

District 2: Greater East Side

Planning District 2, known as the Greater East Side, is located in the northeast corner of the city and is the fourth largest of St. Paul's seventeen planning districts. The district is bounded by Larpenteur Avenue on the north, the Burlington Northern Railroad tracks and Johnson Parkway on the west, Minnehaha Avenue on the south, and McKnight Road on the east.

Between the 1850's, when the first settlers arrived in the area and the land became part of New Canada Township (1858), and the 1880's, the area now known as the Greater East Side was used largely for farming. Early land owners in the area included Alexander Ramsey, who purchased a large farm near present day Arlington Avenue and Furness Street in 1859; and William Ames, who settled near present day Kingsford Street and Ames Avenue in the 1850's. During this period the rural Greater East Side was linked to the tiny town of St. Paul by the Stillwater Road, an early route from St. Paul to Stillwater. Today Ames and Stillwater Avenues trace the route of the Stillwater Road.

Rail service reached the area in the 1860's and 1870's and was probably the impetus for the establishment of some early industries there. In 1868 the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad (later called the St. Paul and Duluth) was constructed along the western boundary of what is now District 2. Four years later, the St. Paul, Stillwater, and Taylor's Falls Railroad (later called the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis, and Omaha) opened a line which runs east and west across the middle of the district. One of the most important industries to establish facilities along the railroad tracks was the St. Paul Harvester Works. Incorporated in 1872 and established in 1875 on a fifty acre site near the intersection of present day Case Avenue and Hazel Street, a planned community was established around the machinery factory, including a post office, school, general store, chapel, and workers' housing. In 1891-1893 a new plant was built at the site by the Walter A. Wood

Harvester Company. Some of those buildings are still standing at 1921 E. Case Avenue, now part of a Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing complex.

The annexation of present day District 2 by the city of St. Paul in 1885 and 1887 occurred at the same time that William L. Ames, Jr., son of the area's most prosperous early farmer, platted the Hazel Park development near present day White Bear and Ames Avenues. Designed as a suburb accessible to downtown St. Paul and to nearby industry by rail lines, the small community grew around the Hazel Park depot, which has since been razed. The first Ames School was built in 1889 on the site of the present Ames School. The Hazel Park development achieved only limited success and only a few Victorian houses remain from this period. Among the most important are the home of William Ames, Jr. at 1667 E. Ames Avenue, the sophisticated Shingle style Charles W. Schneider House at 1750 E. Ames Place (no. 4), and the house at 1023 N. White Bear Avenue.

Soon after Hazel Park was platted, the first streetcar tracks were laid in the area, eastward along E. Seventh Street and north on Hazel Street to Maryland Avenue. From this point a connection could be made to the North St. Paul Railroad Company's tracks which led north to North St. Paul and later to White Bear Lake and Stillwater. Additional tracks were placed in the northern part of the district in 1930. Although the existence of streetcar and rail lines encouraged some settlement in District 2, most of the district developed after World War II when St. Paul experienced a population increase and a corresponding housing boom.

Most of the houses standing today in District 2 are undistinguished single family houses dating from the 1940's and 1950's. The Historic Sites Survey discovered very few early farmhouses, although the Survey identified a few Victorian houses clustered around Ames School dating from the Hazel Park development, and some turn of the century houses located along early streetcar lines. Ames School, built in 1915, merits preservation as one of St. Paul's finest twentieth century

public schools. There are very few intact early commercial or industrial buildings in District 2, and the most significant are the remnants of the Walter A. Wood Harvester Works on Case Avenue.

Presently there are no sites in District 2 that have been designated as historic sites. Following is a list of sites in District 2 which the Historic Sites Survey staff believes are eligible for listing with the National Register of Historic Places and/or the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission and a list of additional sites of major significance. Approximate locations of the sites are shown on the accompanying map.



4. 1750 E. Ames Place, Charles W. Schneider House, 1890, built by Decks and Whitbeck, architect unknown. (Photo by Brad Daniels)

DISTRICT 2

Sites Already Designated - none.

Sites Eligible for Designation

1. 1667 E. Ames Avenue, William L. and Helen Ames House
- Site — 2. 1750 E. Ames Place, Charles W. Schneider House
3. 1760 E. Ames Place, William L. Ames School

Additional Sites of Major Significance

4. 1647 E. Ames Avenue, House
5. 1921 E. Case Avenue, Walter A. Wood Harvester Company
6. 1007 N. Flandrau Street, Winslow W. Dunn House
7. 852 N. Johnson Parkway, House
8. 1345 E. Minnehaha Avenue, House
9. 1023 N. White Bear Avenue, House
10. 1342 E. York Avenue, House

MAP 2

DISTRICT 2



