



## COMMUNITY COOKOUT:

### Engagement Data from Focused Conversations

> Saturday, July 22, 2023, Lake Phalen Pavillion, St. Paul, MN

## BACKGROUND and METHODOLOGY:

The Payne-Phalen Community Cookout is the fourth in a series of five large public events. This event was created to gather residents, workers, businesses, and anyone involved in Payne-Phalen for an evening of good food, soulful music, and just hanging out with one another – by the lake on a stunning summer evening. The central feature of the event was focused conversations about the future of this part of the East Side. While we were eating dinner, our elected Community Council members led the group at their table in a game of cards that touched off focused conversations about the needs, hopes, dreams, and aspirations of community members for the future of this part of St. Paul.

Conversations at each table were based on what each particular group found especially interesting, poignant, or urgent. The prompts for those conversations came from a series of questions and ideas that came up in earlier events PPCC held in the Fall, Winter, and Spring of 2022 and 2023. (More details on those events are at <https://paynephalen.org/district-plan-2/> ). The list of questions and ideas derived from those events was published and crowd-sourced, both online and in-person at our monthly community meetings. From the crowd-sourcing yielded, we took the top 52 most relevant topics for further conversation and created a deck of playing cards, see photos below.

While playing cards and talking, each participant (and/or each conversation leader) made notes on their placemat. After dinner, we photographed all of the placemats. We collected up those that folks didn't want to take with them. We also encouraged folks to keep their placemats and notes if they wanted – as a reminder of the evening and the importance of community coming together. If anyone wanted to keep their placemat, we photographed it first so that their voice and insights could still be integrated into the update of our district plan.

What's in this document is as follows:

- A list of the crowd-sourced questions, sorted by the major topic or theme of each question.
- A transcript of each placemat, combined into a single table.
- A few photos to help readers connect the dots.

At our August 2023 Community Meeting, we will 'walk-through' this document, take feedback and comment from gathered community, and ask for our Board to document their final review and approval. Once they are satisfied, we will publish this on our website and use it to create and carry out engagement for our fifth in a series of five large public events, Uniquely East Side on September 9, 2023 along Payne Avenue.



## High level topics:

Business Development
Community Development
Environment
Housing
Land use and parks
Transit
Miscellaneous

**CROWD-SOURCED QUESTIONS for FOCUSED CONVERSATIONS**

Questions were printed on a deck of playing cards. 25 sets of cards were on hand as a springboard for community conversations at the cookout.

Key to placemat #, see transcript, below.

NUMBER	SUIT	HIGH-LEVEL TOPIC	QUESTION	
Jack	Diamonds	Business Development	How can we support local small businesses to thrive?	
Jack	Hearts	Business Development	What can the community do to attract more local business consumerism?	
Jack	Spades	Business Development	What are your favorite local businesses and why?	
King	Spades	Business Development	How can business owners share resources and empower one another?	
Queen	Diamonds	Business Development	What kinds of businesses do you wish were here?	
Queen	Hearts	Business Development	What does a business need to get started?	
Queen	Spades	Business Development	What policies could city and state government create to support locally owned businesses?	
6	Diamonds	Community	What do you want to be able to stay in Payne/Phalen?	
7	Clubs	Community	What kinds of places and activities do we need to bring diverse groups together in an meaningful way?	
7	Diamonds	Community	How can we foster a sense of connection to the community?	7
7	Hearts	Community	What kinds of things can we all do to make people who are different than us feel welcome here?	
7	Spades	Community	Tell a story of a time when you supported a neighbor/community member, or were supported by a neighbor/community member.	12
8	Clubs	Community	What makes you feel unwelcome here?	
8	Diamonds	Community	What does good neighboring look like?	7
8	Hearts	Community	What makes you feel welcome here?	12
8	Spades	Community	Tell a story of a time you were able to make change in your neighborhood. What allowed that to happen?	
2	Clubs	Environment	What concerns do you have about the environment that you wished more people cared about?	
2	Diamonds	Environment	Do you swim or fish in the bodies of water in our community, why or why not?	
3	Clubs	Environment	What do you know about environmental Justice that you wish others knew or that you could teach others?	
3	Diamonds	Environment	What is a natural resource are you most concerned about losing if it is not preserved?	12
3	Hearts	Environment	How might the community work together to prepare for the possibility of a natural disaster, severe weather, or public health crisis?	
4	Diamonds	Environment	What could be in the neighborhood that would make you and your family feel more connected to the earth?	
4	Hearts	Environment	What do we want to ask of our city, state, or government to make sure our air is safe to breathe?	
4	Spades	Environment	How can we as a community work together to make sure the air is safe to breathe?	
5	Spades	Environment	What makes it possible for you to use less gasoline? Less electricity?	12
Ace	Hearts	Housing	What do homeowners need to thrive?	
Ace	Spades	Housing	What do renters need to thrive?	7
Ace	Diamonds	Housing	Are you aware of housing support programs? Do they fill your needs?	
King	Clubs	Housing	What's your ideal housing situation? What would make that accessible?	
King	Diamonds	Housing	What kinds of housing options should be made available?	12
King	Hearts	Housing	What positive housing options can you imagine?	
Queen	Clubs	Housing	What can we do to make housing more accessible to all?	
2	Hearts	Land use and parks	Do you have access to a garden, or growing your own food?	12
2	Spades	Land use and parks	Tell me about a memory associated with a tree, garden, or natural area in Payne-Phalen? Or somewhere else you've lived previously?	
3	Spades	Land use and parks	What changes would you like to see to the natural areas in Payne-Phalen?	
Ace	Clubs	Land use and parks	How can we make outdoor space safe and welcoming	7

NUMBER	SUIT	HIGH-LEVEL TOPIC	QUESTION
4	Clubs	Transit	Are there places you wish you could access but cannot, due to your transportation? What would help you get there?
5	Clubs	Transit	What should change to make it easier to walk, bike, or run within the community?
5	Diamonds	Transit	What would make you want to use public transportation more often instead of driving?
5	Hearts	Transit	Are there places you do not feel safe using public transportation? What would make you feel safer?
6	Clubs	Transit	What transportation alternatives to you wish we had in St. Paul?
6	Hearts	Transit	How do you think transportation should change in the next 10-20 years?
6	Spades	Transit	How does transit affect your housing choice?
9	Clubs	Miscellaneous	What would you like to see from the city to support public safety?
9	Diamonds	Miscellaneous	What kinds of art would you like to see in our neighborhood?
9	Hearts	Miscellaneous	What would make Payne Phalen a more beautiful or interesting place to spend time for you, your family, and for people coming to visit?
9	Spades	Miscellaneous	What kinds of food do you wish you had easy access to in the neighborhood?
10	Clubs	Miscellaneous	Do you feel safe where you live? If not, would make you feel safe there? If so, what makes you feel safe there?
10	Diamonds	Miscellaneous	How can we reduce poverty and ensure everyone's basic needs are met?
10	Hearts	Miscellaneous	What needs to change for you and your family to feel safe here?
10	Spades	Miscellaneous	What kinds of recreational spaces do you wish were here?
Jack	Clubs	Miscellaneous	What do you hope happens for your community in ten years?

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**TRANSCRIPT from PLACEMATS, re: FOCUSED CONVERSATION**

DRAFT: For review and discussion at PPCC Community Meeting on August 22, 2023

CARD #	SUIT	High level TOPIC on card Known=Regular <i>Inferred=Italics</i>	COMMENTS and NOTES	DRAWING and/or Other non-verbal markings	PLACEMAT # (randomly assigned)	START, STOP, INCREASE, DECREASE
			Transit at night is dangerous or riding alone, maybe a security person on regularly		1	
			Community solar gardens		2	
			Partner with community energy future		2	
			Housing coops		2	
			Movie nights		3	
			Dog Park		3	
			Skate park		3	
			Book mobile/Little free Library		3	
			Horse shoes		3	
			Electric car chargers		3	
			More gatherings like today		3	
			Rental bikes		3	
			Food truck days		3	
			Small restaurants should be able to access fresh food from community gardens		4	
			[People] need \$ to fix their homes		4	
			Parts of Phalen Park remind me of greenspace in Ohio		4	
			In general this community has been good for me		4	
			Anything taking Section 8 vouchers is a place I can [call] home		4	
			I feel welcome when I know about community events and go to them		4	
			Door knocking with my mom/An old man yelling at us makes us feel unwelcome		4	
			I felt supported when I went to my mom's office at the capital		4	
			Type of business – community based hiking club		4	
			Hope for community in 10 years, increase happiness, get along more. Use physical exercise to bring community. Talk more as community		4	
			Need diversity of people in age, culture, etc. Cross generational mentorships		4	
			Favorite thing about the neighborhood is diversity		4	
			Neighborhood is open to everyone		4	
			Diversity makes you more open-minded		4	
			Do you feel safe on public transport? People were arguing in light rail and using drugs. Recommend a community based diffusion team rather than policing this behavior		4	
			More nature restoration and plants		5	
			Open community events/buildings		5	

CARD #	SUIT	High level TOPIC on card Known=Regular <i>Inferred=Italics</i>	COMMENTS and NOTES	DRAWING and/or Other non-verbal markings	PLACEMENT # (randomly assigned)	START, STOP, INCREASE, DECREASE
			Outdoor community infrastructure		5	
			Social opportunities for all ages		5	
			Tech opportunities; video game league; coding camps		5	
			More community gardens		6	
			People don't understand recycling; too much mixing of trash and recycling		6	
			Safety feels like a bigger issue now after living in Payne-Phalen 34 years		6	
A	Clubs		Lynette's voice is our future! AMAZING	Shooting star on the plate	7	
			Space and welcome; lighting, improve house resurfacing roads and stream, having events in area		7	
A	Hearts and Spades		Housing and renters: Stabilize the market, slow the rate increase		7	
2	Spades		Memory space: Associated with green beautification and Payne, biking trails, using water, performing at amphitheater		7	
2	Hearts		Yes: Access to garden, growing food		7	
2	Clubs		It is getting scary (i.e air quality)		7	
2	Diamonds		Fishing, swimming, East Side YMCA		7	
			Accessible public space (libraries, lake, community centers)		8	
			Need police form the neighborhood,		8	
			Keep nature, bike trails, Swede Hollow		8	
			Communications (i.e. Community newsletter)		8	
			Upkeep of sidewalks, trees, (people can walk safely)		8	
			Reduce Homelessness (i.e. by Metro State , Maryland, and 35E)		8	
			More housing stability (more families, fewer absentee renters)		8	
			Knowing local resources (i.e. via Facebook, knowing neighbors)		8	
			Property crime has been troubling and a barrier to long term safety (theft, violence, bad drinking)		8	
			Ice rink (Like Maple Grove's)		9	
			Less pollution		9	
			Less police		9	
			More native landscapes		9	
			Farmer's markets		9	
			<u>What do we need to bring diverse groups together in a meaningful way?</u>		9	
			• Outdoor umbrellas/infrastructure (specifically at library/rec. center)		9	

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More community events</li> <li>• More young – old events especially for teens (video games, movies, etc.)</li> <li>• Opportunities to express themselves</li> <li>• Skills building opportunities</li> <li>• multilingualism</li> <li>• Community kitchen</li> <li>• Large scale community art</li> <li>• Neighborhood art (collaborative experience)</li> </ul>		9	
			What kind of housing options should be made available?		9	
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable</li> <li>• Geothermal/affordable energy</li> <li>• Cluster/tiny homes</li> <li>• Community solar garden (not city-owned or privately owned)</li> <li>• Less rental houses, focus on ownership</li> </ul>		9	
			More celebration of green spaces		10	
			Learning to enjoy our outdoor spaces in		10	
			Minneapolis for guidance		10	
			Concerts at Phalen		10	
			Renters need affordable rent!		11	
			More green space! Parks with slides!		11	
			74-84		12	
7	spades		HAAP helps community, Hmong elementary, giving bags of food to students		12	
7	spades		Helping neighbors shovel entire street		12	
King	Diamonds		Family housing		12	
King	Diamonds		Neighborhood housing		12	
King	Diamonds		Affordable housing		12	
King	Diamonds		Subsidized. Socialist		12	
King	Diamonds		No golf course and 3M stuff		12	
King	Diamonds		No ground poisoning		12	
King	Diamonds		Housing for homeless		12	
8	Hearts		Friendliness, atmosphere, environment, equality		12	
8	Hearts		History of the East Side		12	
8	Hearts		More people should care about the world and the people in it and people who are different from them		12	
8	Hearts		Everything (unreadable) is connected		12	

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8	Hearts		Less division in our country		12	
8	Hearts		More community but off social media, trying to grow		12	
8	Hearts		Change the learning, not the people		12	
3	Diamonds		The Earth, Water, soil, air. Icebergs, the Earth is our mother and everything should return to her.		12	
3	Diamonds		Racial diversity and ethnic diversity,		12	
3	Diamonds		Complaining about it isn't changing it		12	
3	Diamonds		Make community. Animals are important. Don't stop trying to make community.		12	
			(for bike lanes)	Something besides North South	13	
				Jessamine and Earl street signs	13	
			Everything composted		13	
			No jerks		13	
			Light manufacturing returning		13	
			Tree replacement for ash		13	
			Bike lanes, trails everywhere: Payne, for sure Larpenteur, <u>Arkwright</u> , Case		13	
			Having the Karen/general community know more about recycling and waste removal		14	
			Have a place (container) for recycling softy plastics		14	
			Transportation:		14	
			• Community routes for people need more languages (i.e. Karen)		14	
			• Long waits for MetroMobility		14	
			• Bus fares go up darting commute		14	
			• Why don't we have flat rates		14	
			• Need flyers explaining route times		14	
			For disposal of certain things (oil, batteries) we need flyers in multiple languages		14	
			Gardening in the community		14	
			More reliable and accessible transportation		15	
			More IBWs and (unreadable)		15	
			More busses and PT trans(portation) reduces traffic		15	
			Weatherization resources and home improvment		15	
			(unreadable) Knowing each other and helping		15	
			(unreadable) MN Social Security net		15	
			Co-ops		15	
			Affordable, stable, quality housing		15	
			Farmer's Market		15	



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			How can we make outoddor space feel (unreadable)/inviting		16	
			Keep it clean		16	
			Increase lighting at night		16	
			Improve trails		16	

**ARTSHARES** from the day will be posted on our website soon!

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**CREDIT DUE:** Partners, Allies, and Talent:

- HOURLCAR/Evie
- Wonderlust Productions
- Minnesota Interpreters and Translators (MINT)
- St. Paul Parks and Recreation Department
- Suzanne Casler, Kerrie Samayoa, and Studio Moss
- DJ Riverbeats in collaboration with Form Entertainment
- Kristen Howatt and her magical ice cream truck
- Stephen Lang, Photographer
- Hmong American Partnership (HAP)
- Patricia Enstad
- Ricky Keeton
- Ibrahim and Melleck Dogan
- "Violet"

