information to new residents (the New Neighbor Welcome Packets).

CLPSR7.3. Continue to distribute recycling containers and information, and work to increase recycling in the neighborhood.

CLPSR7.4. Publicize the location and encourage use of the leaf and brush compost site. Encourage maintaining the current site so it's accessible to Dayton's Bluff residents.

CLPSR7.5. Create and coordinate volunteer opportunities between neighbors and institutions.

CLPSR7.6. Convene a Community Outreach committee as deemed necessary.

CLPSR8. To promote communication within the neighborhood, the District Council will:

CLPSR8.1. Communicate with the neighborhood through all available means, including the District Council Web site, the District Forum newspaper, local access cable, and so on. Information for the public should be provided in both print and online formats. As part of this strategy, the design of the District Council's Web site should be improved, and the District Forum should be mailed directly to neighborhood residents and businesses.

CLPSR8.2. Ensure that the District Council communicates and interacts with all neighborhood groups, including ethnic minorities, in effective ways.

CLPSR8.3. Establish information kiosks or centers to facilitate communication within the neighborhood. Possible sites include near Swede Hollow Café, Earl Street and Pacific Street, the pavilion in Mounds Park, and the Metropolitan State University bus stop—where people typically get out of their cars or are waiting for services.

CLPSR8.4. Promote the establishment of block clubs and communication with and among them. As one method of such communication, facilitate the creation of block e-mail/phone lists.

CLPSR8.5. Support keeping an officer in the police store front and encourage neighbors to communicate with this officer.

CLPSR9. To improve and promote the use of neighborhood recreation centers, the District Council will:

CLPSR9.1. Work to preserve existing recreation centers and ensure that they are maintained, updated, and well-supervised. Recreation centers should be made safe and accessible, with adult supervision.

CLPSR9.2. Work to make the Mounds Park recreation center an active recreation center.

CLPSR9.3. Make it a goal to have a recreation center within walking distance for all children within Dayton's Bluff.

CLPSR9.4. Publicize recreation center events and programs, for example, via the District Council Web site.

CLPSR9.5. Invite those responsible for recreation centers to meet with the District Council to discuss plans for the facilities and provide input to programming at the centers.

CLPSR10. To improve neighborhood schools and libraries, the District Council will:

CLPSR10.1. Participate in the Site Councils in public schools.

CLPSR10.2. Invite school principals to District Council meetings to inform us about issues affecting schools.

CLPSR10.3. Support continuing education for residents.

CLPSR10.4. Maintain or increase library service in Dayton's Bluff, and promote the bookmobile.

CLPSR10.5. Work to promote renter stability and, therefore, decrease turnover in area schools.

CLPSR11. To promote and encourage the development of additional amenities for the neighborhood, the District Council will:

CLPSR11.1. Explore the possibility of a museum in Dayton's Bluff and contact possible contributors, for example, 3M.

CLPSR11.2. Explore the possibility of erecting statues of famous people who were directly involved with, raised in, or lived in Dayton's Bluff, for example, Lyman Dayton, Warren Berger, and so on.

CLPSR12. To improve the use of land and structures in Dayton's Bluff, the District Council will:

CLPSR12.1. Maintain and follow the defined land use policy, the greenspace guidelines, and other land use policies. The District Council will continue to review land use at its monthly Housing, Environment, and Economic Development meeting.

CLPSR12.2. Do a survey of historic structures and sites to serve as an inventory to preserve them.

CLPSR12.3. Inventory public spaces, such as schools, that could be used for things like public meetings. Put that information on the District Council's Web site and list additional information, such as requirements (for example, a rental fee).

CLPSR13. To monitor and provide input on neighborhood issues to City and regional officials, the District Council will appoint representatives to City and regional committee and task forces (decision-making bodies).

Housing and Residential Life

Background

Dayton's Bluff is made up predominately of older housing, ranging from Victorians—the largest and most diverse historic district in the city is located in the Historic District of the Lower Bluff—to turn-of-the-century homes in Mounds Park, to post-war housing in the eastern part of the district. Combined with beautiful views from the bluffs above the river, and its proximity to both downtown St. Paul and the confluence of major, arterial highways for commuters, this unique neighborhood has the potential to become one of the most desirable living areas in the city.

In recent years, the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood has benefited from strong community and grassroots organizations, such as the Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Service (DBNHS) and the Upper Swede Hollow Neighborhood Association (USHNA).

In 1992, an area of approximately 600 structures—from classic cottages of the working class to mansions of self-made men—was designated a historic district. Several homes have been designated as historically significant by themselves and are on the National Register.



This acknowledgment of the historical significance of these buildings has been very gratifying for the neighborhood and provided encouragement for preserving the original housing stock. Guidelines for exteriors in the historic district have helped maintain the original look of the neighborhood. In particular, the Historic St. Paul Foundation has helped extensively by providing grants and consultation for exterior renovations.

Studies, surveys, and neighborhood meetings, however, have identified many concerns and issues that must be addressed to improve that potential.

Appearance of the Neighborhood

One of the first things a neighborhood is judged on is its appearance. Freshly painted homes in good repair, surrounded by well-kept, litter-free yards with neat, clear driveways and sidewalks all give the impression of a stable, safe, and prosperous neighborhood. Inversely, peeling paint on houses with broken windows, and trash in overgrown lawns alongside cracked driveways and sidewalks contribute to a sense of decay and hopelessness, as if its residents have given up.

In a neighborhood survey done in 2005, approximately half of the respondents rated exterior maintenance poor. In particular, comments were made about the need to improve the look of the three most common gateways to Dayton's Bluff—from downtown to East 7th Street, from the freeway exit to East 6th Street, and from downtown to East 3rd Street. Many homes are being well maintained and beautifully restored, but others are being allowed to deteriorate alarmingly. And, unfortunately, deteriorating structures are often clustered.

Appearance extends to more than just the house but the entire property, including lawns, sidewalks, driveways, and alleyways. The Greening Dayton's Bluff program serves as an excellent resource for the neighborhood. In conjunction with the District Council, participants in this program lead tours of neighborhood gardens and give awards for outstanding examples. Some alleyways, however, are particular eyesores, with rundown garages, overgrown brush, and inadequate trash containers. One of the most popular programs of the year is the annual Neighborhood Cleanup, during which residents can, for a small fee, dispose of trash at a central site. In recent years, the addition of a "swap" area for usable furniture, toys, and so on has been used increasingly. On occasion, dumpsters are available for use at specific sites in the neighborhood following the cleanup at the request of block clubs or District Council members.

Included in issues of appearance is the neighborhood streetscape. Although most streets in Dayton's Bluff have regulation curbs and gutters, there are still some that do not. Isolated areas reflect the historical neighborhood beautifully with lantern lighting and boulevard trees, but many instead suffer from the glare of bent-straw lighting and boulevards that are either bare or contain straggly, uncared-for trees.

Density of Housing and Population

The older the structure, the more likely it was built as a big, single-family house on a large lot. A disturbing trend of recent years is to split large lots, with new construction on the newly created lot. Once more prominent along the East 7th Street corridor, the practice is spreading increasingly to areas of newer construction. Besides losing the open area occupied by the new construction, additional greenspace is often lost to a driveway and garage; if not, the problem of on-street parking is further exacerbated.

Past years have also seen a tendency for large, older houses to be converted into duplex and multi-family rental properties. This leads to much higher numbers of residents than was originally intended. It often appears that the legal number of residents in the unit is exceeded, for example, by extended family or excessive numbers of friends.

Both of these actions often result in undesirable density of housing and residents, radical and unsympathetic remodeling of existing buildings, and inserting of jarringly modern structures. All of these noticeably change the traditional look of the neighborhood in a negative manner.

Image of Rental Properties

There is a strong perception in the neighborhood, not wholly unbased in reality, that rental properties have a negative impact on housing conditions and the quality of residential life. Although obviously not always true, there are pockets of concentrated rental units in Dayton's Bluff that appear to validate that perception.

Typical problems reported include the following:

- Absentee landlords, who usually have less involvement in and commitment to the neighborhood.
- Poor choice in tenants, as evidenced by loud music, other intrusive noises, fighting, and other unsavory activities, including drug dealing and use.
- Poor maintenance of buildings and surrounding areas (lawns, driveways, sidewalks). This encourages, and may even force, landlords to be less discriminating in choosing tenants. Less desirable tenants result in a downward spiral of abuse, further damaging the property and making it even less attractive to responsible renters.

We want to attract responsible renters and then encourage their active involvement in the neighborhood. Renters should be encouraged to view Dayton's Bluff as their home, not as a temporary stop.

Concern has been expressed about the need for a better balance in the following:

- The proportion of single-family, owner-occupied homes versus rental properties.
- The proportion of multi-family, owner-occupied homes versus absentee landlords.

There is strong support for converting properties back to their original intent, for example, small rental units back into single-family homes.

A growing concern among residents is the increasing number of sex offenders being located in rental properties in Dayton's Bluff.

Questionable Zoning

Several areas are zoned in a way that no longer matches the needs and desires of the community:

- RT2 zoning in the northwest half of the district facilitates and encourages the subdivision (noted earlier) of formerly single-family homes into duplexes/multi-family rental units.
- Industrial (I-1 and I-2) zoning in small pockets north of East 7th Street facilitates and encourages the conversion or demolition of housing stock to make room for industrial structures.
- The recent TN zoning has not been applied but would be very worthwhile in business and transportation corridors, and traditional commercial areas, especially the East 7th Street business corridor and the Hudson/Earl Street business area.

Problem Properties

Problem properties can be either rental or owner-occupied. Some of those currently identified have a long history with the City of St. Paul's office of code enforcement and the Police Department. Many of these properties are in dire need of attention.

A highly successful program has been the Good Neighbor Program, in which residents of the neighborhood observe nearby houses and properties for potential code violations, then leave a note explaining the problem and asking for correction by a specific date. After that date, the matter may be turned over to the City of St. Paul code enforcement office. Using this process, many small problems have been identified and rectified before becoming serious.

In addition, a monthly neighborhood meeting is hosted by the District Council and attended by City of St. Paul officials, including representatives of the code enforcement office and Police Department to identify problem properties and develop strategies for improving them.

Vacant Buildings

According to a City report, Dayton's Bluff contains one of the highest numbers of vacant houses in the city. Besides diminishing the image of the neighborhood and encouraging crime, vacant buildings are much more likely to deteriorate faster and may be demolished completely rather than rehabbed or even moved to a more desirable site.

Yet our housing stock is one of our greatest assets. We take pride in having the largest concentration of Victorian houses in the City. In fact, a large portion of the Lower Bluff is a Historic District because of them. Besides the Victorians, we enjoy great diversity in the styles and ages of our buildings—many large, turn-of-the-century homes, Italianates, bungalows, ramblers, and new houses, all of which add to the character of the neighborhood. We can not afford to lose this housing stock to neglect or demolition. It is the face of Dayton's Bluff and one of reasons people come to the area.

Large-scale Developments

Several instances of large scale renovation and new construction have occurred in the neighborhood—for example, Parkway Gardens and Cerenity Care—some of which fit in with the overall look of the neighborhood and others that stand out jarringly from existing styles. Although the community sometimes has input as to general design, appearance, and materials, that is not always the case.

An excellent example of collaboration between the neighborhood and a large-scale development group is that of the Hospital Linen development site. Although actual construction has not yet started, the process has been promising. Neighbors and other interested stakeholders have met several times to review design and give input, starting with the review of the RFP from the City of St. Paul.

Small-scale Private Construction

Although properties within the Historic District must follow the corresponding guidelines, there are no community-wide design standards for either new construction or exterior remodeling. For-profit (real estate) investors may or may not work with the neighborhood to improve the quality of their properties.

Even with these concerns, Dayton's Bluff continues to distinguish itself as a good area in which to live. As people become aware of the Bluff's character, charm, and opportunities, more and more will be interested in moving into the neighborhood. The general public, however, does not have a strong sense of Dayton's Bluff as a community in terms that distinguish it from other East Side communities. Promotion of the unique housing stock, particularly in the Historic District, can and should be used to set Dayton's Bluff apart.

Housing and Residential Life

Vision

Our vision for Dayton's Bluff is that it be known as a classic, older residential area of well-maintained houses and grounds on quiet, tree-lined streets. Gateways, which present a first impression to visitors, should be clean and inviting. New development and exterior remodeling must be of high quality and respect the historic character of the neighborhood, reflecting and fitting in with existing structures. New construction should be well-spaced from neighboring buildings, leaving attractive areas of greenspace while providing adequate parking facilities. Vacant lots, if any, must be well-cared for and add to the positive image of the neighborhood, for example, as gardens, play areas, or simply regularly maintained plots of grass. Affordable rental units need to be available, but these structures must have been explicitly designed for that purpose and, therefore, offer accommodations of sufficient size and strength to support larger numbers of residents and multiple families. Proper zoning should encourage use of single-family homes as they were originally intended. With these standards in place, Dayton's Bluff can be a stable and well-established neighborhood with a diverse and vibrant population that takes pride in the appearance and functioning of the community.

Housing and Residential Life

Goals and Strategies

HRL1. To improve the quality of housing and residential life in Dayton's Bluff, the District Council will continue to work with other neighborhood organizations, such as the Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Service (DBNHS) and other non-profit development companies.

HRL2. To support the Dayton's Bluff Historic District and actively participate in historic preservation activities that maintain the heritage of the neighborhood, the District Council will:

HRL2.1. Support city policies that provide incentives for maintaining historic homes and other structures, sites, and programs.

HRL2.2. Encourage owners of historic homes and other properties to seek designation as historically significant sites.

HRL2.3. Work to save historic houses or, if necessary in the case of redevelopment, moved in order to preserve as much of the unique and original housing stock as possible in Dayton's Bluff.

HRL2.4. Encourage use of the Historic District Guidelines outside the designated historic district to ensure that rehabilitated buildings are compatible with original and adjoining styles.

HRL2.5. Require developers to use designs and materials that fit in with the existing styles in the neighborhood when new construction is done.

HRL2.6. Develop, with the City, guidelines that would apply to the subsequent use of vacant sites or sites created by City-sponsored demolition of structures.

HRL2.7. Seek to get Historic District Guidelines amended to also apply to new construction in the Historic District.

HRL3. To encourage exterior home improvements by property owners, focusing on changes that are sensitive to the historic nature of the neighborhood and funding for the changes, the District Council will:

HRL3.1. Promote loans and grants for exterior improvements for the entire neighborhood.

HRL3.2. Seek to reintroduce the "This Old House" program and other similar tax incentive programs (such as the historic preservation tax credit) that relate to property taxes.

HRL3.3. Explore other tax incentive programs that encourage city living.

HRL3.4. Help those in the neighborhood working to improve their properties to seek funding from traditional and non-traditional sources.

HRL4. To improve the appearance of all facets of the neighborhood, not just houses, the District Council will:

HRL4.1. Work to ensure all of Dayton's Bluff has a traditional neighborhood streetscape, including sidewalks, lantern lighting, curbs and gutters, and boulevard trees.

HRL4.2. Work to ensure that property adjoining alleys is well maintained. Plantings, gardens, and garbage receptacles are encouraged.

HRL4.3. Continue the Greening Dayton's Bluff program as a resource for neighbors. Particularly nice gardens and plantings will be recognized with tours and awards from the District Council.

HRL4.4. Work to educate owners on property beautification and maintenance, and good neighbor training. Print this information in the District Forum.

HRL4.5. Continue to sponsor a neighborhood cleanup and, when money allows, continue smaller cleanups arranged by neighborhood block clubs.

HRL5. To develop programs to deal with problem and vacant properties, the District Council will:

HRL5.1. Work with the City of St. Paul code enforcement officials and neighbors to set up programs, such as the Good Neighbor Program, to identify smaller problems before they become serious.

HRL5.2. Work with City of St. Paul code enforcement officials, neighbors, police, and fire department to identify problem properties and develop strategies for fixing them.

HRL5.3. Support programs to improve and populate vacant properties, like the houses-to-homes program for individuals, and other innovative approaches involving non-profit organizations and co-ops.

HRL5.4. Support programs to encourage low-cost opportunities for homeowners to buy vacant properties with a residency requirement.

HRL5.5. Create criteria to determine whether vacant buildings should be removed or redeveloped.

HRL6. To provide specialized help to residents, new homeowners, and seniors, the District Council will:

HRL6.1. Educate property owners, in particular new homeowners, as to minimum property maintenance standards (such as shoveling sidewalks, mowing grass, and so on).

HRL6.2. Support ways for seniors to stay in their homes if they wish. If they cannot continue living on their own but want to stay in the neighborhood, the District Council will put them in contact with organizations and services that can help them do so.

HRL7. To encourage a return to using houses as they were originally intended (especially when this is a reversion from duplex back to single-family home), the District Council will:

HRL7.1. Work to rezone areas that are currently zoned for duplexes in order to return the structures to the original single-family homes that they were intended to be. In support of this plan, we ask that a 40-acre study be undertaken.

HRL7.2. Work to maintain current single-family home zoning.

HRL8. To accommodate the need for pleasant, affordable rental properties in the neighborhood that are also of high quality, both in terms of the physical structures and the relationships between tenant and landlord, the District Council will:

HRL8.1. Work with tenants' rights groups and landlord associations to educate them both as to their rights and responsibilities.

HRL8.2. Encourage rental structures to be owner-occupied or, at least, that rental property owners live in the neighborhood.

HRL8.3. Encourage usage more in accordance with city averages for crowded rental housing. In cases where housing that was not intended for large numbers of residents is overcrowded by extended families, help find more appropriate housing.

HRL8.4. Work to avoid concentrations of sex offenders near concentrations of children.

HRL9. To ensure preservation and the best possible use of housing in the neighborhood, the District Council will:

HRL9.1. Encourage cooperation with the neighborhood to promote high quality rehabilitation of properties, and encourage for-profit investors (real estate investors) to improve the quality of their properties.

HRL9.2. Help develop neighborhood standards for new housing, for example, based on the historic district guidelines. Keep copies of guidelines and maintain a resource list in an area available to residents, for example, at the Dayton's Bluff/Metropolitan State University libraries.

HRL9.3. Strongly discourage lot splits and encourage property owners to abide by the District Council lot split policy except in those cases where structures are moved. In general, the District Council is against lot splits even when variances are not needed.

HRL9.4. Support all efforts to reuse existing structures in the area. When an existing structure cannot be incorporated into the development, it should be moved if at all feasible. The District Council will work with developers to identify possible sites within the neighborhood to which the structure could be moved. If demolition or radical remodeling of a structure is unavoidable, the District Council encourages "deconstruction" techniques to be used to salvage whatever materials possible for reuse.

HRL9.5. Work with both large-scale developers and homeowners to design new development with no negative impact on existing housing. If redevelopment provides high-density housing, it should be of high quality and fit well into the transit available in the neighborhood. Parking should be considered as a part of the development, but the District Council encourages transit-oriented development with consideration for other transit needs.

HRL10. To encourage more homeownership in the neighborhood, the District Council will:

HRL10.1. Find ways to promote the neighborhood as a desirable place to live.

HRL10.2. Talk with businesses about encouraging their employees to move here.

HRL10.3. Provide information about housing and other amenities such as schools, transportation, and so on.

HRL10.4. Provide financial information that could provide incentives, for example, for first-time homeowners and grants for historic properties.

HRL10.5. Continue to take part in the Minneapolis/St. Paul Home Tour as a way of showcasing properties in the neighborhood, and making aforementioned materials available to visitors.

Neighborhood Safety and Livability

Background

People want to live in a neighborhood where they feel safe, where they have clean surroundings, and where the quality of life is high. In this respect, the residents of Dayton's Bluff are no different than any other people. Much of the neighborhood is satisfied with their safety and livability. Emergency services were universally acclaimed in our neighborhood survey. The survey also pointed out areas where more work is needed. Residents attached the most importance to safety from minor crime, which was considered a problem by many residents. In some areas and populations where major safety or livability issues are prevalent, the situation is dire and in need of concentrated attention. For instance, this quality of life disparity is most evident as reported by our renters and Black residents, who responded to our survey with high degrees of dissatisfaction.

A safe neighborhood is one with sufficient fire prevention coverage and also enough police protection that crime is kept to a minimum. It is also one where the threat of criminal activity is low. Fire coverage is sufficient for accidental fires, but Dayton's Bluff consistently has one of the highest incidences of arson in the city. In the last 10 years, crimes against persons are down in the city of St. Paul by 13%, as are property crimes by 26%. Unfortunately, rates for crimes both against persons and property remain slightly higher in parts of Dayton's Bluff than the city as a whole. (In 2003, Dayton's Bluff had 6.2% of the total city population, with 6.9% of violent person crimes and 8.6% of non-violent crimes.)

Drug dealing and consumption is another aggravation for residents. Inadequate street lighting, and what some view as insufficient police protection, allow for illicit activity to be concealed and also keeps residents from feeling safe while walking on the street. This situation, along with a perceived high level of crime is a major source of concern for residents. Racial minorities and those living in rental properties expressed the least feeling of safety from crime according to our neighborhood survey.

One new source of worry, in addition to more traditional criminal concerns, has arisen from the sex offender notification law. Dayton's Bluff appears to have a higher percentage of such offenders than the city as a whole and the notification each new incoming level-III registered offender exacerbates neighborhood concerns.

It has been a boon to have a beat officer assigned to Dayton's Bluff to help address issues of public safety directly. The officer has a cell phone, paid for by the District Council, and spends any downtime on neighborhood issues. The District Council offices also host a police substation where the officer has a desk and a phone if the officer is able to spend time there.

Clean surroundings are also important to a sense of well-being. Most areas of the neighborhood are well maintained and attractive, but the situation can vary widely from block to block. Residents feel that litter, graffiti, buildings with deteriorating or unattractive exteriors, large surface parking lots, houses that are below code, and unsightly gateway areas all give a poor impression of the neighborhood. Many of the corner stores and their customers are seen as sources of the trash and there are not enough trash receptacles in public areas. Unsightly or poorly maintained yards and houses are another issue. People who live in the area, as well as visitors, are negatively impacted by seeing these problems as they drive, ride, or walk around the Bluff. More than half the respondents to our survey were concerned with a poor image of our residential areas, ranking it as one of our top problems.

Quality of life is also affected by air, water, and noise pollution. Dayton's Bluff, as one of the oldest neighborhoods in the area, is located near the city center of St. Paul. It is also close to the river and major sources of transportation—the railroad tracks, freeways, and airport. Thus, it is no stranger to the wide variety of sounds and smells that go along with the life of a city. Some of this pollution is unavoidable, and is the price of living in a city. But, residents are concerned about the excessive noise generated by loud vehicles, both on the road and in the air.

The airport is a major source of noise pollution late into the night, year round. Flight paths are frequently ignored by pilots flying low over the bluff areas. The airport and City have been unable or unwilling to address this issue.

Neighbors are frustrated that noise ordinances are not applied regularly to the loud car stereos and unrepaired cars that contribute to the overall volume of noise. Quality of life is also adversely affected by nuisance behaviors by other neighbors. Things like loud swearing, fights, unsupervised children, uncontrolled pets and lack of respect were mentioned by neighbors in a Police Department survey as concerns for the neighborhood.

Dayton's Bluff is also sometimes downwind of the city's largest waste water treatment plant, which has historically been responsible for overwhelming odors, but which has recently installed new equipment to deal with the smell. This has been mostly successful, but residents are wary of a return to previous odor levels. Another source of odor remains the strong smells from sewer openings below the Bluff.

Physical health is one last aspect of livability, without which quality of life suffers. Residents of all ages need to have the ability to live a healthy life, and grow mentally and physically. For this to be possible, residents of Dayton's Bluff need to know what options exist when they need help. Any assistance programs for seniors, like the block nurse program, should be encouraged. The same is true for programs that help mothers and their children, such as food vouchers and help with daycare.

Neighborhood Safety and Livability

Vision

The Dayton's Bluff neighborhood is a vibrant and diverse area, and is a safe part of the city in which to live. Emergency services are widely agreed to be excellent and crimes against persons are low. This reality needs to be publicized and reinforced by increased police attention to drug and property crimes so that residents feel safer in their homes and on the streets. Public spaces need to be kept clean and well lit, and private areas should be maintained in good condition. Dayton's Bluff needs to address the problematic concentrations of sex offenders, social services, and group homes. Although much progress has been made, the neighborhood needs to work to diminish the long-term impact of soil, air, noise, and nuisance odor pollution in the district. Residents need to know their neighbors so there is a greater chance of swift and amicable resolution or prevention of conflicts. The District Council can act as a clearing house for information relating to public health, combating crime, dealing with code violations and other issues. Where there is information for neighbors available, the District Council will share it with neighbors so that they can inform themselves and also work with those responsible to address any concerns they might have.

Neighborhood Safety and Livability

Goals and Strategies

NSL1. To improve the feeling of safety in Dayton's Bluff, the District Council will:

NSL1.1. Promote the reality that Dayton's Bluff is a safe neighborhood in which to live and work, for example, by collaborating with the police to provide accurate crime and safety information to residents, block clubs, and local media. Designate a board member and staff person to communicate with the media if sensational crime does occur.

NSL1.2. Provide safety-related information and recommendations to residents, such as contact information for neighborhood complaints and safety issues, suggestions to improve personal and property safety, and encouragement to clearly post house numbers so emergency response personnel can find them quickly.

NSL1.3. Work with representative renters and members of minority groups to determine factors that led to their expressing the lowest feeling of safety from crime in our neighborhood survey, and develop strategies to remedy these factors.

NSL1.4. Work with the City to ensure that streets, sidewalks, and paved bike/walking paths are fully lighted, in particular, public areas that are used during the evenings. Ensure that trees are trimmed so that low branches neither block light nor interfere with foot traffic. Encourage lantern-style lighting to ensure mid-block areas are well lit.

NSL1.5. Research how to improve safety in our city parks.

NSL1.6. Work to decrease the concentration of high-risk sex offenders in our neighborhood.

NSL1.7. Ensure that sidewalks are free of snow in accordance with City code.

NSL2. To decrease the incidence of crime, the District Council will:

NSL2.1. Work with police to educate block clubs and other neighbors about crime prevention and neighborhood watch programs, how to reduce the risk of crime and what to do if they are the victim of a crime, and how to deal with sources of crime.

NSL2.2. Promote more personal focus on the neighborhood by encouraging the St. Paul Police to staff a police storefront in our offices to facilitate communication and collaboration, assign a permanent Dayton's Bluff beat officer with a cell phone, and do more bicycle and foot patrols to become familiar with the area and its people.

NSL2.3. Work with schools and police to reduce juvenile crime by addressing truancy and curfew violations.

NSL2.4. Develop a relationship with the fire department and local fire stations, and educate homeowners to be alert for the potential of arson and how they can decrease their risk.

NSL2.5. Encourage police to enforce existing ordinances, for example, the Aggressive Solicitation Ordinance around local businesses and others regarding vandalism, graffiti, and trash ordinances, thus resolving minor problems before they become serious issues. The District Council will educate people to donate to the needy through formal and well-established channels rather than to individual panhandlers.

NSL3. To decrease noise, odor, and other forms of pollution in Dayton's Bluff, the District Council will:

NSL3.1. Work with management at Holman Field and the City to alleviate noise disturbances and safety issues by ensuring that aircraft follow established flight paths and height restrictions, complete the move of National Guard helicopters from Holman Field to St. Cloud as promised in the past, and apply the City code on noise to airport uses.

NSL3.2. Work with the Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant in St. Paul to ensure that odors are kept to a minimum.

NSL3.3. Clarify with St. Paul police that vehicle noises, such as loud stereos and mufflers, will be a priority for enforcement of noise ordinances.

NSL3.4. Work with the city to identify and clean up polluted land.

NSL3.5. Decrease heavy truck noise by posting truck routes and discouraging jake-breaking.

NSL4. To improve the appearance and livability of our neighborhood, the District Council will:

NSL4.1. Encourage a clean, litter-free neighborhood by increasing the number of privately and publicly maintained trash receptacles where they are needed and will be emptied reliably, and continuing the annual Neighborhood Cleanup as a way to decrease litter and garbage, encouraging block groups to use any leftover dumpsters.

NSL4.2. Promote the pleasing appearance of homes and other structures by encouraging owners to maintain their property in good condition and work to ensure that vacant buildings are sealed and monitored to reduce safety risks and prevent deterioration.

NSL4.3. Create a marketing plan to promote the neighborhood to residents and visitors.

NSL4.4. Collaborate with the Dayton's Bluff District Forum to publicize the District Council and its activities as well as community news and events.

NSL5. To make Dayton's Bluff a neighborhood in which all residents—particularly women, children, and seniors—can be healthy, grow, and take care of themselves, the District Council will:

NSL5.1. Encourage local businesses to support women and children by accepting vouchers from the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program and other similar programs.

NSL5.2. Work to provide low-cost or free daycare to those who need it by implementing a program like Macalester-Groveland's KidsPark Drop-in DayCare.

NSL5.3. Provide information to seniors about health care services available to them.

NSL5.4. Promote the establishment of a neighborhood block nurse program.

NSL5.5. Work to ensure that institutional uses (essentially group homes, runaway youth centers, and high-risk social services) are spread evenly across the city and not concentrated in our community.

Transportation, Traffic, and Parking

Background

Dayton's Bluff is one of the oldest neighborhoods in the city of St. Paul. The organic growth of the area before zoning law means that the intersection of residential, commercial, and industrial uses can lead to a variety of transportation issues in the district. The area is cut by Interstate Highway 94 and bounded by Interstate Highway 35E, downtown St. Paul, and the physical bluff itself. These natural and artificial barriers make alternative modes of transportation, like biking or walking, a challenge. The neighborhood is also served by few public transportation routes.

Dayton's Bluff residents recognize that improving the appearance of the neighborhood streets will go a long way to improve the image and overall appearance of the area. The Residential Street Vitality Program (RSVP) has rebuilt a number of the streets in the area, but due to chronic delays, there are still areas without paved streets or curbs. The program is currently scheduled to finish all of the roads in the Bluff by 2008. During RSVP street repair, the existing, poor quality lighting is replaced with the more attractive lantern-style lighting. Unfortunately, this means that there is little chance to have street lights installed before the paving project reaches certain locations. Portions of East 7th Street and East 3rd Street, between Earl Street and Johnson Parkway, have particularly poor lighting. Other high-use streets with inadequate lighting include Maria Avenue and the stretch of Mounds Boulevard between Earl Street and Highway 61. These streets should either be rebuilt early, or have lighting put in ahead of time for public safety reasons. Most streetscapes have unsightly power, cable, and phone lines located on poles. These need to be addressed, at least in gateway and park areas, perhaps by burying these lines during street rebuilding.

Multimodal Transit Development

Many Dayton's Bluff residents do not own cars and rely on public transit or other means of transportation to go to work and make other trips. Dayton Bluff's close proximity to St. Paul's downtown—an employment and redeveloping commercial destination, and a central connection point for many public transit routes in the east metropolitan area—holds great potential for the community's multimodal transit development. Moreover, the new Bruce Vento Regional Trail offers residents a new option to commute both downtown and through the neighborhood.

Neighbors noted in the survey that bus service is less frequent and more expensive than in preceding years. While the neighborhood is well served by east-west bus routes, there are no north-south options. This means that residents depending on public transit have to go through downtown to get to many neighborhood attractions or businesses. There is a real desire among residents to bring back streetcars or light rail on East 7th Street to better serve area businesses and bring in the investment that follows such popular transit projects.

People who rely on bicycles to get around also have a hard time. There are only two streets in Dayton's Bluff with marked bicycle lanes: Johnson Parkway and 3rd Street. The scarcity of options for bicycle riders make finding safe routes difficult.

Parking

There seems to be adequate parking for residents in most areas of the Bluff. Street parking suffices for many small restaurants and other businesses. An exception is Metropolitan State University, which offers a large surface parking lot but, because it isn't free, students and university staff often compete with neighbors for the surrounding on-street parking. Because the surroundings have large rental populations, it can be difficult to find space for everyone. Conversely, some of the businesses along East 7th Street have what appears to be an oversupply of parking. Most of the surface lots have no landscaping to break up the large, uninterrupted paved surfaces, which create storm water runoff problems and are unsightly.

Traffic Calming

Traffic continues to be an issue of concern, not only on East 7th Street, but also on other major roads in the Dayton's Bluff area, including Mounds Boulevard, East 6th Street, Burns Avenue, and Hudson Road. Particular problems arise when a street that carries fast, heavy traffic (for example, streets that lead to or empty off a freeway or other major road) then transitions into a residential street. An example is East 6th Street, which carries traffic exiting off of and heading toward I-94. Neighbors have worked with the City to have bump-outs installed and signage to encourage traffic slowing, but work remains to be done to further decrease speeds and promote the feeling of a residential neighborhood. Other busy streets would likely benefit from similar treatments and other traffic calming measures such as roundabouts or street painting.

The following streets in Dayton's Bluff have 5,000 or more vehicles traveling on them per day, and warrant traffic calming measures:

- Mounds Boulevard between 7th and Plum Street
- All of East 7th Street
- East 6th Street between Mounds Boulevard and Arcade Street
- All of East 3rd Street
- The portions of Arcade Street and Payne that are in District 4
- Johnson Parkway north of East 3rd Street
- Earl Street between East 3rd Street and East 7th Street

- All of Minnehaha Avenue
- Burns Avenue between Highway 61 and Johnson Parkway

Although the East 7th Street corridor experiences high levels of traffic, some will be diverted through the newly completed Phalen Corridor. The interaction of this new corridor with local streets, such as Atlantic Avenue near East 7th Street, will need to be watched for increased traffic. As well as high volumes of traffic, some of the larger streets are quite loud. Calming the traffic might deal with the noise problem as well. A notable exception is I-94, which is loud, in part because of excessive jake-braking and also due to inadequate noise barriers.

Special care should be taken to develop gateway areas and streets. These are used by the majority of visitors and residents to enter and exit the neighborhood. Not only are there the obvious access points along Mounds Boulevard, East 7th Street, East 6th Street, and East 3rd Street, but also the other end of East 3rd Street on the eastern edge of Dayton's Bluff, Arcade Street, Johnson Parkway, Burns Avenue, and Highway 61. The speed and tone of transportation can be set as people enter through these gateway areas.

Holman Field Airport

While Holman Field Airport provides economic benefits to certain local companies in and around Dayton's Bluff, noise from Holman Field continues to be an issue for neighborhood residents. Planes often do not follow the prescribed routes following I-94, 35-E, or the river corridor, and fly over residential areas. Other planes take off too close to the Bluff and are well below the prescribed minimum height. The resulting airport-related noise can deafen regular conversation and occurs at all hours of the day and night.

Neighbors are particularly concerned by the floodwall and associated projects to make the airport safe from flooding. Although there is little room for actual hanger expansion, the concern is that traffic will increase as a result of the airport being immune from flooding. Holman Field's status as a reliever airport for Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport means that there is little local control over the pilots and planes that fly in and out of the field. It has been difficult to achieve results working with the Metropolitan Airports Commission and the Federal Aviation Agency to address problems.

One final area of concern continues to be the National Guard Helicopters stationed at the field. Their training is an extremely loud source of noise for the district. Half of the squadron has recently moved to St. Cloud, but neighbors would like all of them to move as the Guard promised in the 1980s.

Transportation, Traffic, and Parking

Vision

The Dayton's Bluff neighborhood is alive with the movement of people—residents and visitors need to be able to get to and from their destinations efficiently and safely. To accomplish this, significant investment is needed in a comprehensive, multi-modal transportation system including well-paved streets, high quality rail and bus service, and safe passageways for pedestrians and cyclists. Our street design should ensure that car traffic is controlled and calmed to reduce the safety hazards to drivers and neighbors. Streets should be attractive as well as functional with respect to the design and placement of lighting and utilities. The impact of the freeway as an interruption of the neighborhood should be lessened with plantings and effective, attractive sound barriers. Areas that have high volumes of parking, like Metropolitan State University, 3M, and other area businesses, must plan for a long-term parking solution. There should be no expansion of surface parking lots.

Transportation, Traffic, and Parking

Goals and Strategies

TTP1. To improve safety for all users of our roads, the District Council will:

TTP1.1. Encourage the creation of safe passageways for pedestrians and cyclists on major streets with clearly marked crosswalks and bike lanes, and installation of signs to educate drivers about pedestrian right-of-way and safety.

TTP1.2. Encourage traffic calming measures that limit traffic volume and speed to the existing street capacity and their intended use in residential neighborhoods. In particular, encourage traffic studies and implementation of traffic calming measures on streets recording 5,000 or more vehicles per day and anywhere else where they are felt to be needed, for example, by petition of neighbors. In general, the District Council opposes widening streets.

TTP1.3. Recommend increasing awareness of speed limits and vehicle speeds with signs and monitoring display devices, particularly when there is a major transition, for example in the areas near highway exit ramps.

TTP1.4. Collaborate with Public Works to identify areas with high accident rates and determine the causes. For example, work to reduce traffic accidents on Mounds Boulevard by encouraging the elimination of right-turns-on-red in accident-prone intersections such as East 3rd Street and Kellogg Boulevard.

TTP2. To decrease the congestion on our neighborhood streets and to encourage public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian use, the District Council will:

TTP2.1. Promote the creation of a comprehensive, multi-modal transit system, including rail and bus service, and work to ensure that any rail and bus transit on East 7th Street ties into the transit hub at the Union Depot in downtown St. Paul.

TTP2.2. Encourage the expansion of transit routes—especially a north-south route--through the neighborhood to serve as many residents as possible, and recommend the reinstatement of the downtown transit zone (the fifty-cent zone) to Arcade Street rather than ending it on Maria Avenue.

TTP2.3. Encourage public transit use by advocating for safe, well-lit transit shelters and benches that are well-maintained and shoveled as needed, and include maps and schedules. In high-usage shelters, we recommend adding more benches and heat lamps. East Side businesses will be encouraged to sponsor such shelters.

TTP2.4. Encourage biking by providing bike racks where bike paths exist.

TTP2.5. Work to complete the reconstruction and narrowing of East 6th Street.

TTP2.6. Investigate options to promote better traffic flow on East 7th Street by investigating left turn options, such as arrows.

TTP3. To improve the appearance of our neighborhood streetscape, the District Council will:

TTP3.1. Discourage construction of more surface parking lots and encourage sharing of existing lots. The District Council will also ensure that surface parking lots are landscaped according to the East 7th Street Design Guidelines and encourage screening of parking lots with attractive fencing, shrubbery, and so forth. Use of rain gardens to reduce runoff is encouraged and, when new lots are created or existing lots repaved, the District Council will recommend use of permeable or semi-permeable surfacing.

TTP3.2. Require that all new street lighting be lantern style and encourage the replacement of bent-straw lighting. Where portions of streets have lantern lighting (for example, East 3rd Street, East 7th Street east of Earl Street, and Mounds Boulevard east of Earl Street), the District Council will recommend finishing the street with matching lighting.

TTP3.3. Monitor the Residential Street Vitality Program to ensure the project remains on schedule. When streets are reconstructed, encourage the addition of sidewalks where they do not currently exist but recommend that existing granite curbs be preserved.

TTP3.4. Encourage utility companies to bury lines whenever possible, especially in new developments.

TTP4. To decrease noise pollution in the neighborhood, the District Council will:

TTP4.1. Encourage the addition of sound barriers and attractive plantings to decrease the noise and visual impact of the freeway.

TTP4.2. Maintain contact with airport management at Holman Field, the Metropolitan Airports Commission, and the Federal Aviation Administration to ensure neighborhood noise concerns are addressed.

TTP4.3. Increase the lifespan of streets and alleys as well as reduce noise by working to decrease the frequency and number of garbage trucks.

TTP5. To address parking issues, the District Council will:

TTP5.1. Encourage the posting of parking rules to increase awareness for drivers, decrease violations of time limits, and allow for handicapped accessibility. Work to ensure that signs are posted and curbs are painted appropriately to explain the parking rules (such as 30 feet from the corner).

TTP5.2. Allow for parking variances along East 7th Street due to the historic nature of the area. The District Council will restrict demolition of buildings for parking.

TTP5.3. Encourage businesses and institutions with high parking needs to provide transit options for staff and visitors (for example, subsidized fare cards, and car sharing and car pooling hubs).

TTP5.4. Work with Metropolitan State University and the neighborhood to alleviate parking problems with solutions that are not limited to finding additional parking spaces in the area. Permit parking should be explored for area residents impacted by parking problems.

TTP5.5. Work to change city zoning code to require underground parking for new multi-story buildings.