

## Dayton's Bluff Community Planning Process

# East 4th Street Preservation Project

## Introduction

Working with partners from the Dayton's Bluff Urban Partnership (DBUP), Historic Saint Paul coordinated a community planning process to develop place-based development principles for the Dayton's Bluff area between East 7th Street and East 3rd Street, from Mounds Boulevard to Maple Street.

Spurred by the number of vacant homes in the focus area, the Dayton's Bluff Community Planning Process was designed to develop and test strategies for reversing decline, preserving the historic fabric, and guiding future development efforts in the community.

The 4th Street project area — three blocks along 4th Street, from Maria Avenue to Maple Street — was selected as a high priority area and will serve as a demonstration project for initial implementation of the Dayton's Bluff Community Planning Process.

### The process has three phases:

Phase one, represented in this document, included four workshops in comprehensive, place-based community planning and a design charrette of the focus area.

Phase two is the development of preliminary scopes of work for properties owned by St. Paul's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) that have been identified as priorities for redevelopment. The scopes will be available to parties interested in submitting a redevelopment proposal.

Phase three of the process is the issuance of a call for Requests for Proposals (RFP) by the City of St. Paul for the 4th Street redevelopment projects, an open house for prospective developers showcasing properties to be redeveloped, convening of a selection committee to review proposals, identify potential developers and submit recommendations to the HRA, and awarding of contracts to qualified candidates by the HRA/City of Saint Paul.

## Planning Workshops:

Historic Saint Paul (HSP) contracted with SiteLines Education to engage community stakeholders — residents, institutions, businesses, politicians and planners — in a comprehensive, step-by-step place based planning process. The process was designed to help decision makers 'see' their neighborhood, develop a common language and base of information, and create development principles to help them make informed, collaborative decisions now and into the future.

### The process included:

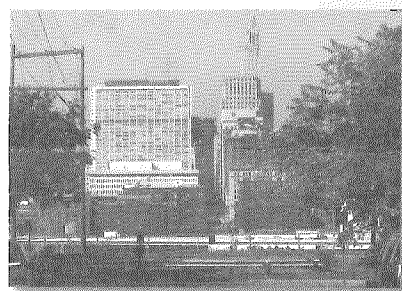
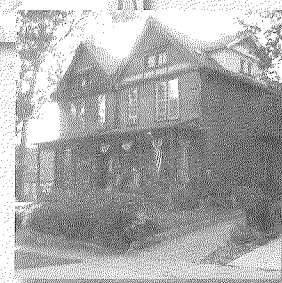
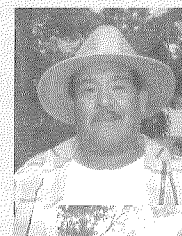
- Evaluation of the existing physical features of the neighborhood
- Investigation of the history and evolution of the neighborhood
- Identification of neighborhood assets and opportunities
- Creation of guiding principles for future development of the neighborhood
- Application of the principles to the 4th Street Project Area

This report highlights the community planning process and serves to: document the collaborative process, create neighborhood development principles that can be used to shape new projects and evaluate redevelopment proposals, identify partnerships and funding opportunities, and give Dayton's Bluff residents a framework for future planning strategies.

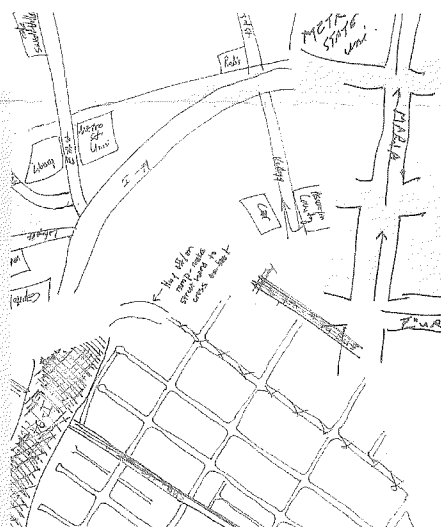
## Walk About: Identity of the Neighborhood

For the "Walk-About," stakeholders ventured into the neighborhood to look around, identify the physical features of the neighborhood — both good and bad — and to photograph those features in preparation for a group discussion. The prevailing neighborhood characteristics that stakeholders identified included:

- Diverse resident population
- Historic neighborhood reflected in its collection of significant buildings
- Unique location on bluff with close proximity to and views of Mississippi River and downtown Saint Paul
- Limited gathering spots and amenities
- Disproportionate amount of low quality rental property
- Beautiful gardens
- Details — broken fences, peeling paint, garbage — need attention



Home Road: How You Use Your Neighborhood



In this exercise individual stakeholders drew a map of their daily path or routine, illustrating the physical features, both built and natural, that define their route and relationship to the neighborhood. The group included roughly equal numbers of stakeholders who live in the neighborhood, those that work in the area, and others that both live and work in the neighborhood.

There was general consensus among residents that live and live/work in the area that Dayton's Bluff is a fairly walkable neighborhood with good access to perimeter parks including Swede Hollow and Mounds Park. The group identified Swede Hollow Cafe as a community landmark and gathering spot, and appreciated the neighborhood architecture. They also identified as positive the easy connections with other residents and day-to-day community activity.

Conversely, there was general agreement that the neighborhood is lacking in basic goods and services, from full-service grocery stores and restaurants to student-oriented housing and entertainment. Additionally, the neighborhood is not amenable to children, because of a lack of playgrounds, or pedestrians of any age, due to high-speed traffic and lack of controlled intersections.

## What's There: 5 Physical Features

Stakeholders inventoried the physical features that make up the neighborhood—community streets, commercial niches, anchoring institutions, homes, and public space—identifying "What's there" in the neighborhood as well as deducing "What's missing." The conclusions were:

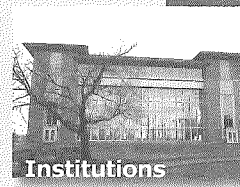
- **Public Space:** Limited in the center of the neighborhood and located mostly on the periphery. Need connections between parks.
- **Streets and Sidewalks:** Well-connected grid of streets with sidewalks. 3rd and 7th Streets are transit routes and, along with 6th Street, are not very pedestrian friendly. Dead ends at the periphery could be re-designed as overlooks.
- **Institutions:** The neighborhood has few institutions. Dayton's Bluff Elementary/Recreation Center and Metro State University are the most prominent of the institutions.
- **Commercial:** 3rd and 7th Streets are mostly commercial but lack diversity, so many residents and visitors go out of the neighborhood for goods and services.
- **Housing:** Considerable amount of lower income rental stock, but there is high quality housing available for first time home-buyers. The neighborhood has limited senior housing options, and few housing options for Metro State students.



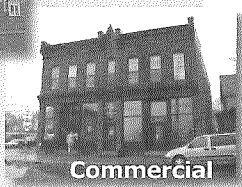
Parks



Streets



Institutions



Commercial

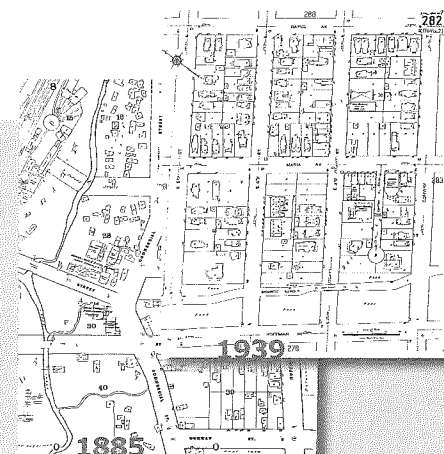


Homes

## What Was There: Historical Perspective

A limited amount of time was devoted to evaluating Sanborn Maps (historical fire insurance documents), tracing the evolution of the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood over a period of 125 years. Stakeholders learned how the neighborhood evolved from a working-class enclave, to a middle-class community oriented around streetcar lines, to a historically designated neighborhood in transition.

\*For additional information on the history of Dayton's Bluff, visit [www.daytonsbuff.org/cult\\_history.html](http://www.daytonsbuff.org/cult_history.html)





# Neighborhood Assets

## Physical Features

### Geography

1. Bluff Edge
2. Proximity to Downtown
3. Mississippi River
4. Shift in north/south street grid

### Major Streets

5. East 3rd Street
6. Maria Avenue
7. East 7th Street

### Parks

8. Swede Hollow Park
9. Dayton's Bluff Children's Garden
10. Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary
11. Mounds Park
12. Dayton's Bluff Recreation Center and Playground

### Institutions

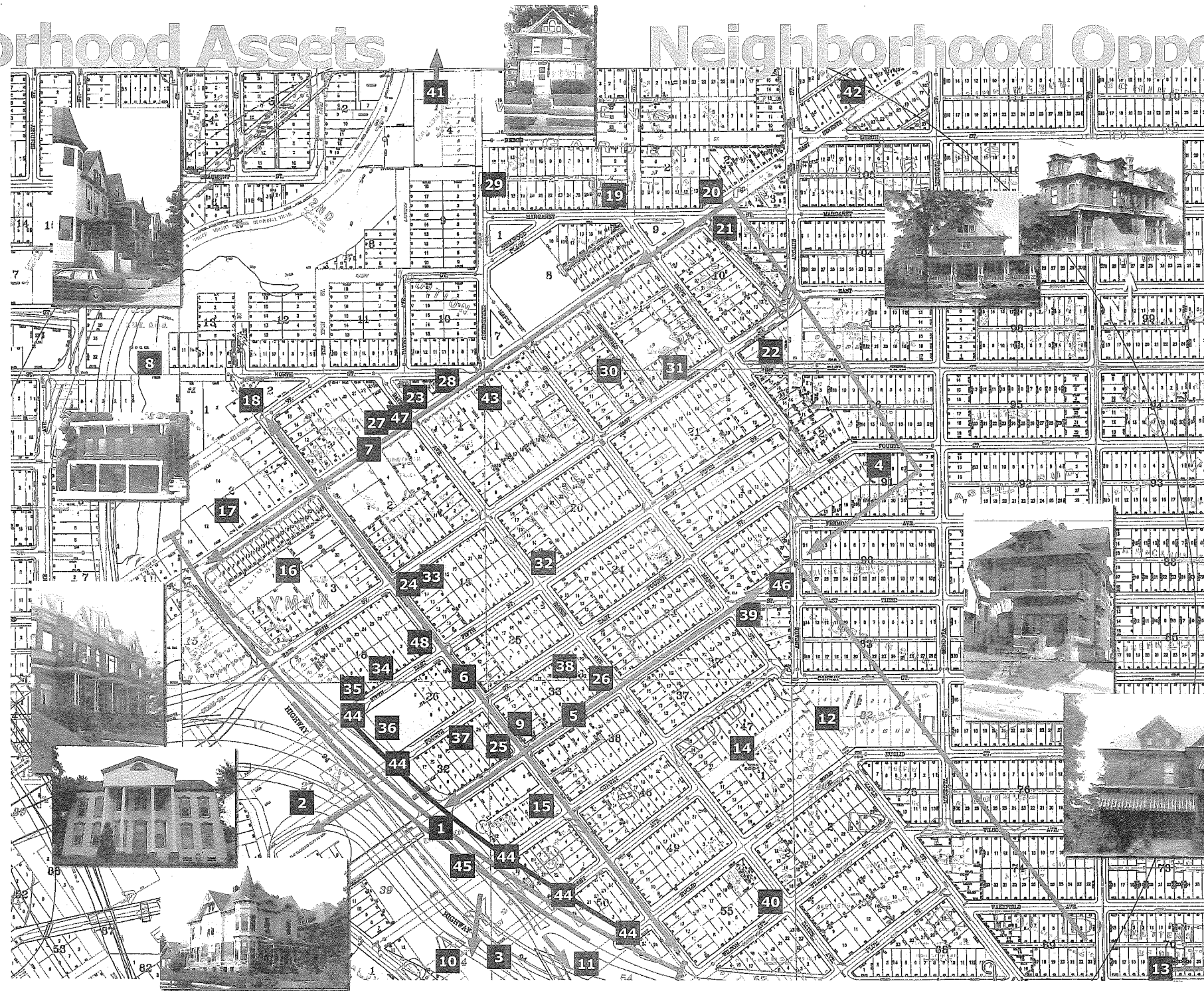
13. Mounds Park Theatre
14. Dayton's Bluff Elementary
15. Eagles Club
16. Metropolitan State University
17. Metro State/Community Library
18. First Lutheran Church
19. St. John's Lutheran
20. Mexican Consulate
21. Dayton's Bluff Community Council
22. Sacred Heart Church

### Commercial/Services

23. Swede Hollow Cafe
24. The Strip Club Restaurant
25. Roy's Service Center
26. A Toast to Bread and incubator kitchen

### Neighborhood/Architectural Landmarks

27. Doeren Cigar Factory
28. Stutzman Block
29. Hamm Family Houses
30. Eichenwald Row
31. Keller Row
32. Toltz House
33. Schoch Building
34. Seeger Houses
35. Muench House
36. Muench-Heinemann House
37. Tandy Row
38. White House
39. Leithauser Building
40. Schornstein Grocery & Saloon



# Neighborhood Opportunities

## Proposed Project Sites

### Major Redevelopment

41. Hamm's Brewery
42. 3M
43. Former Hospital Linen

### Improvements to Bluff Edge

44. Overlooks
45. Retaining wall
  - Pedestrian connections

### Pedestrian Oriented Streetscapes

6. Maria Avenue between Metro State and East 3rd Street
7. East 7th Street
  - Busy intersections ie: along 6th Street
  - Connections between green spaces

### Enhanced Greenspace

9. Dayton's Bluff Children's Garden
46. Triangle garden on East 3rd Street

### Building Redevelopment

25. Roy's Service Center
27. Cigar Factory
31. Keller Row
36. Muench-Heinemann House
47. Budget Tire site
48. Maria Flats
  - Vacant housing
  - Underutilized buildings along East 7th Street
  - Underutilized buildings on Maria between Metro State and East 3rd Street

**Potential Implementation Partners:** City of St. Paul • Invest St. Paul • Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services • District 4 Community Council • Community Groups • Dayton's Bluff Urban Partnership • Community Design Center • Dayton's Bluff Residents • Business Owners • Affordable Housing Providers • Banks • Real-Estate Agents • Metro State University • Xcel Energy • Health Partners • 3M • MNDOT

**Build on Assets** — The Dayton's Bluff neighborhood is distinguished by its unique geography, topography, and history. Conveniently located next to downtown Saint Paul on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River; this historic neighborhood, with its extensive turn-of-the-century building stock, has a notable and established foundation to build on as it moves into the future.

**Forward Thinking** — Through a place based planning process the Dayton's Bluff neighborhood can identify collaborative partnerships to encourage more equitable development\*, create greater opportunities for residents at different stages of life, and realize a more socially, economically and environmentally sustainable future.

**Balance of Uses** — As Dayton's Bluff looks to the future, it can achieve increased stability through a more equitable mix of home ownership, a greater variety of rental opportunities and incorporation of locally based goods and services into the fabric of the neighborhood.

**Neighborhood Connections** — Enhanced physical and visual connections contribute to a more balanced neighborhood. Views to and from downtown can be improved and pedestrian oriented environments into and across the neighborhood can be enhanced. The transformation of physical boundaries into connections and amenities will support the vitality and safety of the neighborhood.

**Creative Re-use** — Select buildings can be transformed to accommodate contemporary uses that satisfy the needs and expectations of modern life. Similarly, selective demolition can be implemented to provide opportunities to build anew and enhance adjacent uses. A balanced approach to development and preservation can simultaneously address community concerns and maintain the historic fabric of the neighborhood.

**Attention to Detail** — Details - from boulevard gardens, clean sidewalks and mown grass, to tidy fencing, architectural ornamentation, porches and freshly painted siding - contribute to the positive image of the neighborhood and convey a sense of pride and ownership. Community supported programs, projects and events that encourage cosmetic improvements to public and private property will help the neighborhood put its best face forward and show off its assets.

\* For more information on the equitable development movement visit [policylink.org](http://policylink.org)

# Development Principles

# Applying The Principles

## Enhancing the 4th Street Project Area

After the initial development principles were drafted, Historic Saint Paul and the Saint Paul Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA-MN) conducted a one-day design charrette to brain-storm ideas for development of the 4th Street project area.

- 1 Capitalize on the unique geographic features and emphasize the neighborhoods extraordinary 'urban windows' by creating overlooks facing the Mississippi River and downtown St. Paul, creating a park/ pedestrian walkway along the bluff line and enhancing pedestrian connectivity to downtown.
- 2 Encourage a more mixed-use, pedestrian friendly environment along Maria Avenue, the heart of the community and an inter-neighborhood street. Aim to expand services and opportunities for Metro State University faculty, staff and students, and neighborhood residents alike.
- 3 Transform turn of the century building stock to accommodate 21st century life by employing best practices and incorporating sustainable systems, products and processes while maintaining the street fabric of this historically designated neighborhood.
- 4 Create a safer pedestrian experience through traffic calming methods such as striping, raised intersections and bump-outs. Enhance the pedestrian environment by adding amenities such as trees, planters and benches.
- 5 Address shortage of garages and green space by redeveloping available sites. Selective demolition and re-use of properties is a potential development tool once a full evaluation has been made of the building's architectural contribution to the historic fabric of the area, future rehabilitation opportunities, and applicable development principles.



HISTORIC SAINT PAUL

**Historic Saint Paul**  
 info@historicsaintpaul.org  
 www.historicsaintpaul.org  
 651-222-3049

#### Sponsors

Family Housing Fund  
 Dayton's Bluff Neighborhood Housing Services  
 Ward 7 City Council  
 National Trust for Historic Preservation  
 AIA Saint Paul

#### Dayton's Bluff Urban Partnership:

Dayton's Bluff Community Council  
 Metro State University  
 Metro State Student Senate  
 Community Design Center  
 Hmong American Partnership  
 Merrick Community Services  
 Dayton's Bluff Elementary School  
 Saint Paul Planning and Economic Development  
 Historic Preservation Commission  
 Ward 7 City Council Office  
 Neighborhood Residents



**SiteLines Education**  
 contact@sitelineseducation.org  
 sitelineseducation.org  
 612.242.6286

