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## Summary Report

# PAYNE AVENUE STREET IMPROVEMENTS

Minnehaha Avenue to East 7th Street



Prepared by:

**Saint Paul Design Center**

June 2014



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## Executive Summary

### Team

Linda Arnesen, Alex Bajwa, Cindy Berg, Joe Berg, Ellen Biales, Dan Bostrom, Mary Brauer, Amy Brendmoen, Sam Carlsen, Ed Davis, Chelsea DeArmond, Tyler DeArmond, Anne DeJoy, Bill Dermody, Karin DuPaul, Jim Erchul, Brian Fewell, Amy Filice, Mike Grealish, Tim Griffin, Brad Griffith, Luis Gutierrez, Tim Herman, Ken Iosso, Tracey Kinney, Paul Kurtz, Erin Laberee, Patty Lammers, Kathy Lantry, Steve Law, John Lenzi, Pat Lindgren, Patrick Lombardo, Don Lorr, Leslie McMurray, Jim Morelli, Kim O'Brien, Al Oertwig, Karen Palm, Juan Parker, Crystal Passi, Michael Pennig, Marjorie Pitz, Gregg Rosenberger, Suzanne Rosenberger, Amy Sippl, Greg Sippl, Dave Thune, Troy Trooien, Andy Twedt, Don Varney, John Vaughn, Fred Yarusso

The Railroad Island Task Force (Task Force) in coordination with the Saint Paul Design Center (SPDC) recommends improvements on Payne Avenue from Minnehaha Avenue to East 7th Street, with more detailed improvements from Beaumont Street to East 7th Street. Taking place in the first half of 2014, the project's main priority is improving pedestrian and vehicular access through new alignment strategies for Payne Avenue and adjoining cross streets. Secondary priorities are improving parking for businesses and addressing future development. The Task Force, businesses owners, community members, Ward 5 and Ward 6 Council Members and Staff, City of Saint Paul and Ramsey County Staff, and SPDC participated in a one-and-a-half day workshop that addressed minor to modest design interventions in the project area from Minnehaha Avenue to East 7th Street. As an outcome of the workshop, three areas were further investigated, specifically:

- The commercial area between Beaumont Street and Tedesco Street
- The Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) parcel between Kenny Street and Woodward Street
- The Railroad Island Entertainment District on south Payne Avenue

The recommended strategies for these areas resulted from further conversations and feature the preferred street alignments of Payne Avenue and adjoining cross streets. The recommendations for Payne Avenue improve walkability, connections to Swede Hollow Park and overall quality of life. Recommendations are conveyed both conceptually and in technical drawings for submittal to the City of Saint Paul for future CIB funding consideration.

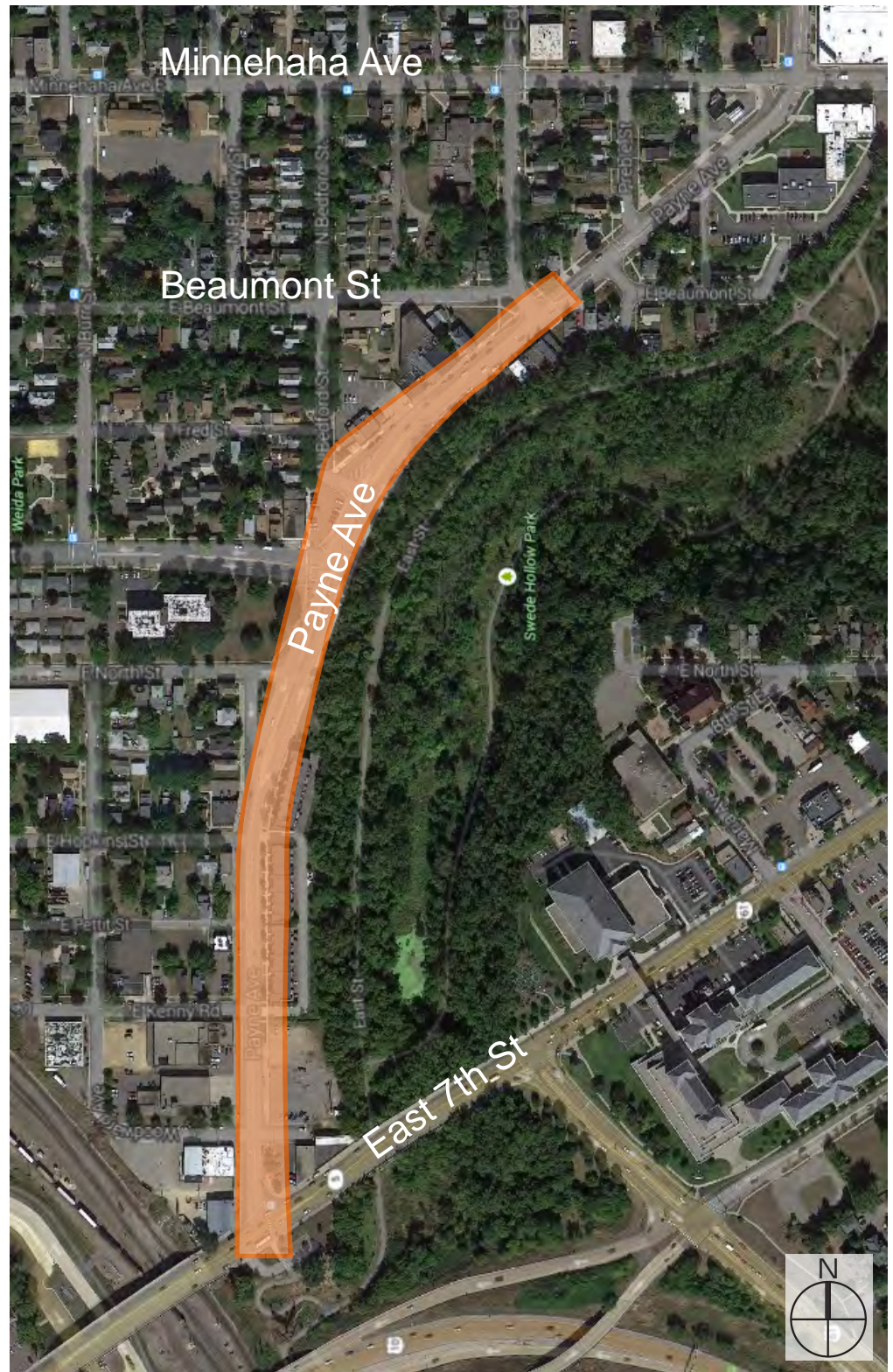
### Notes

1. This document provides technical details of proposed walkability enhancements to be made on Payne Avenue between Beaumont Street and East 7th Street. These proposals are based on community surveys; listening sessions; and a workshop process that involved community members and other stakeholders, including representatives from the organizations listed below.
2. Enhancements as shown in this document are subject to approval by appropriate governing bodies, including the City of Saint Paul.



## Map of Project Area

This map shows the project area along Payne Avenue. The workshop investigated Payne Avenue from Minnehaha Avenue to East 7th Street. As an outcome, the community strategies shown in pages 8 & 9 were compiled. In the course of the workshop process, it was found that there were previous street enhancements that improved walkability from Minnehaha Avenue to Beaumont Street. As a result, the project area was narrowed to focus on Payne Avenue from Beaumont Street to East 7th Street.





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## Payne Avenue Workshop

February 12-13, 2014



*Evening walk*



*Afternoon walk*



*Workshop participants discuss their observations*

### Location

East District Police Community Room, 722 Payne Ave, Saint Paul MN

### Purpose of Meeting

This workshop was held to explore options for streetscape improvements and development potential along Payne Avenue between Minnehaha Avenue and East 7th Street.

### Workshop Process

The charrette consisted of two workshop sessions over two days to more fully engage the community and provide multiple opportunities for participation.

On the evening of Wednesday, February 12, a small group walked Payne Avenue to gather observations about the streetscape. This evening walk was held to understand the experience of Payne Avenue at night. After the walk participants shared their thoughts on the experience.

One of the most widely shared observations was that lighting was inconsistent and frequently inadequate for pedestrians, resulting in feelings of insecurity. Lighting and security concerns were particularly seen on the east side of Payne Avenue, where it runs along Swede Hollow Park between North and Beaumont Streets. A notable exception was the storefront of La Palma, where large windows allow the light of the store to spill onto the sidewalk. Improved lighting combined with the activity at this location creates a greater feeling of security.

On Thursday, February 13, a larger group gathered at the community room to continue the discussion. After a discussion about the purpose and objectives of the workshop, the group walked the same part of Payne Avenue in the early afternoon.

After returning from the walk, participants broke into three groups, each looking at Payne Avenue through a different lens:

- What can we do to improve the street with minimal change, based on current trends and best practices?
- How can we make the most of existing development opportunities with moderate investment and public-private partnerships?
- What if we redesigned problem areas from the ground up?

### Report Out

A representative from each table presented their work to the whole group, based on a synthesis of both sessions, focusing on the following:

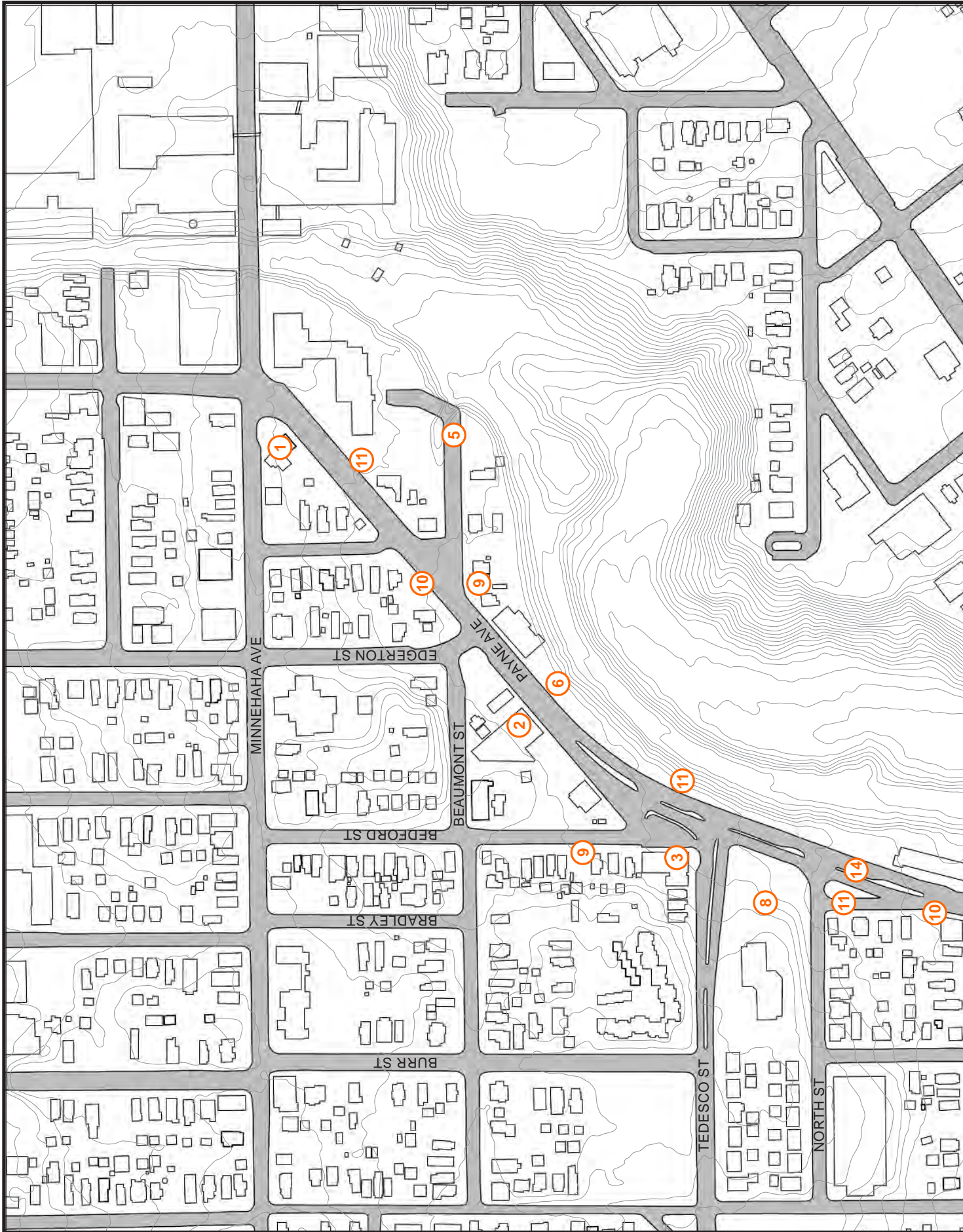
- 3 Gateways
- 5 Development Parcels
- Park Connections
- Public Realm Improvements



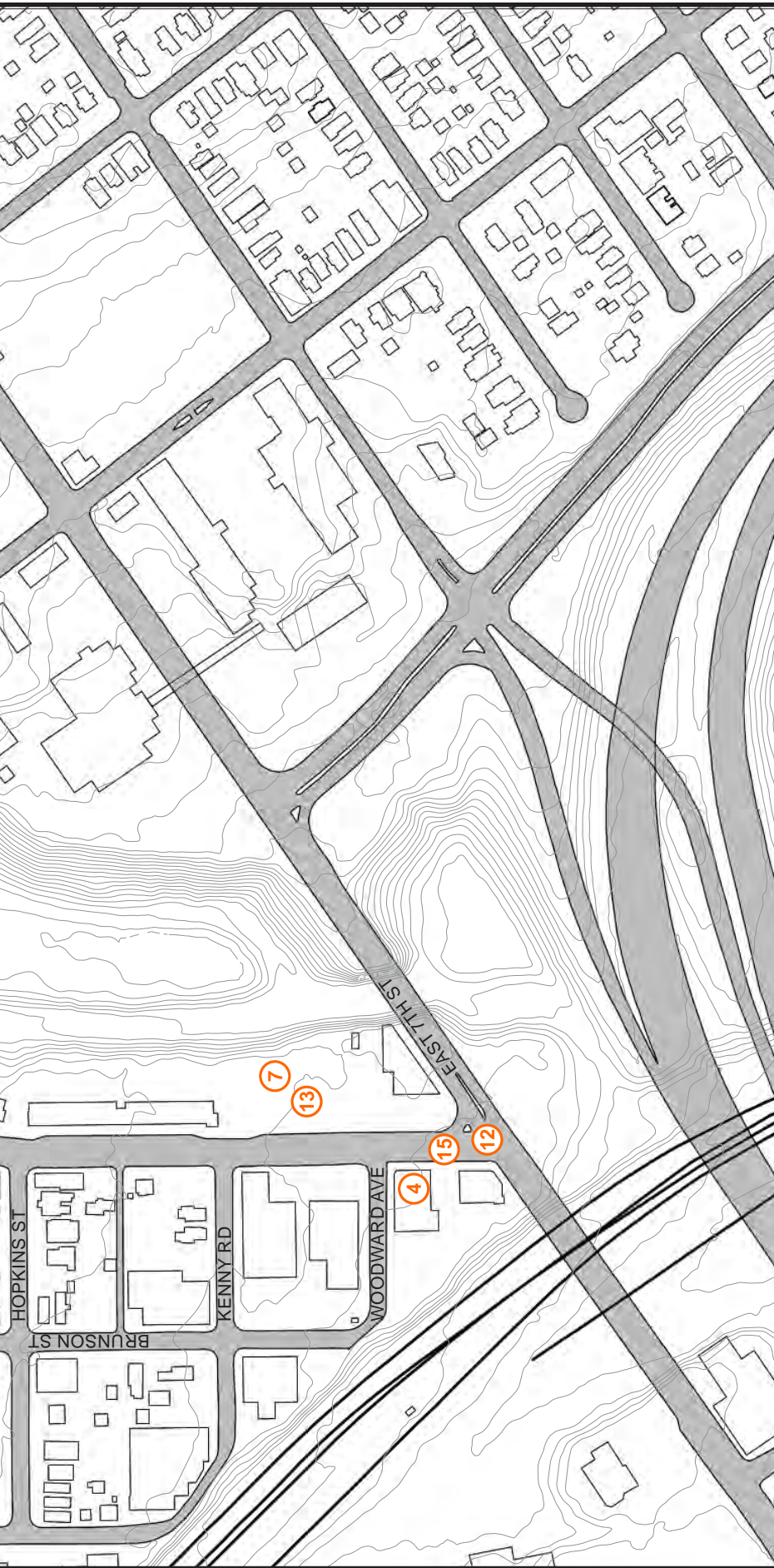




Example of workshop output







Based on the workshop, the community developed a set of key strategic enhancements they would like to implement on Payne Avenue. This map shows the placement of those enhancements along Payne Avenue.

1. Develop gas station site
2. Increase parking for La Palma
3. Increase parking for Morelli's
4. Increase parking for Minnesota Music Cafe
5. Improve access/visibility of Swede Hollow entrance - City of Saint Paul  
Parks Interpretive Signage Standard

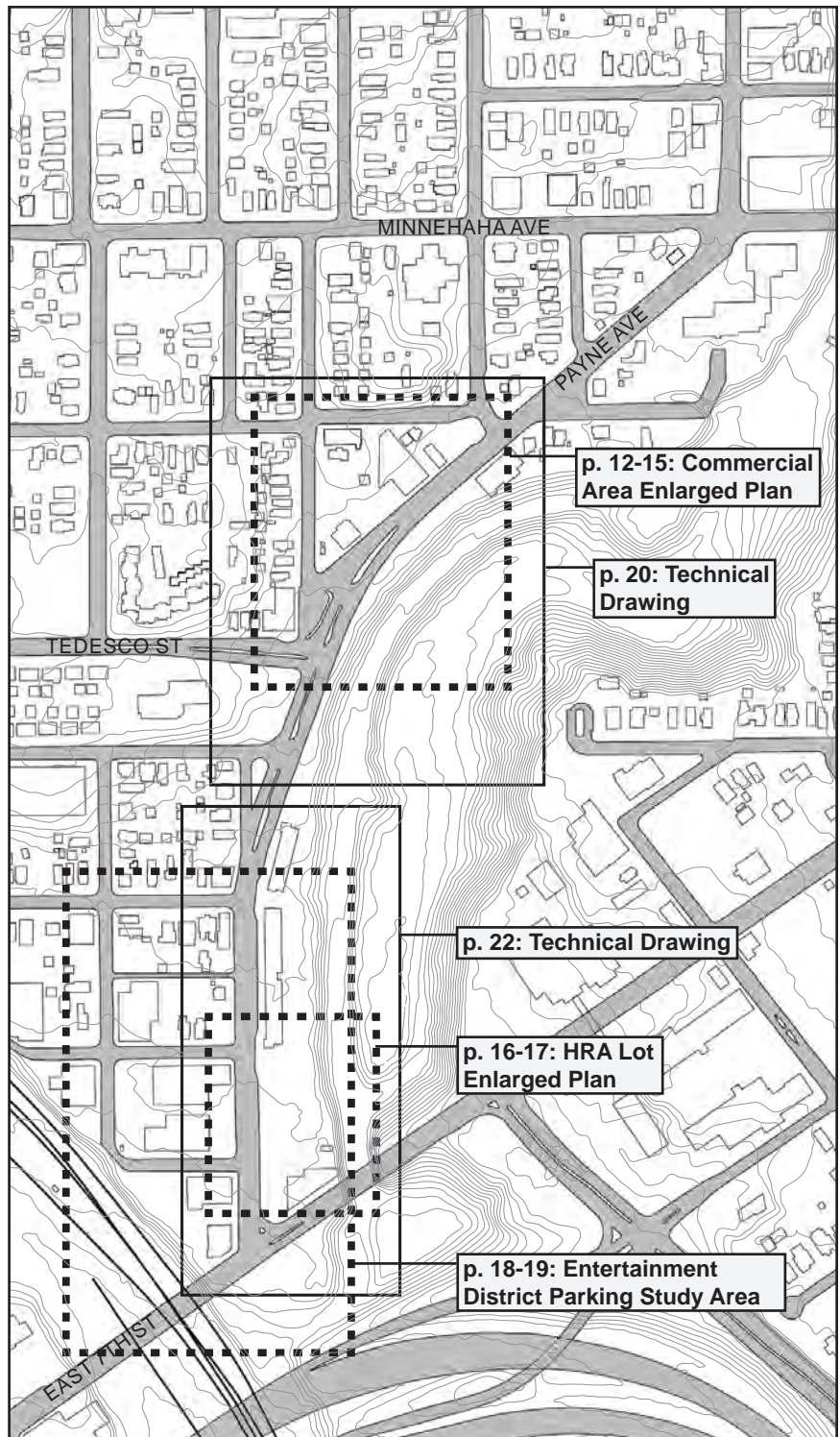
6. Enhance green space across from La Palma
7. Improve visual & physical access to Swede Hollow
8. Better utilization of Labor Plaza open space
9. Improve appearance of properties
10. Add more trash & recycling bins
11. Add lighting improvements; more pedestrian lighting in a consistent style
12. Create gateway at East 7th Street
13. Develop HRA parcel
14. Remove medians - they are hard on delivery trucks and snow plows
15. Develop neighborhood identity/branding





## Key

This map illustrates the locations of the recommendations and technical drawings.



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## Commercial Area Recommendation



*Tedesco Street intersection*



*La Palma*

### General vs Personal Interest in Public Realm Planning

In planning and designing the public realm, the general interest should prevail over personal interest. Public realm projects should provide benefits to the greatest number of users rather than just one property owner or stakeholder. Focus on individual goals can undermine the process and lead to outcomes that benefit one party at the expense of others. Because the public realm belongs, by definition, to the public, it is important to evaluate development proposals based on how well they serve all users, not just one individual or a subset of users.

The preferred development scenario shows moderate redevelopment that achieves the future development goals of the commercial business owners including Morelli's, Yarusso's and La Palma and provides improved access and development opportunities for the future. Key elements of this proposal are:

- Modifying intersection of Bedford Street and Payne Avenue for safer pedestrian and vehicle circulation.
- Reorganizing surface parking in front of Morelli's.
- Modifying Fred Street for pedestrian traffic.
- Squaring off the cross streets that intersect Payne Avenue to 90-degree corners with 20' turning radii to reduce pedestrian walking distances.
- Connecting to Swede Hollow by adding paved crosswalks and a variety of overlooks.

Throughout the development process, it will be important to provide coordination and construction phasing that allows for continuous availability of parking and vehicle access for commercial business owners along the entire length of the project site.

This option includes the following features, shown in the illustration at right:

1. Renovating La Palma to allow parking in the back.
2. Reusing the Fire Station.
3. Adding mixed-use businesses fronting Payne Avenue.
4. Adding surface parking.
5. Improving access from Bedford Street to Payne Avenue.
6. Providing paved crosswalks.
7. Adding a variety of overlooks to Swede Hollow Park.
8. Closing Fred Street to vehicle traffic to create a pedestrian walk.
9. Identifying parcels for redevelopment (brownstone/townhomes or commercial).
10. Adding 3,850 square feet for Morelli's to expand.
11. Organizing surface parking with 28 spaces.
12. Adding a community garden at the Labor Plaza building.





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## Commercial Area Alternatives



*Delivery truck on Payne Avenue*

The commercial area between Beaumont Street and Tedesco Street is home to three thriving local businesses. Walkability, parking, and business expansion are considerations of varying priority for each of the business owners. Three alternatives were developed for the area, showing three different levels of development: minimum, moderate, and modest. These alternatives were presented to the business owners, and based on their feedback a preferred redevelopment alternative was devised to provide for fine-grained infill and shared parking.

### Alternative 1: Minimum

Alternative 1 shows design interventions based on current trends in the neighborhood. These strategies fit into the existing neighborhood character. The proposals could be implemented in a relatively short time frame.

This option includes the following features:

1. New parking lot at Beaumont Street and Payne Avenue.
2. Expanded parking lot to be shared between Morelli's, Yarusso's and La Palma.
3. Demolition of two homes behind Morelli's to provide additional parking. No change to parking in front of Morelli's.
4. Community garden terraces in the Labor Plaza building's open space.





## Alternative 2: Moderate

Alternative 2 shows modest development interventions emphasizing reinvestment and infill. New development will complement the existing built environment in scale and style. Mixed use development is encouraged, providing a range of commercial, retail and residential uses. These improvements represent a moderate increase in density and would occur over many years.

This option includes the following features:

1. Infill development adjacent to La Palma.
2. Parking ramp to accommodate increased retail/commercial presence.
3. Public plaza space between Yarusso's and La Palma.
4. Crosswalks enhanced to improve visibility and safety.
5. Public green in front of Morelli's
6. Infill development next to Morelli's.
7. Reconfiguration of the intersection of Fred Street and Bedford Street to accommodate additional development.
8. Large surface parking lot for Morelli's and adjacent development.
9. Infill development east of Labor Plaza building.
10. Underground parking for Labor Plaza infill development.



## Alternative 3: Modest

Alternative 3 shows robust design interventions and significant redevelopment. This proposal involves considerable reinvestment phased over a longer time period resulting in greater density in this three-block stretch of Payne Avenue. New development will be carefully designed to fit into the existing neighborhood character. Mixed use development is encouraged providing a range of commercial, retail and residential uses.

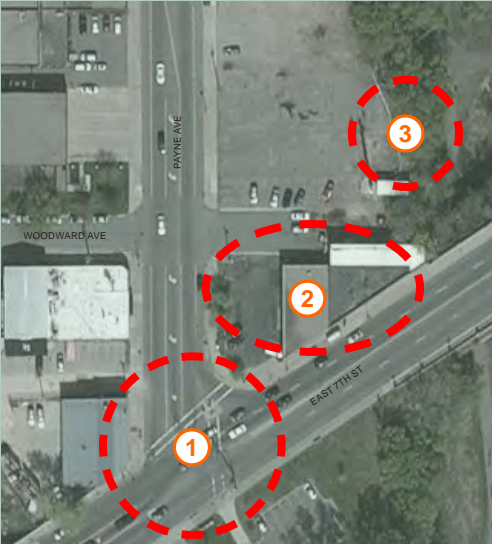
This option includes the following features:

1. Expansion of the La Palma building, incorporating structured parking.
2. Mixed use structure incorporating parking and other uses.
3. Infill development adjacent to Yarusso's.
4. A small public plaza.
5. Crosswalks enhanced to improve visibility and safety.
6. Reconfiguration of the intersection of Fred St and Bedford St to accommodate additional development.
7. Redevelopment of the Morelli's block to provide greater density of uses.
8. Parking structure for Morelli's and adjacent development.
9. Infill development east of Labor Plaza building.
10. Underground parking for Labor Plaza infill development.



## Payne & 7th Gateway Area

The intersection of Payne Avenue and East 7th Street provides three important opportunities.



1. Provide neighborhood identity and branding at entry
2. Opportunity for new development as retail, commercial, residential, or mixed-use space.
3. Potential future connection to Swede Hollow Park.

## Phase 1: Eco-Parking

The short term recommendation for the HRA parcel is to formalize the current temporary parking into an organized, striped and environmentally-friendly parking lot. An environmentally-friendly or "eco-parking" lot features parking for businesses, stormwater management, green space, and natural features. In addition, design elements create opportunities for people to learn more about stormwater management practices.

This option includes the following features:

1. 70 parking stalls.
2. Rain garden and park space with walking paths.
3. Small infiltration beds replacing some parking stalls and connected by special pavers to illustrate the flow of water over the site.
4. Open space with shade structures and benches providing overlook of Swede Hollow Park.
5. Improved crosswalks for access to businesses on west side of Payne Avenue.

## HRA Lot Recommendation

The city-owned HRA lot on Payne Avenue between Kenny Road and Woodward Avenue presents a significant development opportunity. Recommended goals for this parcel include:

- Continuing the street right-of-way (Woodward Avenue).
- Adding bump-outs and crosswalks.
- Providing parking in the short term and residential or commercial land uses in the long term.
- Providing a connection to Swede Hollow Park.

The HRA lot recommendations present a phased development on the site taking into account the needs of the community as it exists today and providing alternatives for development in the future. Each option fits the scale and character of the existing development. In addition, the proposals improve visual connections to Swede Hollow Park by adding overlooks on the southeast corner of the lot.





## Phase 2: Future Development

At present, the HRA parcel serves as parking for businesses in the Entertainment District on south Payne Avenue. A conceptual parking management recommendation for this area is discussed on pages 18-19 of this report.

### Alternative 1: Residential

Alternative 1 continues the existing pattern of brownstones along Payne Avenue. This residential use of the site fits the surroundings in scale and continues the streetscape character established by the existing brownstones.

This option includes the following features:

1. Eight (8) new brownstone units, in the same style as those to the north.
2. Walking trail to back portion of lot, which features a small open space with overlooks of Swede Hollow Park.

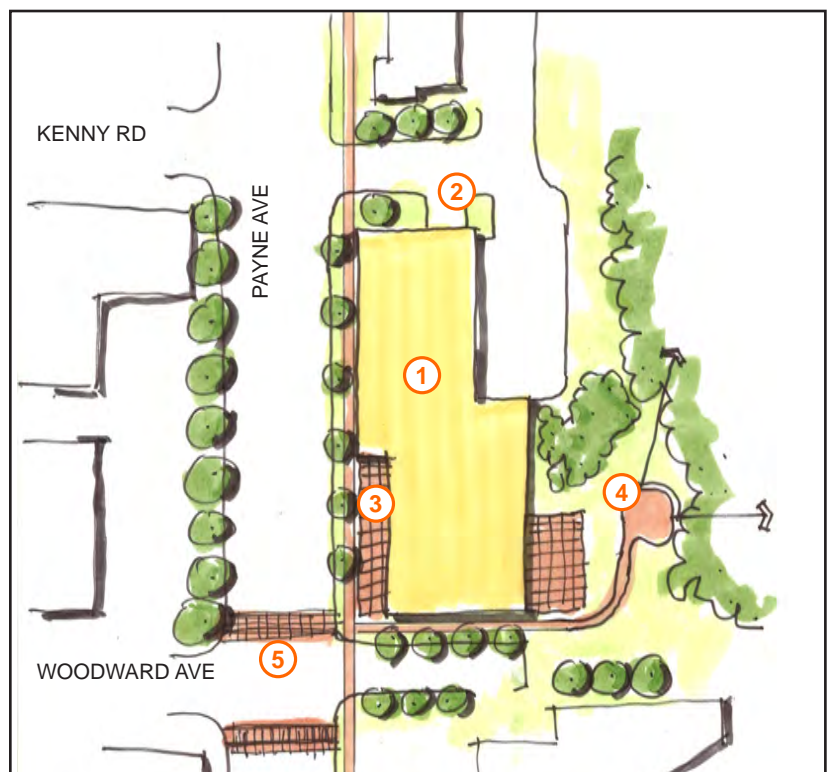


### Alternative 2: Commercial

Alternative 2 shows commercial development on the site. This space would provide room for multiple tenants as well as parking for employees and customers.

This option includes the following features:

1. New two-story commercial structure with retail and office space.
2. Approximately 30 underground parking stalls.
3. Small sidewalk plaza.
4. Patio space for outdoor dining with views of Swede Hollow, and open space with overlook.
5. Improved crosswalks for access to businesses on west side of Payne Ave.

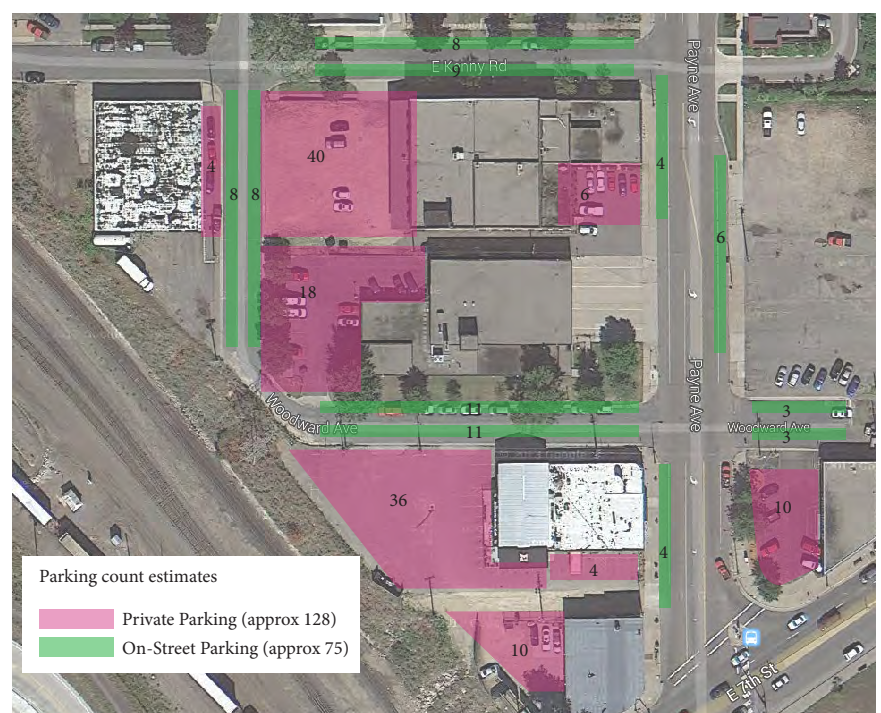


## Conceptual Parking Management Recommendation – Railroad Island Entertainment District

Parking in the Entertainment District is highly valued and sought after for nightly concert events, day time businesses and seasonal festivals. Currently, the HRA parcel at the corner of Kenny Road and Payne Avenue helps to meet this parking need by providing temporary parking spaces for the business owners of south Railroad Island. Today and in the future as development opportunities arise, parking for the entertainment district will need to be a cooperative organized effort to meet the influx of the parking capacity needs that vary throughout the day and week cycle.

Currently the parking space opportunities in this area are mostly privately owned with around 128 spaces, whereas there are around 75 public parking spaces. Maximizing the privately owned parking space availability will help meet the influx of parking need by leveraging parking space availability based on the time of day. The following recommendations will provide a path to improve parking options for the business owners of the entertainment district on South Payne Avenue.

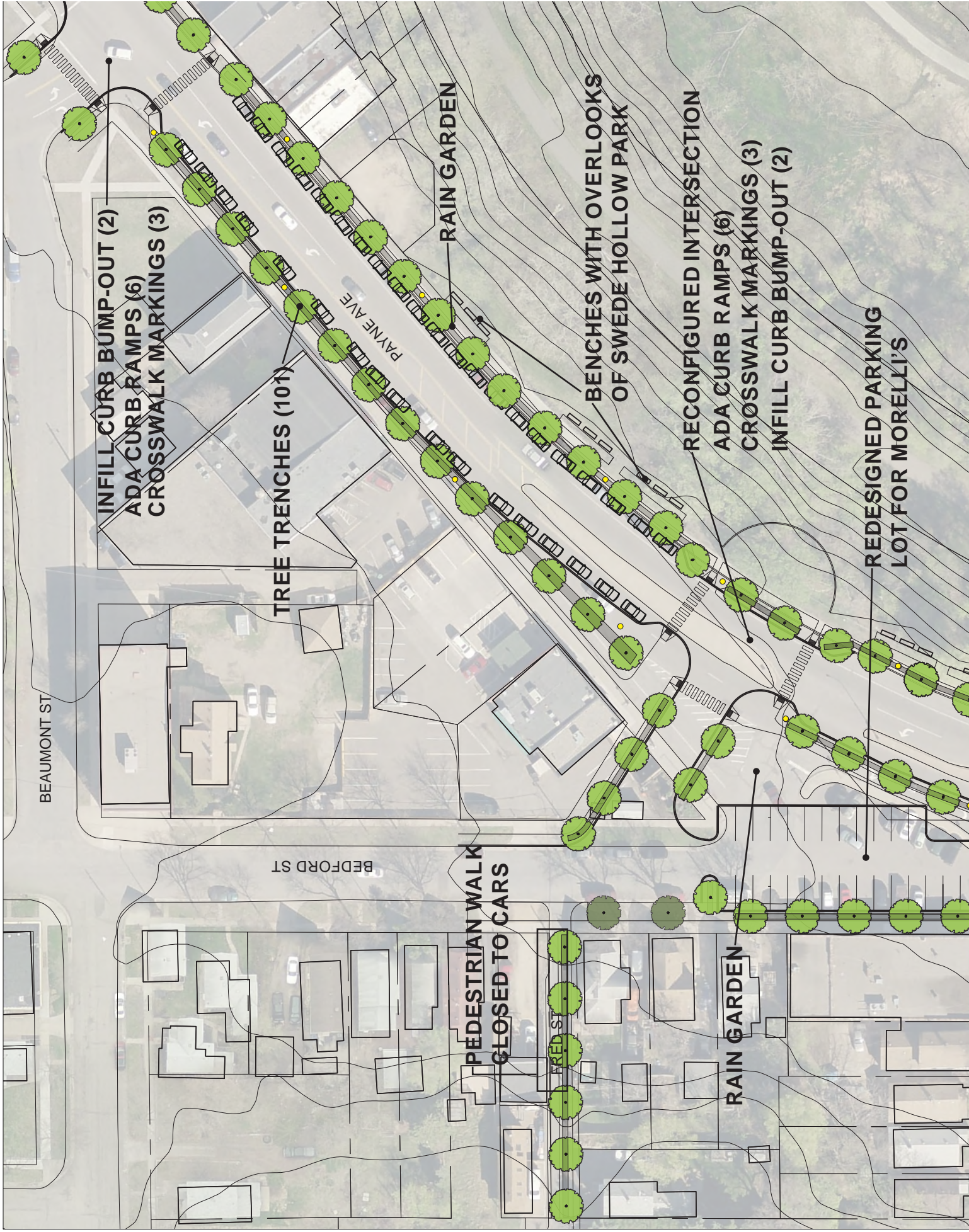
- Reorganize parking to maximize existing parking lots.
- Initiate a shared parking agreement with the City that will facilitate and document each owner's parking needs and space availability to best coordinate parking for businesses with night clients, day clients and visitors for special events. Contact Craig Blakely, City of Saint Paul to start the process.









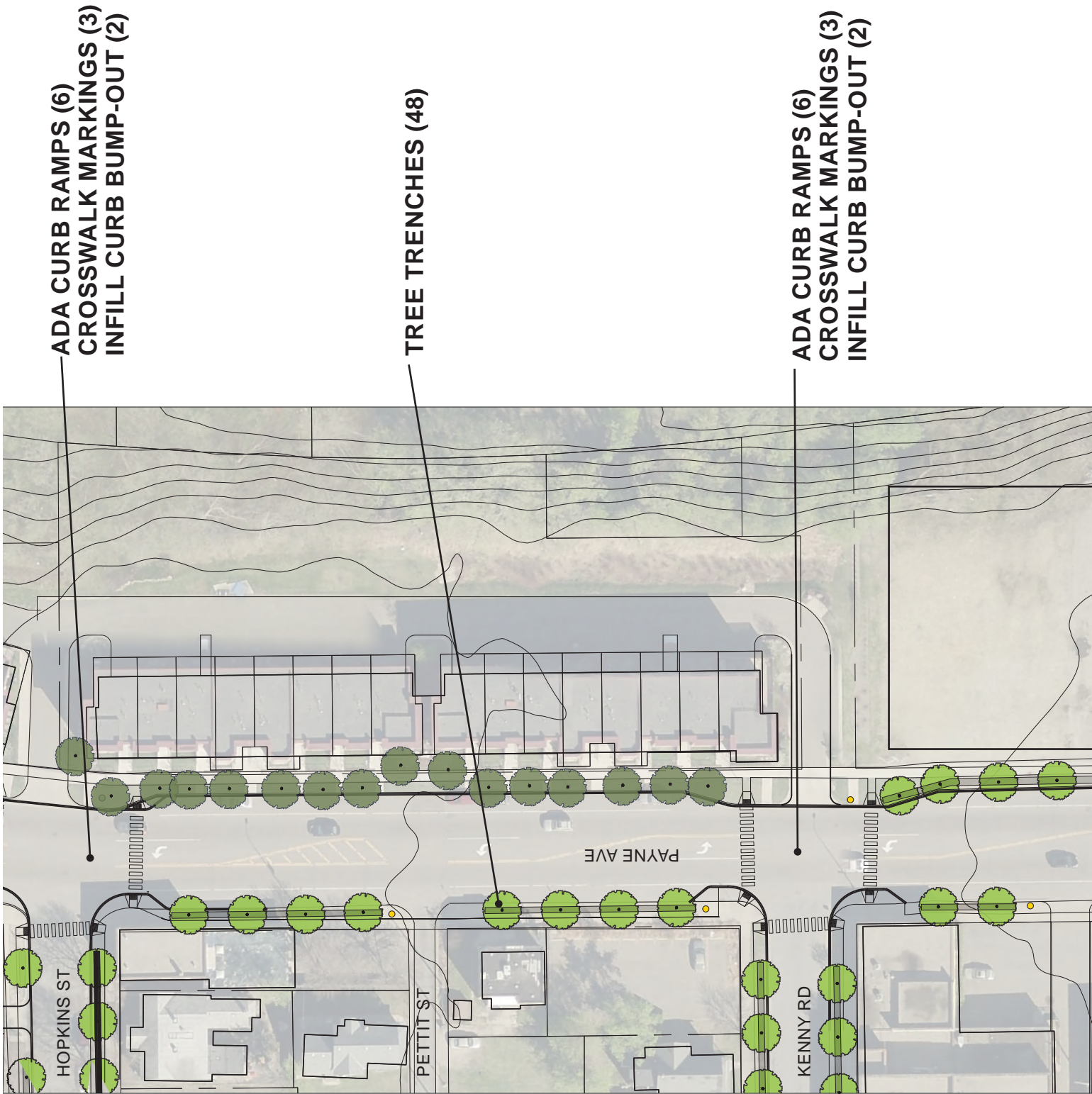




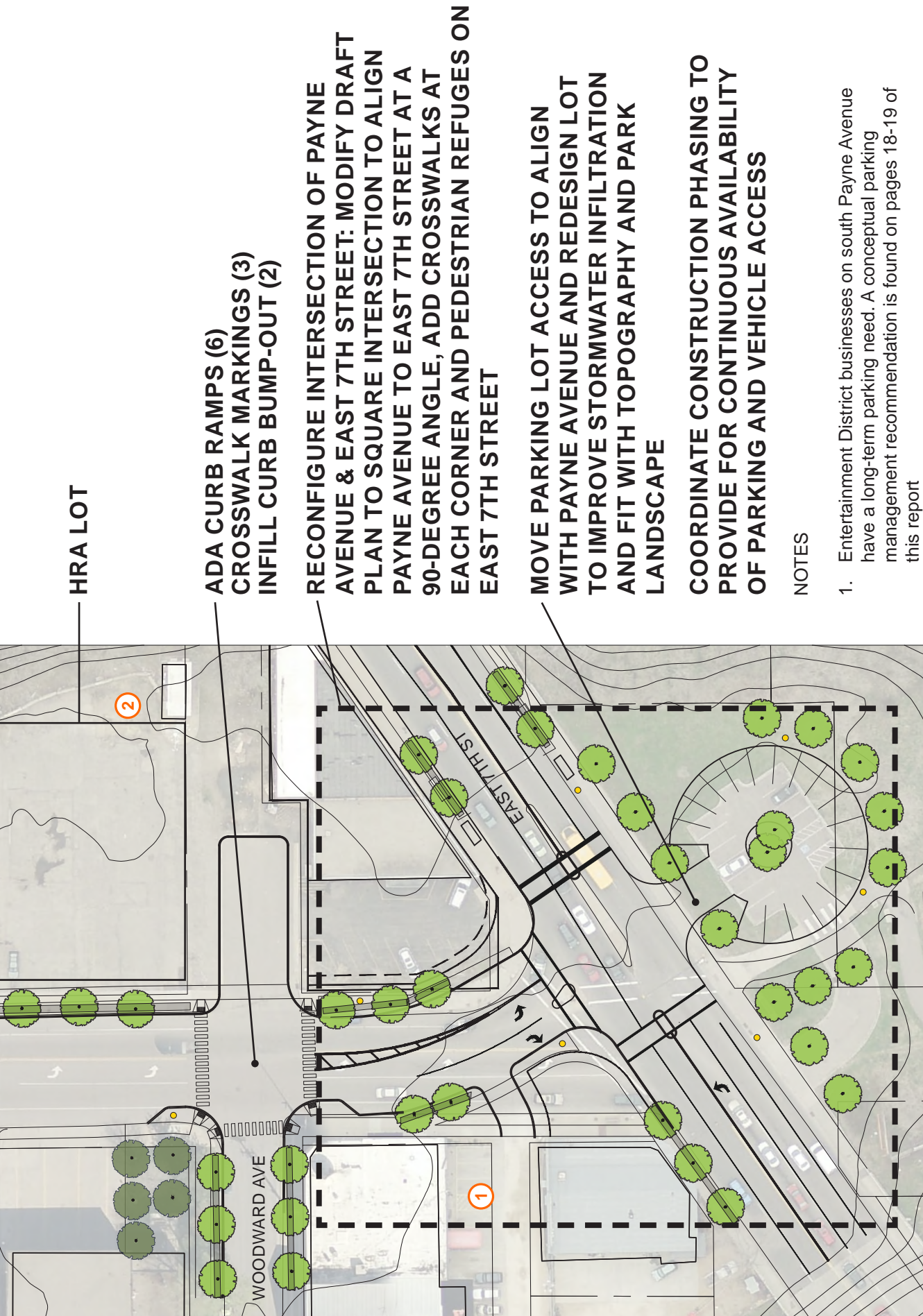


	<h1>Payne Avenue Street Improvements</h1>	<p><b>Saint Paul          Design Center</b></p>
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#### NOTES

1. Entertainment District businesses on south Payne Avenue have a long-term parking need. A conceptual parking management recommendation is found on pages 18-19 of this report
2. HRA parcel includes potential for future connection to Swede Hollow Park.

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## Next Steps

- Don Lorr to approve letter (drafted by SPDC) on behalf of the Task Force for the city/county submittal package.
- SPDC to submit letter and plan package on behalf of the Task Force to the city and county for implementation.
- Business owners to contact Craig Blakely at City of Saint Paul to provide assistance for the shared parking agreement.
- SPDC to convene a City of Saint Paul Complete Streets and Street Design Manual meeting with city/county staff and council members and staff.
- SPDC to start conversation with local art organization to leverage Cultural Star Money for renovation of the Firehouse at Beaumont and Bedford Street.
- SPDC to work with council members and staff to frame a truck size recommendation to accommodate small business owners in urban neighborhoods.

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## **Appendix:**

### **Sample Shared Parking Program**

Shared parking for businesses in the commercial area and the Entertainment District on south Payne Avenue is an effective way to optimize parking opportunities.

As part of the Central Corridor development process, the City of Saint Paul developed the Neighborhood Commercial Parking Program (NCP) to provide funding to businesses that developed shared parking solutions. A similar program could help incentivize the implementation of shared parking on Payne Avenue.

The following pages show the NCP application form. This application is for illustration only; Payne Avenue businesses are not eligible for this particular program.



# 2009-2010 Neighborhood Commercial Parking Program

## Pre-Application Form

Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Project Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Business(es) or Property Owner(s) submitting proposal: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Contact Person Completing the Application:

NAME (PLEASE TYPE/PRINT)	TITLE (IF APPLICABLE)	DATE	SIGNATURE
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Daytime Phone: ( ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Main Contact Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET	City	State	Zip Code
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Property Owner or Representative (if different):

NAME (PLEASE TYPE/PRINT)	TITLE (IF APPLICABLE)	DATE	SIGNATURE
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Loan request amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### PROPOSAL INFORMATION:

1. Please **attach** a description of your project.

2. Check the anticipated benefits that can be expected from this project. Please place a "1" next to the item you believe is the primary benefit, and a "2" next to the item you select as a secondary benefit:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Maximize utilization of existing lots	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provide foundation for infill development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Increase stormwater management
<input type="checkbox"/>	Increase ADA access	<input type="checkbox"/>	Improve personal safety	<input type="checkbox"/>	Encourage biking, walking, and transit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Improve auto circulation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Create shared parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Innovative/Demonstration practice
<input type="checkbox"/>	Improve pedestrian circulation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Improves access during LRT construction	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leverage other funding
<input type="checkbox"/>	Provides a buffer to residential uses	<input type="checkbox"/>	Add/improve landscaping and aesthetics	<input type="checkbox"/>	Benefit a parking "critical area"

3. Please provide a rough estimate of how much of the loan request will be used in each category. Examples are:

Infrastructure improvements:  
Pedestrian improvements:  
Landscaping improvements:  
Efficiency improvements:

capital improvements to existing surface parking or alley, paving, striping, driveways, walls, fences  
lighting, ramps, new/improved building entrances, walkways, accessibility  
plantings, stormwater management, brush removal  
consolidating dumpsters or recycling, removing or repairing garages, bike parking, shared parking  
signage, etc.

CATEGORY	LOAN REQUEST	OTHER FUNDS*	TOTAL
Infrastructure improvements			
Pedestrian improvements			
Landscaping improvements			
Efficiency improvements			
** Direct Project Costs (limit to 10%)			
*** Other Eligible Costs			
<b>TOTALS:</b>			

\* Not Required. \*\*Direct Project Costs (Soft Costs) - Up to 10% of funds may be used for soft costs (i.e. architect, engineering, legal and loan fees, permits, licenses.) Soft costs do not include general administrative expenses, rent, marketing, or operating costs. \*\*\*Other: Please provide a separate sheet with a **detailed explanation** and specific costs included in this category.

# 2009-2010 Neighborhood Commercial Parking Program

## Pre-Application Instructions

Thank you for your interest in the City of Saint Paul's Neighborhood Commercial Parking Program. Before you begin, please read the following:

The purpose of the Neighborhood Commercial Parking Pilot Program (NCP) is to provide forgivable loans for improvements to off-street parking along University Avenue. The program is being piloted to help mitigate the proposed loss of on-street parking due to Central Corridor Light Rail Transit. The NCP will fund a limited number of projects that improve parking management, increase the amount and utilization of commercial parking, and/or encourage business and property owners to equitably share the use and costs of off-street parking.

A successful application for these public dollars will demonstrate cost-effective projects that improve the safety, appearance, or utilization of parking, or increase the amount of off-street parking; have a commitment of human and financial resources; and conform to acceptable credit/loan standards. All business and property owners with frontage on University Avenue between Emerald Street and Rice Street in Saint Paul are eligible for this program. Priority will be given to projects within the 11 critical areas identified in the recent report, [Mitigating the Loss of Parking in the Central Corridor](#).<sup>\*</sup> Competitive forgivable loans will be available for **up to \$25,000**, although larger loans will be considered where multiple businesses and/or property owners cooperate on a shared parking agreement and submit a single application.

You are encouraged to include neighborhood partners & business partners in the development of your project proposal. City staff and translators are also available to assist with your proposal.

**All potential applicants are strongly encouraged (but not required) to submit a pre-application to City staff. Staff will provide preliminary feedback and help applicants create eligible and competitive proposals. Pre-Applications will be accepting on a rolling basis through December 2009.**

For the pre-application phase, please submit the following:

- ☐ Completed Pre-Application Form
- ☐ Map identifying the project location

Mail or Deliver to: Neighborhood Commercial Parking Program  
ATTN: Craig Blakely  
Dept of Planning and Economic Development  
25 West Fourth Street, 13<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55102-1622

- or -

Email to: [craig.blakely@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:craig.blakely@ci.stpaul.mn.us) (please put "NCCP pre-application" and the address of your proposed project in the subject line of your email)

Questions should be directed to city staff, Craig Blakely at (651)266-6697, or [craig.blakely@ci.stpaul.mn.us](mailto:craig.blakely@ci.stpaul.mn.us)

<sup>\*</sup>Report can be viewed at [www.stpaul.gov/DocumentView.aspx?DID=8599](http://www.stpaul.gov/DocumentView.aspx?DID=8599)

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**SAINT PAUL RIVERFRONT CORPORATION**

25 W 6th St, Saint Paul, MN

(651) 293-6860

[www.riverfrontcorporation.com](http://www.riverfrontcorporation.com)