

**CITY OF SAINT PAUL
HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION RESOLUTION**

FILE NUMBER GLMP Recommendation

DATE February 9, 2012

WHEREAS, Section 73.04 of the Saint Paul Legislative Code states that the Heritage Preservation Commission shall “serve as an advisory body to the mayor and city council on municipal heritage preservation matters... [and] shall review and comment on studies which relate to the...architectural heritage of the city...”; and

WHEREAS, the Greater Lowertown Master Plan (GLMP) process was community-led with Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development staff in an advisory role; and

WHEREAS, the Heritage Preservation Commission has been asked for its review and comment on the Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 73.04; and

WHEREAS, the plan area includes the Lowertown Heritage Preservation District , a roughly 17-block area with an impressive collection of industrial warehouse buildings in a narrow street-grid setting, that have been designated by the Saint Paul City Council for heritage preservation; and

WHEREAS, the study area also includes two sites that have been determined eligible for listing on the National Register and local designation which are the Post Office building and the Union Depot train deck; and

WHEREAS, historic preservation is identified as one of three "commonly held values" that inform all aspects of the Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Plan is organized around seven initiatives including Initiative #6: *Preserve the District*, which focuses on preserving the character and value of the Lowertown Historic District; and

WHEREAS, the strategies and recommendations of the Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary that address historic preservation include the following:

Ch 3 Land Use and Urban Design Strategies

1. Prioritize building rehabilitation and redevelopment of surface parking lots over building demolition.
3. Encourage redevelopment of vacant and underutilized properties surrounding Union Depot.
4. Create a permanent home for the Farmers’ Market and a year-round community amenity.
8. Improve Kellogg Boulevard by developing a liner building on the north edge of the Union Depot rail deck.
9. Develop more gathering spaces for the neighborhood.

10. Maintain and create affordable housing and studio space in Lowertown.

Ch 4 Arts, Culture and the Creative Economy Strategies

8. Explore the value of an Arts or Creative Overlay District in collaboration with historic preservation representatives.
9. Work with Union Depot managers to incorporate public art, public programs, retail marketing and other opportunities.

Ch 5 Transportation Strategies

5. Provide bicycle storage facilities at all major attractions.
7. Design the streets surrounding parks and plazas as part of the adjacent open spaces.
8. Extend Broadway to Warner Road.
11. Selectively reconstruct intersections on 7th Street to encourage pedestrian crossings.

Ch 6 Parks and Open Space Strategies

1. Activate the front lawn and former drop-off area in front of the Union Depot with temporary installations, art and programming.
2. Enhance the Farmers' Market site to become a greater neighborhood amenity.
3. Create the River Balcony connecting the Science Museum, Kellogg Mall and Union Depot to the Trout Brook Regional Trail.
4. Create Prince Street Park.
7. Incrementally improve sidewalks to become part of the neighborhood's valued open space system.
8. Expand the use of temporary/seasonal cafes and plazas.
9. Create rooftop gardens as part of the open space system.

Ch 7 Housing

2. Work to convert the vacant and under-utilized buildings into artist-owned live/work buildings.

Ch 8 Water, Energy and the Environment Strategies

5. Extend the LRT infiltration trench in front of Union Depot to adjacent blocks.
6. Encourage new and existing developments to mitigate stormwater by utilizing green roofs and providing cisterns.
8. Consider the use and application of alternative energy sources including low elevation domestic wind turbines.

Ch 9 Historic Preservation Strategies

1. Apply the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties and the local Design Review Guidelines to all repair, alteration, new construction and demolition in the Historic District.
2. Work with the City's PED and HPC to revise and expand the Lowertown Historic District Design Review Guidelines. The Guidelines should better address new construction, signage, public art, streetscape and sustainability

within the Lowertown Historic District.

3. Educate and engage the community, new residents and business owners of the significance of the Historic District and the applicable design review guidelines.
4. Explore listing the Post Office to the National Register and designating it a local Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Site.
5. Explore expanding the Union Depot National Register site to include the adjacent train deck, and designate it a local Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Site.
6. Prepare a Historic Structures Report for the Post Office building to explore adaptive reuse.
7. Conduct a study on historic streetscape and infrastructure to inform future open space and streetscape proposals.
8. Encourage the use of temporary and experimental “pop up” installations within the District as a way to activate buildings and spaces without disrupting the well-preserved assets.
9. Complete the Lowertown Historic District signage program.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Heritage Preservation Commission makes the following recommendations for changes and/or additions to the draft Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary for further consideration by the Saint Paul Planning Commission:

1. The Plan is silent on skyway expansion within Lowertown. The construction of new skyways can often have negative impacts on historic building facades and reduce the vibrancy of pedestrian activity at the street level. Previous City Council-adopted policy is to limit the expansion of skyways to the high-density core of downtown, and prohibit expansion of skyways in the historic areas of Lowertown and Rice Park. The HPC encourages adding a statement within the Plan prohibiting new skyways within the Lowertown Historic District.
2. Strategy 3.8 calls for new liner buildings south of Kellogg Boulevard, and Strategy 5.8 calls for extending Broadway to Warner Road. Both of these actions would likely require removal of large portions of the historic train deck. Strategy 9.5 encourages including the train deck as part of the National Register and local designations of the Union Depot site. The HPC recommends that all strategies be given careful consideration in balancing increased density, improvements in movement, and maintaining the historic and architectural integrity of one of Saint Paul’s premier landmark sites--the Union Depot.
3. The Plan emphasizes the importance of the public realm and established street grid, and includes illustrations that suggest improvements to key public spaces (e.g. the Union Depot lawn and the streets surrounding the Farmers Market). The Heritage Preservation Commission supports Strategy 9.7, which recommends a study on historic streetscape and infrastructure to inform future open space and streetscape improvements within the historic district. The HPC recommends that high priority be given to the preparation of this study, so that future improvements ensure the retention of Lowertown’s historic character.

FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Heritage Preservation Commission finds the strategies in the Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary to be a strong pro-preservation statement that supports the Historic Preservation Chapter in the Comprehensive Plan; and

FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Heritage Preservation Commission finds, with the above recommendations, the Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary to be consistent with the City's policy to protect and promote the heritage of the City of Saint Paul and to preserve our architecturally and historically significant structures.

MOVED BY **Dana**
SECONDED BY **Hill**

IN FAVOR **11**
AGAINST **0**
ABSTAIN **0**