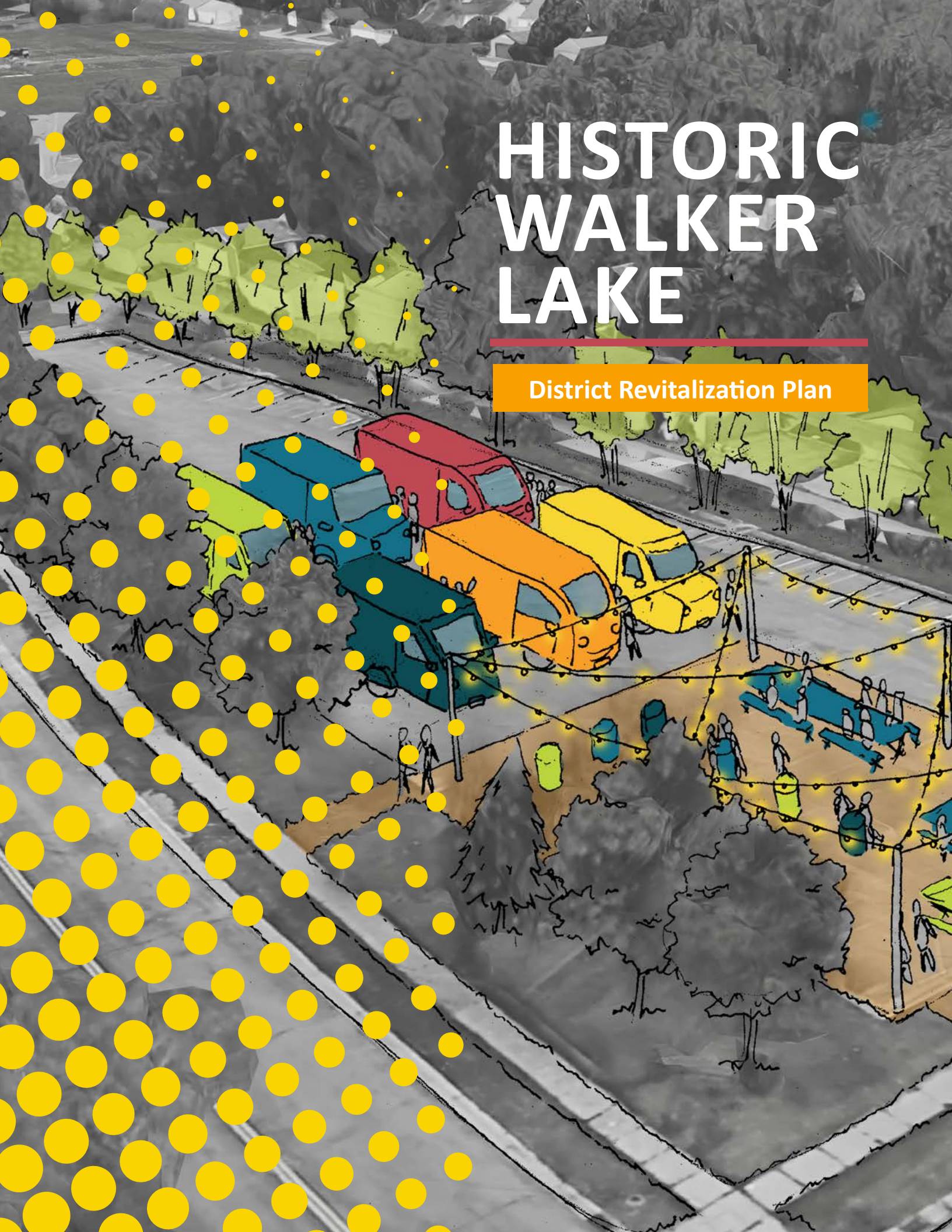
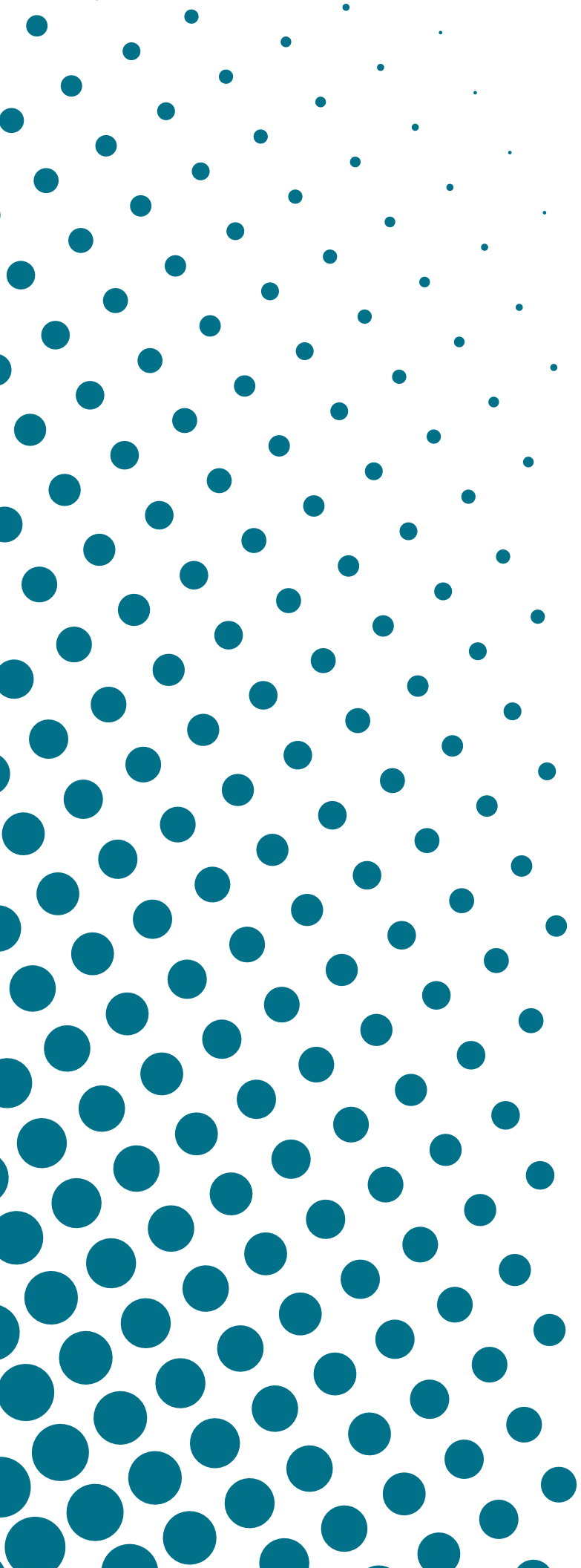


HISTORIC WALKER LAKE

District Revitalization Plan





Partners:

The Historic Walker Lake Revitalization Plan was created by the City of St. Louis Park and stakeholders in the Historic Walker Lake District.



Consultants:

Asakura Robinson (Prime, www.asakurarobinson.com)
SRF Consulting



For more information about this project visit:
<https://www.stlouispark.org/government/departments-divisions/planning-zoning/planning-studies>

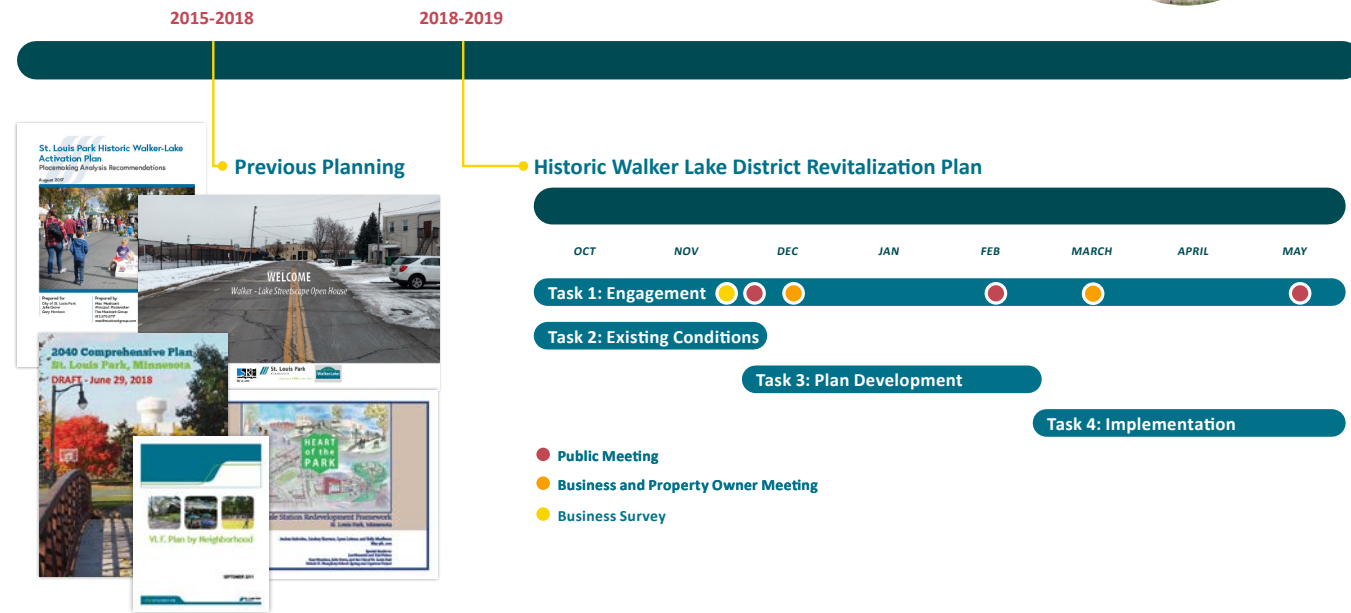
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Executive Summary

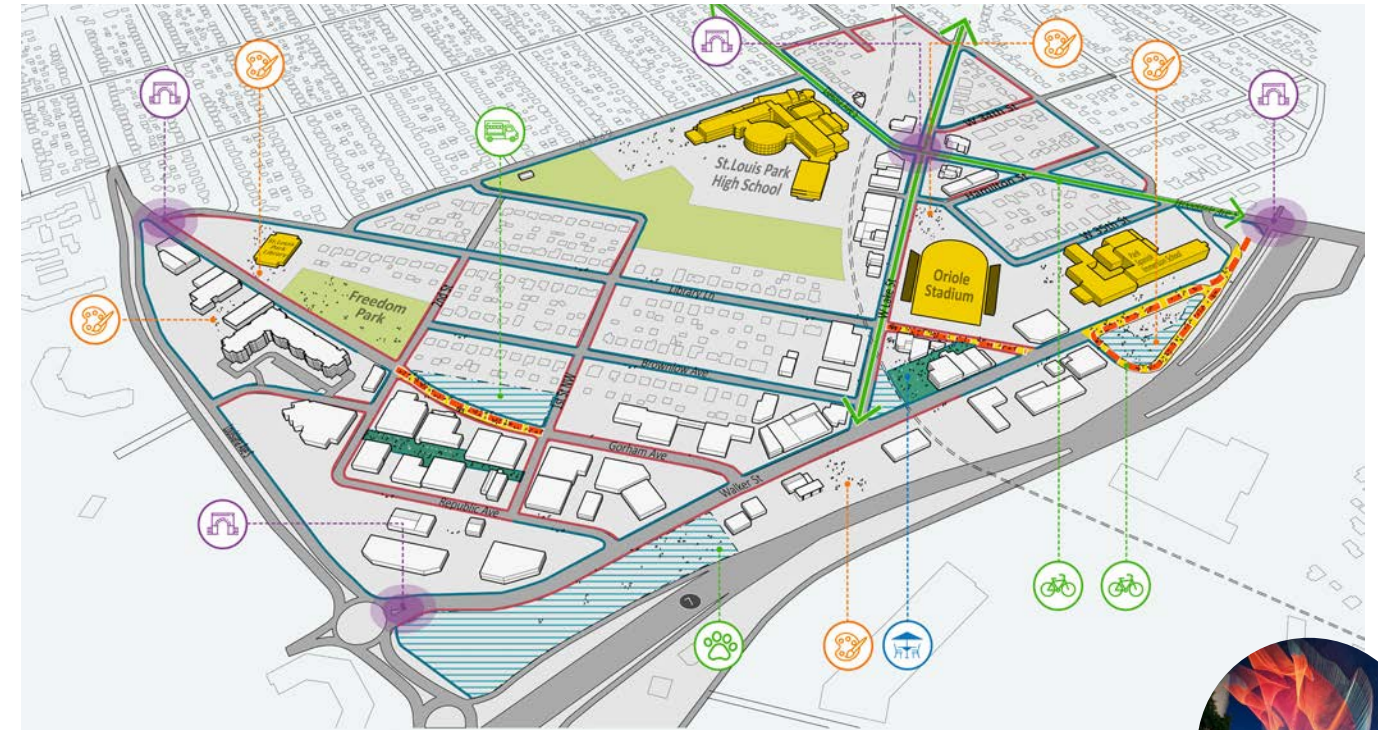
The Historic Walker Lake District in St. Louis Park, Minneapolis is home to a variety of businesses, and has been the subject of many previous planning efforts. Therefore, this effort focuses on implementing the community's vision refined by previous processes. The community desires a business district with a variety of commercial uses. This plan helps the community implement this vision by developing three implementation categories for previous planning ideas, and new ideas developed through this process.

PREVIOUS PLANNING



1. WAYFINDING AND PLACEMAKING

The wayfinding and placemaking strategy includes ideas for alley activations, branding updates, and other activation strategies.



ENGAGEMENT

The team held three public meetings to gather feedback from the community on which planning efforts were most important to them. In addition to traditional engagement, the consultant team developed targeted engagement strategies for businesses, which included two meetings and visiting 55 local business to complete surveys of owners and managers. The goal of the survey was to gain an understanding of if businesses felt their needs were being met in their current building space and neighborhood, as well as what they would like to see in the community. Parking, safety, accessibility, affordability, and beautification were concerns expressed through this survey. More results can be found in Section 2: Engagement.



- Existing Sidewalks
- No Sidewalk
- City-owned, County-owned or Vacant Lots
- Potential Alleyway Redesign (pending neighborhood outreach)
- Potential Street Activation (pending neighborhood outreach)
- Public Art Installation
- Dog Park
- Food Truck Park
- District Gateway
- Bike Friendly Street
- Alley Activation



2. OVERLAY DISTRICT

In order to address regulatory issues effecting Walker Lake, the community has proposed an overlay district for the area. This overlay includes updates to allowed and prohibited uses, form standards for new development, flexible public realm regulations, and parking district proposals.

USE UPDATES

The community identified a variety of uses they would like to include in the district, and those they would like to exclude.

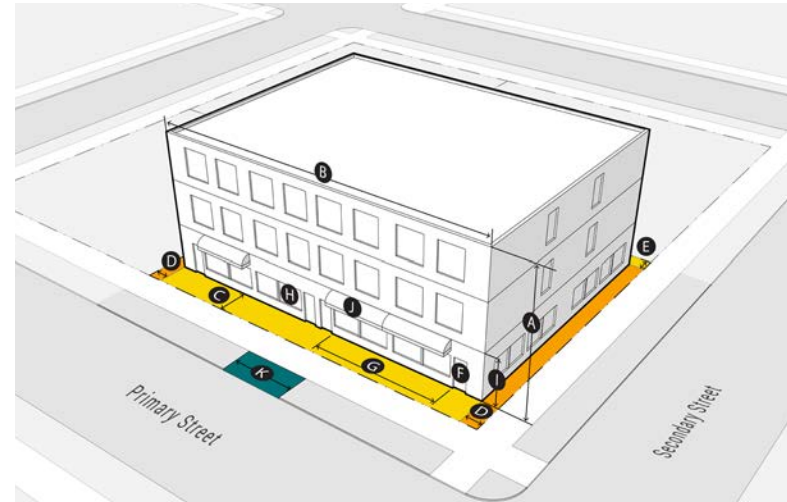
NEW ALLOWED USES:

- Coworking space
- Food hall
- Food truck park
- Theater or museum
- Maker space
- Brewery or distillery
- Retail with onsite production

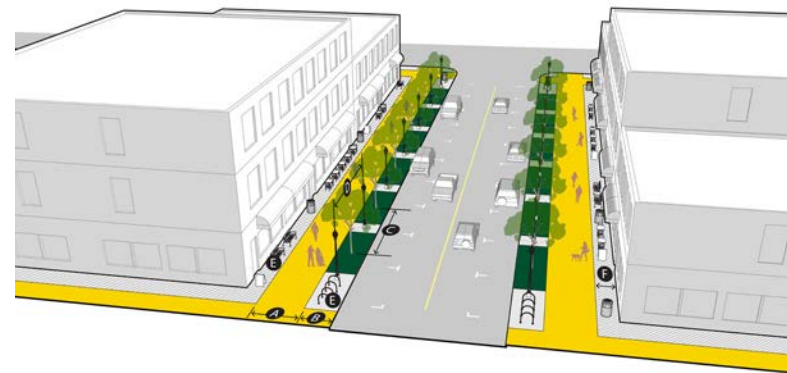
NEW PROHIBITED USES:

- Car repair
- Motor vehicle sales (excluding bike and scooter)
- In-vehicle sales
- Parking lot (as principal use)
- Composting
- Warehouse storage (as principal use)
- Outdoor storage
- Freight terminal
- Auto body painting

FORM STANDARDS



PUBLIC REALM STANDARDS

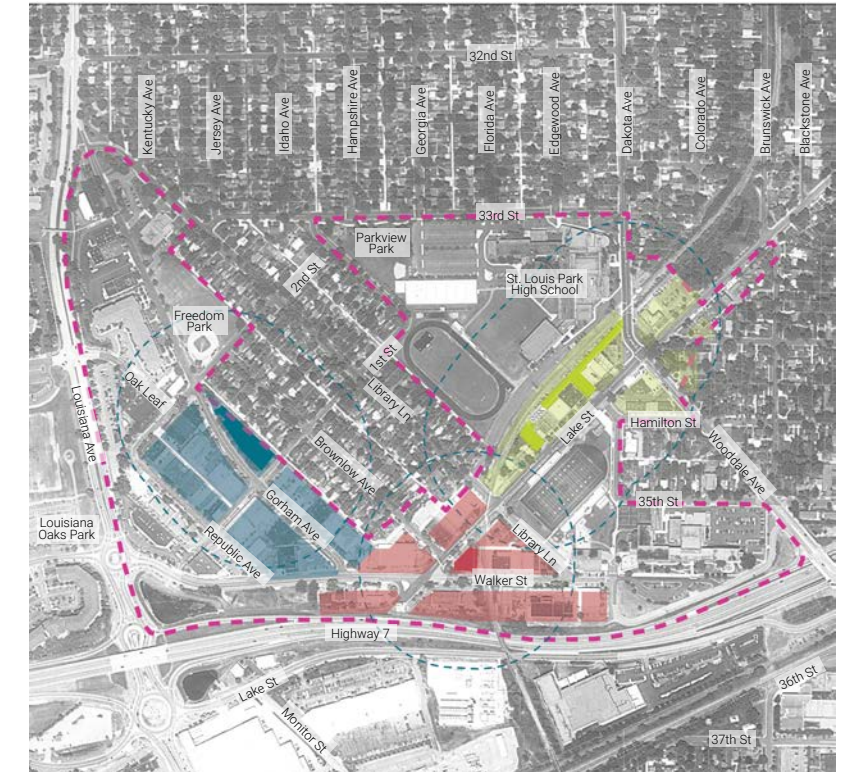


MATERIALS, SIGNS, BUILDING ELEMENTS, STREETSCAPE



PARKING

A parking strategy was created that uses the principles of shared parking and an analysis of capacity and land use to create three parking districts in Walker Lake.



3. MERCHANT'S ASSOCIATION AND AFFORDABILITY

During the planning process, a merchant's association was created to carry out some of the ideas in this plan. The process also looked at commercial affordability. Below are some of the activities the association may take on:

- Marketing
- Programming
- Project Coordination
- Maintenance and Public Safety
- Public Space, Placemaking and Public Art





1: Introduction

ABOUT THE PROJECT

The Historic Walker Lake District in St. Louis Park, Minnesota, is a unique remnant of suburban history. The Walker Lake District predates that era of development, a sort of false start of suburban development, somewhere between the small town beginnings of Hopkins or Stillwater, and the post-war suburban development that would come later.

While the City of St. Louis Park's successes in redevelopment in areas like Excelsior and Grand and West End have been models for the region, the Walker Lake area presents a very different set of challenges, including maintaining and improving historic building stock, preserving the community's scale, and supporting the diversity of locally-owned small businesses. To address these challenges, the City of St. Louis Park engaged the project team to complete a revitalization plan for the area.

The planning process dealt with two major community engagement challenges. First, the plan was to build off of work done over the past few years, including a District Activation Plan from 2017 and ongoing infrastructure projects within the district, which included ongoing engagement events. As such, confusion regarding the goals of the plan as well as the challenges of planning fatigue were concerns for the city. In order to overcome these concerns, the planning process was shifted to focus on implementation from the beginning of the project.



Historic Walker Lake is home to many businesses including these along Lake Street. Buildings are typically below two stories.

Rather than reengaging stakeholders to again discuss community vision, the project team began the project by identifying previous recommendations and focused on communicating the trade off decisions that needed to be made in order to see those plans implemented. For example, where new uses for existing buildings were suggested as desirable, the project team identified the barriers to those uses coming into the district. In many cases, those barriers had roots in both regulatory and market challenges. For example, the uses may not have been allowed by zoning and parking requirements are such that a developer would have to either purchase and demolish adjacent buildings or rely on an uncertain variance, which created challenges in acquiring financing. Using these barriers as a baseline, the stakeholders were able to be engaged in deep conversations about the trade-offs required to achieve the community's goals. Using this approach, participants were able to make informed decisions regarding the future of their community in a way that deeply acknowledged previous planning work and potential future challenges. Community members were able to say, "Yes, the fact that parking may become more difficult is worth it if we are able to preserve our historic building stock and bring in desirable uses."

The second challenge was an understanding that many typical approaches to public engagement do not work for business and landowners, and usually result in very little engagement from these incredibly important stakeholders. Typical meeting times are seldom convenient for those who are running small businesses and the case for participation is often lacking. As such, many business and land owners tend to participate in reactionary ways to infrastructure projects, rather than proactively at planning phase. The project team's approach started with a door-to-door survey of every business in the study area, achieving a goal of at least 50% participation. The survey sought to both bolster the plan's data, but also to make sure that a face to face invitation was made for as many business leaders as possible.



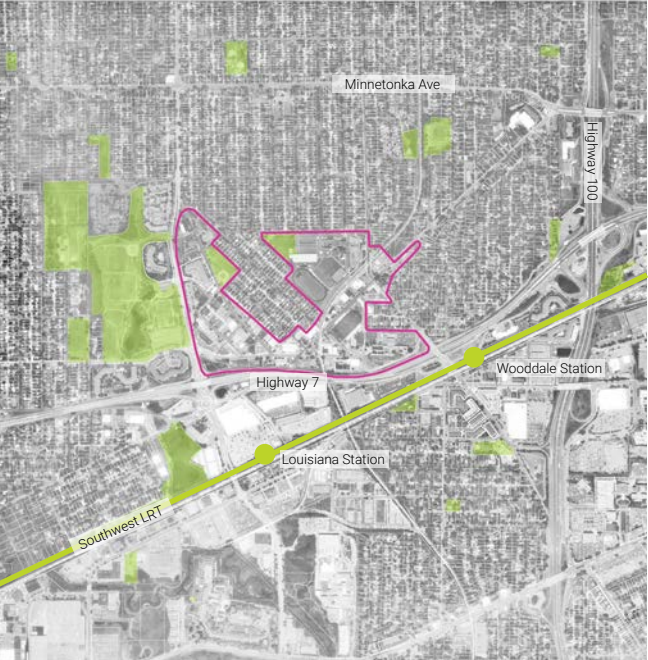
Business owner workshops were conducted to develop a strong implementation strategy for the plan.

One of the city's other project goals was the creation of a business organization for the district. Utilizing contacts made through the survey, the project team organized a series of business owner workshops with the goal of helping the owners organize themselves into a merchant's association. In parallel to this organizing, the city and local non-profits put forward grant applications for a facade repair project and public art that helped create momentum for the district, and business owners were introduced to other technical assistance organizations to assist with the establishment of a merchant's association for the district.

This plan, while focused on implementation steps for the city, also contains a series of next steps that form a work plan for the merchant's association's first years, including recommendations for joint marketing, future programming and numerous other types of placemaking. According to Curt Rahman, a property owner and one of the leaders of the nascent merchants association, "Frankly, the work of Asakura Robinson, the City of St. Louis Park planning department, the city project people and other city staff, including the city council, makes me proud to live and work here."

LOCATION AND CONTEXT OF DISTRICT

St Louis Park is a first-ring suburb of Minneapolis, a few miles southwest of Downtown Minneapolis and directly west from Minneapolis' Uptown and Chain of Lakes Areas. It is bounded, roughly, by France Avenue on the East, Interstate 394 on the north, US Highway 169 on the west and has an irregular border with Hopkins and Edina to the south. It is bisected by Minnesota State Highway 100 which runs north and south and Minnesota State Highway 7 which runs east and west. The Walker Lake District sits close to the geographic center of the city and was one of the earliest areas of the city developed. It is split between the Sorensen neighborhood (the east side) and the Lenox neighborhood (the west side). Access can be severely limited with Highway 7 to the south, St. Louis Park High School to the north, and the Canadian Pacific-Soo Line freight rail line (sometimes referred to as the Dan Patch Line, due to historical ownership) tracks running through the area.



The study area has a variety of light industrial businesses in low rise buildings. Many businesses have been in the area for over twenty years.



Project Boundary

.1 Miles N

Source: City of St. Louis Park

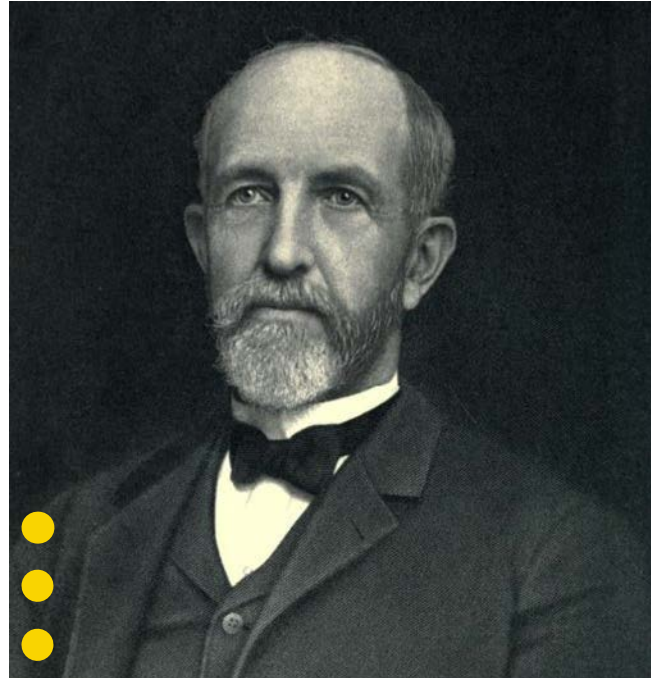
HISTORY

The Historic Walker Lake District in St. Louis Park, Minnesota, is a unique remnant of suburban history. St. Louis Park, a first-ring post-war suburb to the west of Minneapolis, is, in many ways, the prototypical Leave-it-to-Beaver suburb. In fact, it has even played that role in Hollywood as some of the main settings of the Coen Brothers' (who grew up in St. Louis Park) films *Fargo* and *A Serious Man*. The Walker Lake District predates that era of development, a sort of false start of suburban development, somewhere between the small town beginnings of Hopkins or Stillwater, and the post-war suburban development that would come later.

According to the St. Louis Park Historical Society, in the late nineteenth century, a group of investors led by lumber baron and noted art collector TB Walker (who also founded the Walker Art Center) developed a business partnership to create an industrial suburb outside of Minneapolis, linked by and developed around the railway, along the lines of Pullman, Illinois. The group built a small commercial center, a church, several hotels, industrial facilities and several hundred homes along the Minneapolis and St. Louis Railway, from which the city took its name.

Although the village grew to a population of several hundred and had around 600 industrial jobs (mostly filled by commuters from Minneapolis, an inversion of later suburban development), the financial panic and crash of 1893 put an end to almost all development for the next 50 years. The population in 1940 had only grown to 7000. By 1950 it would top 22,000 and by 1960 it would be more than 43,000. Although the commercial offerings of the area continued to grow during this era, the elimination of the streetcar by 1954 and the opening of some of the nation's first strip malls about a mile away in the late 40s and early 50s shifted development away from the area, limited commercial and industrial development and preserved the area's pre-automobile commercial architecture. The 1888 Walker Building as well as major building clusters from the 30s, 40s and 50s were preserved.

In the 1960's and 70's, the area was characterized by a high quality of life and Jewish migration from Minneapolis. During this time, residential retention was high, and the community continued to move away from its industrial origins.



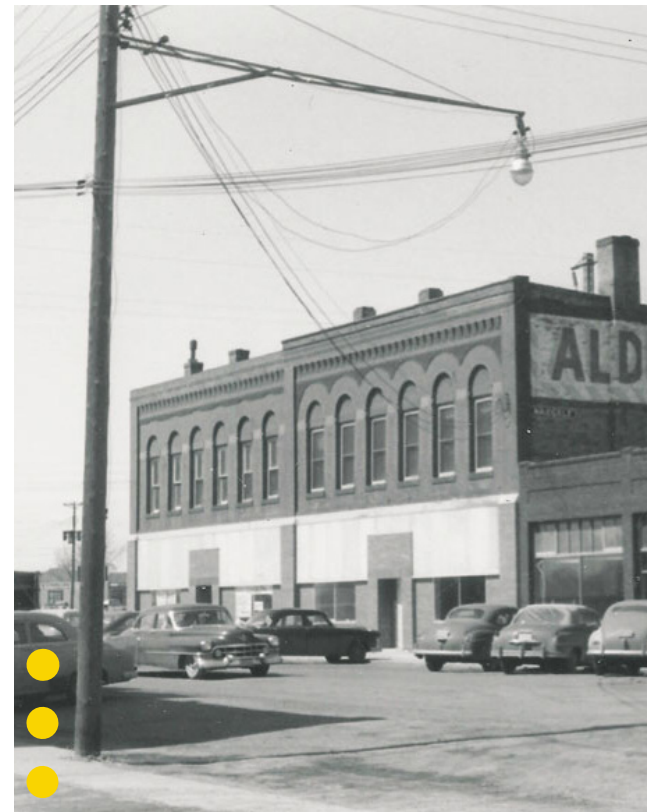
● TB Walker developed a partnership to create the St. Louis Park suburb, and also founded the Walker Art Center. (St. Louis Park Historical Society)



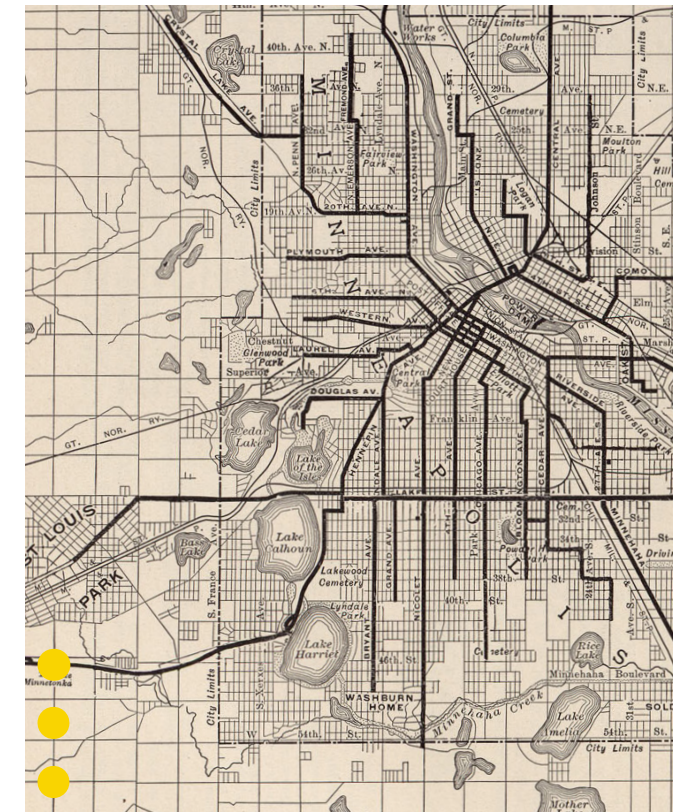
● The restaurant at the end of the Lake Street Streetcar line, alternately known as Reiss's Restaurant and the Waiting Station, as shown in the 1920' or 30's provided meals for travelers and nearby workers. (St. Louis Park Historical Society)



● The Walker Building in 1924. (St. Louis Park Historical Society)



● The Walker Building in 1955. (St. Louis Park Historical Society)



● This map shows early streetcar lines to St. Louis Park in 1913. (St. Louis Park Historical Society)

2: Existing Conditions



PREVIOUS PLANNING

City Wide

The City of St. Louis Park's 2040 Comprehensive Plan details the following strategic directions:

- St. Louis Park is committed to being a leader in racial equity and inclusion in order to create a more just and inclusive community for all.
- St. Louis Park is committed to continue to lead in environmental stewardship.
- St. Louis Park is committed to providing a broad range of housing and neighborhood-oriented development.
- St. Louis Park is committed to providing a variety of options for people to make their way around the city comfortably, safely and reliably.
- St. Louis Park is committed to creating opportunities to build social capital through community engagement.

The plan contains information about the community's vision for the city, including the Historic Walker Lake District, that will be implemented through this process. The Council adopted these strategic priorities in June 2018. They are included in the Comprehensive Plan which will be officially adopted in summer 2019. The priorities came out of an extensive visioning process called Vision 3.0.

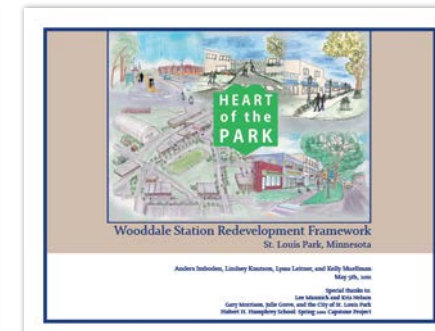
District Specific

The Historic Walker Lake District has been the subject of a variety of planning efforts including the Historic Walker Lake Activation Plan and the Walker Lake Street Infrastructure Plan. Nearby, plans to accommodate the light rail expansion are underway. All of these district-specific plans contain ideas that this effort will seek to implement.



St. Louis Park Historic Walker-Lake Activation Plan

This plan advocates for connecting surrounding neighborhoods and leveraging anchors to create reasons for people to visit and stay in the district. The recommendations further these goals through projects such as enhancing bike and pedestrian connections, adding retail and personal services to the commercial mix, and introducing low cost programming. This plan includes information on the reasons people visit places and stay as well as placemaking strategies.



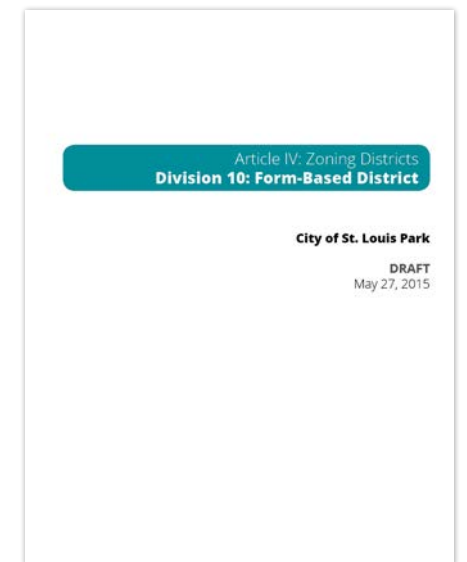
Heart of the Park: Wooddale Station Redevelopment Framework

This plan anticipates forthcoming light rail and contains history and existing conditions for the area. The plan includes placemaking and transit-oriented development recommendations. Goals consist of making multimodal transit accessible, helping business through investments, creating sustainability in the built form, and creating a unique identity for the area around the forthcoming station.



Walker-Lake Streetscape Plan

This plan details streetscape improvements in the central part of Historic Walker Lake. The plan includes green alleys, street parking, and gateway features. It also includes a road diet in parts of the area.



St. Louis Form-Based District

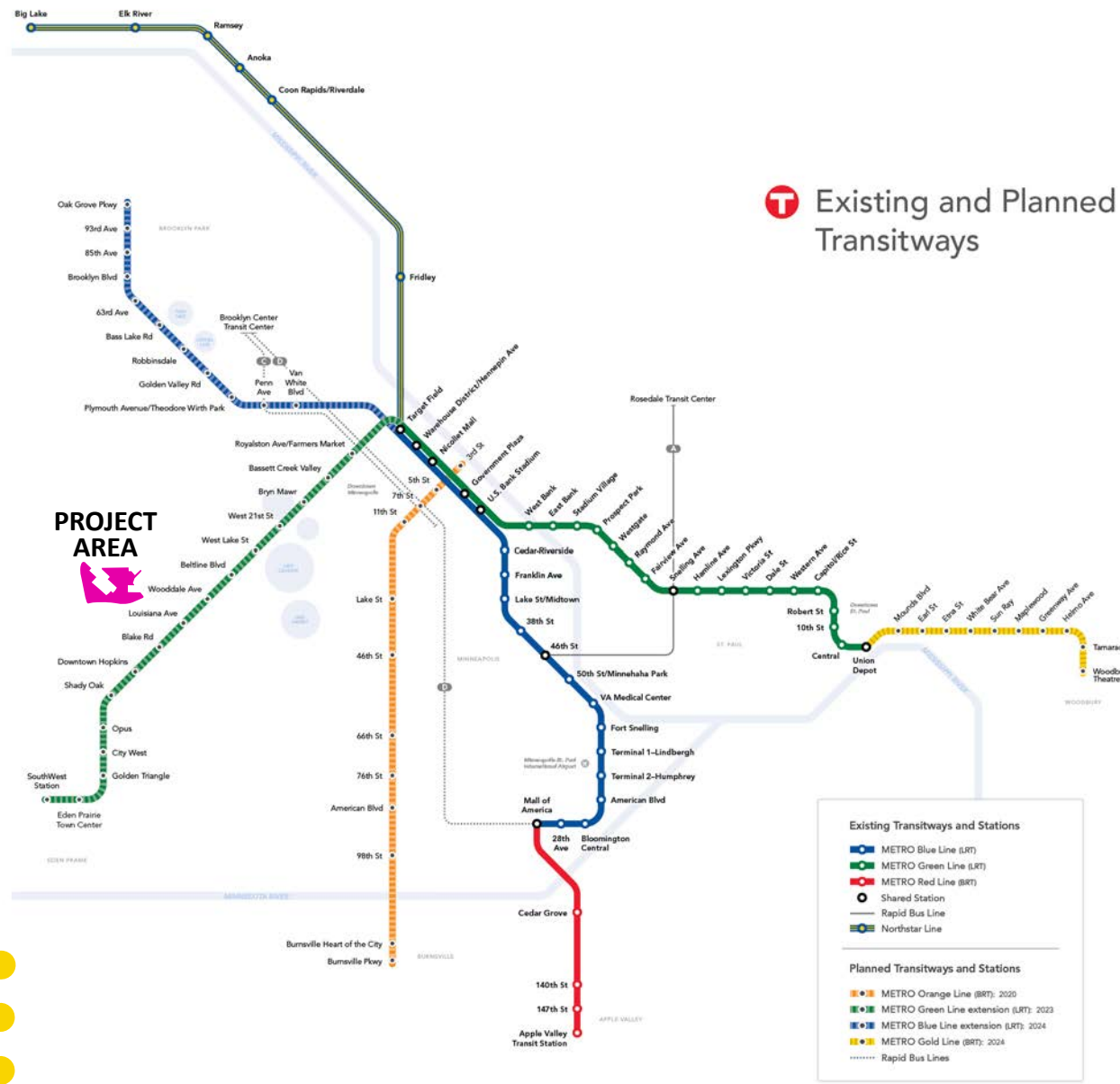
To the east of Walker-Lake a form-based district zoning code was drafted in 2015. The proposed area designates form standards for areas around the Wooddale Station, including a portion of Lake Street, ensuring a walkable and pedestrian-friendly public realm.

Southwest Light Rail

The Southwest Light Rail will be the third light rail project in the Twin Cities and will run 14.5 miles from Downtown Minneapolis to Eden Prairie through St. Louis Park, Hopkins and Minnetonka. The project is expected to begin service in 2023 and will operate as an extension of the existing Green Line, which runs

between downtown Minneapolis and downtown St. Paul. Two stops, Wooddale Avenue and Louisiana Avenue, will be in close proximity to the Walker Lake District and will provide opportunities to significantly increase the numbers of visitors to the area who will now be travelling by transit.

Existing and Planned Transitways



This map shows the forthcoming light rail line that will serve the Historic Walker Lake District with two stations.

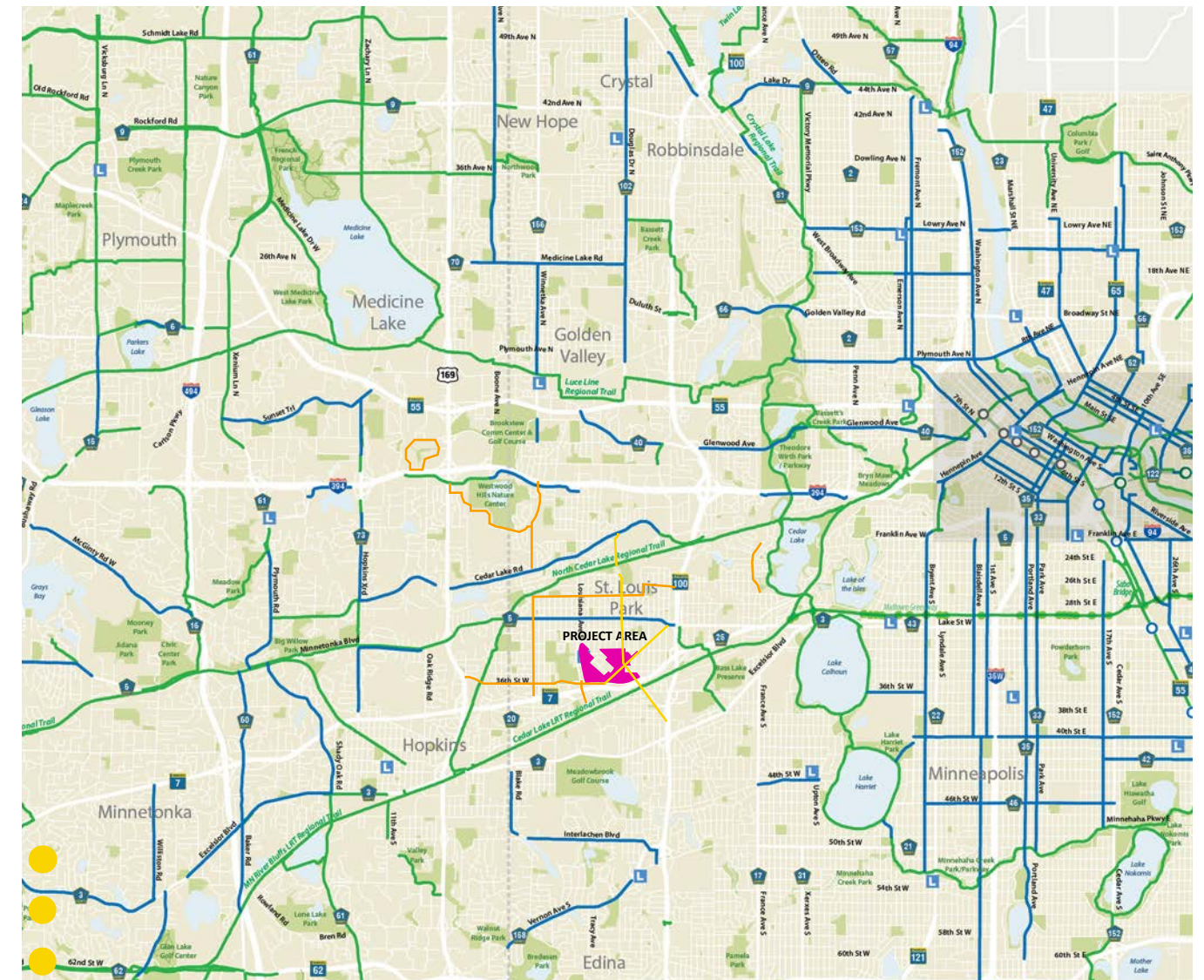
Source: Metro Transit

Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail

The Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail is a major bikeway that runs adjacent to the district to the south of Highway 7. The trail runs east and west connecting to the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail to the west and the Midtown Greenway and Downtown Minneapolis to the east. The trail is a major spine in the metro area trail network and provides significant access to many locations throughout the metro area, including the Grand Rounds in Minneapolis, the trails around Lake Minnetonka, and the trails in the Minnesota River Valley. A 2017 Estimated Daily Traffic

Count (EDT) conducted by the City of Minneapolis at the border with St. Louis Park showed 1600 daily users on the Cedar Lake Trail, an increase of 25% over the 2009 count of 1260. The opening of the Southwest Light Rail line adjacent to the trail will likely increase the numbers using the trail, as many transit users also use bicycles or walk to complete the "last mile" of their trips to or from home, their places of employment or other destinations. Connections to the trail represent an important opportunity for enticing people to Walker Lake and marketing the district.

Bike Routes



This map shows the regional trail system that serves St. Louis Park and Historic Walker Lake.

- Off-street bikeway
 - On-street bikeway
 - Completed Connect the Park Bikeways
 - Planned Walker-Lake bikeways
- Source: Hennepin County

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

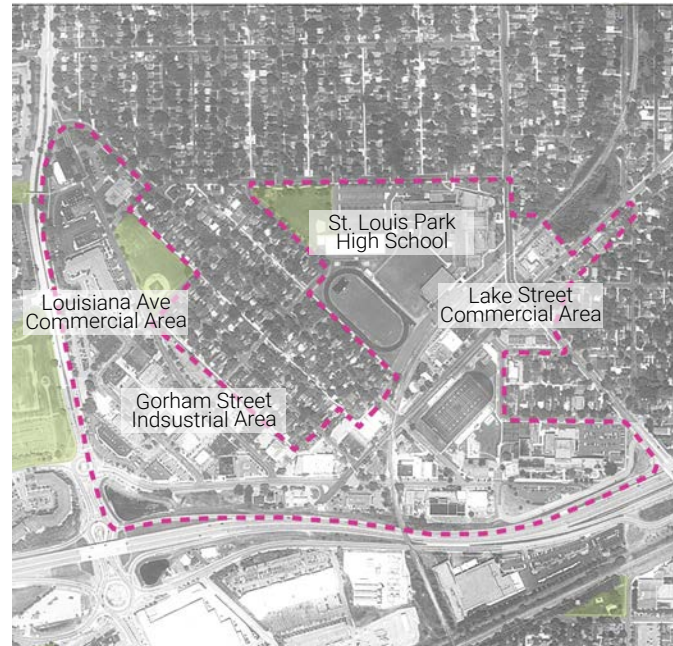
Businesses

The Historic Walker Lake District is home to approximately 105 businesses (note this number includes a variety of LLC's listed at the same address) and 1,584 employees. Below is a summary of the characteristics of these businesses within the study area.



105 businesses are located in the study area

1,584 employees work in the study area



Adjacent Neighborhoods

The neighborhoods adjacent to Historic Walker Lake are primarily residential with commercial centers nearby. These neighborhoods contain mostly single-family homes, condos, and larger apartment complexes.

363 Businesses

19,211 Employees

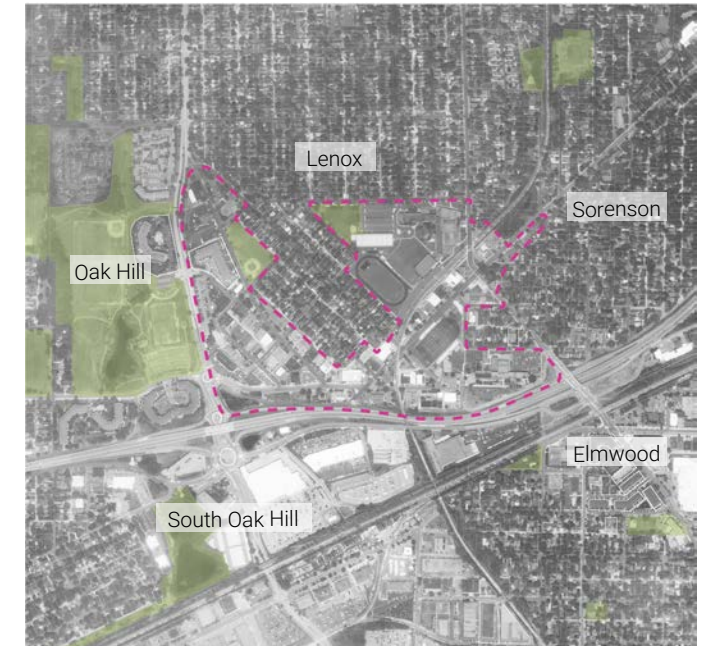
6,638 Residents

65% Owner-occupied homes

35% Renter-occupied homes

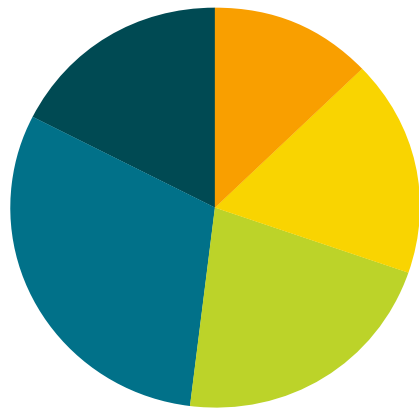
33.3 Average Age

2.12 Average Household Size



Years in Current Location

- Less than 1 year
- 1-10 year
- 10-20 years
- 20-30 years
- More than 30 years

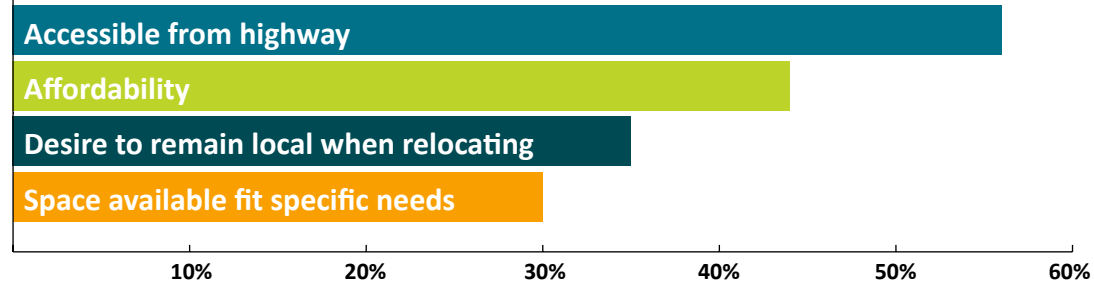


57%
of businesses are open to the public

61%
of businesses own their building

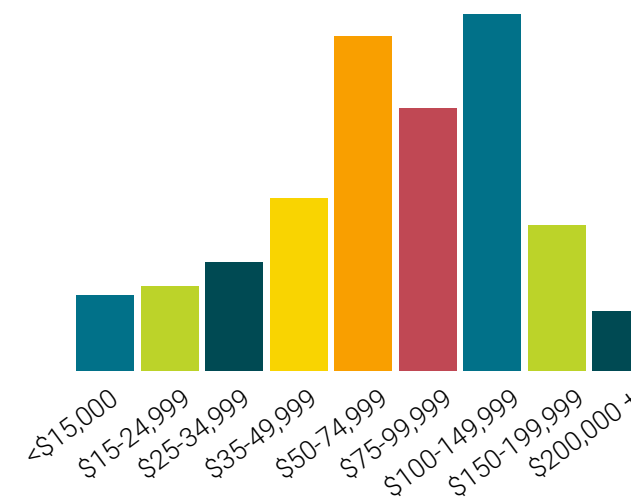
48%
of businesses have been in their location for 20+ years

What initially attracted you to locate your business in this neighborhood?



Source: Business survey conducted by team

Household Income



Source: ESRI Business Analyst 2018



COMMERCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

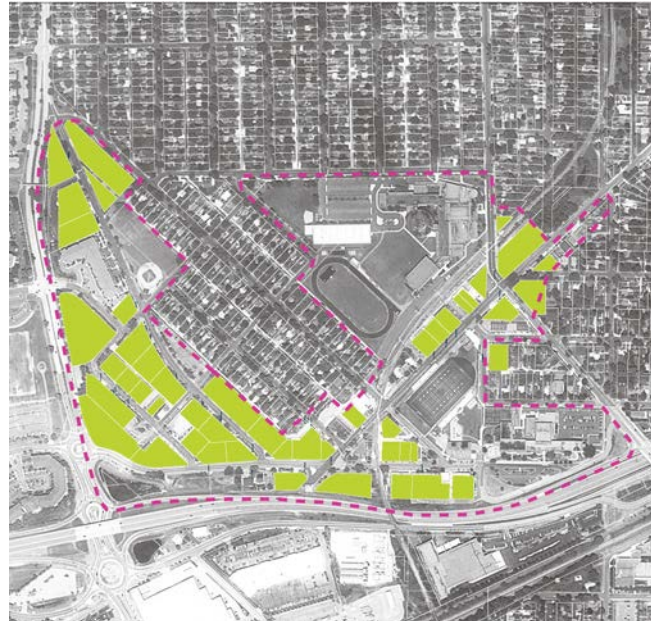
Types of Businesses

There are a variety of businesses in the Historic Walker Lake District. In addition to a small number of retail, restaurant, and personal services, a majority of the businesses are light industrial operations that are open during the day. Examples of these types of businesses include:

- Printing
- Furniture design and manufacturing
- Equipment rental
- Sign manufacturing
- Remodeling
- Lighting and audio visual installation

The maps on this page show that most businesses are open during the day. The project team used this data to develop strategic partnerships related to parking and street life.

Businesses Open During the Day



Businesses Open Weekends



Businesses Open Evenings

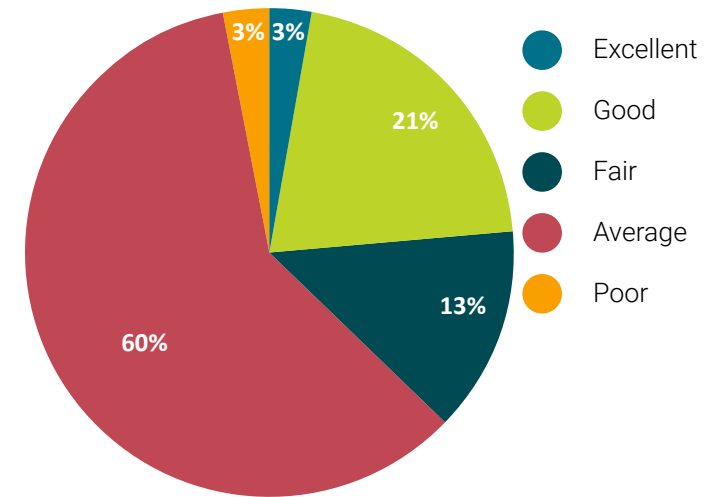


Source: Business survey conducted by team

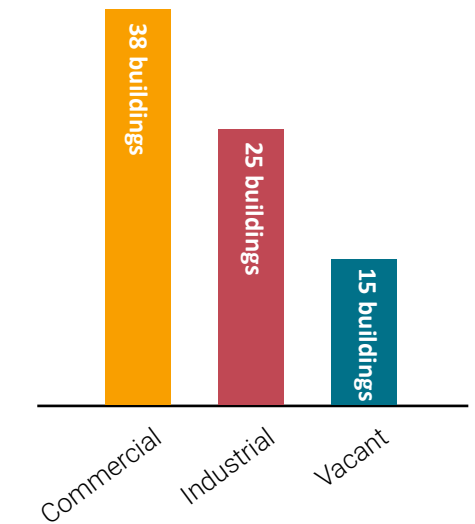
Property Characteristics

A majority of buildings in the study area are in average condition and many have some degree of deferred maintenance. Most buildings are over 50 years old. The data shown below, including building quality is taken from the City of St. Louis Park assessing data.

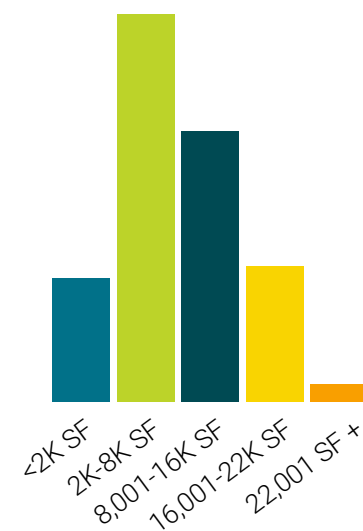
Building Quality



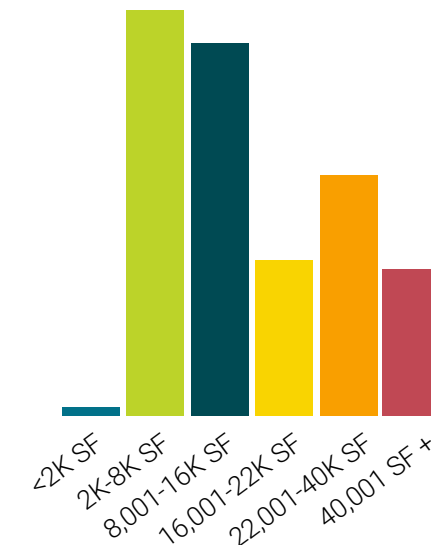
Property Type



Gross Building Size



Parcel Size



Source: City of St. Louis Park

Buildings are on average

63
years old

Building Characteristics

Buildings in the Walker Lake District are simple and utilitarian. They have a cohesive set of characteristics that should be considered with new development.

Commercial Buildings

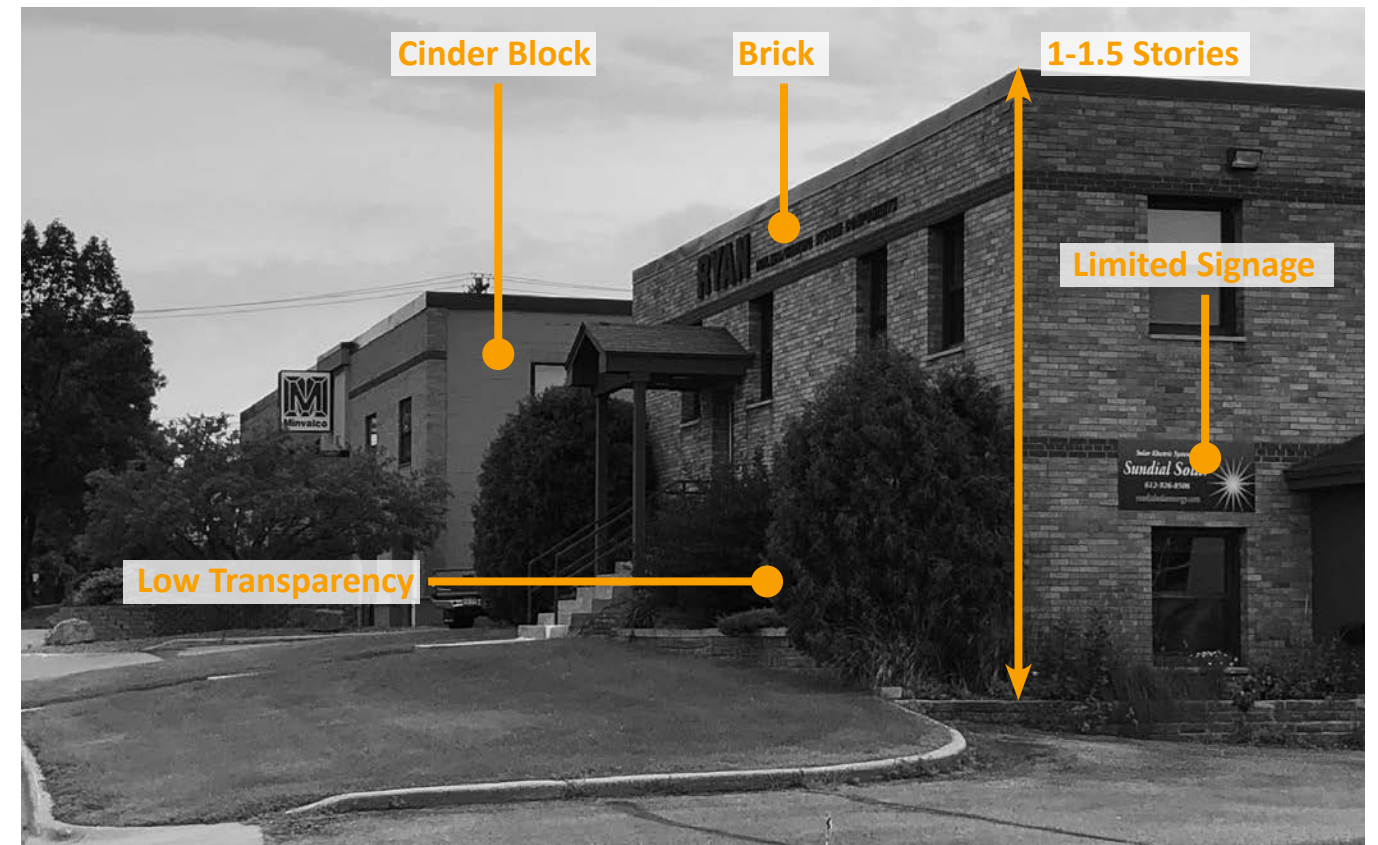
Most commercial buildings in the study area are one and two story brick buildings with varying levels of retail storefronts, including some that are retrofitted. With the exception of the Walker Building and the former Reiss' Restaurant building, these structures have minimal detailing and limited differentiation between floors. These buildings are typically rectilinear with no protruding elements. Setbacks vary from zero to twenty feet. Ground floor transparency varies. Some buildings have awnings, and signage types vary, including painted, illuminated, and stand alone signs.

Industrial Buildings

Most industrial buildings in the study area are single story, or one and a half story, brick or cinder block buildings with small office areas and loading facilities. These buildings are rectilinear with minimal detailing. They often have additions or modifications that post date original construction. Setbacks vary from zero to twenty feet. Some buildings have awnings, and signage types vary, including painted, illuminated, and stand alone signs. Often, signage is only visible near the building's entrance.

Accessibility

ADA access is challenging internally and externally for many of the structures in the study area. Two story buildings especially have difficulty meeting internal ADA standards and several buildings have installed exterior ramps on sidewalks to bring the structure into compliance. Street improvements are addressing some of the external issues in commercial areas, but interior compliance could pose issues for reinvestment.



REDEVELOPMENT CONTEXT

Land Use

The map to the right shows land use in the study area from the 2040 comprehensive plan. The study area contains mostly commercial and industrial uses, bordered by low and medium density residential. There are also civic uses such as schools, parks, and the library.

Outside of civic uses, the predominant land use categories in the study area are commercial and industrial. There are also medium and high density residential uses bordering the study area.

Land Use 2040



- Project Boundary
- IND Industrial
- RL Low Density Residential
- OFC Office
- RM Medium Density Residential
- BP Business Park
- RH High Density Residential
- CIV Civic
- MX Mixed Use
- PRK Park and Open Space
- COM Commercial
- RRR Railroad



Source: City of St. Louis Park

Zoning

The map to the right shows existing zoning in the study area. The main zoning categories in the study area are General Commercial (C-2), Industrial Park (I-P), and General Industrial (I-G). The following uses are permitted by right in the C-2 District:

- Medical and dental office
- Funeral homes
- Libraries
- Museums
- Parks and open spaces
- Police and fire stations
- Banks
- Business/trade school/college
- Offices
- Retail shops up to 20,000 square feet
- Service facilities
- Studios
- Showrooms
- Parking lot
- Transit stations
- Large item retail under 20,000 square feet

The following uses are permitted by right in the I-P District:

- Park and open space
- Police and fire stations
- Post offices
- Business/trade school/college
- Parcel delivery services
- Recycling operations
- Showrooms
- Warehouse and storage
- Transit stations
- Studios

The following uses are allowed by right in the I-G District:

- Parks and open space.
- Police and fire stations.
- Post offices.
- Business/trade school/college.
- Studios.

- Freight terminals.
- Manufacturing/processing.
- Parcel delivery services.
- Recycling operations.
- Showrooms.
- Warehouse and storage.
- Transit stations.
- Catering.
- Brewery without a taproom.

In some places, the zoning regulations do not match the community's vision for the area, specifically related to required parking. Some initial issues include:

- Coffee shops require 600 square feet of parking per every 1,000 square feet of coffee shop space (1 space/200 sf).
- Bakeries require 2,400 square feet of parking per every 500 square feet of customer space (1 space/25 sf).
- Restaurants require 1,992 square feet of parking per every 1,000 square feet of restaurant space (1 space/60 sf).
- Retail and grocery uses require 480 square feet per every 1,000 square feet of space (1 space/150 sf max, 250 sf min).

These regulations can make it difficult for new business to open in the area and can encourage the demolition of buildings for parking.

Redevelopment

Based on the ratio of land value to improvement value, 43.4% of buildings in the area are likely or somewhat likely to redevelop. This figure was derived by taking land values and improvement values from the St. Louis Park assessment data. This means that if development pressure is high, businesses in the study area may be at risk of building turnover or demolition.

Redevelopment Potential	Value	Percentage of Study Area
Likely to redevelop	Improvement value is less than land value	11.7%
Somewhat likely to redevelop	Improvement value is 1-1.5 X land value	31.7%
Unlikely to redevelop	Improvement value is over 1.5X land value	56.5%

Zoning



- Project Boundary
- R-2 Single Family Residence
- R-3 Two-Family Residence
- R-4 Multiple-Family Residence
- R-C High Density Multiple-Family Residence
- M-X Mixed Use
- C-2 General Commercial
- I-P Industrial Park
- I-G General Industrial
- POS-Parks and Open Space

Source: City of St. Louis Park

TRANSPORTATION

Parking Supply

Parking infrastructure in the Historic Walker Lake District is provided through a combination of public and private off-street parking lots as well as unrestricted and permit/time restricted on-street parking. On-street parking takes the form of marked and unmarked parallel parking spaces and marked perpendicular parking spaces.

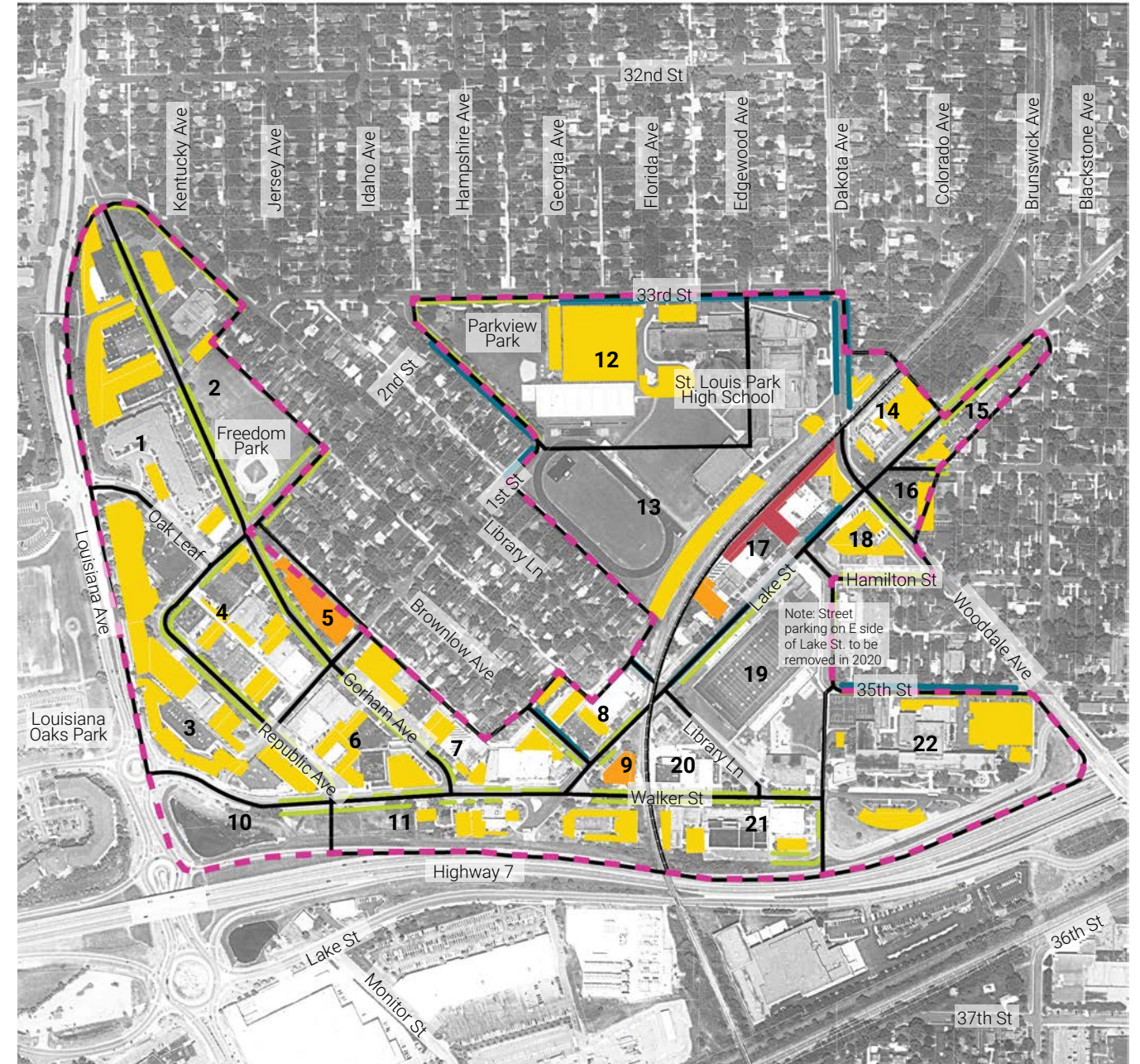
The existing parking supply in the study area was determined through a detailed review of aerial imagery. An on-site field review was then completed to verify the initial findings and confirm relevant time or permit-based parking restrictions. A summary of the existing parking supply is shown to the right. In total, 2,876 parking spaces are available in the study area through a combination of 1,026 on-street parking spaces and 1,850 off-street parking spaces.

A map of the parking supply by block is shown on the facing page. Nearly 20 percent of the available parking supply in the study is off-street parking for two local schools: The St. Louis Park High School (blocks 12 and 13) and the Central School (block 22). Notable concentrations of non-institutional parking are block 3 which includes the Park Tavern bar and restaurant, and block 7 which includes multiple industrial and retail establishments.

The majority of off-street parking in the study area are private spaces intended for use by patrons or employees of the associated businesses. Public off-street parking spaces are located in block 17 (by permit), block 5, and block 9, for a total of 176 spaces. Note that for the purposes of this study, parking for the St. Louis Park Library in block 2 is categorized as private.

Block Number	On-Street (Public)	Off-Street (Public)	Off-Street (Private)	Total Parking Supply
1	39	-	110	149
2	75	-	45	120
3	7	-	280	287
4	115	-	83	198
5	22	96	-	118
6	65	-	68	133
7	70	-	114	184
8	25	-	59	84
9	15	30	-	45
10	-	-	-	-
11	40	-	75	115
12	127	-	291	418
13	61	-	157	218
14	14	-	69	83
15	27	-	13	40
16	16	-	35	51
17	35	70	26	131
18	32	-	41	73
19	60	-	-	60
20	58	-	-	58
21	55	-	30	85
22	52	-	158	210
Total	1,011	196	1,654	2,861

Parking Supply



Restricted Parking

On-street parking is typically provided without time or permit restrictions with notable exceptions on many roadways adjacent to both school facilities. In many cases, unrestricted parking is provided on the side of the street adjacent to the school property while the residential side of the street is permit and/or time restricted. Other portions of the study area that include restricted parking are the north side of Lake Street adjacent to the football stadium and portions of Library Lane and Brownlow Avenue.



Examples of restricted parking in the study area.

During a field review it was noted that many on-street parking locations are used by delivery vehicles in lieu of designated loading areas. On-street delivery activity was most prominent in the morning along sections of Walker Street in block 21 and along portions of Lake Street W in blocks 17 and 19. This coincided with the lowest parking utilization rates at these locations, indicating that no parking availability concerns are caused by this delivery activity.



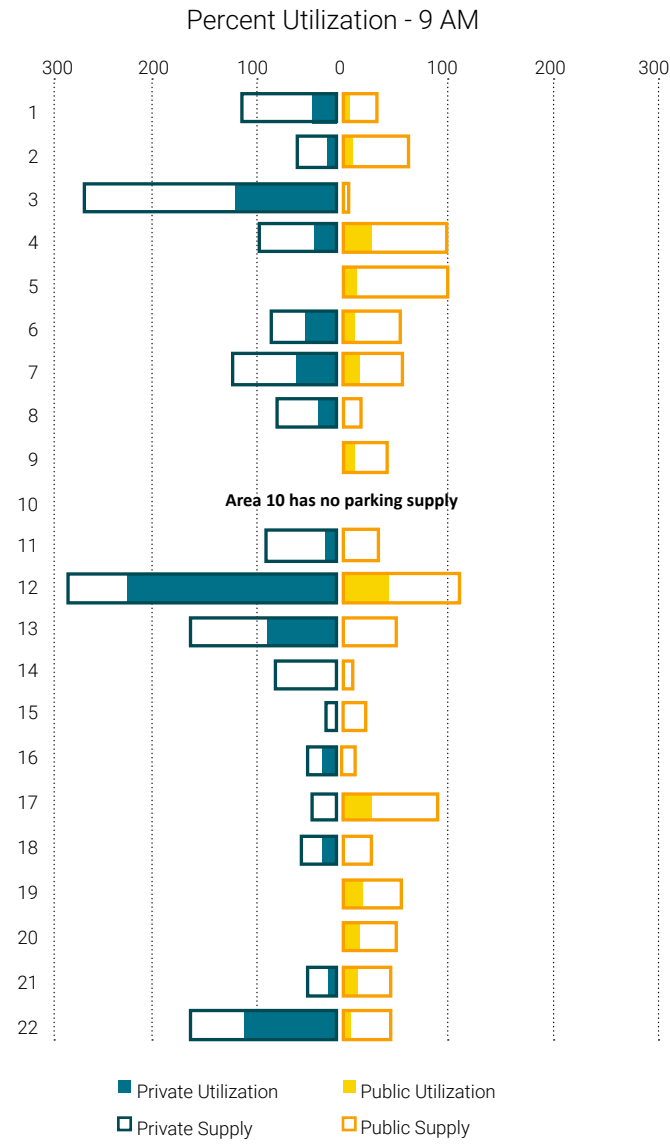
Delivery vehicles often use on street parking spaces instead of delivery areas.

Parking Utilization

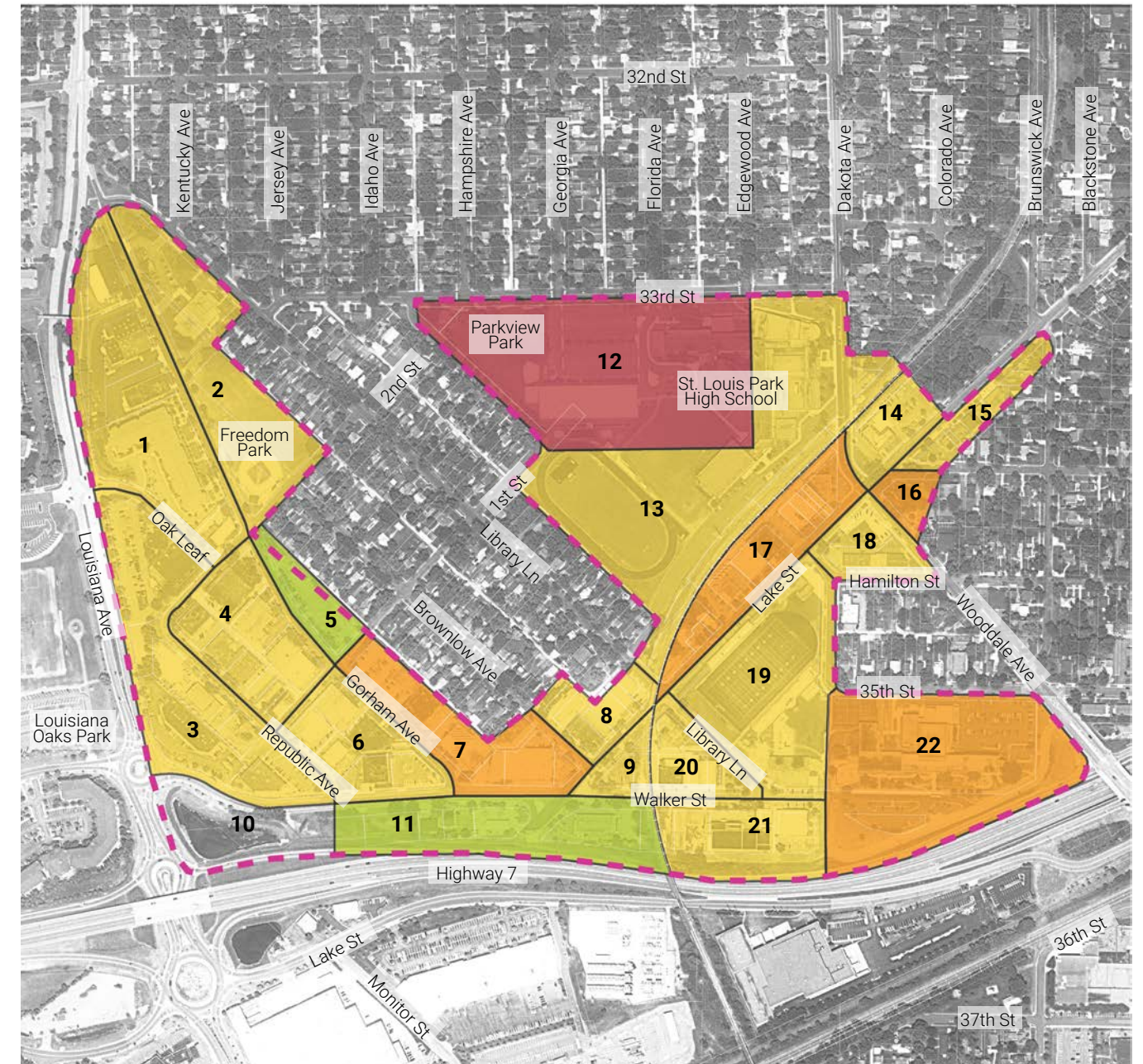
Parking utilization counts were conducted over the course of the day on Thursday, December 6, 2018. Utilization counts were conducted for a morning (9:00 AM) peak, a midday (1:00 PM) peak, and an evening (6:00 PM) peak. The number of parked vehicles were noted for each on- and off-street parking location noted. These data were then aggregated to each block to assess the percent parking utilization and identify any areas of concern.

9:00 AM Utilization

Parking utilization during this time period was highest in block 12 (73 percent) due to parking activity associated with St. Louis Park High School. Of note was the on-street parking on the east sides of Idaho Avenue S and 1st Street NW. Each of these locations was at full utilization. The next highest utilization rate was in block 22 (50 percent) due to parking activity associated with the Central School. For the remaining blocks, parking utilization generally ranged between 20 and 40 percent.

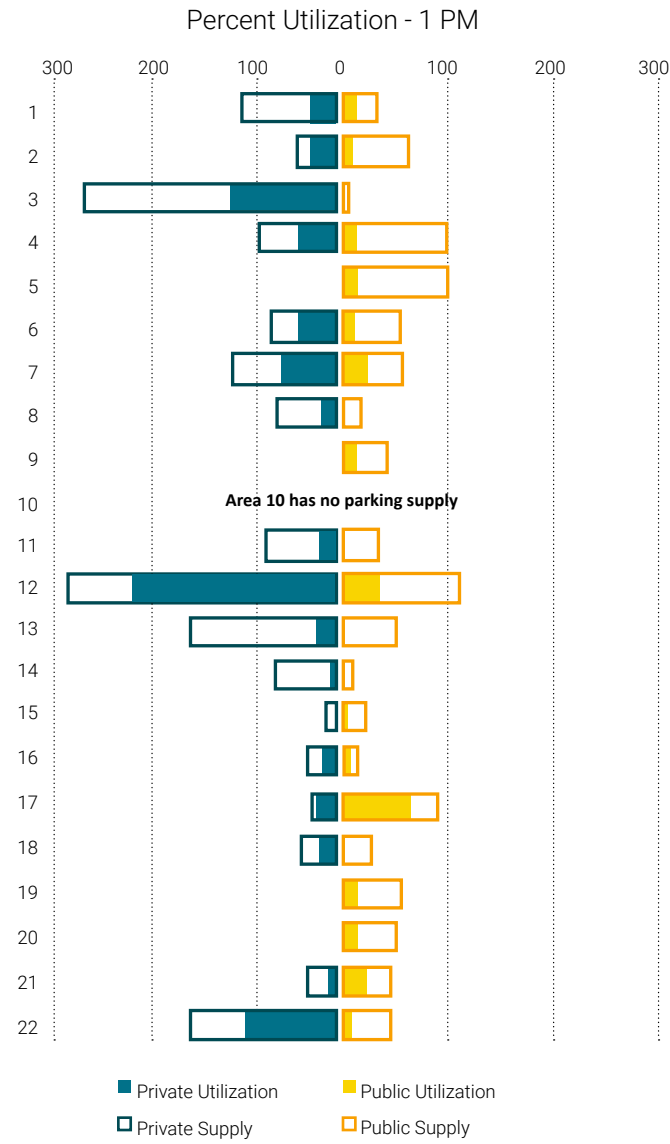


Parking Utilization - 9:00 am

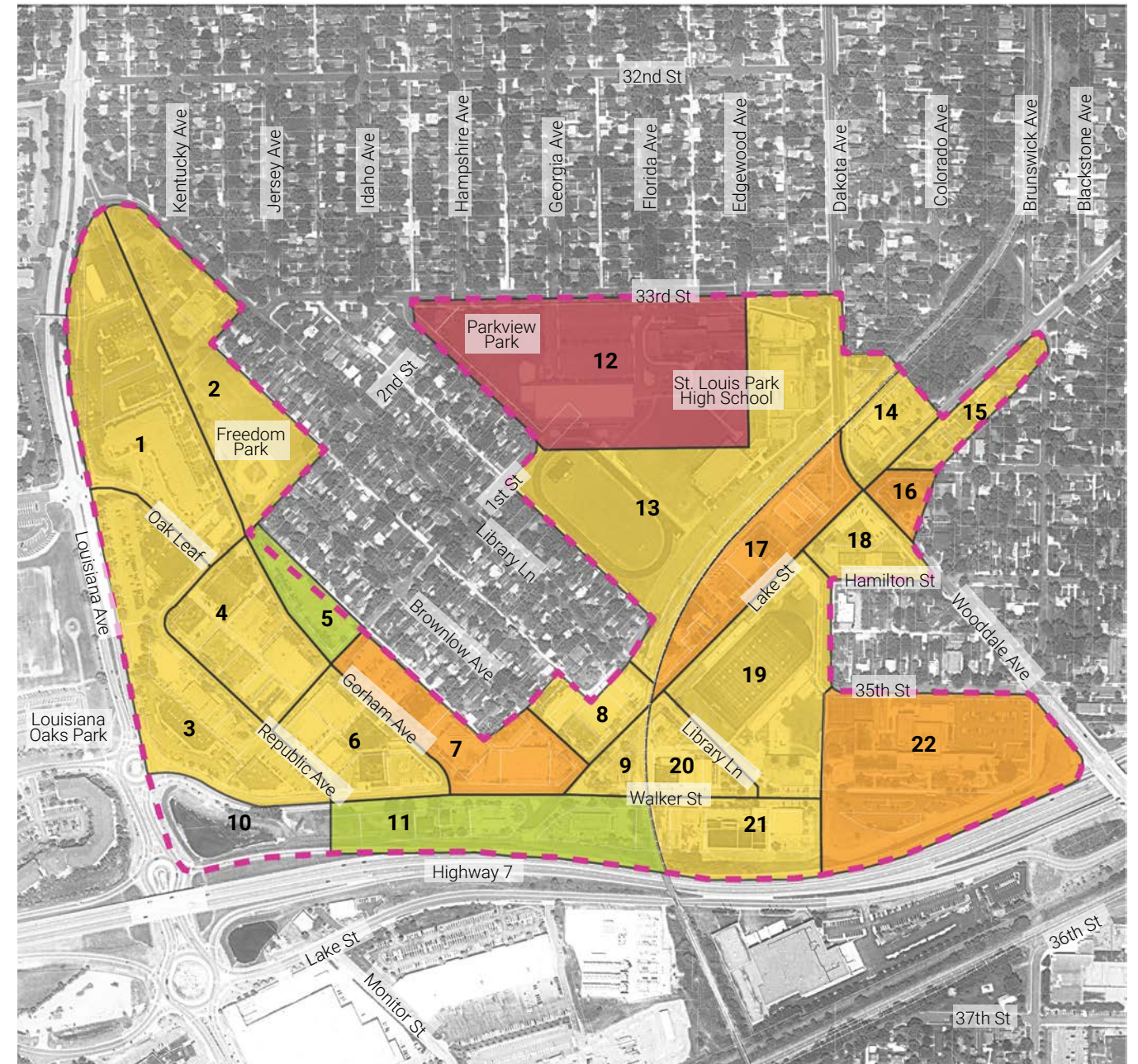


1:00 PM Utilization

The parking utilization in the school areas (blocks 12 and 22) remained relatively constant between the morning and midday time periods, including the on-street parking areas on Idaho Avenue S and 1st Street NW. Notable increases in parking utilization were seen in block 17, north of Lake Street W, primarily due to an increase in use of the public parking lot (an increase from 26 to 64 percent utilization).

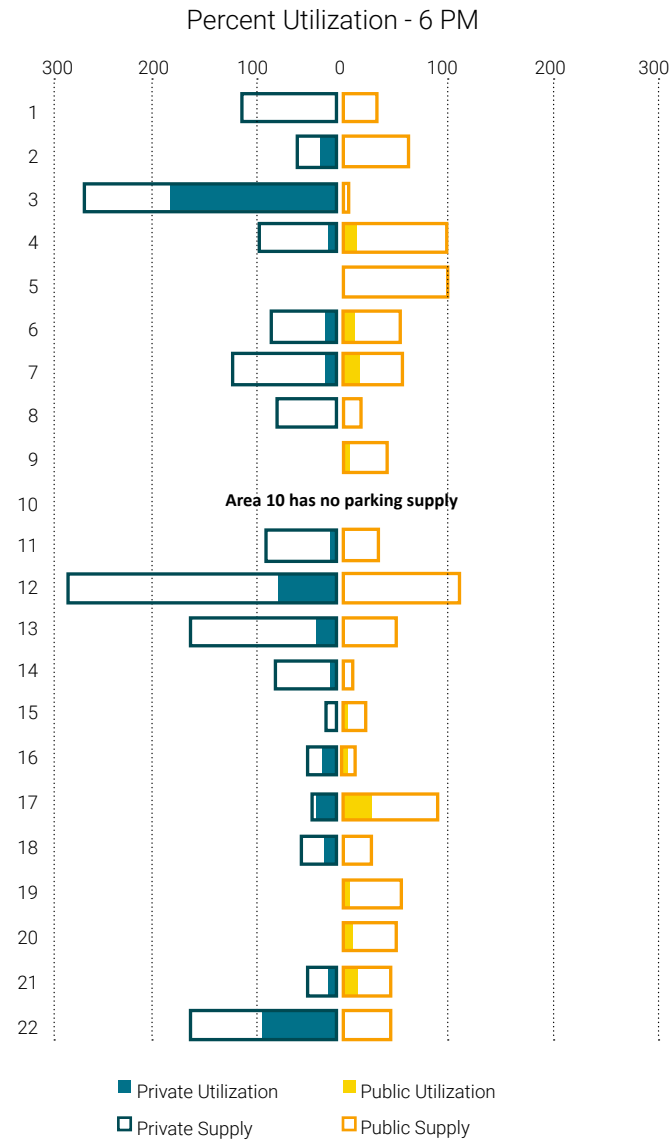


Parking Utilization - 1:00 pm



6:00 PM Utilization

Corresponding with the end of the school day, large reductions in utilization were recorded in blocks 12 and 13. Utilization in block 22 remained relatively high due to an afterschool function occurring during the field review. Parking utilization was highest in block 3 (51 percent). Utilization in this block was driven almost entirely by patrons of the Park Tavern restaurant, where demand exceeded the available supply. Multiple vehicles were parked in unmarked areas of the Park Tavern parking lot. Unauthorized on-street parking spaces along the extent of Oak Leaf Drive were also recorded being used as overflow parking. It is notable that both the commercial parking lots in the southern section of block 3 and the public parking lot in block 5 saw minimal utilization.



Parking Utilization - 6:00 pm



3: Community Engagement

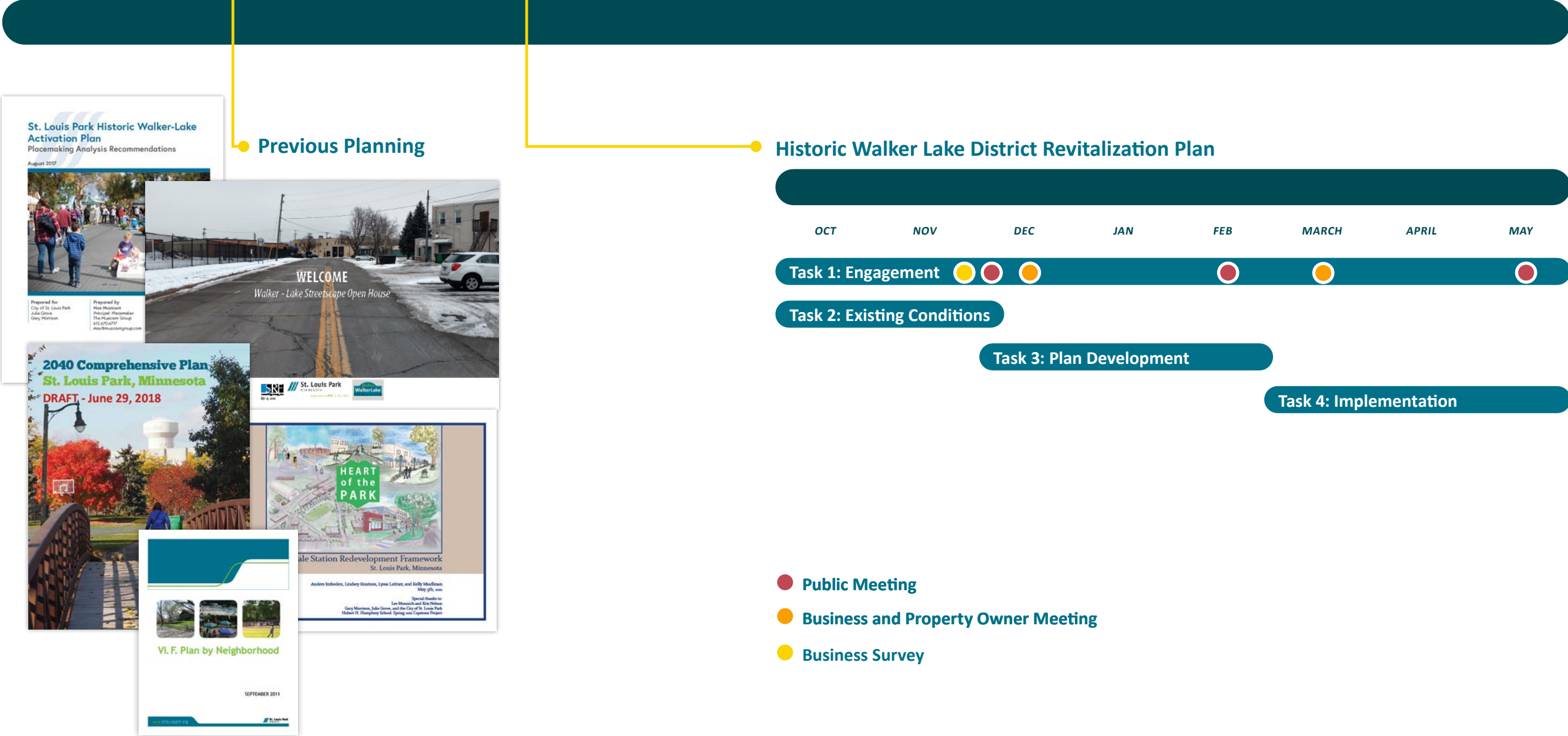


COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

An extensive and comprehensive engagement strategy was completed for this project. It included traditional public meetings and targeted outreach to reach business owners. These activities are detailed on the following pages. Engagement was designed to build off previous planning efforts and look towards implementation.

2015-2018

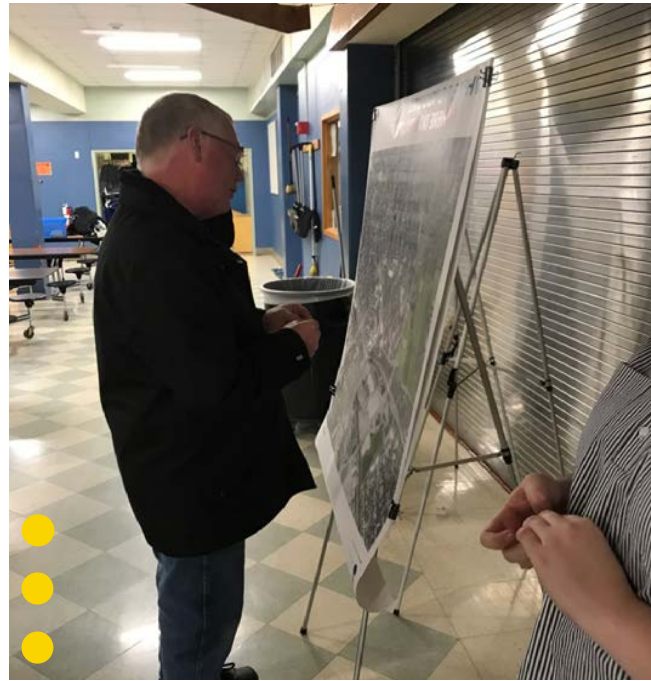
2018-2019



PUBLIC MEETING 1

The City of St. Louis Park kicked off the Historic Walker Lake District Revitalization Plan with an initial public meeting at the Central Community Center on Wednesday, November 14 from 6:30 - 8 pm. The meeting included a short presentation about the project area's main challenges and opportunities, followed by small group discussions facilitated by the consultant team and city staff. The meeting's goals were to inform attendees about the project, provide education about history and previous planning efforts of the area, gather feedback and public insight regarding potential strategies, and provide an opportunity for attendees to share knowledge, concerns, and desires for the area. In the small group discussion facilitators asked questions to gather community and business owner input regarding the opportunities and challenges they saw in the community and how the City of St. Louis Park can assist in revitalization of the area.

The event drew 21 community members and business owners. The presentation was recorded and is available for viewing on the City of St. Louis Park website. Common themes arose from the facilitated small group discussion regarding challenges and opportunities for the Historic Walker Lake area. These themes are summarized on the following pages.



Attendees marked where they live or work on a map of the district to begin the meeting.



Also at check in, attendees could sign up to be involved with further discussions of business organizations.

Challenges

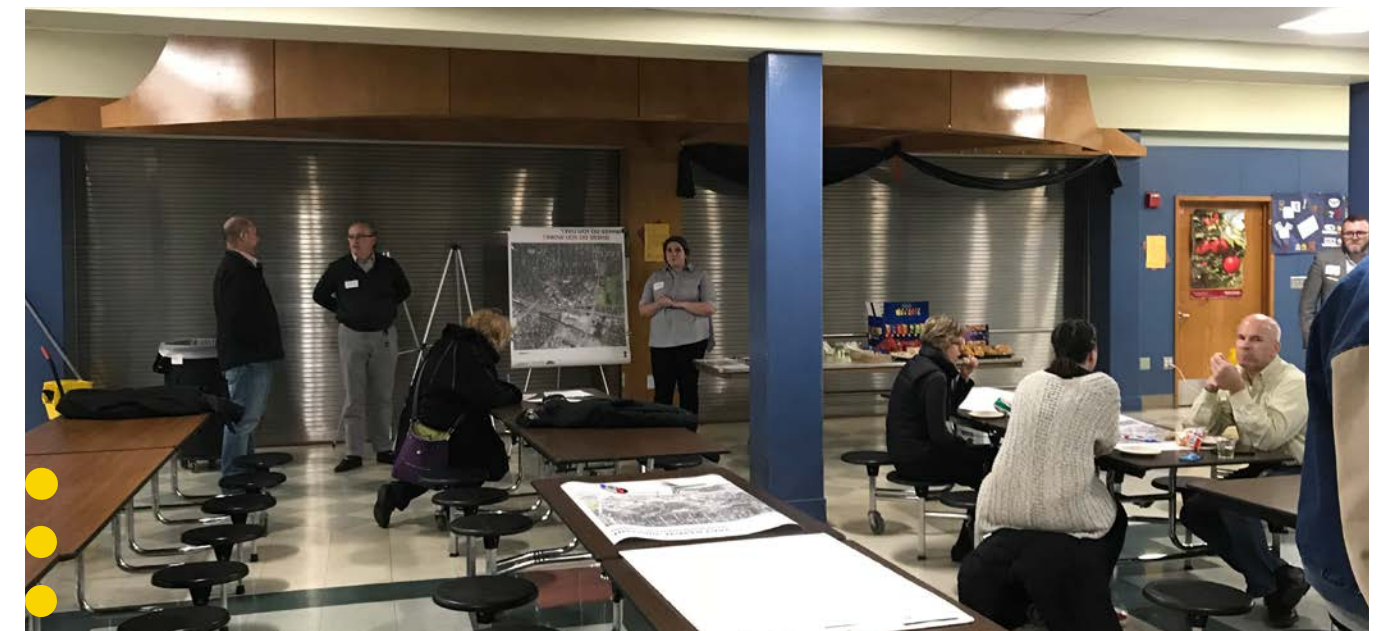
- Parking, both in business requirements and quality of public lots, are currently difficult to meet and could be a deterrent for future business development.
- Speed of traffic in the area creates safety concerns and hinders walkability.
- Walkability between off-street parking and businesses, and between businesses is limited.
- The neighborhood is not easily visible and would benefit from coordinated wayfinding efforts.

Opportunities

- Creation of a destination for community members to visit and be able to walk around and enjoy.
- Coordinated city events, could help activate streets, businesses, and alleys during night and weekend hours.
- Performance or art-based space to draw community members into the area with family friendly engagement.
- Restaurants, cafes, food trucks, or grocery stores allowing access to food options for businesses and their patrons.
- Allow potential for shared parking and more traditional commercial uses in industrial areas.



The presentation focused on ideas from previous planning efforts and challenges to implementing those ideas.



The City of St. Louis Park provided dinner and snacks for the group. Consultants were on hand to continue the business survey with business owners in attendance.

Community Priorities

- Accessibility – being able to park and walk to multiple destinations.
- More partnerships among businesses or businesses and city to promote attraction to the area.
- Ensure any regulation or community changes avoid displacement of existing businesses and keep the character of the area.
- Increase safety with traffic calming practices, crosswalks, and increased access to sidewalks.
- Attractive and desirable business facades and streetscapes.



Small groups were formed to dive into challenges and opportunities and discuss areas on a map.



Around eighteen people attended the meeting/ Attendees included residents, employees, and business owners.



City staff and consultants led small groups to discuss their vision for the future of Historic Walker Lake. The groups discussed barriers to the implementation of both new ideas and those developed in previous planning efforts.

PUBLIC MEETING 2

The second public meeting regarding the Historic Walker Lake District Revitalization Plan for the City of St. Louis Park was held at 3340 Republic Avenue on Tuesday, February 5th, 2019 from 5:30-7:00 pm. The meeting included a short presentation sharing project updates, followed by a group discussion facilitated by the consultant team. The meeting was on a snowy evening, and for some, reaching the meeting was difficult. However, the meeting was recorded and was available to view and comment on after the meeting.

The meeting's goals were to inform the attendees about the project's progress and plan development. The team provided a brief project history, as well as an update on the timeline of the project, including an overview of previous engagement and ideas that previous meetings identified. The consultant team shared results of the parking supply and utilization study in addition to ideas for how the city and the Walker Lake area can accommodate parking needs and changes with future development. Other information was provided on design guidelines, regulatory changes, the potential for business organizations, and improved wayfinding and public spaces for the Walker Lake. In the group discussion, a facilitator gathered community feedback around challenges and opportunities foreseen when implementing plans for the area, as well as any additional concepts to be considered or information provided.

Eight community members attended the meeting. The presentation was recorded and is available for viewing on the City of St. Louis Park website. Common themes arose from the facilitated discussion regarding opportunities, visions, and concerns for the Historic Walker Lake area plan and implementation. These themes are summarized on the following pages.



The consultant team presented results of a parking supply and utilization study completed since the last meeting.



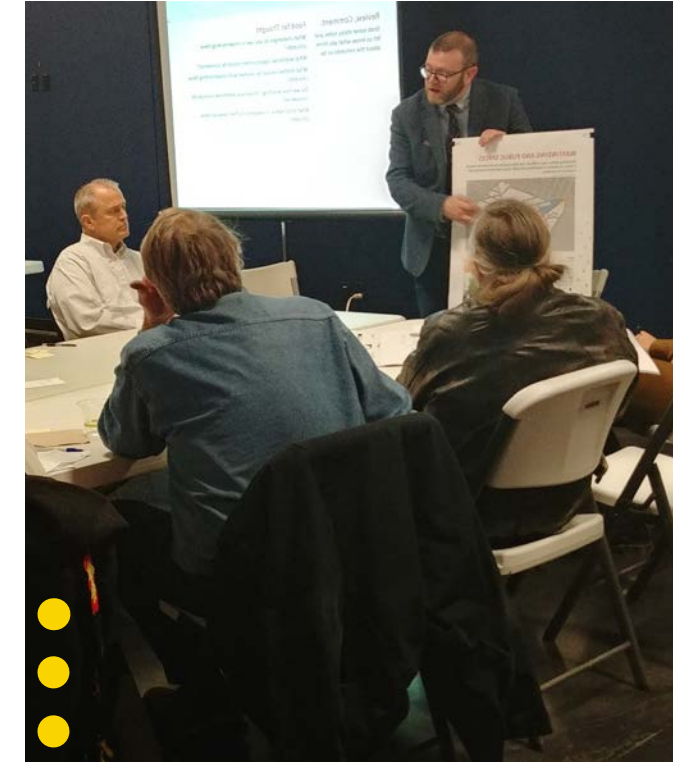
Community residents share thoughts and concerns about ideas presented for the Historic Walker Lake District.

Challenges

- Addressing the impact of both new LRT stations, not just Wooddale
- School parking is currently flooding over into community street parking
- Area is missing personal services in walkable area
- Need to plan for a destination as well as for those who are already in the community
- Gentrification and affordability

Opportunities

- Preserve quaint, historic look along Walker
- Outdoor meeting spaces - gazebo, pianos, public art
- Arts hub of retail and production
- Creating valuable maker space or performance space
- Potential to collaborate with the school
- City or business coordinated outdoor activities
- Facade improvements to help with image/branding
- Parking districts



Staff facilitated a group discussion where community members provided feedback on the presentation and plan implementation.



Community members reviewed posters showing ideas presented for the Historic Walker Lake district.

BUSINESS SURVEY

As a part of this project, the consultant team visited local businesses to survey business owners and managers. The goal of the survey was to gain an understanding of if businesses felt their needs were being met in their current building space and neighborhood, as well as what they would like to see in the community. Over the course of two weeks, 55 local businesses were visited, and 23 surveys were completed.

There were a few common themes that appeared when asked about the types of neighborhood improvement they would like to see in the area.

- Increase public parking options or reduce parking requirements - many shared concerns in meeting parking requirements and often utilized public parking for employees or to ensure required parking was met.
- Safety and Accessibility - there is a lack of sidewalks along Gorham or connecting businesses to municipal lots leading to the community not feeling connected or pedestrian friendly. Traffic speed on Lake is a public safety concerns with participants expressing a need for places to safely cross Lake Street encouraging pedestrians to walk through the community.
- Continued beautification of streetscape - business owners expressed interest in funding to assist with facade or landscape improvement, and the inclusion of public art to inspire people to walk, shop, and stay in the area rather than simply pass through



Businesses were visited to discuss how the district and their building were serving them in their current capacity.

BUSINESS AND PROPERTY OWNERS MEETING

A meeting was held specifically for business and land/building owners in the Walker Lake area. The meeting was held at Sota Clothing on December 19th, 2018 from 4:30-5:30pm, with twenty business and building owners in attendance. The meeting included a short presentation from the consultant team regarding work done in other communities to create business organizations and the various models that exist. Group discussion was then facilitated by the consulting team.

The meeting's goals were to inform the attendees about potential models of business organizations as well as brainstorm what would be a best fit for the Walker Lake business community. Participants engaged in discussion to prioritize ways to collaborate on relevant issues for the Walker Lake district and its businesses. Business owners shared ideas on how a business organization could be useful for the community.

Shared values and visions arose from the large group discussion, and are organized into key themes below.

- Shared Resources - marketing, communications and business resources
- Programming and Events - easier coordination and support around district-wide events and promotions
- Coordination with the city - streamline and simplify communication and coordination with the city regarding regulations, construction impacts, future business development and affordability
- Placemaking - bring forth unified vision and support design, aesthetics, maintenance and public safety of the community, businesses, and public spaces.

These themes were presented to community members at the second public meeting held in February.



Business and property owners met at Sota Clothing to discuss organizing efforts.

BUSINESS AND PROPERTY OWNERS WORKSHOP

A second meeting was held specifically for business and land/building owners in the Walker Lake area. The meeting was held at Sota Clothing on March 7th, 2019 from 5:30-7:00pm, with thirteen business and building owners in attendance. The meeting included a review of activities from the consultant team regarding work completed to date on the district plan as well as an update from the city regarding funding. Group discussion was then facilitated by the consulting team.

The meeting's goals were to update the attendees about project concepts as well as build upon momentum to establish a small committee for the formation of a business organization for the Walker Lake community. Participants engaged in discussion about their ideas related to the district plan concepts and which attendees would be interested in joining a small committee to start a business organization.

Shared values and visions arose from the large group discussion regarding, and are organized into key themes below.

- Design Guidelines - desire for eclectic but cohesive mix of old and new styles for additional buildings
- Funding Opportunities - the city has applied to and is applying for grants specific to the district, including a facade grant and small loan program
- Arts & Activities - opportunities for interactive public art, community murals, and event programming
- Community Building - connecting with surrounding residents, retaining current employees, attracting new customer base and workers.



Business and property owners met at Sota Clothing to discuss transitioning the momentum to a small committee from the district.

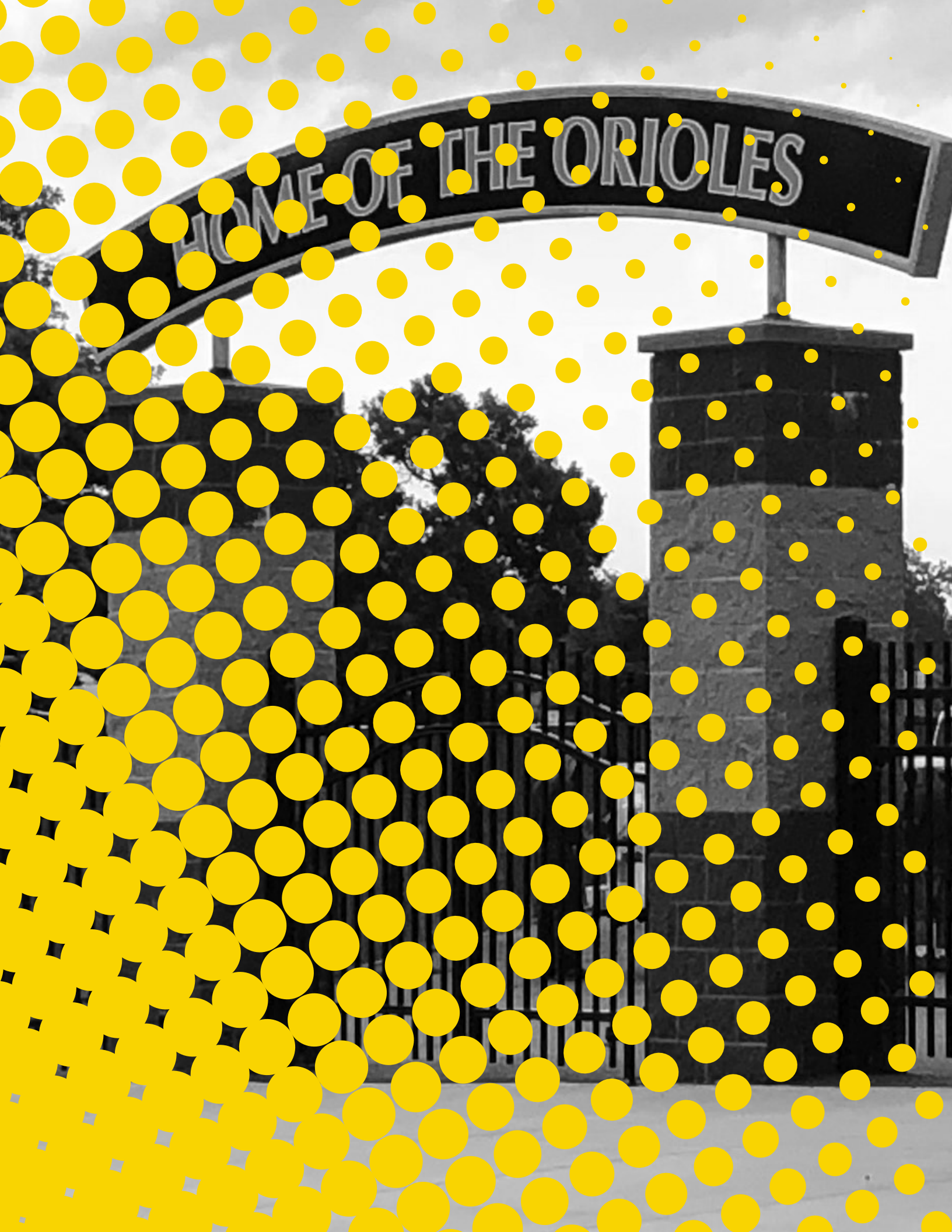
PUBLIC MEETING 3

A final public meeting regarding the Historic Walker Lake District Revitalization Plan for the City of St. Louis Park was held at Perspectives 3381 Gorham Avenue on Thursday, May 9th, 2019 from 6:00-7:30 pm. The meeting was also streamed live on YouTube live and the presentation was posted on the city website following the meeting. 20 community members, land and businesses owners attended the meeting. Mayor Spano and Councilmember Rog were also in attendance.

The meeting consisted primarily of a presentation sharing the project's final recommendations, followed by a question and answer period from the attendees. The meeting's goals were to inform the attendees about the plan development and the recommendations that will be presented to council. The presentation focused on the development of recommendations, from the identification of key challenges as reviewed in meeting one, through the research and conceptual planning in meeting two to the development of final recommendations. Questions from the attendees focused primarily on the expectations for redevelopment and questions about the parking recommendations.



The third and final public meeting was held to cover the final plan recommendations.



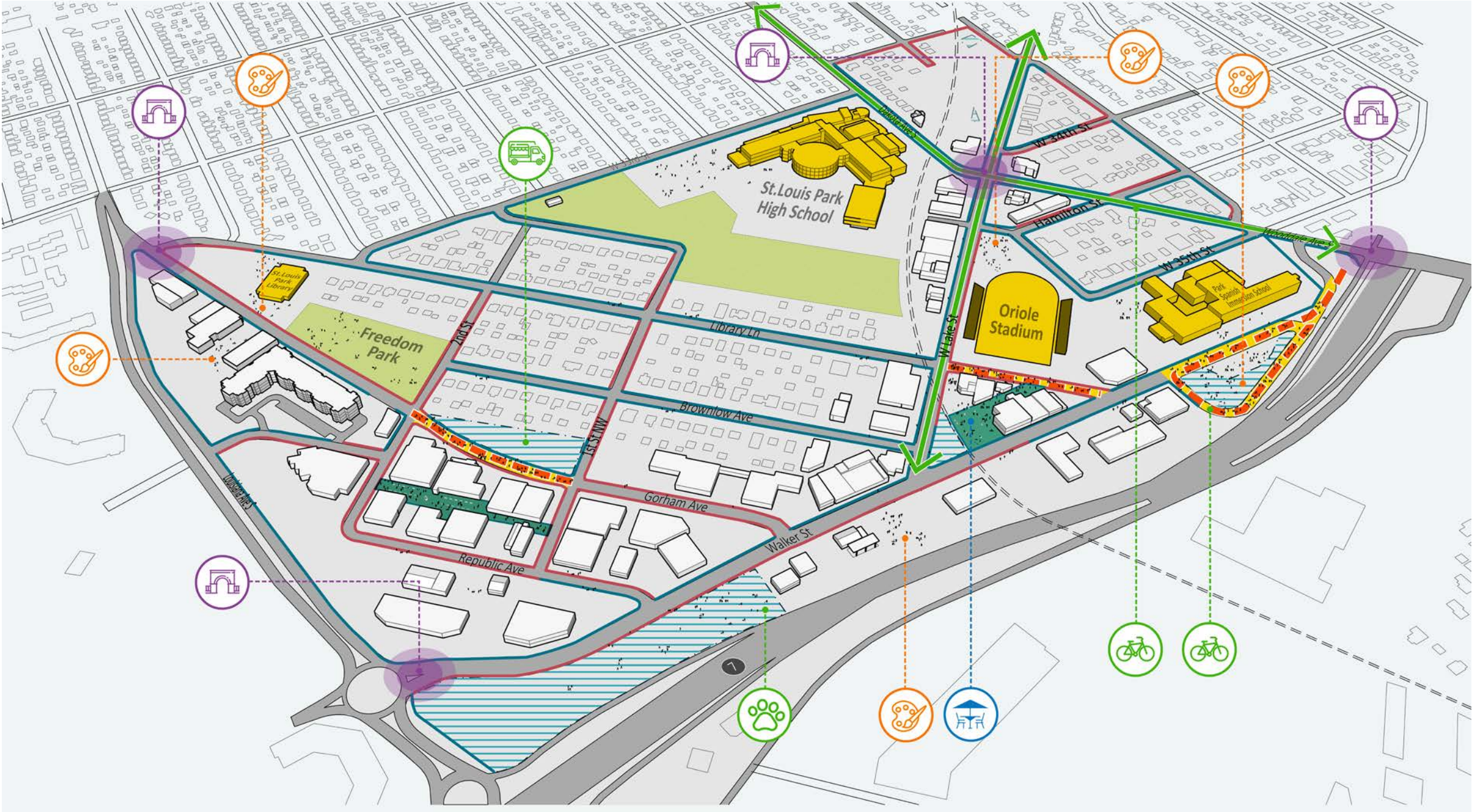
4: Wayfinding and Placemaking



WAYFINDING STRATEGY

Navigating Historic Walker Lake is difficult, and often passerby do not know the district is there. A network of wayfinding and public spaces will connect visitors and residents to amenities.

The Historic Walker Lake District has an opportunity to use the forthcoming light rail stations to raise its profile and ensure easy connections through the district to surrounding neighborhoods. The graphic to the right details the multifaceted wayfinding strategy for the district, that includes signage, temporary, and permanent activations. The following pages detail these strategies.



- Existing Sidewalks
- No Sidewalk
- City-owned, County-owned or Vacant Lots
- Potential Alleyway Redesign (pending neighborhood outreach)
- Potential Street Activation (pending neighborhood outreach)
- 🎨 Public Art Installation
- 🐕 Dog Park
- 🚚 Food Truck Park
- 🏠 District Gateway
- 🚲 Bike Friendly Street
- 🚶 Alley Activation and Parklets

Street Activation

Street activations, like a Woonerf, also known a "living street", originated in the Netherlands. The street is open for a variety of modes, but speeds are limited to walking pace by the use of techniques such as traffic calming, activations, and recreation activities. A Woonerf, suggested for a portion of Gorham Avenue and in other areas, would activate underutilized space in the district, and elevate the profile of the district.



Public Art

Very popular at engagement events, public art is a way to bring creativity and interest to the district, and solidify an identity. Public art that is good for selfies, unique to the district, or visible from the highway would be especially relevant. Art locations are suggested at a variety of strategic locations in the district, but are not limited to these areas.

Dog Park

The city has identified an area north of Historic Highway 7 that would be a good space for a dog park in Walker Lake. The park would bring activity to the district and support the overall wayfinding strategy. During the design of the park, considerations should include:

- ADA access via a sidewalk along Walker Street;
- Site remediation from previous environmental contaminants;
- Lighting options; and
- Parking.



Food Truck Park

Creating a food truck park is a strategy to bring activity and commercial uses onto a site with a low initial investment. The park could either be temporary, with food trucks intermittently parking there, or later, become more permanent, with designated infrastructure and longer-term trucks.



Woonerfs, a dog parks, and a food truck park are all strategies to support placemaking in Walker Lake.



Public art is an important part of the placemaking strategy for Walker Lake.

District Gateway

District Gateways are signage that announce the entrance to a district, and often coordinate with other signage in the district. The gateways are an important piece of the wayfinding strategy, and are detailed further in the following pages. Public art can also be used as gateway signage.



Bike Friendly Street


Bike friendly streets are neighborhood streets where cars and bikes share space. They are low speed, and have signage for bicyclists. Low-volume and speed streets in Walker Lake are great candidates for the treatment.



Alley Activation and Parklets

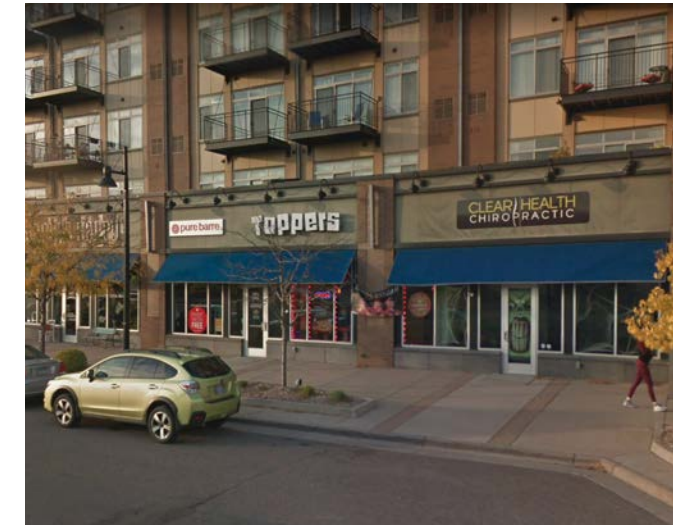
Outdoor seating and planting can activate underutilized spaces in warmer months. Temporary seating is a cost-effective way to increase retail or restaurant space. These activations work with underutilized or left over space to house funky and unique projects.



 Gateways, bike friendly streets, and alley activations are all part of the of the placemaking strategy for the district.

Sidewalks


A key part of the wayfinding strategy is adding new sidewalks where they are missing, and repairing those that are currently in poor condition. The strategy recommends a full build out of sidewalks in Walker Lake.



Parking Signage

Parking signage in the district should be consistent. Public parking areas should be well signed at gateway entrances. Parking signs should carry through branding elements and be clear to new users. See the Parking section in Section 2: Overlay District.



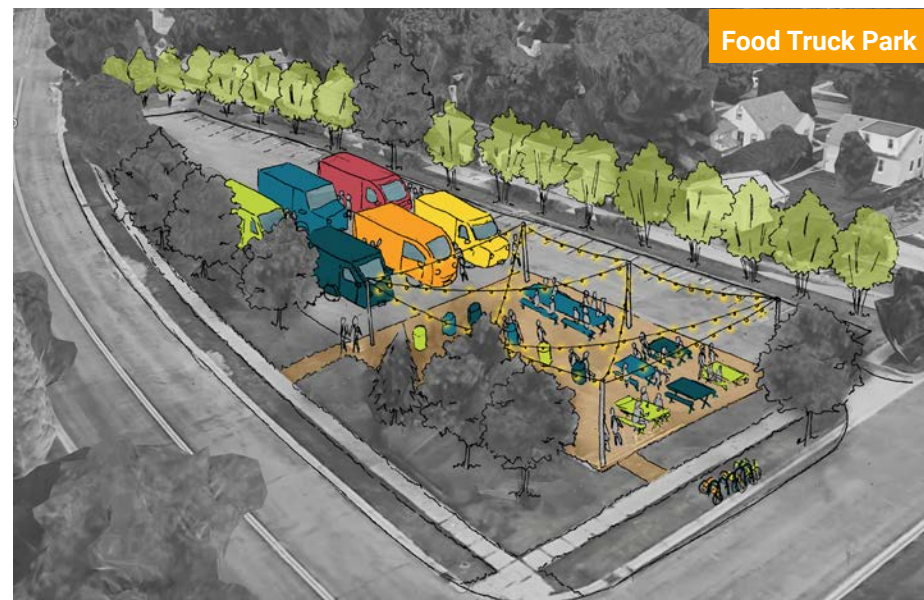
 Parking signage and a full buildout of sidewalks are key to the wayfinding strategy.

Temporary Activations

With its underutilized public space and industrial feel, Historic Walker Lake is a great candidate for temporary activations. These initiatives activate space before community-desired businesses move in, bringing activity and identity-creating attention to the area. The concepts on this page show how the parking lot on Gorham could be utilized.



Farmer's Market



Food Truck Park

Some ideas for temporary activations include:

- Farmer's and craft markets
- Food markets, night markets
- Alley art programs
- Temporary alley cafes
- Sip and stroll events
- Temporary retail space through shipping containers or other materials
- Children's events
- Snow-related competitions
- Micro storefronts



Temporary activations such as art shows and installations can activate spaces cheaply and easily, before businesses are able to make improvements.



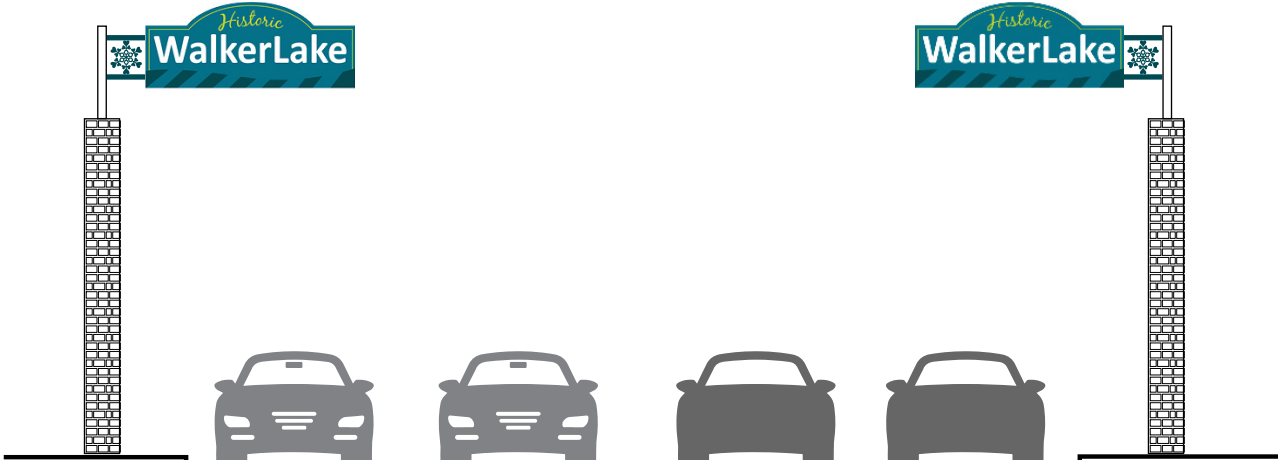
Activating existing parking lots is an easy way to bring commercial activity to the area and solidify Walker Lake as a desirable commercial area.

DISTRICT BRANDING

District branding is a key way to increase the profile of the Walker Lake District. The community has already create a logo for the district, and this design should be used on entrance kiosks, wayfinding signage, and street signs. Signage locations are shown previously in the Wayfinding Strategy section.

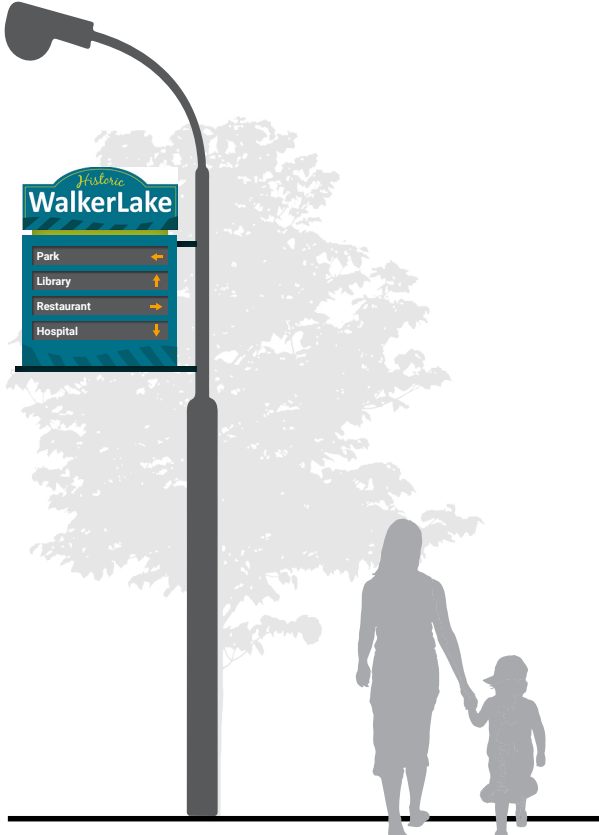
Gateways

Gateway signage on key entrances to the district will confirm to users they have arrived at a distinct place, whether they are visiting the district or passing through.



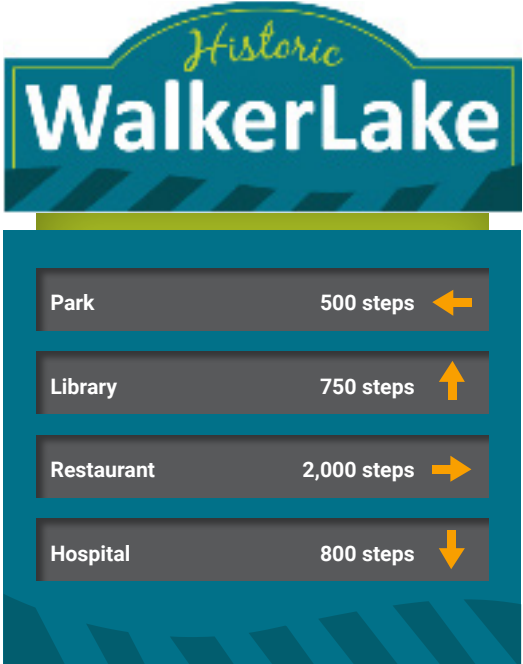
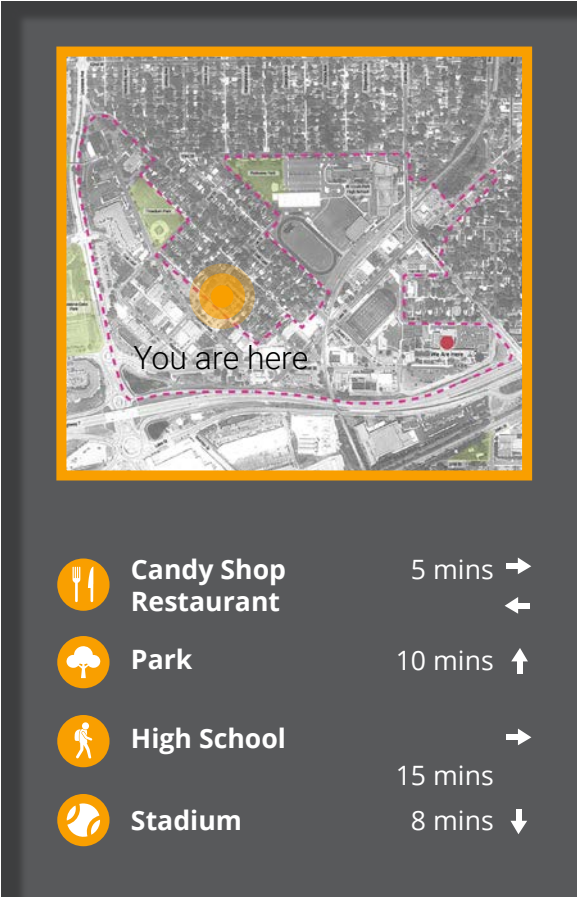
Street Lights

Signage on street lights should be designed using district branding. It can contain wayfinding elements to popular landmarks.



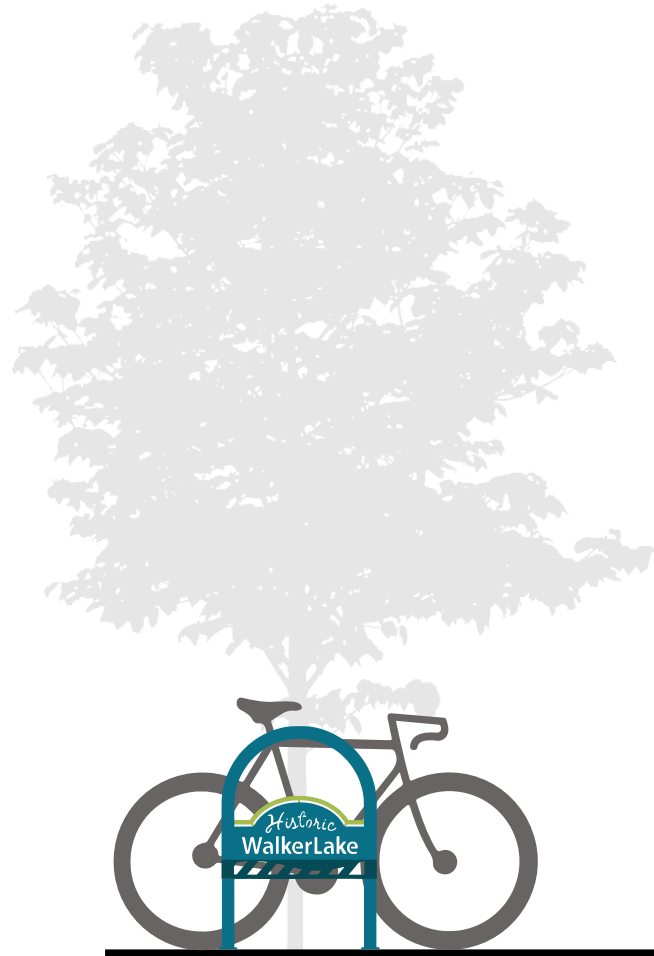
Wayfinding Kiosks

Kiosks that tell people where popular attractions are located are key in areas where the district is not easily navigated. Listing these distances in time or steps is an easy way to make them relatable to pedestrians. Kiosks should be more frequent in areas with higher expected pedestrian traffic and close enough to be seen from each other.



Bike Racks

Bike racks will encourage biking by assuring riders there will always be a safe space for parking. District bike racks have been purchased. They will have district branding and be placed according to the public realm standards in Section 4: Overlay District.



Banners

Banners on street lights will help identify the district even when users are away from major branding elements or in less recognizable parts of the district. They can also be used to advertise events and can be designed seasonally.





5: Overlay District

About Overlay Districts

Overlay districts are applied to one or more base zoning districts, creating additional standards for the properties within its boundaries. Overlay districts can apply additional, more strict standards, or they can loosen restrictions. These districts are often used to protect areas, such as historic resources, or to apply technical standards to areas with specific natural features, such as wetlands or steep slopes. For development purposes, overlay districts can be used to promote specific development patterns, provide certain uses, or support transportation priorities.

Like base zoning districts, uses contained in overlay zones are legally justified "as contributing to the health, safety, and welfare" of the community. A variety of court decisions have upheld the legality of this zoning tool.

Overlay districts are efficient zoning tools that allow development to meet the community's vision. They are often easier for staff to create, both politically and practically than a full zoning code update, as they do not require a full analysis and update of often complex zoning ordinances, but are added on to specific areas. It is important to calibrate overlay districts to ensure that inequities and inefficiencies in the process are not created, both for staff and for the development community.

Through community engagement, an overlay district was identified as a tool to update use, parking, and design regulations in the Walker Lake District.

Source: <https://www.planning.org/divisions/planningandlaw/propertytopics.htm#Overlay>

USE REVISIONS

Land use in the Walker Lake District is governed by the St. Louis Park zoning code. In general, the zoning code supports existing uses in the district, but does not allow some new uses that would support the community's vision, despite the market potential for these types of businesses. Allowing new uses that will benefit residents, businesses, and visitors is key to creating a thriving district.

The recommended changes to the allowed uses in the district are based on community and business owner input during the engagement process. This feedback includes:

- Create a destination for community members to visit and be able to walk around and enjoy;
- Develop performance or art-based space to draw community members into the area with family friendly engagement;
- Easily allow restaurants, cafes, food trucks, or grocery stores, creating more food options;
- Allow popular uses in existing light industrial buildings, if businesses would like to move;
- Add missing personal services in a walkable area; and
- Create and arts hub of retail and production.

In order to address the community's desire for more personal services, creative uses, and the continuation of light industrial activity, the use standards in the existing zoning code should be updated via the overlay district. The overlay district should update the use standards to allow these uses, as developed during the outreach process:

- Coworking space
- Food hall
- Food truck park
- Theater or museum
- Maker space
- Brewery or distillery
- Retail with onsite production

When creating the overlay district to allow these uses, care should be taken that parking requirements do not inadvertently create undue pressure on existing businesses and structures.

In addition to additional uses, certain uses no longer fit the community's vision. These are:

- Drive thrus
- Car repair
- Motor vehicle sales (excluding bike and scooter)
- In-vehicle sales
- Parking lot (as principal use)
- Composting
- Warehouse storage (as principal use)
- Outdoor storage
- Freight terminal
- Auto body painting

Coworking Space



Food Hall



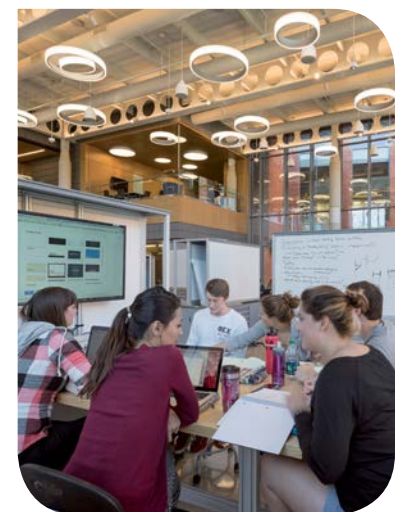
Food Truck Park



Theater or Museum



Maker Space



Brewery or Distillery



Retail w/ Onsite Production



FORM STANDARDS

Walker Lake has a variety of historic buildings. New development should respect these buildings in form, but reflect modern building styles. As a part of an Overlay District created for the Historic Walker Lake District, these guidelines should be applied.

The guidelines on the following pages show requirements and recommendations for new development in the district

User's guide

The User's Guide on this spread shows the rationale for each requirement or guideline. Look for these yellow boxes throughout this section to provide guidance on certain standards. These will be reviewed on the following pages.

Required:
These standards are required for new buildings in the district.

Form Standards:
Building height, envelope, and setback form standards ensure that modern development does not overwhelm or overshadow historic buildings, and ensures a walkable commercial district.

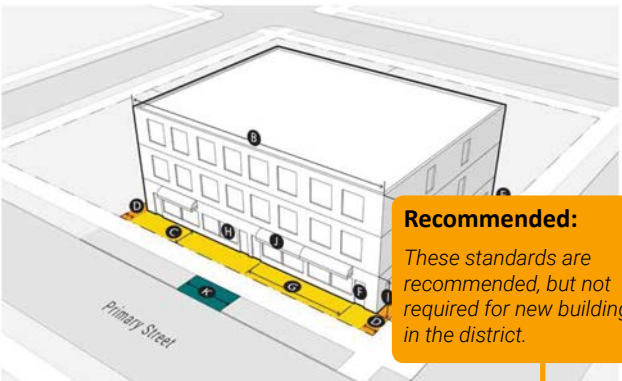
Current zoning in the area allows height that is taller than three stories, but existing buildings are one or two stories. Allowing three stories takes into account a light intensification of uses.

Building length is set to allow for the existing light industrial buildings, but limiting blank wall space on new construction, supporting walkability.

Setbacks are dictated by current setbacks, allowing for differentiation, reducing nonconformities, and adhering to city minimum standards.

Private Development

Required and recommended standards for private development, or the development that happens behind a lot line, have been developed and are detailed on this spread. These standards are based on feedback received from the community, a study of existing regulations, and best practices.



Requirements:

1 Building Height	
Maximum height	3 stories/35' max
Minimum height	2 stories min
The blocks northwest of the intersection of Gorham and Walker may be considered for a higher height limit.	
2 Building Envelope	
Building length	130' max
3 Setbacks	
Front	Setback established by existing buildings on block, closest building to property line, not to be less than 4'-0"
Side	min.
Rear	min.
Fences over 3' tall are prohibited in front of buildings. Where fencing is necessary, planters are encouraged.	

Recommendations:

4 Entrances	
1 Pedestrian entrance	Facing Primary St.
2 Entrance spacing	65' max on Primary St.
5 Ground Floor	
1 Transparency	50% min
2 Story Height	12' min, 18' max*
*Ground story height over 18' counts as two stories	
6 Building Elements	
Awning, Balcony	Allowed Balcony must be >4' deep
7 Curbs	
New curb cuts allowed/lot on Primary St.	0

Recommended:
These standards are recommended, but not required for new buildings in the district.

Street Level Standards:

These standards support a walkable public realm and ensure flexibility for the future of ground floor spaces.

Entrances and transparency are designed to reduce nonconformities in existing buildings which supporting walkability with new construction.

Story height is designed to allow for flexibility, being low enough for office use on the ground floor, which as the district develops may give way to retail uses that usually prefer more height. Counting a large ground floor height as two stories allows for light industrial buildings to reach the minimum height standard.

Building Elements:

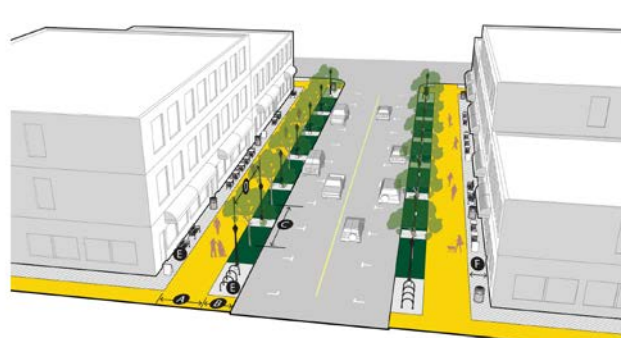
Building elements are further defined in this section.

Curbs:

Limiting curb cuts promoted walkability and pedestrian safety.

Public Realm

Public realm recommendations on these pages contain standards to create a high-quality public realm, yet still be flexible enough to conform to existing city standards and future business needs. Property owners are encouraged to activate the streets by customizing planting areas. Fences in front of buildings are prohibited.



Recommendations:

Pedestrian Zone	
1 Sidewalk width	10' min
2 Tree/furniture zone depth	5' min
Pedestrian Zone Elements	
1 Tree planting type	Structural soil
2 Tree spacing	4-6/block face
3 Pedestrian lights	4-6/block face
Fences over 3' tall are prohibited in front of buildings. Where fencing is necessary, planters are encouraged.	
Creative planting strategies are encouraged. Businesses are encouraged to customize the planting area near their location.	

Recommendations:

1 Street Furniture	
Bench	4/block face
Bike rack	8/block face
Waste and recycling bins	2/block face
2 Encroachments	
Temporary Seating	allowed
Temporary Sign	allowed

Pedestrian Zone:

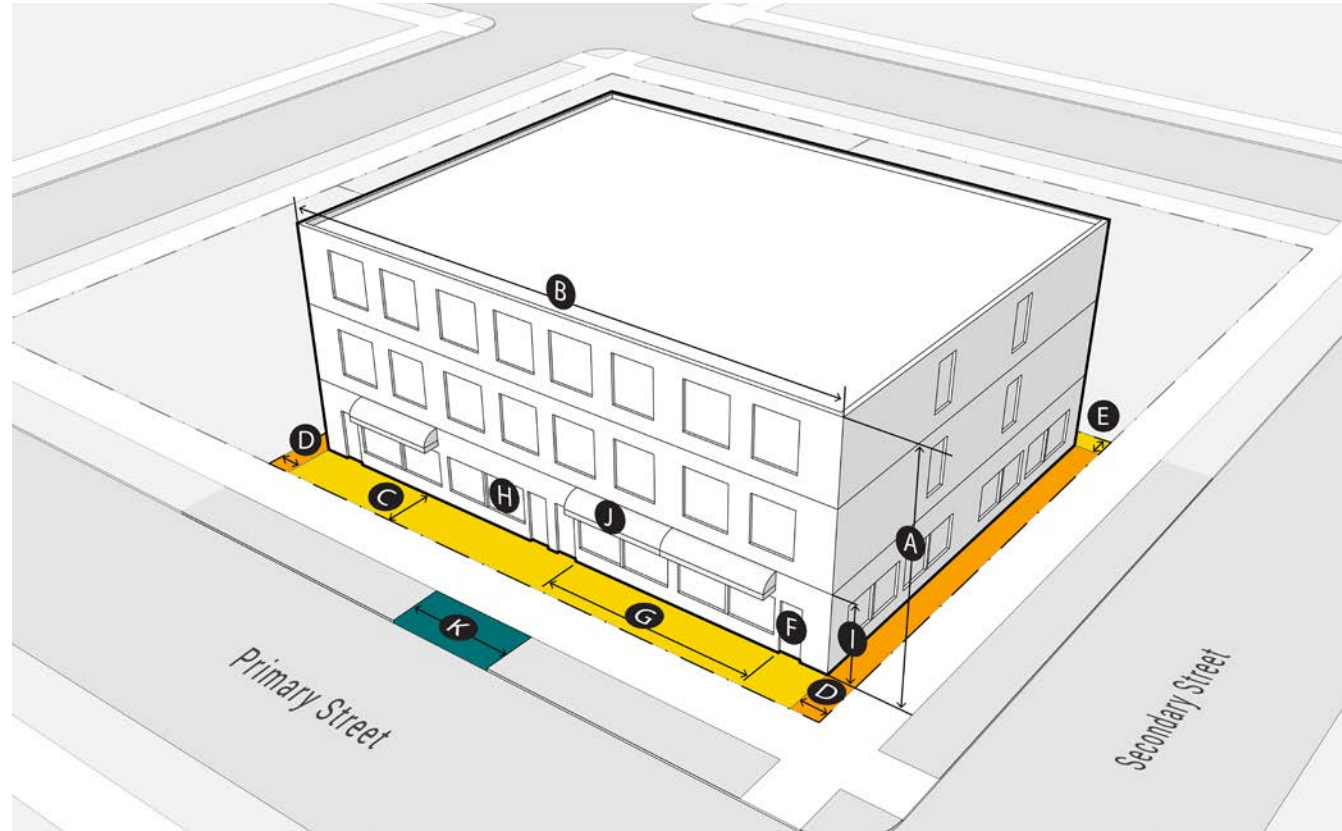
Pedestrian zone standards are designed to ensure a high quality public realm while allowing for flexibility. These recommendations allow for flexible tree planting and landscaping. Sidewalk widths conform to city standards. Tree and lighting spacing allows for flexibility, yet adequate coverage as infill development is built.

Furniture:
Street furniture standards list target numbers per block, allowing flexibility. The forthcoming merchant's association may select standard furniture designs.

Encroachments:
These standards allow businesses to use signage to promote their businesses. More details on signs can be found on the following pages.

Private Development

Required and recommended standards for private development, or the development that happens behind a lot line, have been developed and are detailed on this spread. These standards are based on feedback received from the community, a study of existing regulations, and best practices.



Requirements:

A Building Height

Maximum height	3 stories/35' max
Minimum height	2 stories min

The blocks northwest of the intersection of Gorham and Walker may be considered for a higher height limit.

B Building Envelope

Building length	130' max
-----------------	----------

Setbacks

C Front	Setback established by existing buildings on block, closest building to property line establishes setback. 5' min.
D Side	
E Rear	

Fences over 3' tall are prohibited in front of buildings. Where fencing is necessary, planters are encouraged.

Recommendations:

Entrances

F Pedestrian entrance	Facing Primary St.
G Entrance spacing	65' max on Primary St.

Ground Floor

H Transparency	50% min
I Story Height	12' min, 18' max*

*Ground story height over 18' counts as two stories

J Building Elements

Awning, Balcony	Allowed
Balcony	Balcony must be >4' deep

K Curbs

New curb cuts allowed/lot on Primary St.	0
--	---



Private Development:

Infill development should respect existing historic development in form and follow the private development form standards.

Architectural Details

The Walker Lake District is home to historic buildings and newer buildings alike. Architectural details on new buildings should reflect the existing context in form and material, but use current building design. The examples on this page show recommended renovated and new building design.



Recommendations:

Architectural Details

Updated and traditional materials should be used.

Older building elements can be replicated in form, but not in detail. This means building form, such as height and setbacks, should be similar, but details, such as materials or windows shapes, can be different. The scale of the buildings should be similar, but the architectural style is open.

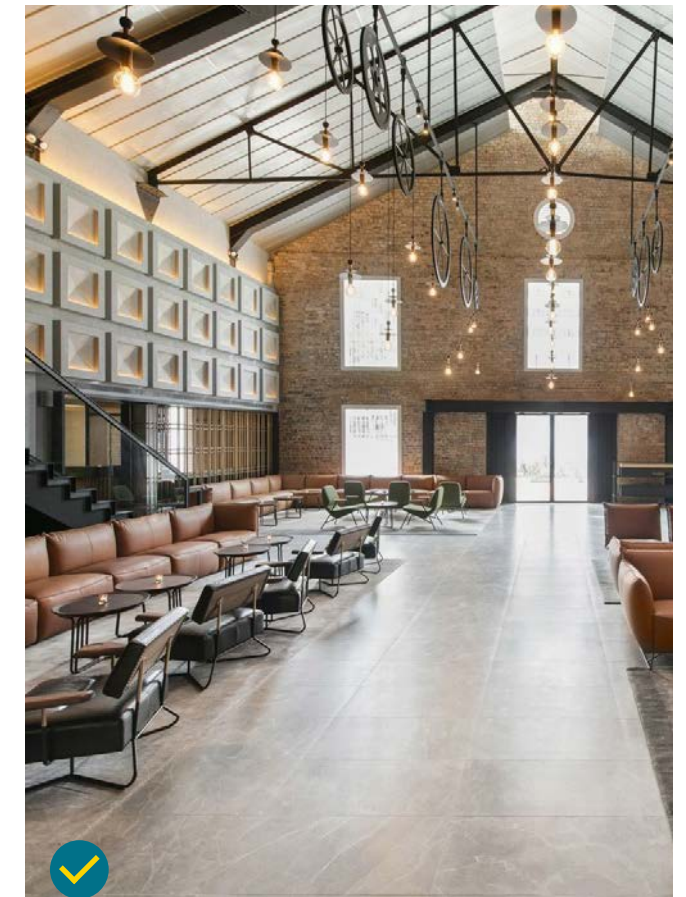
Infill:

This infill building replicated the form and size of historic buildings, but uses updated building design.



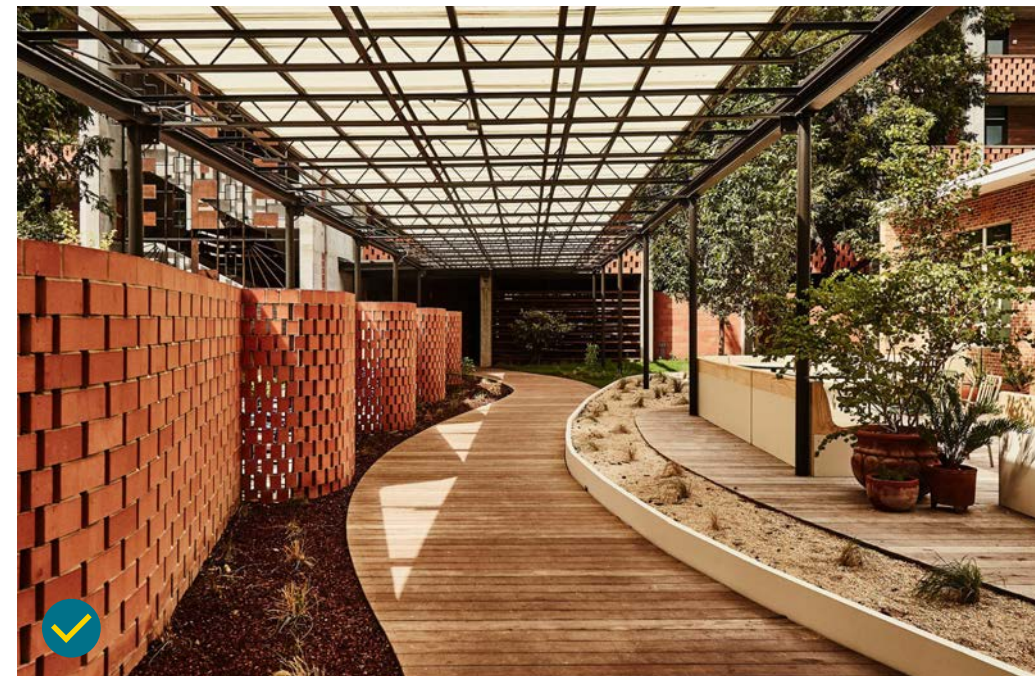
Details:

The infill building uses non-structural historic details poorly. New buildings should not replicate historic buildings with non-structural details.



Infill:

These facades replicated historic entrance spacing and transparency but use updated building design.



Renovation:

The historic renovations on these pages show how light materials highlight the historic features of the older buildings while introducing updated materials and uses.

Signs

New signs should respect existing buildings and signs in scale and materials. The recommendations on this page show appropriate signs for the district.

Most existing signs in the district are allowed, such as those attached to a building. Monument signs are not allowed, as they support a car-oriented environment and are not supportive to pedestrians. They tend to be used separately from active buildings, such as near a parking lot or other remote amenity.

Recommendations:

Signage	
Projecting signs	Allowed
Building signs	Allowed
Building signs (painted)	Sometimes Allowed
Monument signs	Not allowed
Temporary signs	Allowed

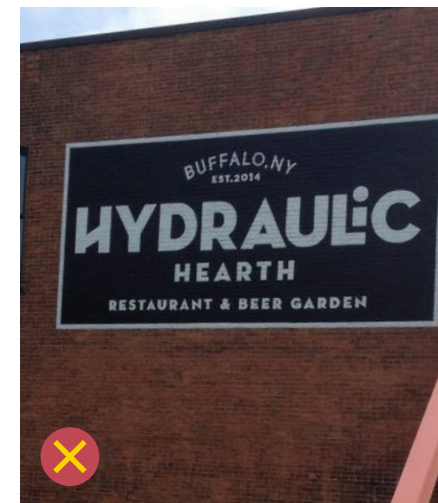
Building signs:
These signs are attached directly to the building.



Projecting Signs:
These signs are hung perpendicular to a building and are viewable from the sidewalk.



Painted Building Signs:
This variation is painted directly on the building. These are often historic and should be preserved or replicated. New painted signs cannot be painted on brick.



Temporary Signs:
These are stored inside and announced business activities such as sales and specials.

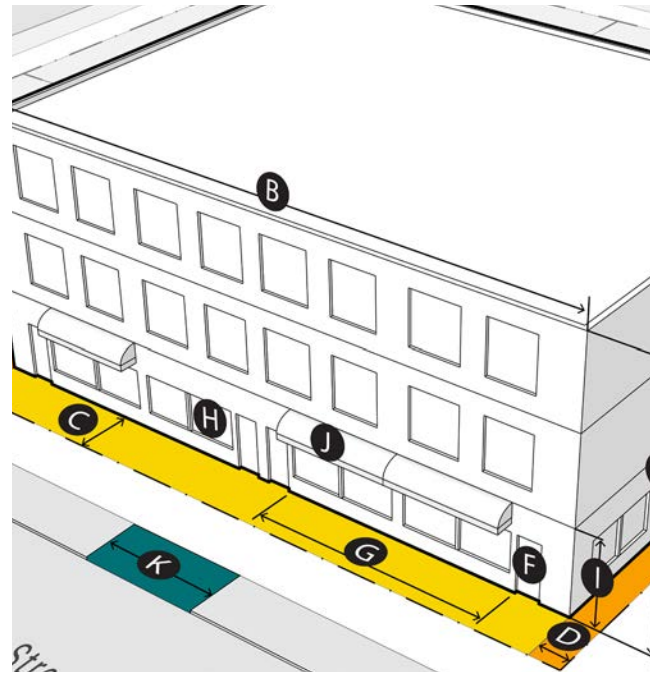


Monument Signs:
These are not allowed. They are typically used in auto-oriented environments.



Building Elements

Building elements are additions to the facade that increase pedestrian comfort or business desirability. As recommended by the design guidelines, a variety of building elements are allowed in the district. Building elements are allowed to cover the entire width of a building facade.



Recommendations:

J Building Elements

Awning, Balcony	Allowed
	Balcony must be >4' deep

Facade Grant Program

St. Louis Park is proposing a façade improvement grant program aimed to help revitalize the Historic Walker Lake businesses district. This incentive program would encourage and assist businesses and property owners to make lasting physical improvements to their buildings, attract customers and enhance the overall aesthetics of the district, while establishing a cohesive design and identity for the area.

The city proposes to provide a matching grant, up to a maximum \$10,000 and a minimum of \$2,000 per project, to assist with eligible façade improvements on properties located within the Historic Walker Lake business district (see attached map). This program would require that grant funds be matched 1:1 with private dollars. Façade improvements would be required to be visible from a public street, adhere to the design guidelines developed as part of the recent Historic Walker Lake Small Area Plan, and comply with a list of eligible exterior improvements. The program would be available to commercial and industrial buildings, given the diverse mix of businesses in area. Property owners, tenants and for-profit and not-for-profit businesses would be eligible, as long as funds are used for a commercial building.



Awnings:

These elements provide shelter from the elements and visual interest.



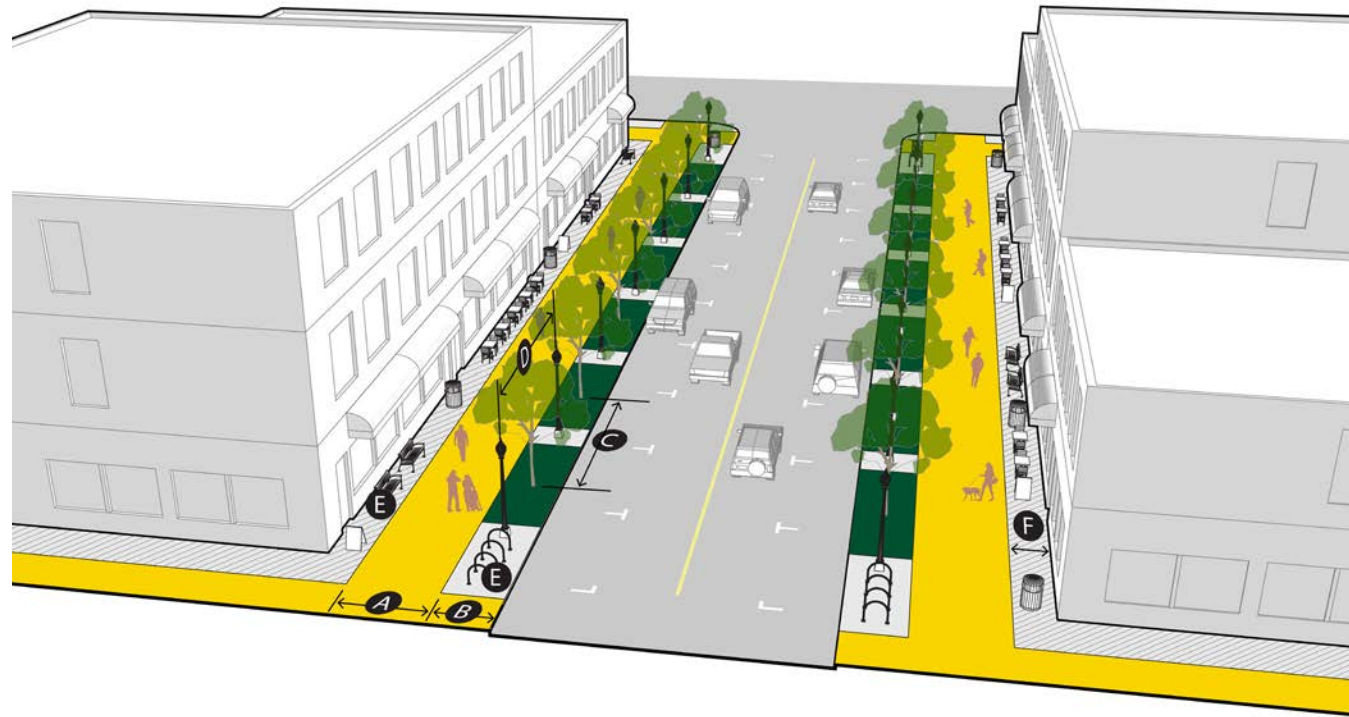
Balconies:

These elements provide outdoor space and second story activation. Balconies should have a minimum depth of four feet.



Public Realm

Public realm recommendations on these pages contain standards to create a high-quality public realm, yet still be flexible enough to conform to existing city standards and future business needs. Property owners are encouraged to activate the streets by customizing planting areas. Fences in front of buildings are prohibited.



Recommendations:

Pedestrian Zone

A Sidewalk width	10' min
B Tree/furniture zone depth	5' min

Pedestrian Zone Elements

Tree planting type	Structural soil
C Tree spacing	4-6/block face
D Pedestrian lights	4-6/block face

Fences over 3' tall are prohibited in front of buildings. Where fencing is necessary, planters are encouraged.

Creative planting strategies are encouraged. Businesses are encouraged to customize the planting area near their location.

Recommendations:

E Street Furniture

Bench	4/block face
Bike rack	8/block face
Waste and recycling bins	2/block face

F Encroachments

Temporary Seating	allowed
Temporary Sign	allowed



Public realm standards are designed to create a walkable, active streetscape but to also allow for flexibility and adherence to city standards.

PARKING

Parking infrastructure in Historic Walker Lake is provided through a combination of public and private off- and on-street parking. Since different businesses use parking at different times of day, shared parking should be encouraged to reduce the space needed for parking. This approach being applied in the Historic Walker Lake area also helps the city be responsive to its commitment on Climate Action; lessening the environmental impact of congestion in this area by implementing parking minimums and maximums, which in turn helps encourage alternative mode choice to patrons of the area (bicycling or walking, rather than driving alone).

The recommendations contained herein are provided for consideration to help develop an overlay zone for the Historic Walker Lake area. These recommendations are based on review of existing uses and parking supply/demand in the area; how parking is currently utilized in the area influences how it may be used in the future. Although as land uses change and properties are potentially redeveloped (either with completely new redevelopments and buildings, changes in use but reuse of existing buildings, or continuing current uses in existing buildings) how the city approaches requiring parking in the area is critical. Recommendations include:

- The area needs a multipronged approach to parking requirements.
 - » Do not encumber existing uses in Historic Walker Lake with retroactive parking requirements. [no minimum parking requirement beyond what is already provided / updated new parking maximum]

- » Manage parking expectations for new uses in the area within existing building structures/footprints. [no minimum parking requirement beyond what is already provided / updated new parking maximum]
- » Require parking for completely new developments, including additions/expansions to existing building structures. [new minimum parking requirement (beyond what is provided in the area) / updated new parking maximum]
- Parking district philosophy that considers organized clusters of parking to satisfy excess parking demand of nearby businesses.
- ADA accessible parking is important to the health and vitality of the businesses within the Historic Walker Lake area.
- Bicycle parking requirements are important components of comprehensive parking management.
- Management of the curbside space is an important consideration as travel modes continue to shift in the future.
- Find opportunities to incentivize alternative choices to parking single occupancy vehicles in the area.
- Investigate potential for development of “fees in-lieu” of providing required on-site parking



● Parking in the district is confusing and hard to understand.

New Minimum and Maximum Parking Requirements

As demonstrated by the existing conditions parking supply and utilization data presented earlier, there is a fairly significant amount of available parking supply given how the current land uses demand parking (use it) in the Historic Walker Lake area. However, there is a concern that redevelopment in the Historic Walker Lake area may apply pressure on the existing parking supply due to increased demand. The city has current parking requirements which are considered the minimum parking that is required, except where noted in the zoning code.

An alternative approach the city should consider implementing with an overlay zone for Historic Walker Lake is an updated set of minimum and maximum parking requirements. This will allow the current parking supply to be more resilient to land use change/redevelopment in the area, while setting realistic parking requirement expectations for developments when they occur. The following table outlines the recommended minimum and maximum parking requirements for potential development in the Historic Walker Lake area. The values were developed based on research of like-type ordinances and zoning codes.



● New parking minimums and maximums can support the need for less parking.

Current Land Use Category	Current Number of Parking Spaces Required In Code		Proposed Required Off-Street Minimum	Proposed Required Off-Street Maximum
Residential				
Multi-family	1 space/bedroom. 10% of the required parking as guest parking. Multi-family residential developments shall not be eligible for a transit or Planned Unit Development reduction in required parking.		1 space/dwelling unit	2 spaces/dwelling unit
Elderly Housing	1 space/dwelling unit, except where verifiable information indicates a reduced long-term parking demand.		1 space/dwelling unit	2 spaces/dwelling unit
Human Care Uses				
Adult day care	2 spaces/each five program participants licensed by state.		1 space/employee on largest shift OR 1 space/500 sq. ft. of GFA, which ever is largest	1 space/employee on largest shift OR 1 space/200 sq. ft. of GFA, which ever is largest
Group day care, nursery school	1 space/each 2 employees, +1space /each 10 program participants based on total participant capacity of the facility.		1 space/employee on largest shift OR 1 space per 500 sq. ft. of GFA, which ever is largest	1 space/employee on largest shift OR 1 space per 200 sq. ft. of GFA, which ever is largest
Group homes	2 spaces/five beds.		1 space/4 beds	1 space per 2 beds
Medical or dental office	<2,500 sq. ft. floor area, 1 space/each 250 sq. ft. floor area. >2,500 sq. ft. floor area, 1 space/each 200 sq. ft. floor area.		1 space/500 sq. ft. FA in excess of 4,000 sq. ft. (min. 4 spaces)	1 space/200 sq. ft. FA
Nursing home	5, +1 space/five beds.		1 space/employee on largest shift +1 space/6 beds	1 space/employee on largest shift plus 1 space/ 3 beds
Institutional Uses				
Community center	Parking requirement shall be based upon uses within the building.		Parking requirement based on uses within the building.	Parking requirement based on uses within the building.
Libraries, museums, art	1 space/300 sq. ft. floor area in principal structure.		1 space/450 sq. ft. floor area in principal structure.	1 space/ each 300 sq. ft. floor area in principal structure.
High school and post- secondary schools	1 space/4 students based on building capacity, +1 space/two classrooms.		1 space/classroom + 1 space per 5 students of legal driving age based on the maximum number of students attending classes at any one time	2 spaces/ classroom + 1 space per 3 students of legal driving age based on the maximum number of students attending classes at any one (1) time
Commercial Uses				
Bank	1 space/each 250 sq. ft. floor area		1 space/250 sq. ft. floor area	1 space/200 sq. ft. floor area
Catering	1 space/500 sq. ft. floor area.		1 space/500 sq. ft. floor area.	1space/500 sq. ft. floor area.
Coffee shop	1 space/each 200 sq. ft. floor area.		1 space/200 sq. ft. floor area.	1 space/100 sq. ft. floor area.
Food service or bakeries	1 space/ 25 sq. ft. customer floor area.		1 space/300 sq. ft. floor area.	1 space /150 sq. ft. floor area.
Hotel	1.5 spaces/dwelling unit, guestroom, or hotel room.		1 space/3 guest rooms + parking equal to 10% of the capacity of persons for an affiliated use on site (i.e., dining or meeting rooms)	1 space/guest room + parking equal to 30% of the capacity of persons for an affiliated use on site (i.e., dining or meeting rooms)
Offices or medical and dental labs	< 50,000 sq. ft. floor area: 1 space/250 sq. ft. floor area. 50,000 sq. ft.-200,000 sq. ft. floor area: 1 space/275 sq. ft. floor area. 200,000 sq. ft. floor area -400,000 sq. ft. floor area: 1 space/300 sq. ft. floor area. >400,000 sq. ft. floor area: 1 space/325 sq. ft. floor area.		1 space/500 sq. ft. FA in excess of 4,000 sq. ft.	1 space/250 sq. ft. FA
Bowling alley	1 space/bowling lane.		1 space/250 sq. ft. FA	1 space/100 sq. ft. FA
Pool hall or video arcade	1 space/25 sq. ft. customer area.		1 space/250 sq. ft. FA	1 space/100 sq. ft. FA
Sport/health club, studio, pool	1 space/200 sq. ft. non-court area. 2 spaces/ tennis/racquetball court. 1 space/50 sq. ft. deck area for a swimming pool.		1 space/500 sq. ft. FA in excess of 4,000 sq. ft. (minimum of 4 spaces)	1 space/ 200 sq. ft. FA
Theatre, auditorium, assembly halls	1 space/4 seats. A single seat on a bench is equal to 28".		1 space/4 attendees	1.5 spaces/4 attendees
Restaurants - fast casual	1 space/60 sq. ft. floor area.		1 space/300 sq. ft. FA	1 space/75 sq. ft. of FA
Restaurants - standard sit down	1 space/60 sq. ft. floor area.		1 space/300 sq. ft. FA	1 space/75 sq. ft. of FA
Brewery/Food Hall	n/a		1 space/150 sq. ft. FA	1 space/75 sq. ft. FA
Retail store, grocery, and service establishment where > 25% gross floor area is customer area	Minimum: 1 space/250 sq. ft. floor area. Maximum: 1 space/150 sq. ft. floor area.		1 space/400 sq. ft. floor area.	1 space/400 sq. ft. FA
Retail where < 25% gross floor area is customer area	1 space/100 sq. ft. of customer service area.		1 space/250 sq. ft. floor area.	1 space/150 sq. ft. FA
Studios	1 space/400 sq. ft. floor area.		1 space per 400 sq. ft. FA	1 sapce per 200 sq. ft. FA
Industrial Uses				
Manufacturing, fabrication, or processing	F5 space + 1/500 sq. ft. floor area.		1 space/ employee on largest shift or 1 space/1,200 sq. ft. FA whichever is greater +1 space/vehicle normally stored or parked on the site	1 space/500 sq. ft. FA +1 space/ vehicle normally stored or parked on the site
Showrooms	1 space/500 sq. ft. floor area.		1 space/500 sq. ft.	1 space/200 sq. ft.
Warehouse	1 space/1,500 sq. ft. floor area.		1 space/2 employees on largest shift or 1 space/ 1,500 sq. ft. FA whichever is greater	1 space/500 sq. ft. FA

The intent is for these recommended minimum and maximum parking requirements to be applied to all new developments in the Historic Walker Lake area. A new development is considered one that fully redevelops an existing site, builds one from the ground up on open land, or expands an existing structure with new square footage. For buildings with expansions/additions, the new minimum and maximum parking requirement would apply to the completely new square footage only. This falls under the category of a reasonable expectation for new developments to provide parking.

For all other types of existing building renovations, even with new uses, the minimum parking requirement would not be applied. These renovations would have a zero-minimum parking requirement, with the understanding that the existing parking supply is adequate to accommodate existing uses (or renovations within existing building footprints). However, in situations where a renovation would like to expand their parking supply, the recommended maximum parking requirement would apply.

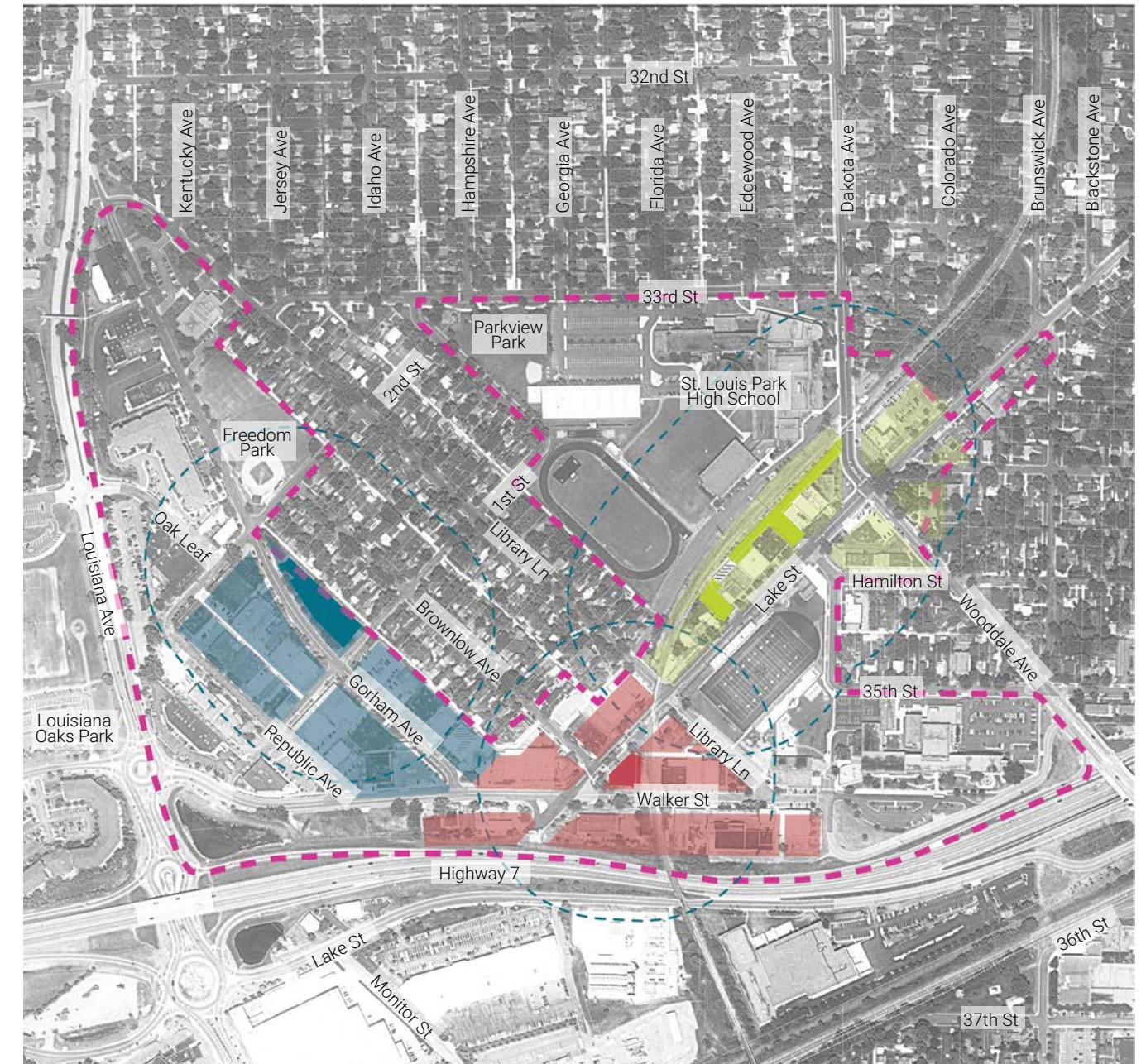
Under no circumstance can existing private parking be removed if minimum parking requirement cannot be met on site. If parking on site requirements can be met with consideration of building expansion at the expense of removing parking, this is acceptable.

Designated Parking Districts

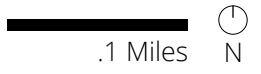
Organized parking districts have shown to be effective in other consolidated development areas to manage parking demand. The intent of parking districts is to identify for businesses and patron's areas of parking that can be relied upon to serve their parking demands within a reasonable distance of their business.

Approximate service areas of 1/8-mile were considered to organize parcels and their respective potential off-street parking fields (for initial consideration, understanding that on-street parking is also available within these potential districts). The resultant districts outlined in the figure below include the Gorham parking lot (District 1), the Lake Street/Walker Street parking lot (District 2), and the Bohn Welding/Lake Street Alley/Georgia Avenue parking lot (District 3).

Walker Lake Parking Districts



- - - - Project Boundary
- Parking District 1
- Parking District 2
- Parking District 3
- District 1 Lot
- District 2 Lot
- District 3 Lot
- - - - 1/8 mile buffer



Key Parking Considerations for Historic Walker Lake Zone

ADA Accessibility

It is important for the city to ensure the Historic Walker Lake area businesses consider all users/patrons, including those with ambulatory (i.e., walking) challenges. The city already has Americans with Disability Act (ADA) accessible parking requirements; it is extremely important this is maintained into the future and emphasized with all new developments. Where the city has existing parking lots, ADA accessible parking quantities should be reviewed.

Bicycle Parking

A cornerstone of city policy is overall mobility for all users throughout the community. This is especially evident with its emphasis on bicycle infrastructure. To that end as well, bicycle parking within the Historic Walker Lake area is an important component to accommodate those users/patrons. Bicycle parking is already required within the city code, intended to provide adequate and safe facilities for the storage of bicycles, to encourage the use of bicycles as an alternative to motor vehicles, and to provide bicycle access to employment, commercial and other destinations.

The overlay zone for Historic Walker Lake should carry forward the city's current bicycle general requirements, location criteria, and number of required spaces.

Curbside Management

The city will need to consider how the curbside space is managed on streets within commercial zones throughout the city. This is especially important in commercial areas with a high likelihood of alternative modes of transportation for arrivals such as Transportation Network Companies (TNCs - Uber/Lyft). Allocating space for this mobility service has the potential to impact the on-street parking supply. In addition there are other uses competing for curbside space:

- On-street parking
- Designated ADA accessible parking
- Loading zones
- Passenger loading zones (Taxi/TNC staging areas)
- Bicycle parking (i.e. Bike corrals, etc.)
- Dedicated car share spaces (if implemented as part of a travel demand strategy)

- Electric vehicle parking/charging station

A policy should be considered in the future to address this within the overlay zone.

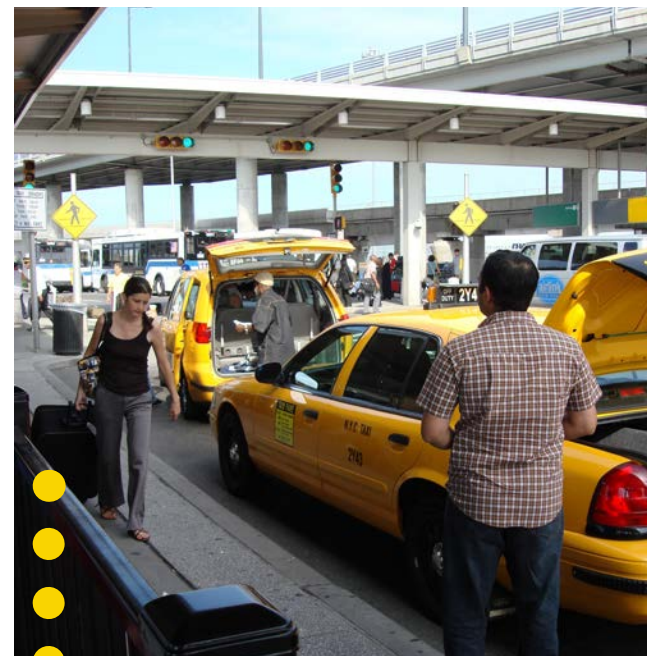
Parking Optional Incentives

There are a number of strategies that can be considered to encourage users of the parking facilities to reduce their reliance on driving the single occupancy vehicle that include:

- Transit Service: Regular transit service within one-quarter mile of the development area, can have a positive impact on parking requirements for the area. Users of the mobility system have an alternative to driving alone. The Historic Walker Lake area is well served by transit service.
- Bicycle Parking On-site: The provision of bicycle parking on-site is important to accommodating users/patrons that may choose this alternative mode to driving alone. While there are bicycle parking requirements built into the code already, encouraging expanded bicycle parking will help to nudge users/patrons in this direction.
- Valet Service: Provision of valet service for certain commercial uses (restaurants, theatres, etc.) help to manage the parking demand during peak times. While this does not directly impact parking demand it helps manage the parking supply in an organized fashion.
- Travel Demand Management: Developing structured travel demand management strategies that outline measures to minimize the vehicular mobility impacts of the developments on parking demands is beneficial. Travel demand management has traditionally been used as a way to mitigate existing congestion, if applied systematically in the land development process it can serve as a means to enhance mobility and reduce parking demand.

Opportunities for “Fees In-Lieu”

The city currently applies fees in-lieu to other aspects of the zoning code (i.e., providing trees as part of developments). This similar concept can be applied for parking requirements that either cannot be met or where it is desirable to pay a fee in-lieu of providing the parking for various reasons. Based on the existing parking supply and demand assessment contained herein there is a fairly significant amount of parking available to accommodate the Historic Walker Lake area today and into the future.



Accessibility, bicycle parking, and curb side management should all be considered when creating the overlay district..

As an example, a surface parking space can cost approximately \$3,000-\$5,000 to construct; in-lieu of providing one space the city should consider collecting a proportional fee (i.e., 10-25% of construction cost per space). The money collected as part of this program would be reserved for management of the publicly available Historic Walker Lake district parking (on-street curbside or off-street parking lots). This concept does not imply that a redevelopment can expand a building at the expense of removing private or public parking, with the intent to pay a fee-in-lieu of providing the parking.

Next Steps

To ensure the parking supply is sustainable in the Historic Walker Lake area the city should consider conducting a parking study update after a proportion of the area redevelops and the minimum/maximum parking requirements have been in effect for some period (to be determined based on qualitative assessment by city staff). Conducting the parking study update before the area parking supply is exhausted will allow the city to take stock of the parking situation and determine a course of action to pivot if necessary to respond to area parking demand. Options to consider as potential course of action if parking supply is determined to not be sufficient following parking study update includes, but not limited to:

- Parking time limit restrictions in public lots/on-street
- Charge for parking in public lots/on-street
- Increase alternative mode choice options in the area (bike share stations, shared mobility staging areas, etc.)
- Increase travel demand management strategies
- Identify opportunities for parking expansion in public lots



6: Merchant's Association and Affordability

BUSINESS ORGANIZATION

It is recommended that the businesses, non-profits, and landowners of the Walker Lake District form a merchants association to help steer and create activities within the district. The Historic Walker Lake district offers a range of retail, restaurants, light industrial, non-profits and services that reflect a unique culture and provide goods, services, and amenities to the community. These elements are essential to a socially and economically healthy St. Louis Park.

Merchants associations can help steer and create ideal conditions for a successful commercial district, and to promote and support businesses of all sizes and types. A merchants association is a group of business owners that exists to anchor and stabilize neighboring businesses around beautification efforts, marketing and promotions, events, placemaking, and economic development activities within a commercial district. Collectively, merchants associations act as a unified voice and assist in leading and influencing positive changes.

Members of merchants associations are typically business owners, property owners and supporters of the district. Ultimately membership is determined by the leaders of the association and documented in the bylaws of the organization, which would need to be legally established by the members themselves. The organization would exist to empower business owners, organize to identify goals, and anchor leadership in the district to advocate for the future they envision.

Initial outreach was conducted to educate business and property owners within the area, culminating in district meetings in which the group worked together to share information on the characteristics, challenges, and vision of businesses in the district. Five main subject areas were identified by those that attended the meetings as potential focus areas for a future merchants association

- Marketing
- Programming
- Project Coordination
- Maintenance / Public Safety
- Public Space, Placemaking and Public Art

Marketing

Marketing and promotions can be some of the lowest hanging fruit for a new merchants association. It is recommended that, upon establishment, the association work to develop group marketing materials. This would include, at a minimum, a map of the district with members identified, which could be provided at all member locations, but could also include other types of marketing campaigns, including media buys or other types of local advertising.

In addition to marketing, promotions could be developed to further the goals of shoppers visiting multiple locations in the district, rather than driving to a single destination and then leaving the district. This could include numerous types of district discounts including a website and social media accounts. The association should also develop a website and strong social media presence, and may also benefit from developing some form of internal message board, whether a "members only" forum on the website or using a tool like Slack.

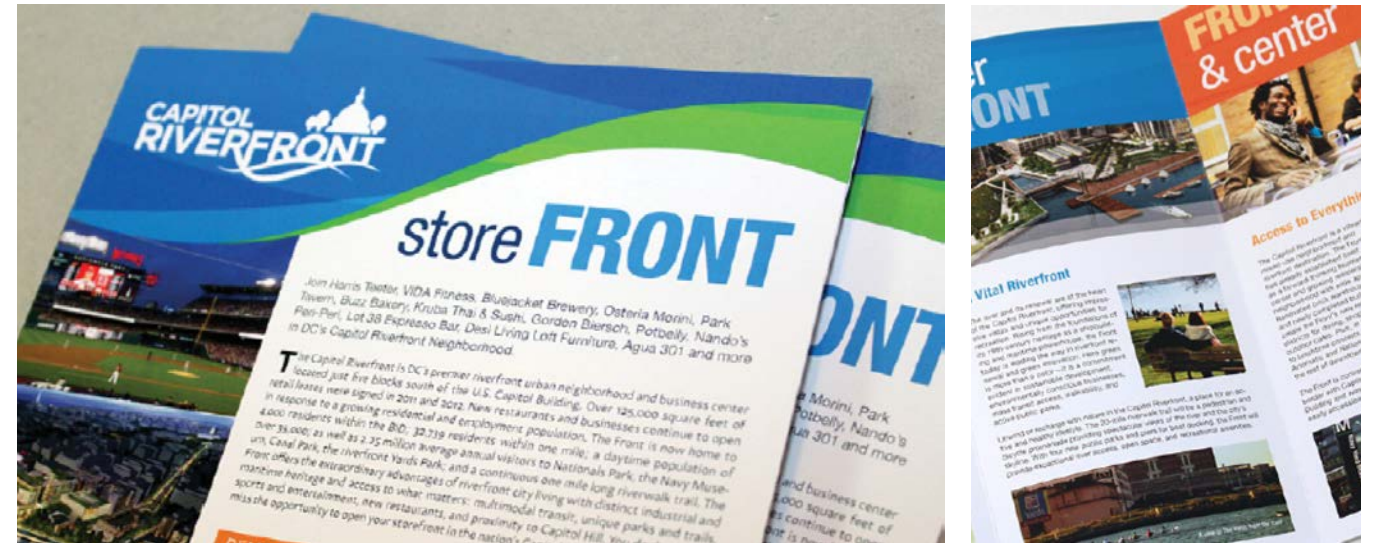
Programming

The district is already host to several successful events, including the Holiday Train in December as well as St. Louis Park High School sports events at Oriole Stadium. The merchants association could expand on this success with seasonal events, street closures, festivals, or even a monthly event (third-thursdays, or fourth-fridays) during which local businesses would expand promotions, additional vendors could be brought in, or music or other performances could take place. These types of programming would have a successful impact on increasing the visibility of the district and encouraging more visitation regionally.

Project Coordination

While providing many long term benefits to local businesses, major construction projects can be challenging as well. Merchants associations can act together to minimize the disruptions of major projects and disseminate information to affected properties.

Additionally, the merchants association can be an organizer or convener for other types of programs that benefit the district, for example, travel demand



★ SMALL BUSINESS SATURDAY ★
NOV 24

VIBE CREATIVE DISTRICT

YOU'LL ♥ OUR
POP-UP MARKETPLACE IN THE PARK

Coordinating marketing and branding materials is one function of a merchant's association.





Coordinating maintenance projects and events is another potential function of a merchant's association.

management techniques with employees, or coordinated valet or rideshare pickup for restaurants. Some of these options are described in more detail on the following pages.

Maintenance and Public Safety

Merchants associations can also take a role in maintenance of landscaping, public spaces, snow removal, mowing, graffiti abatement and other types of public safety activities. Coordinated maintenance can be less expensive than it would be to individual businesses, and can allow districts to have more elaborate landscaping than the city would be able to maintain. In Minnesota, these types of services are rendered through Special Service Districts, which could be created through the City of St. Louis Park, and would assess businesses in the district for these types of activities above the membership dues of the merchants association. The merchants association could also play a major role in the development of specific landscape palates, the selection of street furniture or other "branded" activities in the public realm in cooperation with the city.

Public Space, Placemaking and Public Art

Finally, the merchants association can play a major role in the development, maintenance and management of public spaces within the district, including the proposed shared street spaces or activated alleys. As mentioned above, the association can play a role in the development of public realm guidelines, including specific plantings and street furniture.

In coordination with organizations including St. Louis Park Friends of the Arts or Forecast Public Art, the association can have a major hand in the development of public art within the district, including murals, statuary or other artistic options. Special service districts may be a way to fund the installation of other placemaking initiatives including publicly owned, privately maintained lighting, benches, trash receptacles, or wayfinding signage.

Travel Demand Management

In coordination with the parking strategies pursued by the city, travel demand management (TDM) strategies may also be implemented, in many cases by a merchants association, to reduce the demand for parking in the area. TDM strategies are measures used to encourage residents, visitors, and employees of local businesses to use alternative modes of transportation and to encourage the use of facilities during off-peak time periods. Examples of TDM strategies that may be implemented in the Walker Lake area include:

- Provide electronic welcome packets to employees detailing ways to reduce vehicle travel. These could include information regarding local transit routes and schedules, car share programs and ride-matching services, and maps of nearby pedestrian walkways and bicycle infrastructure. Individual businesses or the association could also offer employee benefits to those who choose not to travel by single-occupancy vehicle
- Promote biking as mode of transportation by providing bicycle amenities including short-term bicycle parking for visitors and long-term covered bicycle parking for employees and residents. Pursue bicycle friendly business designations for area businesses.
- Work with the city to ensure safe, secure sidewalks throughout the areas to encourage walking. It will be especially critical to maintain adequate pedestrian infrastructure between the public parking facilities and adjacent businesses and residences.
- Provide adequate wayfinding signage to advertise non-obvious parking locations and provide directions to nearby attractions, businesses, and transit locations. The installation of information kiosks throughout the area may also be used as a way to provide information and guide visitors to nearby attractions.
- Develop and Maintain a policy to encourage off-peak truck and service deliveries.
- Provide dedicated off-street loading zones for high-frequency delivery services such as FedEx and USPS.
- Create designated rideshare drop off and pick up zones, as well as driver waiting zones.
- Develop shared parking relationships between businesses.
- Offer reduced public transportation passes.

AFFORDABILITY

Through the engagement process, the community indicated that commercial affordability was a concern and the community would like to maintain commercial affordability for the current and future businesses in Walker Lake. Existing conditions indicate that in some cases, redevelopment potential is high.

User Considerations

Maintaining affordability for commercial properties is more complex than maintaining affordability for residential properties. Considerations include:

- Type of User: Commercial users require a variety of different space types and sizes with a variety of utilities needed. For example, restaurant uses require kitchen space that comes with additional cost and permitting requirements than regular retail. Light industrial uses may require certain building specifications or utilities on site. Community health clinics may be subject to specific zoning standards.
- Location: Certain users prefer to be on commercial corridors, such as grocery or retail, whereas maker space or other light industrial uses can be in more diverse locations. These changes in location have implications for maintaining affordability.
- Tenure status: A businesses' tenure in its location effects the ability to retain affordability. Users that own the building might need support with making improvements, whereas those who rent spaces might be at risk of displacement. New businesses looking for affordable space to begin operations can further strain available spaces.

Maintaining Affordability

When developing a strategy to maintain affordability in commercial areas, the community must decide which types of businesses it would like to support, so efforts can be targeted to those types based on user considerations.

After this determination has been made, a variety of tools are available to support these businesses. They include:

- Purchase or acquire and issue an RFP: Purchase properties and issue an RFP for a developer based on a certain type of desired commercial or mixed-use development profile that will include affordable commercial space. A deed restriction may be included to ensure ongoing community benefit and commercial affordability.
- Commercial land trust: Purchase properties, and either retain ownership of land and buildings as a landlord, or retain ownership of land and sell the improvements to businesses with affordability conditions on resale.
- Master lease: Master lease property for a long period of time and then rent it at a subsidized rate to desired businesses.
- Facade improvement grants: Offer businesses that own their buildings grants to improve facades in order to better attract customers. These can also be small loans.
- Tenant improvement grants: Offer startup businesses grants for buildout of spaces they rent to meet their needs.
- Incubators: Support incubation spaces focused on particular desired sectors.
- Coworking spaces: Support coworking spaces that rent desks at affordable rates to small and startup businesses

Finally, the community should evaluate implementation possibilities to determine which of the tools is feasible based on desire outcomes, and to gather partners to implement the selected strategies.



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Preserving commercial affordability requires targeted efforts by the community.



7: Conclusion

The Historic Walker Lake planning process gathering community members and business owners to address barriers to the implementation of a variety of planning efforts.

Next Steps

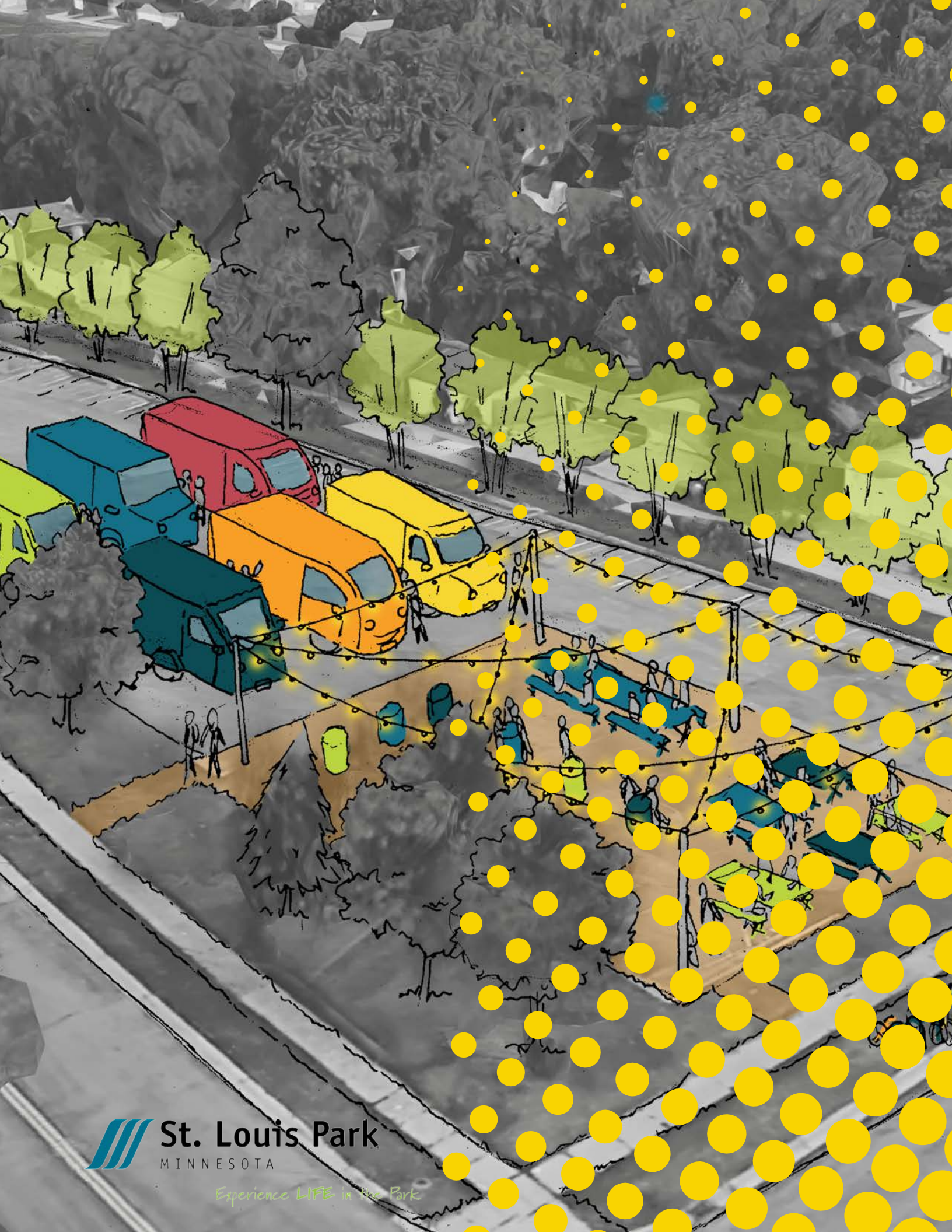
The process has led to the formation of a merchant's association to improve the districts, and a variety of other next steps. These are summarized below.

- Work towards the development of the overlay district, to include:
 - » Use revisions
 - » Form standards
 - » Public realm standards
 - » Parking districts
- Begin to implement wayfinding and branding strategies, including:
 - » Facade improvements
 - » Temporary activations
 - » Signage and wayfinding
- Continue to develop the merchant's association and its goals and processes, including:
 - » Regular meetings and selecting leaders
 - » Commercial affordability
 - » Special service district establishment for selection of street furniture and district branding
 - » Development of marketing materials
 - » Initiation of wayfinding and activation activities

Monitoring Progress

Progress on the implementation of this plan should be monitored regularly and posted on the project website. Milestones should be celebrated by community stakeholders.





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