

# 1. Introduction

## Lowertown Interpretive Plan

A red square logo with the white text "RRTL" inside.

September 28, 2017

Ramsey County Historical Society  
323 Landmark Center  
75 West 5th Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55102

Dear Mr. Roberts,

Enclosed is the Lowertown Interpretive Plan (LIP) that we have been asked to prepare. During the course of our discussions, meetings, tours and reviews we have discovered a broad and sincere interest in Lowertown, its history and its future.

This planning document focuses on two elements; one, the collection and consolidation of all data and information into a single location for the first time; and two, conceptual ideas for how this information can be easily accessed by anyone in an interesting yet economical manner.

Our discussions clearly left the impression that there are many varying stories that need to be collected and vantage points of interest. Residents, artists, building owners, the Capitol River Council and City officials have had initial opportunities for contributions. There are many details to resolve, but this plan will serve as a spring board to orchestrate concentrated efforts to collect and share Lowertown's history.

We look forward to the possibilities.

Thank you so much for the opportunity to work with you and your RCHS staff.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig Rafferty".

Craig Rafferty, FAIA

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*Farmers Market*



*Union Depot*



*Mears Park*

### Project Participants

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Jeanette Sobania  
Rachel Wacker

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## Lowertown Interpretive Plan

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan Background



The Lowertown Interpretive Plan was conceived as an opportunity to bridge the gap between residents and organizations interested in the history of Lowertown. This includes several decades of master plans and studies that stopped short of identifying actionable projects. The Plan is not meant to be proscriptive or proprietary, but rather an open-source, living collection of community identified priorities and proposed approaches that can be implemented and expanded upon for the next decade. The plan document and extensive collection of background materials will be maintained by the Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) in the Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center and via its website, [www.rchs.com](http://www.rchs.com). It is expected that the plan will be updated regularly as new projects are pursued and new data is generated by individuals and organizations working in Lowertown.

The Ramsey County Historical Society extends its thanks to all the project participants and to the Institute for Museum & Library Services for financially supporting this study.

RCHS worked in collaboration with a Technical Advisory Group including, but not limited to representatives of Union Depot, Capital River Council, Ramsey County, Ramsey County Historical Society, City of Saint Paul, and the Saint Paul Historic Preservation Commission. The project included gathering over 250 source documents (available at [www.rchs.com](http://www.rchs.com)) several meetings of a Technical Advisory Group, citizen-led walking tours, several focus groups, and prototyping several interpretive options.

Responding to the Greater Lowertown Master Plan developed in 2010, and paying tribute to the decades-long revitalization work by community members, the plan will lay the foundation for future historic interpretation projects. The plan will be published and widely distributed, and will also be available online. During the next ten years, this interpretive plan will guide the implementation of interpretation projects in Lowertown, Saint Paul.

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan Goals

How can historical information and data be organized and easily accessed?

The intent behind The Lowertown Interpretive Plan (LIP) is to address community needs expressed to the Ramsey County Historical Society, specifically that more history be made available to the public in this rapidly evolving neighborhood.

Early assessments by RCHS identified several key challenges – there were a number of disconnected projects, some active, some dormant, all pursuing related goals, but with varying degrees of success. Also, there have been a large number of studies, master plans, and policy documents developed over the past four decades and these were widely scattered – with no single repository it was

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### Lowertown Interpretive Plan Goals

<p>What planning decisions have created Lowertown?</p>	<p>difficult for individuals and organizations to understand work that had been previously completed or proposed. A central repository of past and present work, permanently maintained by RCHS, was a key outcome. Another challenge was in the nature of the previous plans. Broad themes were identified, but these did not create actionable items outside of large, very well-funded projects. With this in mind, it was a key goal to identify interpretive approaches that not only create a enhanced history experience in Lowertown, but do so in a way that can be created by individuals or small organizations.</p> <p>Further there is the understanding that important planning efforts have carved the way to present day Lowertown. Time makes these planning documents increasingly difficult to find. Their record is important as they highlight where we have been in order to help to guide our direction forward.</p>
<p>Where can information gathered be stored?</p>	<p>History is a living, constantly moving event. There is an increasing demand for historical information. The Lowertown Interpretation Plan (LIP) is primarily aimed at creating a home base for the rapidly expanding amount of information regarding Lowertown. This home base will be Ramsey County Historical Society (RCHS) who will organize and manage the information. The LIP plan proposed here is focused on two key goals:</p>
<p><u>Goals</u> Collect and Organize</p> <p>Create access and flexibility</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. The collection and organization of materials and information pertaining to Lowertown past, present, and its future. This includes public policies, personal interviews, corporate stories, written histories, planning and design documents, and historical records. The creation of a repository for this information is an essential part of this challenge. The simplicity and ease of access to this information as well as a place for materials to be added are required goals for this repository. <b>Ramsey County Historical Society is the repository for this information in its Mary Livingston Griggs &amp; Mary Griggs Burke Research Center and via its website, <a href="http://www.rchs.com">www.rchs.com</a>.</b></li><li>2. Identify community identified and achievable options for presenting more history in Lowertown. Such options must be reasonable to maintain, fit within the guidelines that define Lowertown, meet the requirements of the Heritage Preservation Commission, and are economical to implement. Options for sharing information have many possible approaches, technology will become the primary method within the coming years.</li></ol>
	<p>The audience for this information and its access will start humbly with those interested and living or working within Lowertown and the visitors to the area. However, in many ways the motivating spirit behind the concept is the potential to spread throughout the City of St. Paul, to create an example that can be built on and refined.</p>

## 2. Process and Suggestions

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Process Sequence

The process established in order to gather as much information as possible was set up with two parallel tracks:

1. Research all sources for historical material related to plans, master plans, studies, and other published or individually produced documents on file in reliable research locations
2. Speak directly with the people in the streets, hold focus group meetings, and seek the guidance of a technical advisory group.

In the Fall of 2016, RCHS developed its first prototype for the project, “Portals” was debuted to hundreds of visitors as part of the River Balcony Prototyping Festival. The working group of designers and artists convened by the Riverfront Corporation all provided input as did public visitors. The second major activity period for the project occurred over a two month period in late summer 2017. During this period the technical advisory group met three times and six focus groups were convened. These groups identified ideas for the LIP, commented on additional prototypes, raised concerns that will need to be addressed upon any plan implementation, and identified additional stakeholders to engage in future projects. In addition, the lead consultant identified and gathered over 250 documents from previous plans, studies, archaeological investigations, and more related to Lowertown.



## 2. Process and Suggestions

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Lowertown Interpretive Process Participants



#### Ramsey County Historical Society Role



The collection and organization of materials and information pertaining to Lowertown past, present, and its future. This includes public policies, personal interviews, corporate stories, written histories, planning and design documents, and historical records.

The creation of a repository for this information is an essential part of this challenge. The simplicity and ease of access to this information as well as a place for materials to be added are required goals for this repository. Ramsey County Historical Society will become the caretaker.

**Collected data related to Lowertown shall be accessible in two locations:**

- 1. Mary Livingston Griggs & Mary Griggs Burke Research Center**  
Basement Level, Landmark Center  
75 West 5th Street  
Saint Paul, MN 55102
- 2. [www.rchs.com/lowertown](http://www.rchs.com/lowertown)**

## 2. Process and Suggestions

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Recommended Technical Considerations

The LIP study has indicated the use of smart phones and other such technology as a means of disseminating information. The following are suggestions that have been made to expand on this singular approach and to assure success:

- Simplicity is foremost; make sure that technology is not unnecessarily difficult.
- Avoid solutions that are too prohibitively expensive to be implemented.
- Make sure that recommendations can begin to be implemented immediately with minimal difficulty.
- Beware of technology as it is changing very rapidly.
- Suggestions of access thru QR code technology should not be the only means, allow for direct access as well thru URL addresses.
- Consider Bluetooth technology that connects when the user and smart phone are in the immediate vicinity.
- Make sure the information and supporting materials that are collected are stored properly.
- Clearly define who will be responsible for the storage and the continual updating.
- Recognize that this is a historic technology transition period and that multiple forms for information are necessary at this time and therefore collateral materials should include both print and digital forms.
- Should be replicated in other neighborhoods.
- Must be compliant with City code as well as HPC and SHPO standards/guidelines.
- When possible, should take advantage of existing infrastructure and assist in general wayfinding.
- Avoid sidewalk markings (e.g. Boston's Revolutionary Trail) as weather conditions will obscure these for a substantial part of the year.
- Ensuring all technologies and materials are ADA compliant.
- Determine how alternative languages will be accomplished.

## 2. Process and Suggestions

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Suggested Important Connections

Through the LIP series of Focus Group and Technical Advisory Group discussions there were multiple suggestions of important as well as courteous connections with individuals and groups that should be made. The following is a list of such connections. Some of which were actualized during the study and others to be explored in the future. Please note that as connectivity with other neighborhoods is an important consideration, some of these lay outside the boundary of Lowertown.

- Saint Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development
- Saint Paul Public Works
- Saint Paul Parks and Recreation
- Public Arts St Paul
- Saint Paul Arts Collective
- Lowertown Arts
- Visit St Paul
- Lowertown Entertainment District
- Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC)
- Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation (LRC) Archives
- Weiming Lu, LRC Planner
- Minnesota Museum of American Art
- Alley Up Project
- Downtown Vitality Vision
- Collaborative Working Environment (COWE)
- Extend the study to adjacent areas
- State Capitol
- Bruce Vento Nature Center
- Wakan Tipi Center
- Larry Millet author
- City Council
- Open St Paul
- Lower Phalen Creek Project (LPCP)
- Native American Studies at Metro State University
- Lower Landing Web site
- Metro Transit Corporation
- Lowertown Future Trust
- Christine Podas Larson
- Bob Close, Landscape Architect

## 2. Process and Suggestions

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Information Delivery Options

The needs for simplicity and economy have been a motivating force behind the discussions for disseminating information. The following are suggestions for ways to provide historical, human interest, geographical, and other vantage points of information. The top three options are described in more detail.

##### 1. Walking Tours with various themes

Self-guided tour collateral material for these tours should be created and accessible digitally, with print options available via Union Depot, City of St. Paul Visitor Information Desk (Landmark Center), Visit St. Paul, and Ramsey County Historical Society. These maps may be specific to a tour or combine multiple tour options, to be determined by the entity that develops them. Tour themes identified as priorities include: AIA Minnesota updated Architectural tours; City Churches; Public Art; MN State Historical Walking tours. Guided tours may be arranged through Ramsey County Historical Society and Minnesota Historical Society. It is proposed that Union Depot be the “home base”/ origination point for these tours as it is a transit and parking hub serving thousands of Lowertown visitors, has adequate public restroom facilities, large indoor spaces in the event of inclement weather, and is connected to the Skyway system.

##### 2. QR Codes/URLS added to existing signage

The prototyped QR code and URL options should be added to existing historical markers and signs as content is made available. While no hierarchy was determined with regards to priority order of existing signs, those in or adjacent to high use areas (Union Depot, Farmers Market, Mears Park, and CHS Field) are recommended. Initiator of project will need to secure formal approval from City of St. Paul Historic Preservation Commission, (prototyped options received informal approval but this is not sufficient to proceed to implementation).

##### 3. Additional signage with links to digital content

Several appropriate sign options have been identified. The initiator of the first such addition should work with the City of St. Paul HPC to identify what ancillary information should be included for wayfinding, including possible identification of nearby public restrooms. These signs should include QR codes and URLs to digital content. Priority for new signs should be for Custom House and Union Depot. The initiator of this project will need to work with the HPC for design approval and should be cognizant of setting a high standard for other signage.

- River travel similar to Chicago Architectural River Tour.
- Garden Tours.
- River landing focus.
- Visitor center focused information.
- Public Information and rest rooms locations.
- City wide introduction as drop down menu choice.
- Alley Tours.
- Holographic projections in the depot waiting area simulating 1930's activity.
- There are many films related to Lowertown that should be available.
- Establish a more effective Lowertown Wikipedia page.
- Street walks with Artists.
- Lowertown Art Crawl.
- Establish a menu of choices that are available at each location in pop up style.
- Brewery Tour.
- Information available at Saints game.
- Updated Historic Plaques.
- Proposed River Balcony along bluff.
- Activate Galtier Plaza Movie House for regional story showings.
- Sign Options to Consider
  - Wrigley Field Chicago Information Kiosk
  - Heritage Trail markers in Minneapolis
  - Information Map near W. A. Frost restaurant
- Minnesota State Capitol Grounds information App system.



## 2. Process and Suggestions

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Areas of Interest

During the course of this study it became very clear that there is universal consensus that the heart of Lowertown is Mears Park and the Farmers Market/ CHS Field. There is also a strong sense that the Union Depot is fast becoming a third equal part of Lowertown's focal point. The fourth zone is important for some and a forgotten zone for others, the Lower Landing at the river. The following points were made regarding areas of interest, importance, and potential:

1. Mears Park
2. Lowertown Alleys
3. Bike trails
4. River front and future activities
5. Gateway from the River
6. Union Depot interior
7. Bruce Vento Nature Center
8. Minnesota Museum of American Art
9. Black Dog Café is a key meeting place.
10. Wacouta Commons
11. First Baptist Church
12. Views of the River
13. Union Depot Plaza
14. Extended river front area
15. Proposed Riverwalk along bluff
16. Depot Park area at track upper level
17. Saints Ball Park and surrounding area
18. Farmers Market
  - All open spaces in the Lowertown area should be catalogued.
  - Gardens
  - Public Information access points
  - Locations for Guest (visitor) services
  - A safe walking path around the area.
  - Create a similar art in the alleys initiative as done in
  - Public Art Park is needed.
  - Creation of a City Visitor Center



## 2. Process and Suggestions

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Stories

One of the most important aspects of the LIP study is identifying stories that should be told, recorded, found, and shared. This list is simply a starter identifying the thoughts that members of the TAG and Focus Groups suggested during the study reviews and discussions:

##### 1. 1930s Union Depot in its Prime

This Icon is more than a transit hub, its walls have witnessed the passage of millions of human lives over its existence. During its busiest years it was used by over 1,000 people every day and was a part of the St. Paul experience for virtually all out of town visitors. Exploring the remarkable stories of the Red Caps, veterans and soldiers, the notable and less notable citizens of the Sainly City, and the countless business interests that shaped not only this town but many communities in the great Northwest Territory of the United States.

##### 2. Custom House

At one time serving patrons from Saint Paul to Seattle, the former US Post Office and Custom House, after years of vacancy, has recently undergone a transformation. Once again a vital part of Saint Paul, Custom House is a classic case of adaptive reuse done right. Ripe for interpretation, the history and recent restoration of this landmark is well documented in an award-winning book written by the building's owner.

##### 3. Lowertown Art Crawl – Pioneering Art Activation in a Historic Neighborhood

One of the signature events of Lowertown is the Art Crawl, and it was one of the first of its kind in the nation. For decades it has been intrepid artists keeping Lowertown moving forward – their success has been one of the pillars on which other successful investments have been built. Telling the story of the Art Crawl and its impact as first a lifeline for a failing neighborhood to the catalyst for being named the “Hippest Neighborhood in America”, now is the time to capture this story before gentrification decimates the long-time artist residents’ population that made the Art Crawl a success.

##### 4. Cyber Village

One of many ideas ahead of its time and planned for Lowertown, the story of the proposed “Cyber Village” is one in a series of stories that tell of complicated plans, false starts, and the eventual success of business investments in Lowertown. This story should be part of a series that explores the mercantile and industrial history of the neighborhood – from its earliest use as home to warehouses and transportation oriented businesses through its peaks and valleys as industries changed and their evolution to today’s mix of small businesses, entertainment venues, restaurants, and housing. This is a piece of a bigger story punctuated by colorful failures and dynamic successes.

##### 5. Humans of Lowertown – the personal stories of Lowertown residents and artists.

History is the story of people – and the people that live in Lowertown are worth preserving and sharing. As gentrification threatens to push out the artists that made this a desirable place to live, how is the community adapting? The story of the artists and residents – past and present – is as fascinating as it is relevant as the City grapples with rapid change in the neighborhood.

- Beneath the Streets, historical as well as city services.
- History of River Landing.
- Barge Traffic History.
- Original Depot Historic Renovation in 1983.
- Capture stories and the voices of the past.
- James J. Hill warehouse history.
- Baptist Hill story.
- Farmers Market evolution and location in Lowertown.
- Jax Building success.
- Guinness Book of Records world’s largest Lite Brite artwork.
- Master Framers Fire (260 4th Street).
- Lowertown Alleys.
- Community gardens.
- Music in the park story.
- Winter trail at the Depot.
- Historic brick wall ads.
- Train rides from Duluth and Rochester.
- Design history of current Mears Park.
- Lower landing Story.
- Glacial Melting Story.
- History of Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation.
- Rayette Corporation story including Aqua Net Hair Spray.
- Story of President Reagan bestowing the Presidential Design Award to Lowertown planning and design teams.
- Focused interview with Weiming Lu.
- Assembly of all information in convenient location.
- Excerpts from Weiming Lu’s Tao of Urban Rejuvenation.
- Lowertown as a residential artist community
- McKnight Foundation funding.

## 2. Process and Suggestions

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Concerns

During the course of the reviews, discussions, and the walking tours there were several comments made regarding areas of concern that individuals felt should be addressed by City Planning, the building owners, the Public Works, City Parks and Recreation, and others. These generally pointed out difficulties, safety issues, or needed improvements for those living and working in Lowertown :

- Public Restrooms are impossible to find for visitors
- Can information related to events, restaurants, services skyway hours etc be more easily accessed for visitors and residents out waking.
- Needs safer walking access to areas like Bruce Vento Nature Center
- The Depot should have more activity to be successful
- The Depot has many activities scheduled but they are often after hours and the residents are not aware of these activities.
- The Farmers Market needs a significant upgrade in signage to identify it and the hours.
- Can more Farmers Market days be extended into the winter?
- Will the City Visitor Center locate in the Union Depot?
- The second train from Chicago and its implications
- Can there be Music in the Park extended into main spaces like the Depot during the winter?
- How can Lowertown artists be incorporated into Lowertown planning?
- Skyways are difficult to get to from the street.
- Skyway hours are difficult at times for residents.
- Access out of the Skyway is difficult at times.
- Galtier Plaza is under utilized.
- Galtier Plaza needs a welcoming entry visible from Mears Park.
- Fourth Street across from the depot is safer to walk because the Green Line trains have discouraged cars.
- Parking is needed and is slowly being depleted.

To the extent that these concerns can be addressed or mitigated with new history projects, every effort should be made to do so. (e.g. including direction and distance to nearest public restroom on informational signs)

#### Street Tours

In conjunction with the Saint Paul District 17, Capital River Council (CRC) recommendations, street tours were organized in order to understand the key Lowertown locations, those perceived to be the heart of Lowertown. Two tours were orchestrated in order to gain differing vantage points. Each tour lasted for two hours and were primarily dictated by the participants. The sequence started near the Farmers Market and thus the priorities are not in hierarchical order as seen below.

##### MORNING TOUR

Farmers Market  
Union Depot  
Mears Park  
Wacouta Commons

##### EVENING TOUR

Farmers Market  
Lowertown Alleys  
Riverfront  
Union Depot  
Mears Park

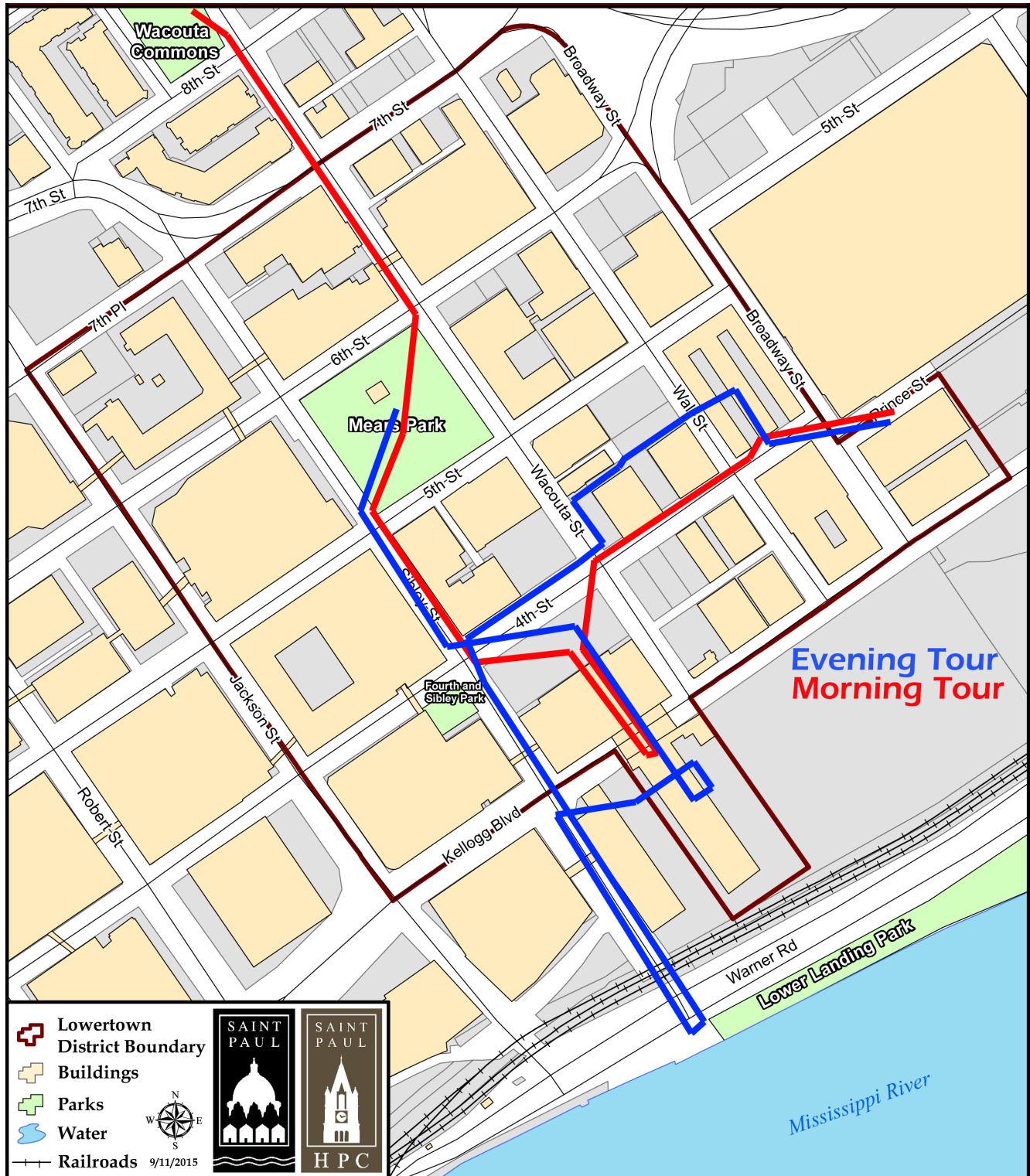
The map illustrated on the following page demonstrates the routes covered by the two tours. During these discussions the comments collected were incorporated into the preceding pages under headings that reflect the nature of the comment. The routes of these tours, determined through group consensus, offer important insight into potential preset Lowertown tours.



## 2. Process and Suggestions

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Street Tours



## 3. Concepts

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### How can information be made easily available?

Options for creating interest and easy access to information are essential for the Lowertown Interpretive Plan. Suggestions ranged from using tried and true printed materials (maps, guides, signs) to cutting edge technology (immersive virtual reality experiences). Connections with other ongoing activities such as the Jazz Festival and Music in Mears were also suggested, and logically so- the many ongoing activities in Lowertown all have audiences that can be reached via their organizers.

Expanding the use of technology is a top priority- ease of access for most individuals coupled with the capacity to provide access to a great depth of information if the user desires, as well as accessibility from remote locations all make this an obvious choice. A web-based platform hosted by RCHS is a logical way to archive digital content developed for Lowertown and can include all manner of content from text to video to virtual reality experiences should they be developed. Access to this content can be managed in a wide variety of ways. Current thinking is that QR codes will be integrated in physical signage, providing access to the central content database. This approach can be implemented easily in existing or new locations. This premise has been received favorably, is economical, and is generally understandable for users.

Caution was raised that not everyone uses a smart phone, a necessary component to any scannable link technology. For that reason, it would be ideal that some content be presented via building plaques. There was general agreement that the design of the existing historical building plaques is appropriately iconic, having an understood identity. However, while they identify a building as historic, they are static, contain minimal information, and do not direct the viewer to where more information can be found. New interpretive signage created in the future should include more data and clearly identify where to seek out additional information.

More access to historical material is needed to satisfy a rapidly increasing level of interest. The information gathered and described in section four, Research, provides overwhelming evidence of the amount of material available. It is also evident through this planning effort that self-guided tours (digital or printed maps) have real potential for delivering information while minimizing overhead expenses that are incurred through guided tours. Supporting either options requires content and a method of effective delivery.

The following pages outline four concepts that sparked interest, technology potential, economic opportunity, and possible implementation methods.

- 1. Concept One - Portals**

A glimpse into the past and present.

- 2. Concept Two - QR Code Historic Plaques**

Web-enhanced signage provides access to additional information.

- 3. Concept Three - Street Information Kiosks**

Obvious access points to information, including architecture, human interest stories, events, amenities, and more.

- 4. Concept Four - Historic Light Trail**

A walking trail featuring historic locales and information kiosks, identified and defined by unique lighting.

## 3. Concepts

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Concept One - Portals

Remember as a child choosing your favorite reel to take you to new places through your View-master® or inserting a quarter into a tower viewer to see the magnified animals at the zoo or cityscapes from the tops of iconic buildings. Let's take people back in time in much the same way as they visit Lowertown.

By placing Portals from the vantage point of the historic photographs, the experience is unique not only to Saint Paul but to the exact spot where a person is standing. This uniquely site-specific experience can incorporate visual and audio elements to explore history of an area in the level of detail desired by the viewer (the potential scope of material accessible is limited only by available content, not the physical limitations of the viewer/Portal). Because these Portals use digital imaging, it is possible to also present conceptual drawings of future development near the Portals, including plans for the proposed River Balcony project that runs the length of Lowertown on the Mississippi River.

Four different options for implementation have been identified, and number 2 was prototyped as part of the River Balcony Prototyping Festival in late 2016.

##### 1. A Peek into the Past Portal

A viewer that works like a coin operated tower viewer – easy and intuitive to understand by the public, the infrastructure for acquiring and maintaining these are readily available.

##### 2. Surprise Portal

At least two feet wide by three feet tall, these large metal frames will house a digital screen, camera, media player, and motion sensor. The strategically placed frames will highlight specific views, and will rotate so the user can have multiple experiences in one station. The camera will show a digital image of the view at the moment, disguising the true nature of the Portal at a distance. As a potential user nears the Portal, a historical image will replace the current day image, and a simple user interface will allow the user to change views to different times and by spinning the frame, different views will become visible. Making this Portal web/wifi-enabled allows even greater flexibility regarding the presentation of content.

##### 3. City View Portal

Visitors to Lowertown will be adjacent or inside buildings during their visit. A motion-activated projection system will detect the presence of visitors and project on walls or glass scrims (if no suitable wall is available) very large historic images looking into Saint Paul from the vantage point of the users. These oversize/life-size projections will provide dramatically different perspectives of the city for users and will run the gamut from the mid-19th century to the early 21st century.

##### 4. Personal Portals

All the content for the above portals, as well as additional content that covers as much of Saint Paul as desired, will be made available via Timera, Pivot, or successor apps that allow individual smartphones to provide a similar, though less immersive, experience. Users would not be limited to Lowertown. By using apps that are widely available and free to the user, the audience of users will be significantly enhanced.

### 3. Concepts

## Lowertown Interpretive Plan

### Concept One - Portals Demonstration

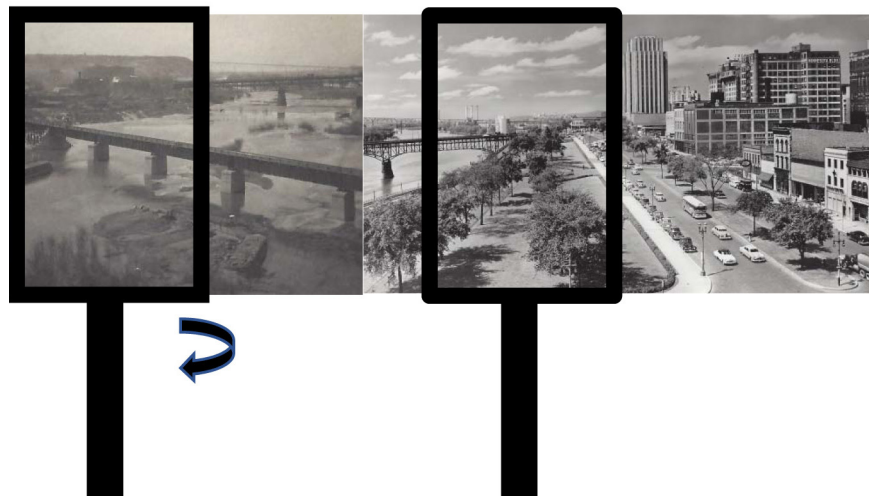
#### 1. Peek into the Past Portal

Basic concept, no unique “skin”, we have all seen these.



#### 2. Surprise Portal

Simple looking frame that appears to hold nothing at a distance, automatically populates with historic view when approached. May be rotated by user to see entire image and for different views. Frame would be all-weather enclosure and would require electricity (could be solar powered)



#### 3. City View Portal

A motion-activated projection system will detect the presence of visitors and project on walls or glass scrims (if no suitable wall is available) very large historic images looking into Saint Paul from the vantage point of the users.

#### 4. Personal Portals

See examples at <http://www.timera.com/Explore> (none from Saint Paul yet) and <http://www.pivottheworld.com/> (none from Saint Paul yet)

### 3. Concepts

## Lowertown Interpretive Plan

### Concept Two - Digital Content Access via Historic Plaques

Existing historic plaques are spread throughout the city, with a particularly high concentration in Lowertown. The plaque is cast Bronze with a distinctive shape that has become an iconic element quickly identifying the building as an important part of our heritage. The information included in these plaques is minimal, typically limited to address, name, year, architect, and identifying that it exists in the Lowertown Historic District.

The Digital Content Access via Historic Plaques concept is demonstrated on the right. A QR code will be added to each plaque and all content related to that location would be readily available via a smartphone. From the portal that is accessed at one plaque the visitor would have the option of finding data on all locations for which there is content and could opt to follow an established walking tour or build their own. The physical manifestation of this is the addition of bronze QR codes to existing or new plaques. The much larger and hidden part of this is the content database. This will need to be built out over time as content is developed and may draw from other online entities like Lyfmap.

When scanned by a smart phone, the QR code will direct the user to site from which they could choose to explore all kinds of information, including but not limited to:

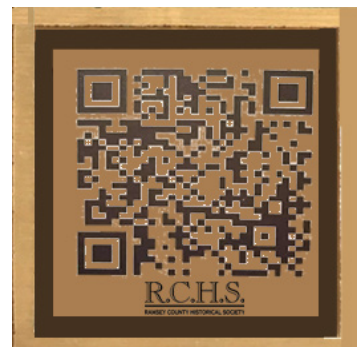
1. Allow you to choose to view more architectural information.
2. Human interest information about the owners and/or the people that lived or work there.
3. Access to audio or video information.
4. Local activities could be coordinated on a separate menu.
5. Public Services such as rest rooms could have a convenience map.

Not all historically relevant elements are architectural. There are many human interest, geographic, and political events that shape our history as well. The many stories mentioned on page 14 attest to this simple truth. These plaques can certainly commemorate such moments, allowing materials related to those stories that are related to have access. They need not be placed on a building.

QR codes are fairly simple to use and are expected to be durable and relevant for the foreseeable future. For those reasons, using QR codes to access digital content is a reasonable solution. As an access point, these can be made static and content that links to each QR code can continue to evolve and improve. It is relatively simple and inexpensive to update data in a database rather than re-fabricating permanent signage as new information becomes available.



*This QR Code will take us to wood staining products. It will be replaced in this report with an example for Lowertown, once the prototype is established.*





### 3. Concepts

#### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

##### Concept Two - QR Code Historic Plaques Demonstration



## 3. Concepts

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Concept Three - Street Information Kiosks

The need for general information and stories about people and places other than architectural is accommodated within this existing information kiosk standard. It is part of the recent Union Depot renovation above the parking area and on the train track level. We are proposing to use a similar design in order to replicate things that have been approved and to minimize the variety of things that are scattered on the streets and sidewalks. The signage as suggested for the LIP study is simulated on the right facing page to suggest what could happen on an information kiosk.

1. Information at the upper area would identify the historic subject
2. Information contained in a cast QR Code would be placed at the appropriate ADA height
3. Some will not use a QR Code Reader on their smart phone so a URL address is provided.
4. A Braille address would be provided as well.
5. Public information regarding rest rooms, parking areas, etc., would be provided here.

Variations in material other than steel can be studied. The acceptability of this design within the Lowertown Historic District will need to be verified, as would any design that is intended to be placed within the district.

### 3. Concepts

## Lowertown Interpretive Plan

### Concept Three - Street Information Kiosks Demonstration



1. Historic Subject

2. QR Code Image

3. Direct URL Connection

4. Direct URL Braille Connection

5. Public Info Access

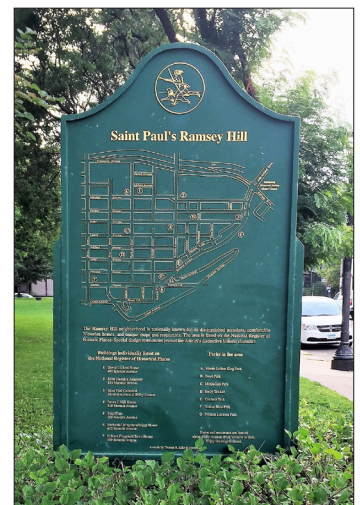
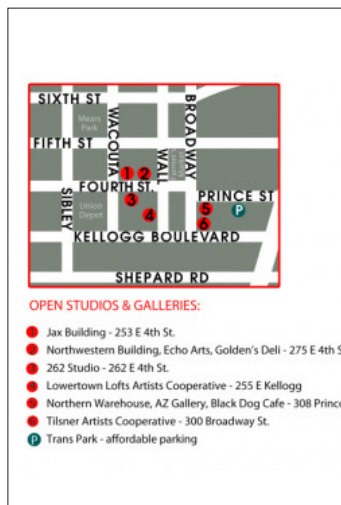
*Note that this signage was approved as part of the historic renovation of Union Depot.*



### 3. Concepts

## Lowertown Interpretive Plan

### Concept Four - Historic Light Trail



The potential of tours, the need to add information to existing historical markers, and the need to incorporate other markers and informational signage brought out suggestions during the Focus Groups reviews. These are examples of successful but limited existing signs from Lowertown and other areas. By limited is meant that they communicate only information on their surface. The opportunity to offer other available information, to delve deeper, is not available.

Booklets and other hand-out materials will still be needed for the foreseeable future but use of a fully integrated web-based system is hard to resist and it has the potential to create a truly flexible, accessible, and user friendly system for sharing the wealth of historical information gathered.

### Concept for a light tour

The site plan diagram, on the right facing page, overlays existing street lighting systems onto the Lowertown Historic District plan. Potential historic information kiosks are randomly assigned with the green box symbol. The diagram suggests possible tour informational locations. These are not calculated for exactness in the diagram, rather they simply convey the possibilities for information kiosks that could form tours or be used independently. Branding the tour with a name, suggested here as "Illuminating the Past", or a similar identity would be recommended. Boston's Freedom Trail has such an identity.



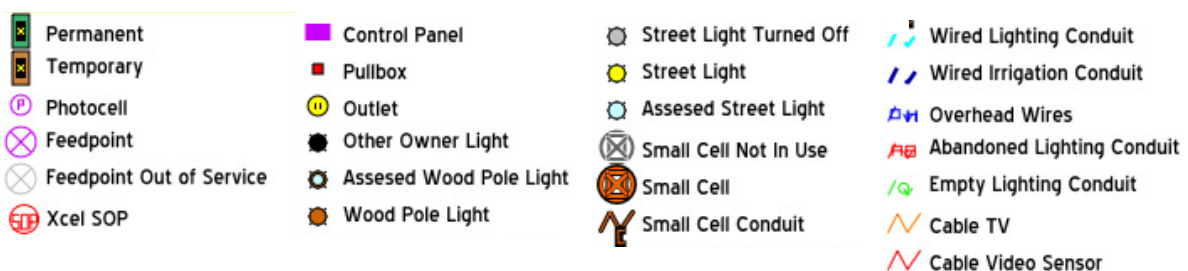
# Lowertown Interpretive Plan

## Concept Four - Historic Light Trail/Illuminating the Past



## Example

■ = Possible Light Fixture Info Kiosk



## 3. Concepts

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Concept Four - Historic Light Trail/Illuminating the Past

Lowertown's light fixtures are part of the historic district but are not original. Preliminary conversations with City Public Works Department lighting engineers suggest adaptations are possible. With modest adjustments a historic light trail for tours could be established. By changing a lamp or possibly a globe, as suggested in the comparative simulation on the right, the approach to achieve informational light kiosks could be achieved.

Options will need consideration for ways to attract attention and create a visual path for tours or at least a series of Information Kiosk access points. The suggestions for changing the fixture, in the modest way demonstrated, maybe an economical way to implement the concept. A prototype will be studied to determine if this approach or another approach will be effective.

One of the most successful historic self guided historic tours is Boston's Freedom Trail. An effort in Lowertown could be very similar in character. Guidebooks, signage, and digital systems would highlight the trail.



### 3. Concepts

#### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

##### Concept Four - Historic Light Trail Street Light Comparison



## 4. Research

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Resources

Prepared by PVN

##### **Greater Lowertown Master Plan Summary**

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/neighborhood-plans> 2012

Author: Greater Lowertown Master Plan Task Force; Task Force Advisors; and Consultant Team

##### **Greater Lowertown Master Plan (Full)**

Creativecommunitybuilders.com 2011 Author: Greater Lowertown Master Plan Task Force; Task Force Advisors; and Consultant Team

##### **St. Paul Downtown Development Strategy (Chapter of the St. Paul Comprehensive Plan)**

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/neighborhood-plans> 2003; updated 2005

Author: Downtown Development Strategy Task Force; City of St. Paul; Capitol River Council; and St. Paul Planning Commission

##### **Downtown St. Paul Station Area Plan**

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/neighborhood-plans> 2010

##### **St. Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework**

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/neighborhood-plans> 1997 Author: Berridge

Lewinberg Greenberg; Dark Gable Limited; Applied Ecological Services Inc.; Close Landscape Architecture; Glatting Jackson Kercher

Anglin Lopez Rinehart

##### **Prosper: Vision SP 20 I 20**

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/neighborhood-plans> 2014 Author: BWBR

##### **Saint Paul River Balcony Master Plan (amendment to Great River Passage Master Plan)**

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/neighborhood-plans> 2017

##### **Mississippi River Corridor Plan (chapter of the Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan)**

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/neighborhood-plans> 2002

Author: City of St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development

##### **Central Corridor Development Strategy (chapter of the St. Paul Comprehensive Plan)**

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/green-line/plans-policies/central-corridor-0> 2007

##### **Map of Lowertown Heritage Preservation District**

<https://www.stpaul.gov/sites/default/files/Media%20Root/Planning%20%26%20Economic%20Development/Lowertown%20Color.pdf>

2015 Author: City of St. Paul and the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission

##### **Brief histories of specific buildings and places in Lowertown**

<http://lowertownlanding.com/lowertown-building-history/> and <http://lowertownlanding.com/lowertown-historic-places/>

##### **Shepard-Warner-East CBD Bypass, St. Paul: Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Historic Resources Survey, Appendix D)**

[https://books.google.com/books?id=h7w1AQAAMAAJ&dq=shepard/warner/east+cdb+bypass+st+paul+environmental+impact+state](https://books.google.com/books?id=h7w1AQAAMAAJ&dq=shepard/warner/east+cdb+bypass+st+paul+environmental+impact+statement&source=gbs_navlinks_s)  
ment&source=gbs\_navlinks\_s 1988

##### **Report of the Diamond Products Task Force**

<http://www.riverfrontcorporation.com/wp-content/uploads/DiamondProductsTaskForce200512.pdf> 2005

Author: Diamond Products Task Force

##### **Lowertown: The Rise of an Urban Village (video)**

[http://www.mnvideovault.org/index.php?id=21945&select\\_index=0&popup=yes](http://www.mnvideovault.org/index.php?id=21945&select_index=0&popup=yes) 2011 TPT

##### **Lowertown Walking Tours: Lowertown Walking Tour (audio and text)**

<https://soundcloud.com/lowertown/sets> 2013

##### **Art Crawl Building Guide (audio and text)**

<https://soundcloud.com/lowertown/sets> 2014

##### **The Buildings of St. Paul: The Mears Park Area**

LowertownLanding.com 1992 Author: Andrew G. Earhart

##### **St. Paul's Historic Lowertown: A Walking Tour**

LowertownLanding.com 1988 Author: St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission and the City of St. Paul

##### **Tour St. Paul: East Side to Lowertown**

LowertownLanding.com

##### **Uniquely St. Paul: A Self-Guided Walking Tour through a 21st River City**

LowertownLanding.com 2008 Author: Rotary Club of St. Paul and the City of St. Paul

##### **African American Heritage: Points of Entry (walking tour)**

<http://saintpaulhistorical.com/tours/show/41>



## 4. Research

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Resources (cont.)

Prepared by PVN

##### Historic Lowertown (walking tour)

<http://saintpaulhistorical.com/tours/show/38> Taken from 1988 St. Paul's Historic Lowertown: A Walking Tour by St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission

##### Dayton's Bluff: Below the Bluff (walking tour)

<http://saintpaulhistorical.com/tours/show/1>

##### Histories of 22 Lowertown buildings

<http://saintpaulhistorical.com/items/browse?tags=Historic+Lowertown> 1988 Author: City of St. Paul and the St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission

##### East Side Park and Trail Map

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/56db649a044262039484e013/t/57069c867da24f76a6ea9d75/1460051080892/EastSideTrail-Guide-2.jpg-1-1+%281%29.pdf> Author: Lower Phalen Creek Project and Hedberg Maps, Inc

##### River of History: A Historic Resources Study of the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area

<http://www.historicsaintpaul.org/resources/river-history-historic-resources-study-mississippi-national-river-and-recreation-area> 2003 Author: John O. Anfinson, National Park Service

##### Historic Sites Survey of St. Paul and Ramsey County

<http://www.historicsaintpaul.org/resources/1983-saint-paul-ramsey-county-historic-sites-survey> 1983 Authors: Patricia A. Murphy and Susan W. Granger

##### Great River Passage Master Plan (Addendum to St. Paul Comprehensive Plan)

[http://www.stallionpublishers.com/publications/1343/p/great\\_river\\_passage\\_master\\_plan\\_s.pdf](http://www.stallionpublishers.com/publications/1343/p/great_river_passage_master_plan_s.pdf) 2012

##### Environmental Assessment Worksheet for Trunk Highway 52/Lafayette Bridge Replacement and Roadway Modification Project from Plato Boulevard to East 8th Street

<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/lafayettebridge/pdf/ea.pdf> 2009

##### Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, Minnesota: Final Comprehensive Management Plan Environmental Impact Statement, Vol. 1

[https://books.google.com/books?id=Yc1wo6GATssC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs\\_ge\\_summary\\_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com/books?id=Yc1wo6GATssC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false) 1994 Author: Mississippi River Coordinating Commission and National Park Service

##### Metro Greenprint: Planning for Nature in the Face of Urban Growth

<http://files.dnr.state.mn.us/assistance/nrplanning/community/greenways/greenprint.pdf> 1997 Author: Greenways and Natural Areas Collaborative

##### Lowertown Pedestrian and Alley Study

Courtesy of Craig Rafferty 1984 Rafferty, Rafferty, Mikutowski, Roney, and Associates, Inc.

##### Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy

[Creativecommunitybuilders.com](http://creativecommunitybuilders.com) 2011 Creative Community Builders

##### National Register Nomination for Lowertown Historic District

<http://www.mnhs.org/preserve/nrhp/nomination/83000935.pdf> 1983 Author: Historic Sites Survey of St. Paul and Ramsey County

##### The Tao of Urban Rejuvenation: building a livable creative urban village

Minnesota Historical Society Library 2013 Weiming Lu

##### Lowertown : A Report of the Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation, Saint Paul

Wilson Library- University of Minnesota 1985 Author: Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation Partnership in Lowertown

Wilson Library- University of Minnesota 1981 Author: Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation

##### Transportation, Urban Design and the Environment: Highway 61/Red Rock Corridor (Report #13 in the series Transportation and Regional Growth Study)

<http://hdl.handle.net/11299/865> (University of Minnesota's Digital Conservancy) 2003 Author: Lance M. Neckar, Department of Landscape Architecture, University of Minnesota

##### Lowertown Heritage Preservation District Design Guidelines

<http://www.stpaul.gov/DocumentCenter/View4/15224.pdf> Author: City of St. Paul

##### A Special Report: Lowertown, St. Paul's Exciting New Urban Village

Minnesota Historical Society Library 1991 Author: Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation

##### Lowertown: Welcome to Lowertown, St. Paul's Exciting New Urban Village

Minnesota Historical Society Library 1994 Author: Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation

## 4. Research

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Resources (cont.)

Prepared by PVN

**Lowertown: Welcome to Lowertown, St. Paul's Exciting New Urban Village: Special Report**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 2001 Author: Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation

**Lowertown River Garden**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 1994 Author: City of St. Paul Department of Planning and Economic Development and Department of Public Works; Consultants Rafferty Rafferty Tollefson Architects, Inc. and Edwards and Kelcey, Inc.

**Public/Private Partnership**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 1994 Author: Weiming Lu

**Lowertown: Welcome to Lowertown, Saint Paul's Exciting New Urban Village: Special Report**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 1993 Author: Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation

**Mears Park: Evaluation and Enhancement Study**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 1988 Project for Public Spaces, Inc.

**Lowertown Redevelopment Opportunity: A Proposal Prepared for the McKnight Foundation**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 1978 Author: City of St. Paul, Office of the Mayor

**Lowertown National Register Historic District Boundary Increase Nomination Form**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: Lowertown Historic District Boundary Increase- National Register file) 1989 Author: Rolf T. Andersen

**Proposed Lowertown District Expansion**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: Lowertown Historic District Boundary Increase- National Register file) c. 1989

**The History and Significance of the James J. Hill Building**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: RA-SPC-4501- RA-SPC-4550) 1987 Author: Harry Hunter

**National Register Nomination Form for the James J. Hill Building**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: RA-SPC-4501- RA-SPC-4550) 1987 Author: Harry Hunter

**National Register Nomination Form for the McColl Building**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: Merchants National Bank St. Paul- National Register file) 1974

Author: Lynne VanBrocklin and Thomas J. Lutz

**Site Nomination Form for the McColl Building (St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission)**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: Merchants National Bank St. Paul- National Register file) 1978 Author: Carol Ekstrum and David Wieberg

**Inventory Form for the Union Depot Elevated Rail Yards (part of the Union Depot Phase I/II Project)**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: Union Depot Elevated Rail Yards- National Register eligible file) 2007

Author: Jeanne-Marie Mark (The 106 Group)

**Lowertown: St. Paul's Exciting New Urban Village: Special Report**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: Lowertown Historic District- National Register file) 1991 Author: Lowertown Redevelopment Corp.

**Historic Property Record for Lafayette Bridge**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: Bridge No. 9800- National Register eligible file) c. 2009

Author: Robert M. Frame, Christine Long, and Shannon Malzahn (Mead & Hunt)

**Historic Property Record for Lafayette Bridge - Photographs**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: Bridge No. 9800- National Register eligible file) c. 2009

**National Register Nomination Form for the Walsh Building**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: Walsh Building- National Register file) 1988 Author: Paul Clifford Larson

**Significance Survey for the United States Postal Office**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: United States Post Office and Custom House- National Register file) 1985

Author: Dr. Norene A. Roberts

**National Register Registration Form for the United States Postal Office**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: United States Post Office and Custom House- National Register file) 2013

Author: Emily Ramsey (MacRostie Historic Advisors LLC)

**National Register Evaluation for the United States Postal Office**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: United States Post Office and Custom House- National Register file) 2007

Author: Earth Tech/Berger Joint Venture

**Kellogg Boulevard Streetscape Project**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: Survey RA-99-3H) 1999 Author: Andrew J. Schmidt and Kristen M. Zschomler (The 106 Group)

**Phase I and II Architectural History Survey for the Union Depot Multi-Modal Transit Hub Project**

State Historic Preservation Office (File: Survey RA-2007-RH) 2007 Author: William E. Stark and Jeanne-Marie Mark (The 106 Group)

## 4. Research

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Additional Resources

Prepared by PVN

##### **Lowertown Bulletin (9 newsletters)**

Minnesota Historical Society Library Various dates Author: Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation

##### **Custom House: Restoring a St. Paul landmark in Lowertown**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 2015 Author: James A. Stolpestad

##### **Once There Were Castles: Lost Mansions and Estates of the Twin Cities**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 2011 Author: Larry Millett

##### **AIA Guide to Downtown St. Paul**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 2010 Author: Larry Millett

##### **"Lost neighborhood: Mary Hill's Lowertown, 1867 - 1891"**

Minnesota Historical Society Library Spring 2006 Author: Eileen R. McCormack Article in Ramsey County History magazine

##### **"Lowertown: Another Perspective"**

Minnesota Historical Society Library Spring 2006 Author: David Riehle Article in Ramsey County History magazine

##### **"Lost Neighborhood: Borup's Addition and the Prosperous Pioneer African Americans Who Owned Homes There"**

Minnesota Historical Society Library Fall 2002 David Riehle Article in Ramsey County History magazine

##### **St. Paul Lowertown News**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 2001- 2004 Author: St. Paul Publishing Co.

##### **Changing Places: Rebuilding Community in the Age of Sprawl**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 1999 Author: Richard Moe

##### **The Lowertown News**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 1995- 2001 Author: St. Paul Voice, Inc.

##### **America's Downtowns: Growth, Politics & Preservation**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 1991 Author: Richard C. Collins, Elizabeth B. Waters, A. Bruce Dotson

##### **The Dahl House: The Last of Old Lowertown**

Minnesota Historical Society Library Spring 1990 Ramsey County History Magazine Article in Ramsey County History magazine

##### **The Lowdown on Lowertown**

Minnesota Historical Society Library Author: Lorin Labardee

##### **Lowertown Crier periodical**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 1979- ? Author: Lowertown Commercial Club

##### **Building Coalitions for Urban Excellence: 1995 Rudy Bruner Award for Excellence in the Urban Environment**

St. Paul Public Library 1996 Author: Jay Faberstein

Lowertown Yards: Public Space From Renewed Infrastructure in Saint Paul

U of M Digital Conservancy 2011 Author: Colleen O'Dell Master's Capstone Paper

##### **Mixed Use Development, St. Paul**

In storage at U of MN Library Access Center 1980 Author: Albert W Lindeke Thesis

##### **Energy Efficient Housing Development Downtown Saint Paul**

In storage at U of MN Library Access Center 1984 Author: Tanja Toganidou-Vardoulaki Thesis

##### **Everyday Urbanism: A Socially Sustainable Urban Realm in Lowertown, St. Paul**

In storage at U of MN Library Access Center 2008 Author: Amanda Kay Olson Thesis

##### **The River Garden: A Return to the River - St. Paul Lowertown, Minnesota**

Wilson Library- U of MN 2001 Author: Ying Mao Thesis

##### **Energy Efficient Urban Housing in the Lowertown Area of St. Paul**

In storage at U of MN Library Access Center 1981 Author: Steven R Lipschultz Thesis

##### **Lowertown St. Paul: Reconnecting to the River**

Architecture/Landscape Architecture Library- U of MN

##### **Historic photos of Lowertown**

<http://lowertownlanding.com/lowertown-history-historic-photos-images/>Originally from the Minnesota Historical Society

##### **Weiming Lu Papers 1953 - 2013**

Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota Boxes 28- 31 from subseries 3 (Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation)

##### **Weiming Lu Papers, 1963 - 2013**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 1963- 2013

##### **Downtown Community Development Council records, 1977 - 1990**

Minnesota Historical Society Library 1977- 1990

##### **Downtown St. Paul, 1849 - 1975 (Historic Context Study)**

HistoricSaintPaul.org 2001 Authors: Carole Zellie, Landscape Research and Garneth Peterson, BRW

##### **Cities on the Mississippi (1994)**

Architecture/Landscape Architecture Library- University of Minnesota 1994 Authors: John W. Reys and Alex S. MacLean

## 4. Research

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Corporate Records of Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation - MN Historical Society Library

Prepared by PVN

##### Various editions of the Lowertown Bulletin

Box 9 Various dates Author: Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation

##### Various editions of the Lowertown Update newsletter

Box 9 Various dates Author: Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation

##### An Emerging Future for Lowertown

Box 9 1979 Author: Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation

##### Various pamphlets and brochures on Lowertown

Box 9 Various dates

##### Block 40 Mixed Use Development: Urban Development Action Grant, Application for Federal Assistance Vol. 1

Box 10 1980 Author: City of St. Paul

##### Redevelopment Objectives and Requirements: Block L

Box 10 1978 Author: Housing and Redevelopment Authority of the City of St. Paul

##### Economic Impact: Lowertown Redevelopment Program, 1978 - 1993

Box 12 1994 Author: McComb Group

##### Economic Impact of the Lowertown Redevelopment Program, 1979 - 1985

Box 12 1985 Author: James B. McComb Associates

##### Economic Impacts: Lowertown Redevelopment Program, 1979 - 1998

Box 12 1999 McComb Group

##### Characteristics of Lowertown, St. Paul

Box 12 c. 1977

##### Proposed East CBD Bypass

Box 12 1992 Author: City of St. Paul

##### Faculty Women Tour

Box 16 1984

##### Lowertown Small Area Plan

Box 17 1994 Author: Lowertown Small Area Plan Taskforce

##### Proposal: Market and Economic Feasibility Analysis

Box 17 Author: James B. McComb and Associates

##### Midway Corridor LRT Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Box 18 1990 Author: BRW, Inc.

##### Action: Public Art, Placemaking in Downtown Saint Paul

Box 24 1997 Author: Capitol River Council and Public Art Saint Paul

##### Riverview Corridor Study: Phase I

Box 24 1998 Author: Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority

##### Riverview Corridor Major Investment Study: Saint Paul Minnesota (Draft Report)

Box 24 2000 Author: Ramsey County Regional Railroad Authority, U. S. Department of Transportation, and the Federal Transit Administration

##### Changing the Face of Our City: How the People of Saint Paul Are Reinventing Their Riverfront

Box 24 c. 1995 Author: Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation

##### Next Urban Village Plan: Lowertown, St. Paul (Draft)

Box 25 2002 Author: Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation

##### St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission Report: List of Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Sites and Districts

Box 27 Rev. 1986 Author: Saint Paul Heritage Preservation Commission

##### St. Paul Union Depot: Renewing a Civic Landmark in Downtown St. Paul

Box 30 Post-1997 Author: HGA

##### Downtown Urban Design Plan (Draft)

Box 35 1993

##### Saint Paul's Skyways: A Report of the Skyway Task Force of the Saint Paul Planning Commission

Box 35 1986 Author: Saint Paul Planning Commission

## 4. Research

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Potential Resources

Prepared by PVN

**Resources which may be helpful but could not be located (some may be located within the Corporate Records of the Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation)**

Urban Village Vision (2004)

Riverfront Action Strategies (SP Port Authority; 1999)

St. Paul's Central River Valley Development Framework (1994)

Phase I and II Cultural Resources Investigations of the Central Corridor Minneapolis, Hennepin County and St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota (1995)

A River Heritage (St. Paul Heritage Preservation Commission brochure)

Discover St. Paul: Merchantile Architecture (City of St. Paul, Community Services Department, St. Paul Convention and Visitor's Bureau)

Rocky Roots: Geology and Stone Construction in Downtown St. Paul (Ramsey County Historical Society; 1978)

## 4. Research

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Databases Researched

Prepared by PVN

##### City of St. Paul Website: Neighborhood and Citywide Plans

<https://www.stpaul.gov/departments/planning-economic-development/planning/neighborhood-plans>

Searched all district 17 plans and citywide plans

##### Historic St. Paul

[www.historicsaintpaul.org](http://www.historicsaintpaul.org)

Searched entire "resource" section of website

##### St. Paul Historical

<http://saintpaulhistorical.com/tours/browse/>

Searched through "tours" and "stories" sections

##### Lowertown Landing Website

<http://lowertownlanding.com/>

Searched entire "history" section

##### University of Minnesota (U of MN) Libraries

[https://primo.lib.umn.edu/primo-explore/search?vid=TWINCITIES&lang=en\\_US&sortby=rank](https://primo.lib.umn.edu/primo-explore/search?vid=TWINCITIES&lang=en_US&sortby=rank)

Searched the following databases: MNCAT Discovery, CURA, University Digital Conservancy, Digital Repository for U of M, Archival Finding Aids

##### St. Paul Public Library

<http://www.sppl.org/>

Searched catalog: very few resources relating specifically to Lowertown

##### Ramsey County Libraries

<https://www.rclreads.org/>

Searched catalog: very few resources relating specifically to Lowertown

##### Hennepin County Libraries

<http://www.hclib.org/>

Searched catalog: very few resources relating specifically to Lowertown

##### State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

<http://www.mnhs.org/shpo/survey/files.php>

Searched files of all inventoried properties within neighborhood of Lowertown, as well as their associated National Register files and surveys

##### Minnesota Historical Society Library (MNHS)

[http://mnhs.mnpals.net/F?RN=432637486&func=file&file\\_name=basic](http://mnhs.mnpals.net/F?RN=432637486&func=file&file_name=basic)

Searched catalog

## 4. Research

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Lowertown Files

##### Prepared by PVN

A Special Report\_Lowertown St. Pauls Exciting New Urban Village\_1991.pdf  
Arts, Culture, and the Creative Economy\_2011.pdf  
Borders of Lowertown.docx  
Downtown St. Paul Station Area Plan\_Part 1\_2010.pdf  
Downtown St. Paul Station Area Plan\_Part 3\_2010.pdf  
Downtown St. Paul Station Area Plan\_Part 4\_2010.pdf  
East Side Park and Trail Map\_xxxx.pdf  
Environmental Assessment Worksheet for Trunk Highway 52\_2009/pdf  
Great River Passage Master Plan\_2012.pdf  
Historic Property Record for Lafayette Bridge Photographs\_c.2009.pdf  
Historic Property Record for Lafayette Bridge\_c.2009.pdf  
Historic Sites Survey of Saint Paul and Ramsey County\_1983.pdf  
Inventory Form for the Union Depot Elevated Rail Yards\_2007.pdf  
Kellogg Boulevard Streetscape Project\_1999.pdf  
Lowertown Heritage Preservation District Design Guidelines\_xxxx.pdf  
Lowertown National Register Historic District Boundary Increase\_1989.pdf  
Lowertown Pedestrian Study II.pdf  
Lowertown Pedestrian and Alley Study\_1984.pdf  
Lowertown Resources.xlsx  
Lowertown River Garden\_1984.pdf  
Lowertown St. Pauls Exciting New Urban Village\_1991.pdf  
Lowertown\_A Report of the Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation\_1985.pdf  
Lowertown\_Welcome to Lowertown St. Paul's Exciting New Urban Village\_1994.PDF  
Lowertown\_Welcome to Lowertown\_1993.pdf  
Lowertown\_Welcome to Lowertown\_2001.pdf  
Lowertown Master Plan Full\_2011.pdf  
Lowertown Master Plan Summary\_2012.pdf  
Map of Lowertown Heritage Preservation District.pdf  
Metro Greenprint\_1997.pdf  
Mississippi River Corridor Plan\_2002.pdf  
National Register Evaluation for the United State Postal Office\_2007.pdf  
National Register Nomination Form for the James J. Hill Building\_1987.pdf  
National Register Nomination Form for the McColl Building\_1974  
National Register Nomination Form for the Walsh Building\_1988.pdf  
National Register Registration Form for the United States Postal Office\_2003.pdf  
Partnership in Lowertown\_1981.pdf  
Phase I and II Architectural History Survey for the Union Depot Multi-Modal Transit Hub Project\_2007.pdf  
Proposed Lowertown District Expansion\_c.1989.pdf  
Prosper Vision SP2020\_2014.pdf  
Public\_Private Partnership\_1994.pdf  
Report of the Diamond Products Task Force\_2005.pdf  
Significance Survey for the United States Postal Office\_1985.pdf  
Site Nomination Form for the McColl Building\_1978.pdf  
St. Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework\_1987.pdf  
St. Paul River Balcony Master Plan\_2017.pdf  
St. Paul's Historic Lowertown\_A Walking Tour\_1988.pdf  
St. Paul Downtown Development Strategy\_2003 (2005).pdf  
The Buildings of St. Paul\_The Mears Park Area\_1992.pdf  
The History and Significance of the James J. Hill Building\_1987.pdf  
Tour of St. Paul\_East Side to Lowertown\_xxxx.pdf  
Transportation, Urban Design and the Environment\_2003.pdf  
Uniquely St. Paul\_2008.pdf



## 4. Research

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Historical Properties related to Central Corridor/Green Line Project

Prepared by Nienow Cultural Resources

Central Corridor Phase I Architectural History Investigation Report, Vol. 1 PDF 89 MB

Central Corridor Phase I Architectural History Investigation Report, Vol. 2 [part 1 of 3] PDF 81 MB

Central Corridor Phase I Architectural History Investigation Report, Vol. 2 [part 2 of 3] PDF 75 MB

Central Corridor Phase I Architectural History Investigation Report, Vol. 2 [part 3 of 3] PDF 59 MB

Central Corridor Phase II Architectural History Investigation Report PDF 11.3 MB

Central Corridor Supplemental Historic Property Investigations Report, Downtown Saint Paul PDF 37 MB

Central Corridor Capitol Mall Historic District Mitigation Plan, February 2010 PDF 5 MB

Central Corridor Union Depot Mitigation Plan PDF 2 MB

<https://metro council.org/Transportation/Projects/Light-Rail-Projects/Central-Corridor/Environmental/Historic-Properties.aspx>



## 4. Research

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Archaeological Reference Materials for Ramsey County

Prepared by Nienow Cultural Resources

##### Available at the Office of the State Archaeologist and/or the State Historic Preservation Office

(Note: this is done by year and not alphabetical author- to better represent the archaeological chronology of the County).

##### No Name?

1981 Archeological Survey of the I-35E Pleasant Ave. and Shepard Rd. Corridors, St. Paul, Minnesota.

##### Ketz, K. A.

1993 Shepard/Warner/East CBD Bypass, Archaeological Potential.

##### Bennett, G. and A. Ketz

1994 Phase II Archaeological Investigations, Shepard Rd. Alternative A-3 and Warner Rd., Chicago-Milwaukee-St. Paul- and Pacific Railroad Freight House, Shepard/Warner/East CBD Bypass Project, St. Paul, Minnesota.

##### Ketz, K. A.

1994 Burlington Northern Regional Trail, East 7th St. to Lake Phalen, Cultural Resources Survey, St. Paul, Minnesota.

1994 Additional Research for Potential Historic Archaeological Sites, Shepard/Warner/East CBD Bypass Project, St. Paul, Minnesota.

##### Hess, D. J., and J. A. Hess

1994 Documentary Analysis of Potential Historic Archaeological Sites in the Proposed Construction Zone of the New Wabasha St. Bridge, St. Paul, Minnesota.

##### The 106 Group

1995 MWWTP Environmental Inventory, Phase I- Implementation, Cultural Resources Investigations, St. Paul, Minnesota.

##### Higginbottom, D. K.

1997 Archaeological Monitoring and Emergency Salvage at the Department of Revenue Construction Site, St. Paul, Minnesota.

##### Ollendorf, A. L. and D. Higginbottom

1997 Data Recovery Plan for the Department of Revenue building, St. Paul, Minnesota.

##### Ollendorf, A. L.

1997 Addendum: Protection, Monitoring, and Data Recovery Plans for the Historic William Dahl House, St. Paul, Minnesota.

##### Management Analysis Division

1997 Recommended Action for the Dahl House: Task Force Report to the Commissioner.

##### Ketz, K. A. and M. Kullen

1997 Literature Search for the Science Museum Relocation/Expansion Project City of St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

##### A. J. Schmidt and K. A. Ketz

1997 Literature Search for the Chestnut Street-Shepard Road Intersection City of St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

##### The 106 Group

1997 Research Design and Monitoring Plan for the Science Museum Relocation/Expansion Project City of St. Paul. Ramsey County, Minnesota.

##### Abel, E. and A. Schmidt

1997 Phase II Archaeological Investigation for Proposed Improvements to the Chestnut Street-Shepard Road Interchange City of St. Paul Ramsey County, Minnesota.

##### Justin, M. A.

1998 Report on Archaeological Testing at 365 Michigan Avenue.

##### Ollendorf A. L, et. al.

1998 Archaeological Monitoring, Emergency Salvage Excavations, and Data Recovery Excavations at the Department of Revenue Construction Site, St. Paul, Minnesota.

##### The 106 Group

1998 Cultural Resources Investigations Preliminary design Phase Harriet Island Regional Park City of Saint Paul, Minnesota.

1998 Cultural Resources Investigations Harriet Island Regional Park City of Saint Paul, Minnesota. Traditional Cultural Property Report.

1998 Interpretive Potential for Harriet Island Regional Park City of Saint Paul.

##### The 106 Group

1998 Archaeological Monitoring Report for the Wabasha Street Bridge Replacement City of St. Paul Ramsey County, Minnesota.

1998 Washington Street Residential District Data Recovery for the New Science Museum of Minnesota, St. Paul, Minnesota. (Vol. 1-3).

1998 Archaeological Monitoring for the Science Museum Relocation/ Expansion Project City of St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

1998 Historical Documentation for Rice Park City of St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

## 4. Research

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Archaeological Reference Materials for Ramsey County

Prepared by Nienow Cultural Resources

##### The 106 Group

- 1999 Sibley Street Pedestrian Way Project. St. Paul, Minnesota. Phase I Cultural Resources Investigation.
- 1999 Phase II Archaeological Evaluation Harriet Island Regional Park. City of Saint Paul. Ramsey County, Minnesota.

##### Halloran, T.

- 2000 Cultural Resources Review of the Northeast Quadrant Property T29N R22W SE 1/4 of Section 31, Lots 1-6, Block 6, Lots 1-6, Block 3, Lots 1-10, Block 2, St. Paul, Minnesota.

##### Halloran, T. and E. J. Abel

- 2001 Extended Documents Research for the Northeast Quadrant Property.

##### The 106 Group

- 2001 Field Report for the Archaeological Evaluation of Site 7 (The Plastics Lot) in Preparation for the Armstrong House Relocation for the Smith Avenue Transit Hub, City of Saint Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

##### Terrell, M. M.

- 2001 Lower Phalen Creek Literature Search for Historical Archaeological Potential, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.
- 2001 Phase II Archaeological Evaluation of Site 7 (21RA0047) in Preparation for the Armstrong House Relocation for the Smith Ave. Transit Hub, St. Paul, Ramsey County.

##### Terrell, M. M.

- 2002 Cultural Resources Overview for the Upper Landing Park Project, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

##### 106 Group

- 2003 Archaeological Monitoring and Data Recovery Plan for the Department of Administration Robert Street Laboratory Building/Lot Y, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

##### Terrell, M. M.

- 2003 Determination of Eligibility of Carver's Cave (21RA27) and Dayton's Bluff Cave (21RA28), Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary Project, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

##### Madson, M. J.

- 2003 Phase IA Archaeological Resources Investigation of the Proposed Robert Street Laboratory Building/Lot Y.
- 2003 Phase IA Archaeological Resources Investigation of the Proposed Departments of Agriculture and Health Office Building/Lot S, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.
- 2003 Phase IA Archaeological Resources Investigation of the Proposed DHS Office Building/Lot T, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

##### Terrell, M. M. and A. C. Vermeer

- 2004 Archaeological Monitoring and Phase I/II Archaeological Survey and Evaluation for the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary at Lower Phalen Creek, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

##### Vermeer, A.

- 2004 Addendum to Archaeological Monitoring and Phase I/II Survey and Evaluation for the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary at Lower Phalen Creek, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

##### Bring, J. L.

- 2004 Archaeological Monitoring of Wetland Construction for the Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary Project at Lower Phalen Creek, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

##### Trocki, P. A. and C. M. Hudak

- 2005 Geoarchaeological Investigation on Pig's Eye Peninsula, Saint Paul, Minnesota (T28N R22W, Sections 10, 15, 22) for the Proposed South Saint Paul Forcemain Project.

##### The 106 Group

- 2006 Phase II and IIB/III Archaeological Investigation for the Smith Avenue Transit Hub Project, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota. Volume I – Technical Report.
- 2006 Phase II and IIB/III Archaeological Investigation for the Smith Avenue Transit Hub Project, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota. Volume II – Appendices.

##### Vermeer, A. C.

- 2007 Archaeological Documentation of the Twin City Rapid Transit Company East Seventh Street Station (21RA55) for the Globe Roofing Project, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

## 4. Research

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### Archaeological Reference Materials for Ramsey County

Prepared by Nienow Cultural Resources

**Hudak, C. M.**

- 2008 Geomorphic Investigations of the Trunk Highway 52 Lafayette Bridge and Union Depot Concourse Rehabilitation Project Areas, St. Paul, Minnesota.

**Vermeer, A. C. and C. M. Hudak**

- 2008 Phase I Geoarchaeological Investigations for the Trunk Highway 52 Lafayette Bridge Replacement Project, St. Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

**Schoen, C.**

- 2008 Phase I Archaeological Boring Study for the Loading Dock and Parking Facility, St. Paul Processing & Distribution Center, 108 Kellogg Boulevard East, St. Paul, Minnesota DRAFT.

**Justin, M.**

- 2009 Letter Report: Archaeological Monitoring in Partial Fulfillment of the Archaeological Investigation Plan for the Central Corridor LRT Project.
- 2009 Letter Report: Archaeological Monitoring in Partial Fulfillment of the Archaeological Investigation Plan for the Central Corridor LRT Project, Report No. 2.

**O'Brien, M. M.**

- 2011 Literature Review/Archaeological Assessment for the Proposed Bruce Vento Regional Trail Bridge Construction, St. Paul, Minnesota.

**Harrison, C.**

- 2012 Report on Archaeological Monitoring of Rehabilitation Activities at the Schmidt Brewery, City of St. Paul, Minnesota.

**Sather, D. T. and L. Ollila**

- 2013 Archaeological Monitoring and Visual Reconnaissance for the Lowertown Ballpark Project, Saint Paul, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

# 5. Conclusions

## Lowertown Interpretive Plan

Conclusions for the Lowertown Interpretive Plan are summarized as follows:

### Interest

1. There is popular interest for access to historical information beyond the basics currently represented on Historic Plaques and signage.
2. There is a wealth of historic material that is difficult to access and located in many varying places. The need to collect and consolidate the historic information related to Lowertown in a single location is a necessary first step.
3. There are many ways to make history available that exist including signage, trails, historic markers or plaques, pamphlets, and books. These are deemed limited in their ability to offer in depth historical coverage.
4. Simple, economical concepts should be emphasized in order to assure that implementation could occur with minimum complications.

### Solutions

1. This Lowertown Interpretative Plan has generated research resulting in the collection of over 250 articles, books, past planning studies, and historical research documents.
2. This proposal outlines that Ramsey County Historical Society will become the repository for all Lowertown information as a single collection point regarding past and future materials collected.
3. Concept One- Portals, defines a simple way to compare the past with the present through vignettes.
4. Concept Two - QR Code Historic Plaques, defines a system that can be incorporated into existing signage and on existing historical markers and plaques with compatibility and economy; allowing access to a greater depth of information, orchestrated through the Ramsey County Historical Society's Lowertown access site.
5. Concept Three – Street Information Kiosks, modeled after similar information standards at Union Depot, that allow access to information regarding districts, people, events, as well as general public information about the area such public restroom locations.
6. Concept Four- Historic Light Trail, incorporating existing Lowertown Light fixtures with minor modifications in order to create a Historic Light Trail. The trail allows for a self-guided tour of Lowertown areas by moving between highlighted fixtures in tandem with the Street Info Kiosks. Inspiration from the Boston Freedom Trail generated the precedent for this concept.

Ramsey County Historical Society has begun the collection and assembly of materials generated through this study. They will be made available on line through the RCHS web site and under the heading Lowertown.

Concept One – Portals, has been tested with Proto-type. Prototypes for Concept Two and Concept Three will be tested on location in Custom House and Union Depot. Concept Four- Historic Light Trails will undergo additional discussion and testing through the City Public Works Department and the Heritage Preservation Commission.

## 6. Appendix

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### A. Meeting Minutes



RRTL

### MEETING MINUTES

**PROJECT:** Lowertown Interpretive Plan (L.I.P.) **RRTL PROJECT #:** 1705.01  
**TO:** Chad Roberts  
**FROM:** Chip Lindeke / Craig Rafferty  
**SUBJECT:** Lowertown Interpretive Plan  
**DATE:** August 11, 2018  
**PRESENT:** Members of the Capitol River Council Development Committee, Chip Lindeke, Craig Rafferty  
**COPIES TO:** File

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This meeting was held to introduce the concept behind the Lowertown Interpretive Plan (LIP) grant. Ramsey County Historical Society is conducting the study with the aid of this small museum grant. The following points were made:

1. Boundaries – Generally Lowertown area, but hard borders are not important.
2. Paul Mandel notes that the MN Historical Society has an app for the Capitol Grounds to explain the various monuments. Other MN cities have their own walking plans/guides.
3. It was noted that there is a Lowertown Landing Website
4. Who is the audience? What language should be used? There are various types of ethnic, age, economic backgrounds etc. in the area.
5. The Ramsey County Historical Society grant for this study is a federal grant.
6. How will the focus groups be formed? Lucy Thompson suggested using the city's "Open St. Paul" to get the word out, trying to connect with anyone who could be a stakeholder.
7. Suggestion for a pilot walking tour to get input from community to understand wayfinding issues.  
CRC can help with this – Tabitha Benci DeRango is a CRC Community Engagement person.
8. How to link to Metro Transit apps, so that people can find walking tours.
9. Solicit information from visitors at bars/restaurants –suggestions.
10. Baseball crowd – table at the Saints game.
11. Talk to building owners about what they've learned over the years. They have stories. They've learned how to market the preservation aspects of the area.
12. Building plaques on each building telling history and information. This doesn't have to be fancy or expensive. Could tell the stories of the people too.
13. Unified narrative of Lowertown, including geological history also. Glacier melting changed the course of the Mississippi, creating the foundation for St. Paul and Lowertown.

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## 6. Appendix

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### A. Meeting Minutes

14. MN Geologic Society excited about interpretive ideas.
15. National Parks (John Anfinson) excited also about Lowertown Landing Park idea. Don Varney with St. Paul Parks & Rec is working with this.
16. Connecting to the river is an important idea.
17. Veronica Burt working for Lower Phalen Creek Project (LPCP) to do community engagement surrounding Interpretive Center next to Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary. Wakan Tipi looking for input from community on what the Interpretive Center should be. Wakan Tipi Center survey has been handed out. Survey on LPCP website also. Monday August 14<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm gathering at Mounds Park and Commercial Street.
18. Metro State has Native American studies program.
19. This is an opportunity to connect.
20. Looking to create a prototype of some sort as an outcome of this study.
21. Looking for additional feedback.
22. This could be a time travel portal – to look into the past.
23. Wacouta Commons could be a welcoming portal. What other portals could there be?
24. What's here now? What was here before? What was here before that?
25. Lucy asked about what kind of official adoption should there be. Whatever the outcome is, the intention will be to discuss with the city regarding next steps.
26. Incorporate human studies into the narrative.

This summary is part of the permanent record for this project. If there are concerns or discrepancies please notify RRTL within 7 days.

END

CER/jwb



## 6. Appendix

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### A. Meeting Minutes



RRTL

### MEETING MINUTES

**PROJECT:** Lowertown Interpretive Plan (L.I.P.) **RRTL PROJECT #:** 1705.01  
**TO:** Chad Roberts  
**FROM:** Craig Rafferty  
**SUBJECT:** Focus Group Meeting  
**DATE:** August 08, 2018  
Weiming Lu: Former head of Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation  
Tim Griffin: Former Director of Planning and Design for the Riverfront Corporation  
Richard Gilgard: Architect and past active participant in courts facilities at the edge of Lowertown  
**PRESENT:** Craig Rafferty  
**COPIES TO:** File

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This meeting was held to explain the LIP Project and to collect thoughts and comments. The following points were made after Craig introduced the purpose of the project.

1. Tim opened by suggesting that there are historic tour apps based on GPS that can be set up for Lowertown. Tour Buddy was suggested.
2. The Lowertown Future Fund was mentioned as a group to connect with as well as the St. Paul Foundation.
3. A recent speech given by Weiming Lu is available on the McKnight Foundation web site.
4. Reference Weiming Lu book, The Tao of Urban Rejuvenation.
5. St. Paul's Lowertown is an open urban planning laboratory. Other such labs include: Portland, Oregon; Richmond, Virginia and Chattanooga, Tennessee.
6. The Riverfront Corporation was independent of the City Planning Office and also from Lowertown Redevelopment Corporation.
7. A key individual is Jim Stolpelsted, particularly with the revival of the Riverwalk concept.
8. The Great River Passage plan is a milestone study during the past 50 years for the river as it passes St. Paul.
9. The Art Crawl is extremely effective and has had great turn outs.
10. The recently published "Makers and Shakers" document is aimed at talking with the artists and cultural leaders of the city.
11. 25% of Lowertown apartments and condos qualify as affordable.
12. Christine Podas Larson should be contacted. The Museum of American Art should be contacted. This museum could host events. Christine MacHolm can be contacted.

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## 6. Appendix

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### A. Meeting Minutes

13. Artist and organizer Tom Borup is part of an organizing group for the potential World's Fair in Bloomington.
14. The Healthy Cities Conference is coming in November.
15. San Francisco is an example of Public Art in Market Street.
16. The Franconian Sculpture Park in Franconia, MN is working with St. Paul to show some of its pieces.
17. The State Historic Society has Lowertown Redevelopment Corporations files.
18. Anderson Library at the University has Weiming LU's personal files.
19. Look for different festivals that would like to partner.

This summary is part of the permanent record for this project. If there are concerns or discrepancies please notify RRTL within 7 days.

END

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## 6. Appendix

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### A. Meeting Minutes



RRTL

### MEETING MINUTES

**PROJECT:** Lowertown Interpretive Plan (L.I.P.) **RRTL PROJECT #:** 1705.01  
**TO:** Chad Roberts  
**FROM:** Craig Rafferty  
**SUBJECT:** Lowertown Interpretive Plan  
**DATE:** August 11, 2018  
**PRESENT:** Tabitha Benci DeRango, Craig Rafferty  
**COPIES TO:** File

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This meeting was held to coordinate goals between the Capitol River Council (CRC) and the the Lowertown Interpretive Plan (LIP). The following points were made:

1. Tabitha is a newly appointed consultant to the CRC, charged with defining and establishing the Council's Engagement Program. She has a sterling track record for achieving participation and is specifically interested in the LIP study because of its potential to activate the residents of Lowertown.  
Businesses have a strong voice on the council, but residential input is diminishing.
2. The LIP program is intended to reach out in a short time period in order to establish the foundation for future historic interpretation projects.
3. Input from the artists and residents of Lowertown will be crucial for the process. Tabitha has agreed to orchestrate this participation. This is done because it fits perfectly within her charge to provide a more effective engagement process and it is done with the belief that the artists and residents have meaningful contributions. She believes that one must be on the "street" to learn the stories.
4. After discussing the ways that this could be undertaken, it was agreed that an on-site walking tour asking questions of what important meaningful facts and events should be highlighted. Ask about what should happen with wayfinding.
5. This loose description will be developed with greater detail.
6. In order to activate the residents, sometime will be needed to do so effectively.
7. It was agreed to target the mid-week of September 11th – 14th. Tabitha will pin down the exact date. 12:00 will be tentative time.
8. It was also agreed to have two "walk arounds". One during the day and one during the evening in order to accommodate the most schedules possible.
9. The discussion regarding ways to define points of interest; ways to define a path through Lowertown; ways to highlight locations where information would be available must become part of the discussion.

The "Freedom Trail" in Boston was cited as an example. How can Lowertown create something as effective?

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### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### A. Meeting Minutes

10. The premise behind “lighting the Story” was discussed. A specific light or lamppost is a possibility. Combined with a pre-defined phone app and a source scan at each pre-set location is one approach.
11. Tabitha suggested a mock-up of the light stand that would be part of the tour.
12. More information will be developed, but this will be an excellent starting point and the exercise will serve both the CRC and the LIP study purposes.
13. Information must be recorded, photographed, documented and then reported. This is the RPDR approach.
14. The City Master Plan for the lower landing and park should be referenced.
15. The next discussion will happen after Tabitha has had a chance to set the process in motion.

This summary is part of the permanent record for this project. If there are concerns or discrepancies please notify RRTL within 7 days.

END

CER/jwb





## 6. Appendix

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### A. Meeting Minutes



RRTL

### MEETING MINUTES

**PROJECT:** Lowertown Interpretive Plan (L.I.P.) **RRTL PROJECT #:** 1705.01  
**TO:** Chad Roberts  
**FROM:** Craig Rafferty  
**SUBJECT:** Technical Advisor Meeting  
**DATE:** August 16, 2018  
**PRESENT:** Jim Miller, Jim Stolpestad, Lucy Thompson, Chad Roberts, Craig Rafferty  
**COPIES TO:** File

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This meeting was held to seek advice from City Leaders who have agreed to act as Technical Advisors. The following points were made after an introduction of the grant and the challenge.

1. Part of the goal for this project is gathering, in one place, materials that have already been prepared.
2. The project is not limited to Lowertown, but that is the focus.
3. The process needs to tie into the neighborhoods eventually.
4. Strategic plans/master plans don't identify how to go about seeking funding for a history project.
5. This project is intended as a document to reference or use as a guideline for future projects.
6. Need to focus on the Union Depot in order to think of ways to activate the building.
7. A plaque for the Custom House was discussed with the potential for adding a QR code for historic information.
8. Should review Lowertown for all area plans.
9. Should review the Lowertown Master Plan.
10. It is hard to get new input in 6 weeks, keep the scope simple and straight forward.
11. The evaluation of Lowertown is an exciting story.
  - A place for the past and future stories.
  - What are the stories that are to be told?
  - What are the challenges? This is a living history opportunity.
  - Bruce Vento Nature Center
  - Wakan Tipi Center
  - There have been numerous books written about Lowertown.
  - Want to get to relevancy for today.

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### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### A. Meeting Minutes

- Over time what has happened?
  - What is the history that is being made today?
12. The project was categorized as an ambitious undertaking. It was cautioned not to become too complicated or filled with concepts that cannot work without major time commitments.
  13. Tell the Cyber Village story.
  14. This project is intended as a scoping document; it will suggest how to approach historical projects filling in missing pieces of Lowertown at later dates.
  15. The story of Farmers Market is another worthy subject.
  16. There isn't a goal to seek city approval nor a requirement.
  17. Should check with the HPC who is defining a new, updated set of design guidelines for Lowertown.
  18. Want to find a couple of recommended programs – need a good solution.
  19. Can a QR code be added to existing building plaques? This would allow building owners to add their own stories.
  20. Should review Chicago's Wrigley Field kiosk.
  21. The "Cloud Mirror" in Chicago's Millennium Park has thousands of posts each day.
    - Renswick Gallery went out of its way to creating spaces for selfies, which in turn has created a significant increase in participation.
  22. Creating experiences that share interest.
  23. Larry Millett's "Brick" book is a wealth of information that should have a connection.
  24. The results of this study must be actionable.
  25. As a basic courtesy, the results will be shared with the City Council.
  26. Heritage Trail in Minneapolis along both sides of the river has a very successful series of historical plaques.
  27. Landmark Center has walking tour, which is scheduled.
  28. The downtown Ambassadors program in St. Paul through the CRC, is just slowly beginning.
  29. Historic maps could be a future challenge, but there are quite a few available now.
  30. The map in the park near WA Frost is very effective.
  31. As information is compiled it should be accessible at Landmark Center or the Depot.
  32. The bibliography for information is the real goal.
  33. The 300 residents in Custom House are hungry for historical information.
    - A Lowertown History Wiki should be established.
  34. It was suggested that a Wikipedia page be generated as a place to tell stories.
    - The current Wikipedia page should be expanded.
  35. Tabitha Benci DeRango, the new Engagement Program Manager for the CRC is planning to conduct 2 "walk abouts" in September in order to solicit thoughts and comments from the artists and residents of Lowertown.



## 6. Appendix

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### A. Meeting Minutes

36. Additional suggested Technical Advisor Group members could include:

- Larry Millett
- HPC Leadership
- Jane Lewis, Visitor St. Paul
- Terry Mattson, Visitor St. Paul

37. Suggestions for moving forward include defining the resulting steps after the Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> deadline. Making sure that there are ideas, easily implemented, that can jump start the process.

38. A menu of choices was discussed. Projects that can be phased and appropriate in scale.

39. Additional meetings will be scheduled for the 1<sup>st</sup> week of September and also the end of September.

This summary is part of the permanent record for this project. If there are concerns or discrepancies please notify RRTL within 7 days.

END

CER/jwb



## 6. Appendix

### Lowertown Interpretive Plan

#### A. Meeting Minutes

RRTL

### MEETING MINUTES

**PROJECT:** Lowertown Interpretive Plan (L.I.P.) **RRTL PROJECT #:** 1705.01  
**TO:** Chad Roberts  
**FROM:** Chip Lindeke / Craig Rafferty  
**SUBJECT:** Lowertown Interpretive Plan Focus Group Tours  
**DATE:** September 14, 2018  
**PRESENT:** Tabitha Benci Durango, CRC; members of the community; Craig Rafferty (RRTL Architects)  
**COPIES TO:** File

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#### Notes from 10 AM resident focus group tour.

Basic introduction to the Lowertown Interpretive Plan project's goals were discussed. Questions on how information should be made available? What stories are you interested in hearing or telling? What is the heart of Lowertown? Mock ups of potential informational systems using QR code technology were introduced as initial ideas based on simplicity and potential for implementation.

Instructions to group were to have the tour route dictated by their preferences. See routes selected at the end of summary. The Morning Group directed a path to the Farmers Market, to the Union Depot, to Mears Park, and then to the Wacouta Commons park.



The following comments were made:

1. The Lowertown Preservation District is extremely interesting but walking around is a problem in that there are so many bleak areas in order to get to the interesting areas. Examples: getting to the river or the Bruce Vento Park.
2. There should be better connections thru out the neighborhood.
3. Many people don't have smart phones or even carry a phone. Others still rely on printed material and avoid the computer. This is changing but during the interim relying solely with on line in formation can be problematic when access is not available. Printed material should also be available as well as other non -computer related methods. Information should be available in several forms.
4. The best tour on line is so far is the AIA Minnesota information for St. Paul.

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5. Among the most interesting buildings is the James J Hill warehouse and the story behind his career and success.
6. The Historical Society walking tours take 2 hours and are interesting.
7. The Baptist Hill story would be interesting to learn more.
8. In Paris there are several walking tours that one can get information that cover different interests, this should be considered here. Booklets could be coordinated for these variations.
9. Information available to residents as well as visitors should be broader than simply historic information. It should:
  - a. List restaurants and price range
  - b. Available public rest rooms.
  - c. Other simple information is also important such as where do you get a can opener in the city.
  - d. There should be a city wide coordinated basic introduction to St Paul.
10. The Lowertown Art crawl is a popular event that draws many people. A connection with the Minnesota Museum of American Art should be made.
11. Can hotels be a partner in making information available?
12. QR codes will go out of date eventually.
13. Basic services information such as restrooms was brought up again, underscoring the serious lack of such facilities for the public.
14. The hub or center of Lowertown activities is the Farmers Market, Black Dog, and Mears Park.
15. The Farmers Market is seriously lacking in identifying signage.
16. The days when the Farmers Market is open are the most exciting days in Lowertown, although the Saints baseball games are becoming equally as popular.
17. What are paths through the area between key points? 4th street is safer now because of the train which has discouraged cars.
18. Crossing traffic at Jackson where there are the cars, bike paths, and trains is a difficult.
19. The new bike paths are welcome and exciting to have but they have already been spray painted by the city for construction gas line locations. Spray markings like this never seem to be removed long after the construction is completed.
20. The story of the Master Framers Building fire and the buildings that were eventually added to the vacant lots from the fire should be told. (262, 270 and the new construction on 4th street).
21. The Jax Building is a story of successful connection with artists for many years and the gradual elimination of them thru pricing increases. It is now an empty building because of this uprooting of the resident artists.
22. Parking is always a concern and as the vacant blocks are filled in more available parking is lost.
23. The Union Depot and the Light Rail are adding immeasurably to the neighborhood. Although the Depot is mostly empty except for infrequent events.
24. The saving of the Depot and its nomination to the National Register of Historic places in the early 1980's is a story that should be told.
25. The Depot was much more effective as a place to gather when Christo's restaurant was there, as well as when LeeAnn Chin's restaurant was there.
26. The Depot plaza is a fairly active space during the Jazz Festival and other events.
27. The Depot contains the Guinness Book of records largest Light Brite display a worthy story.
28. Trash on the sidewalks is discouraging to the group.
29. The Alleys were discussed but deemed unsafe and filled with trash at least as they exist now.
30. Mears park community gardens and the community sense of ownership that they generate is a story.
31. The Music in the park story should be told. It could also include similar activities in Rice Park, in Kellogg Park, and Pedros Park.



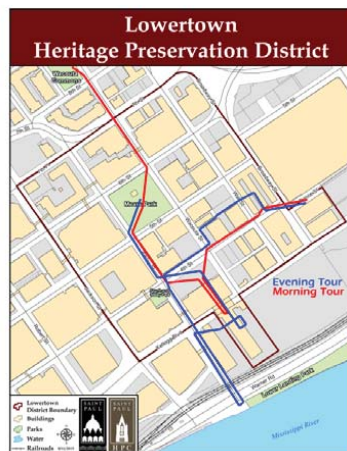


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32. This park is a destination for many. Many dog owners rely on the park. This has been very successful but is it becoming over crowded?
33. The path around Como Lake is a favorite as it seems safe, green, and interesting. Such a path around Lowertown will be hard to capture the safety at the river, at Bruce Vento Park, etc.
34. What can be done with the artists? Are there ways to incorporate their art work?
35. In Massachusetts there are areas where artists design the decorative tables in a park on Cape Cod.
36. Discussion regarding the river was brought up to see its response from the group. Access to the river was considered unacceptable and a barrier.
37. The winter trails starting on the deck of the depot were of interest to some. St Paul Vibrancy is working on similar issues of winter enhancement.
38. There are only three effective winter space indoor spaces in the city: The Union Depot, Landmark Center, and the River center.
39. Skyways are lifesavers in the city in the winter. Hours need to be extended and safety needs to be constantly monitored. They should find ways to be activated.
40. The lack of an inviting entry to Galtier Plaza will continue to assure that it is mostly empty.
41. Designated alleys in a designated San Francisco area are allowed to have artists paint murals etc. This has become very popular and should be considered within the Lowertown Alleys.
42. The Historic building wall signs are really interesting but are also disappearing.
43. The Wacouta Commons Park has a beautiful park, play area for children, and an area for dogs. Soccer is played there by many of the kids who come from countries where soccer is the primary sport. The First Baptist Church is a welcoming gesture from the north side of Lowertown as is the Tower at St Mary's Church. Cars drive past these and also past the Wacouta Commons which is a very nice green space. This is a welcoming entry. It is in stark contrast to the entry from the south along the river.
44. The stories of a train ride from Rochester and the impressive rooms of the Union Depot are important. The space filled with people, sounds, and activities were memorable. How can this sensibility be replicated. Can recordings of that era in a train depot be imported as background?
45. Can holographic projection recreate the sense of an active train concourse?
46. This walk around tour ended at First Baptist Church on the North side?



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##### Notes from 6 PM resident focus group tour:

Basic introduction to the Lowertown Interpretive Plan project's goals were discussed. Questions on how information should be made available? What stories are you interested in hearing or telling? What is the heart of Lowertown? Mock ups of potential informational systems using QR code technology were introduced as initial ideas based on simplicity and potential for implementation.

Instructions to group were to have the tour route dictated by their preferences. The Evening route is demonstrated at the end of the AM tour summary. They directed a path to the Farmers Market, then through 2 alleys, then to the River, back through the Union Depot, to Mears Park, and then to the new Hygge restaurant across from the Depot.



The following comments were made:

1. The Farmers Market is the heart of Lowertown. Mears Park is also almost equally important as far as the residents are concerned.
2. The Green line train is the reason that many have located in St Paul and Lowertown.
3. Everyone is happy and active on market days. Is there a way to extend the atmosphere of the market to more days in Lowertown? It is not a daily event but it has such a positive effect on the city. What would it take to have more year round activity?
4. Signage is really inadequate at the market.
5. The Union Depot is an underutilized asset. What can be done to create a stronger connection between the Depot, the Farmers Market, and Mears Park?
6. The alleys were the next stop and the charm of the alleys from the market past Golden's Deli and the Jax Building were described as very interesting for potential pedestrian movement. There is an ongoing arts project called Alley Up that intends to introduce art into the alleys as way to begin to open their potential.
7. The Seattle Bubble Gum Row, where sticking gum on the wall has become an art form, drawing visitors is another example of alley ways taking on a different persona.
8. The alley murals in San Francisco district were cited again this evening similar to the morning discussion.
9. The lack of activities or shops in Galtier that would make it a draw was discussed. Options such as opening up for winter farmers markets, recreating the original entry, using the movie theater, etc. where suggested. Is Galtier an opportunity for a downtown high school?
10. Cray Corporation's recent decision to move was predictable. Thought is needed to be given to a more successful draw for the region.
11. The Downtown Vitality Vision concept is being nurtured currently.
12. Music in the park is a huge draw and the design of the Mears Park is part of the reason it is successful.
13. The story behind the design of Mears Park is worth explaining, as should the events, the community gardens, and these should become part of the overall story of the Park that has had a couple of names including, Baptist Hill and Smith park.



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14. Public Art installations should include links to events and the stories behind the art work.
15. Probably the most necessary information for the visitor would be a description of where Public restrooms are located, what are the price ranges of restaurants and where are they located, and what is happening in town on that day and the next day. The public restroom situation is almost impossible.
16. Could the Public PA system in Mears Park be part of a city wide information system?
17. The River should be emphasized and connections to it enhanced.
18. The recent temporary art installation of Lowertown people throughout the area was extremely successful and brought the district to life.
19. Access to and from skyways to the streets are not as clearly defined or available.
20. The Robert Street Bridge is beautiful but in need of repair.
21. Welcoming signage would be welcome.
22. The landing at the river should have a reason to go to it and a route that is safe. What are things that can be done to make the landing interesting? What can be done to activate the river and the waterway?
23. What is the story behind the Lower Landing?
24. Views to the river are mostly from the Union Depot, but a connection is very needed in order to pass over the railroad tracks and Shepard road in order to get to the river.
25. Weddings, ethnic, and cultural events are now constantly part of Navy Island.
26. More economical restaurants are needed.
27. The light rail at the depot plaza is a huge boost to the region and the reason the housing in Lowertown is filling rapidly and the residential numbers are increasing rapidly.
28. Action groups include COWE (the Collaborative Working Environment) and the St Paul innovation Summit.
29. Hygga is a new restaurant opened by Bruce Schneider,
30. Content films have been recorded for many years and can be added to the information that is made available if the QR concept or any of the options to connect people with information.
31. Whatever solutions result from the Lowertown Interpretive Plan study, they should serve for multiple purposes for example:
  - a. Artist and Business and shops
  - b. Visitor and resident
  - c. Market, business, arts, city wide events
32. An art park would be exciting as would an arts tour.
33. There are companies that can prepare the information that would go into the QR codes. Information can be updated without changing the code so having it cast as part of a plaque is a very reason approach that can be accomplished with relatively little difficulty.

This summary is part of the permanent record for this project. If there are concerns or discrepancies please notify RRTL within 7 days.

END

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### MEETING MINUTES

**PROJECT:** Lowertown Interpretive Plan (L.I.P.) **RRTL PROJECT #:** 1705.01  
**TO:** Chad Roberts  
**FROM:** Chip Lindeke / Craig Rafferty  
**SUBJECT:** Technical Advisory Meeting 2  
**DATE:** September 20, 2018  
**PRESENT:** Mollie Spillman, Tina Volpe, Karen Clover, Jim Miller, Chad Roberts, Lucy Thompson, Craig Rafferty  
**COPIES TO:** File



The progress to date was reviewed including introduction to the research materials as well as potential solutions related to the lighting the way concepts. The following points were made:

1. Clarity for how the reference material will be accessed was stressed, in order that it would be easily available.
2. Caution was stressed that the QR code technology is not always the best technology. It has not been that successful. It will most likely it will not be around long before it is replaced.
3. It would be better to have a text option that would bring you to the preferred web site, or a direct URL connection. Blue Tooth as an option was also suggested.
4. Caution should be exercised regarding the addition of more street side clutter.
5. The discussion sidetracked regarding available App technology. With Bluetooth in the on position as you enter some Starbucks a "ping" will sound bringing you available information regarding that location.
6. RCHS agrees that it should explore apps after the deadline for this interpretation study is completed. Also to be explored is how the collected information can be stored and accessed at RCHS. Such data would need management and the ability to be warehoused and updated frequently. It will eventually be close to a full time job to keep things updated and organized properly. Currently and in the future it may be "low tech" that is the most appropriate for ease of access and updates.
7. A question was raised regarding outdated material suggesting that the list presented be edited to eliminate such information in order to keep the most current material. It was pointed out that this

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- is a historical repository for material and information and should not be edited for current or dated material or information.
8. Eventually connections with Public Art St Paul, SPAC, Lowertown Arts and other groups should be included.
  9. What have other cities done in order to collect and make available historical information?
  10. What are other Main Street stories that could serve as examples.
  11. What is the history behind the Lowertown Light fixtures?
  12. The alleys continue to be a source of genuine interest. The alleys are high on the list of priorities for the city to address.
  13. Printed material in addition to web accessed material should be made available after it has been organized.
  14. The Lowertown Walking Tour prepared by the City almost 25 years ago is still being used but could be updated with the connections that are being proposed by this study.
  15. It was stressed that a clear, simple explanation of the goals behind this study should be part of the report.
    - a. What is the driving intent behind the funding?
    - b. What are the organizing principals?
    - c. What are the core reasons?
    - d. How will new projects fit?
    - e. What are guiding principles?
    - f. What problem is being resolved?
    - g. What is the big picture?
  16. Guiding principles must be cautiously stated in order to keep options open for the future.
  17. One of the reasons to undertake this challenge is to help people understand how they can contribute?
  18. A story that would be interesting for some would be a description of what exists beneath the streets of the city.
  19. Themes that stretch within and beyond the boundaries of Lowertown should be incorporated like open spaces, bike trails, and garden spaces.
  20. There are no gateways from the river. In the 30's the union Depot was a gateway.
  21. The River Landing is targeted for significant change. Discussions have been on going to create river cruises with St Paul as the beginning and / or the terminus for such cruises. The process has been bogged down lately with permits and other requirements.
  22. Visit St Paul is a key. When it included, on its web site, a photo of the two river paddle boats docked in Lowertown, it was their most popular posting.
  23. The creation of a Lowertown Entertainment district has been a goal for the city and the community.
  24. St Paul was in the past and should be the highest northern navigable point on the Mississippi. The Great River Passage study talked about extending the barge traffic further but this may not make sense due to the expense of continuing to dredge to keep channel open.
  25. Rice Park has Landmark Center as its focal point and information is available for the area in its lobby. Is the Depot the focal point for Lowertown? The Depot does have an information kiosk and it could become a city Visitor Center but it isn't at the moment. It should be part of the long range discussion.
  26. How should information be accessed in Lowertown?





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27. The 2nd train connection to Chicago will be important and is being negotiated at this time.  
Currently the one train leaves early in the morning and returns late at night without many people around. A Visitor Center would not be open at those times.
28. Visit St. Paul is supportive of the Union Depot as the city visitor center and the Union Depot is interested in this as well.
29. Where does one buy a cheap souvenir of the city?
30. Guest services should be front and center.
31. Gordon's and Signals restaurant were the key elements in 1983 when the depot reopened, this would make an interesting story.
32. Lowertown is a residential artist community, this should be a story in itself regarding how to keep the activity of the artists from being driven away. The Jax building is a disappointing example. Lowertown Lofts residents should have their stories told. What can be done to maintain the artistic emphasis of the community?
33. History is a living thing and the stories and voices of the past and the future should be captured.
34. "Humans of Lowertown" is a Facebook post that is a spoof on a similar posting from New York City about gentrification of city areas.

There will be one additional follow-up meeting next week as the grant study is pulled together.

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END

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