

Frenz, Andrew

From: Jamie Schwesnedl <jamie@moonpalacebooks.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 14, 2026 2:59 PM
To: Frenz, Andrew
Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL] Concerns about rezoning at 3033 Snelling/3000 Minnehaha and moving of Alley

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Thank you for your reply.

I hope planners will also take into account that any business at 3010 Minnehaha will need dumpsters in their drive. I assume that at some point the city will require a fence to be built around the dumpsters, which will also take up space. That will require 50 - 70-foot semi-trailers delivering beer and 40-foot tour vans unloading equipment to make a 90 degree right turn from the 15-foot wide alley into a 22-foot wide driveway, with no extra space past the little corner on the north property line. That seems way too tight for vehicles of that size to make.

Thank you.

Jamie Schwesnedl

[Moon Palace Books](#)

3032 Minnehaha Ave.

Minneapolis, MN 55406

On Thu, May 14, 2026 at 1:23 PM Frenz, Andrew <Andrew.Frenz@minneapolismn.gov> wrote:

Hi Jamie,

Thank you for your comments.

They will be included in the record and provided to the Commissioners at the start on Monday's meeting.

If you haven't seen them yet, the hearing agenda, which includes the staff reports and applications materials, is now available online here: <https://lims.minneapolismn.gov/board/agenda/CPC/5999>.

Thanks for raising your concerns about vehicles using the driveway for 3010 Minnehaha Ave having to back in or out with the change to the alley configuration. The City also would not want to create a condition where vehicles back up across the sidewalk or bikeway. I know that the turning movements at the intersection of the two alley

segments were evaluated and the proposed alley configuration can accommodate all needed turns between the two alleys, but I'm not sure what was evaluated for the 3010 Minnehaha Ave driveway. I'll reach out to Public Works and the applicant to find out and will be back in touch.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions or comments in the meantime.

Thank you,

Andrew Frenz, AICP
Principal City Planner

Land Use, Design, and Preservation

City of Minneapolis – Community Planning and Economic Development

505 4th Ave S – #320

Minneapolis, MN 55415

Office: 612-673-3790

andrew.frenz@minneapolismn.gov

www.minneapolismn.gov/cped

From: Jamie Schwesnedl <jamie@moonpalacebooks.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 13, 2026 3:22 PM
To: Frenz, Andrew <Andrew.Frenz@Minneapolismn.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Concerns about rezoning at 3033 Snelling/3000 Minnehaha and moving of Alley

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Hello Mr. Frenz -

I received the letter about plans and a public hearing regarding the re-zoning of the parcel at 3033 Snelling, and I have serious concerns. I looked at the City's website which features renderings of the proposed project, and the relocation of the alley looks as though it will be impossible for large delivery

vehicles to turn from the alley in the driveway of the business at 3010 Minnehaha. That business is a music and performing arts venue, and has large delivery trucks and tour buses pulling from the alley into its drive several times a week. If those vehicles can't access that drive from the alley, I worry that they will have to either back in from Minnehaha, OR back out into Minnehaha. This seems incredibly dangerous. It's a busy street, and the drive is just feet from a major intersection (Lake and Minnehaha) and only a couple blocks from the offramps of highway 55, and it crosses a busy sidewalk near a major bus stop, and would cause buses and large trucks to drive backwards through a major bike lane that already has limited visibility.

As a small business and commercial property-owner in the area, I am shocked that the City would propose moving an alley in a way that prevents a pre-existing business from operating safely, either forcing the business to close, or endangering residents, workers and visitors to the area.

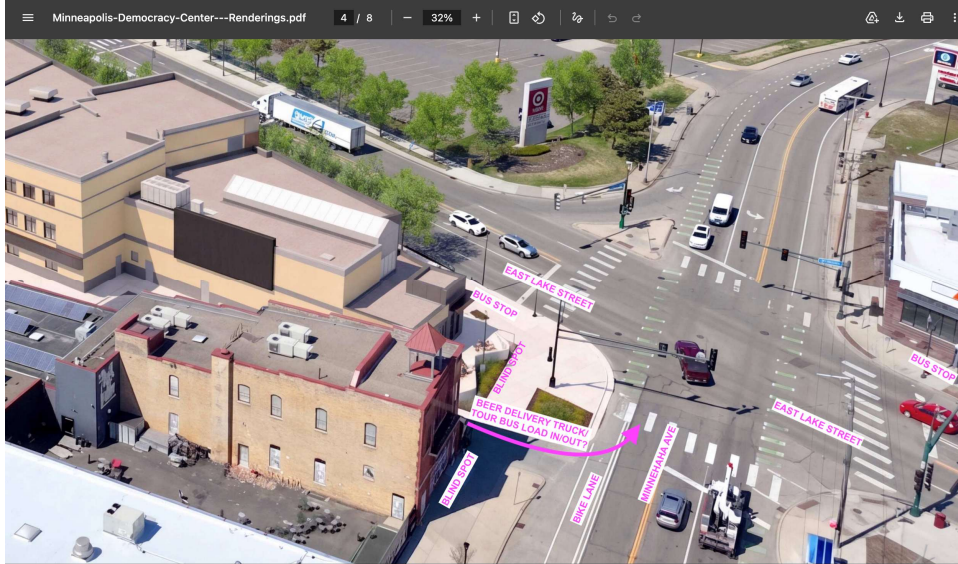
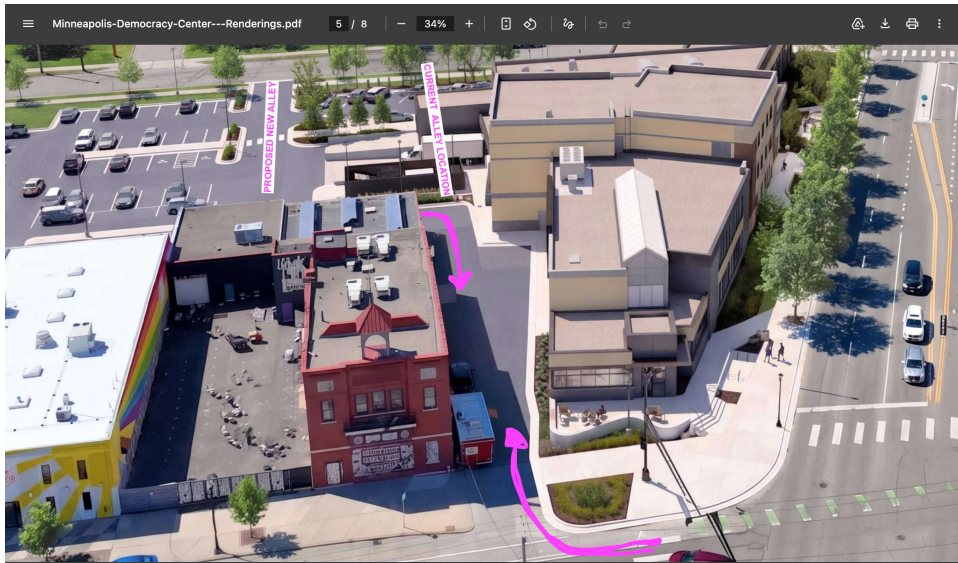
Additionally, the proposed relocation of the alley has it making a 90 degree turn directly behind the property, with no curb or traffic blocking space, greatly increasing the likelihood that a vehicle will drive into the back of the building at 3010 Minnehaha Ave.

I will try to make it to the hearing on Monday, but if I'm not able, I hope you can let me know through email how this business is being accommodated for losing this pre-existing public thoroughway, or how that is being taken into account in the planned moving of the alley (which property owners along the alley have not been previously notified of) and the associated re-zoning of 3033 Snelling Ave.

Thank you.

-Jamie Schwesnedl

Co-Owner, Moon Palace Books



[Moon Palace Books](#)

3032 Minnehaha Ave.

Minneapolis, MN 55406

[EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the City of Minneapolis. Please exercise caution when opening links or attachments.

Frenz, Andrew

From: Chris Mozena <chris@thehookmpls.com>
Sent: Monday, May 18, 2026 9:03 AM
To: Frenz, Andrew
Cc: Kristine smith; Jesse Brodd Nobool; Forever Agate LLC; Lisa Boyd; Hannah Wydeven; Jamie Schwesnedl; Kate Winkel; Meena Natarajan; GovDelivery; Chowdhury, Aurin; Wonsley, Robin (she/her/hers); Palmisano, Linea; elliott.payne@minneapolismn.gov; Stevenson, Soren D
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Concerns regarding 3000 Minnehaha proposed project

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Some people who received this message don't often get email from chris@thehookmpls.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Andrew-

Thank you for posting your contact info outside of our 3010 Minnehaha Ave building entrance, on the fence surrounding the former 3rd precinct.

I personally appreciate the opportunity to contact you directly and would respectfully ask for an opportunity to express our collective objection to the proposed combining of city properties at Minnehaha and Snelling, as presented by Artur Maia with the City of Minneapolis Properties Services, at tonight's meeting.

You recently heard from our neighbor, Jamie at Moon Palace, whom articulated concerns to you regarding the alley being moved and coming to a 'T' directly behind our facility, in addition to safety concerns with the alley parcel along The Hook being dead-ended.

Now I'm wanting to voice The Hook & Ladder's own direct opposition to this specific plan as is currently proposed, prior to the meeting on this subject tonight at 4:30pm, as the direct next door neighbor to both properties under consideration.

We can only assume that Mr Maia's office is unfamiliar with the historic property sitting directly to the south of the former 3rd Precinct, and that his office was unaware that an iconic community theater and cultural hub (The Hook & Ladder, celebrating 10-years of operations this month) sitting at that location would be irreparably harmed should these proposed changes be implemented.

For historical relevance, The Hook suffered \$400k in damages following the Minneapolis Police murder of George Floyd in 2020, but thankfully survived!

Today, The Hook is the last remaining performing arts center along the once vibrant East Lake Street corridor, from Highway 35 to the Mississippi River, existing to support artists, community and provide platform to marginalized voices! We currently host in excess of (250) live arts performances annually, including a large number of community festivals, non-profit fundraisers and the award-winning summer outdoor concert series, Under the Canopy! We are an economic engine for our community, bringing in 10's of thousands of guests annually.

The proposed site rendering we've seen (attached here for your review) seem to represent a number of planned actions that would have devastating impact on The Hook & Ladder's future ability to operate these historic facilities, if implemented.

From the illustration provided, we can foresee a number of issues we'd like to have addressed before any additional consideration of action is taken.

First and foremost, we request that the attached drawing be redrawn to correctly show actual location of Hook & Ladder facilities relevant to the alley running parallel with Minnehaha/Snelling. The drawing currently seems to show space between the back of Hook facilities and the alley that does not exist. (Once corrected, with the addition of actual dimensions, it will be clear that no vehicle can safely make the turn into/out of the alley from our own perpendicular 'alley parcel' and entrance, rendering our primary entrance unusable for a number of essential functions.)

Additionally, we'd like these drawings to acknowledge the ownership property lines. Today, FG&C (owner of The Hook properties) owns the 'alley parcel' running between the former 3rd Precinct and the old firehouse that is being most dramatically impacted.

One more significant issue on the attached drawings is where the location of a loading dock would ultimately end up on the existing 3rd Precinct building that does not currently have this feature.

The location for loading docks that we see in the 'logistics area' of the attached rendering appears to have (2) loading docks, which come at the cost of more than 50% of the existing/limited community parking! (We believe there IS a better way, and we'd be happy to explore that option with your office!)

Please also see the recently commissioned Parking Survey results (linked below) for this area, to better understand the impact of this decision on our local residents and business community. *This study was funded by a pair of community non-profits in the past year, Seward Redesign and Longfellow Rising, and is presented with their permission.

250107 Abridged_Downtown Longfellow
Parking Study.pdf
drive.google.com



Unfettered access to The Hook's 'alley parcel' running between the former 3rd Precinct and The Hook & Ladder, from Minnehaha to Snelling, is critical to the Hook's operations for a number of reasons, including;

- 1) the north entrance to The Hook & Ladder is our primary guest entrance
- 2) the north entrance is the location of our handicapped parking which we are required to maintain
- 3) the proposed removal of thoroughfare to Snelling eliminates ability to safely receive commercial deliveries and mobility impaired guests (also forcing vehicles to back into traffic, across bike lanes, at one of the busiest intersections on Lake.)

4) 50% of existing parking would be removed from community access under this proposed plan, negatively affecting all local residents and businesses

5) the introduction of unlit green spaces will (unfortunately) make our surroundings less safe for our community, businesses and visiting guests in the evening hours.

6) the limited available on-street parking in the neighborhood (on Snelling) is no longer accessible to area guests without walking around the entire block

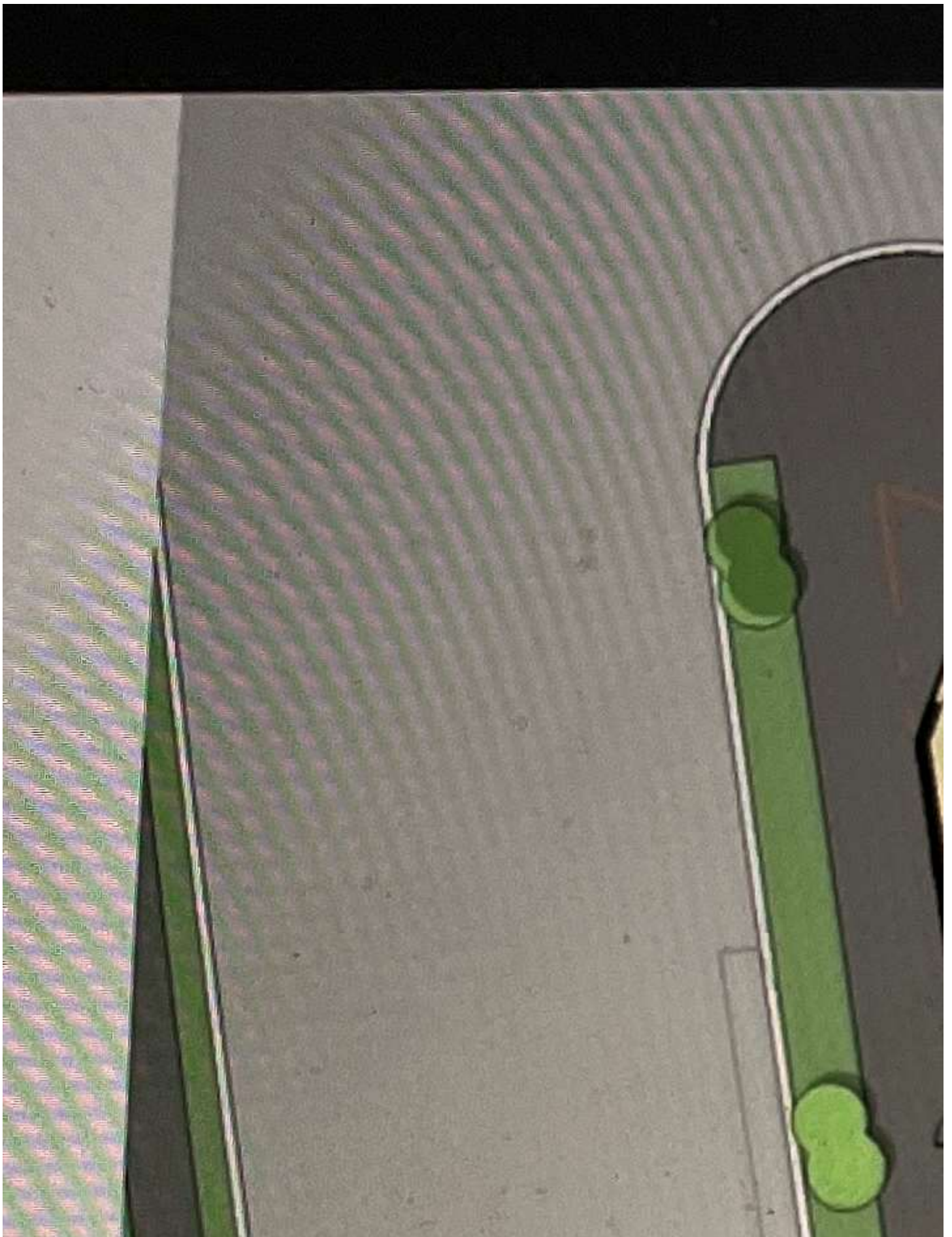
7) snow removal from the new alley location, without the ability to make a turn with a plow, will apparently be pushed into the back of our facility which abuts the alley. This brings the issue of eroding concrete block due to the use of heavy road salt piling on our wall.

For the above outlined reasons, we respectfully ask that this development initiative be paused until alternative options can be satisfactorily explored that can meet both the needs of the surrounding neighbors and community, as well as those of the city.

Thank you in advance for your thoughtful consideration, and please don't hesitate to be in touch directly with any questions at all. We look forward to addressing these concerns with you personally this evening.

Most sincerely-

Chris Mozena
The Hook & Ladder
3010 Minnehaha Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55406
TheHookMpls.com
612-306-3059 cell



[EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the City of Minneapolis. Please exercise caution when opening links or attachments.

Frenz, Andrew

From: Allison Sharkey <asharkey@lakestreetcouncil.org>
Sent: Tuesday, May 26, 2026 8:56 AM
To: Frenz, Andrew
Subject: [EXTERNAL] 3000 Minnehaha exterior layout

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Hi Andrew,

I've heard there is a need to look at the layout on the exterior of 3000 Minnehaha to avoid hardship for the neighboring businesses.

Anything that can be done to support the Hook and Ladder would be greatly appreciated as it's an important anchor on a block that has been through so much.

Thanks for looking into this,

Allison

Allison Sharkey

Executive Director, Lake Street Council

Mobile : 612.824.7420 **Web:** VisitLakeStreet.com

Address: 2925 Chicago Ave, STE 190, Minneapolis, MN 55407

Email: asharkey@lakestreetcouncil.org

[EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the City of Minneapolis. Please exercise caution when opening links or attachments.

Frenz, Andrew

From: Bell.Brian@dorsey.com
Sent: Monday, June 1, 2026 4:52 PM
To: Frenz, Andrew
Cc: manyhatshere@gmail.com; chris@thehookmpls.com
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comment Letter on Minneapolis Democracy Center
Attachments: 2026-6-1_FG & C LLC - Minneapolis Democracy Center Comment Letter-v1.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Hi Andrew –

Please see attached comment letter on the Minneapolis Democracy Center. Please include this in the record for PLAN21164 and the materials for any future City meetings on this matter.

Regards – Brian

Brian B. Bell

Partner, Local Department Head Regulatory Affairs



DORSEY & WHITNEY LLP

Suite 1500, 50 South Sixth Street | Minneapolis, MN 55402-1498

P: (612) 492-6178

C: (651) 785-5329

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BRIAN B. BELL
Partner; Local Department Head Regulatory Affairs
(612) 492-6178
bell.brian@dorsey.com

June 1, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Andrew Frenz
Principal City Planner
Land Use, Design, and Preservation
City of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development
505 4th Avenue S, Ste. 320
Minneapolis, MN 55415
(612) 673-3790
andrew.frenz@minneapolismn.gov

Re: Concerns with Minneapolis Democracy Center Proposals

Dear Mr. Frenz:

The Hook & Ladder Theater ("Hook & Ladder" or "Theater") has struggled to survive through numerous threats over the last six years. The civil unrest after the murder of George Floyd and COVID-19 pandemic are just the most high-profile challenges. These challenges have been difficult enough without the City of Minneapolis ("City") actively pursuing a project that will inflict a fatal blow on the Theater. If the planned conversion of the former third-precinct building ("Third Precinct") into the Minneapolis Democracy Center ("Project") proceeds as currently proposed, it will be the 1,000th cut in a death by a thousand cuts. Unfortunately, many of the cuts along the way have been inflicted by the City itself, which is supposed to support, not hinder, residents.

This letter is submitted on behalf of FG & C, LLC ("FG & C"), the fee owner of the Hook & Ladder located at 3010 Minnehaha Avenue. In this letter, FG & C comments on two access issues that will bring an end to the Theater's long and storied history. First, the letter addresses the proposed relocation of the public alley ("Public Alley") that currently splits the Third Precinct from the parking lot to the south ("South Lot"). Second, the letter addresses the related accessibility issue of the loss of significant off-street parking. The Hook & Ladder can be saved only by addressing both of these issues: maintaining the Public Alley in its current location and formalizing the City's parking relationship with the Theater. So far, the City has sought to address only the first of these two interrelated issues.

Background

The Hood & Ladder is a fiercely independent, artist-driven, inclusionary, multi-use event center located in historic Firehouse #21 in the Longfellow neighborhood. For 27 years, the Theater

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has served as a nexus and a host to diverse and multicultural arts endeavors across the entire metro area. The Theater hosts 250 live events a year, including the Juneteenth event, Soul of the Southside; Festival de las Calaveras, a Día de los Muertos Celebration; Roots, Rock, & Deep Blues; and the award winning summer concert series, Under the Canopy. Roosevelt and South Highs hold their performances at the Theater. And the Lake Street Council hosts its annual meeting there.

FG & C has owned the Theater for 27 years. Problems with the City started from the beginning. In the early 2000s, the City proposed to put the front door of their new addition on the private alley owned by FG & C north of the Theater ("Private Drive"). In the mid-2010s, to create a bike lane, the City reduced parking on Minnehaha Avenue. The reduction of parking required more patrons to park on Snelling Avenue and in the South Lot. The reduction of parking forced the Theater to move its iconic firehouse entrance on Minnehaha Avenue to the Private Drive. The Private Drive also serves as a parking lot, passenger drop-off, and loading area. Then came the murder of George Floyd. In response to the civil unrest that followed, law enforcement commandeered the Theater for a fourth defensive wall and prohibited the Theater from boarding up. When police withdrew from the Third Precinct, the Theater was a sitting duck. The Theater suffered \$400,000 worth of damage. The City has had Jersey barriers with razor wire on FC & G's property for nearly six years. These events in 2020, of course, occurred with the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was devastating for performing arts centers. Just as the Theater was recovering for these issues, not to mention inflation headwinds, Operation Metro Surge hit, which dramatically reduced patronage of the Theater.

After barely surviving through these turbulent times, in early May, FG & C learned of the City's Land Use Application for the Minneapolis Democracy Center to be housed at the former Third Precinct. As relevant to these comments, the Application proposes to: (i) vacate the Public Alley, which, in conjunction with the Private Drive, creates a direct connection between Snelling and Minnehaha Avenues; (ii) relocate the public alley approximately 75 feet southeast of its current location; and (iii) reduce the parking capacity of the South Lot by nearly 50%, from 86 to 46 spaces.

Comments

The FG & C and Theater¹ fundamentally and emphatically disagree with the City's contention that the Project, as currently proposed, would not negatively impact the surrounding properties. Application at 10-11, 23. The City never consulted the Theater regarding the impacts of the Project on the Theater. If it had, the City would have learned that the proposed reduction in off-street parking and alley relocation would irreparably harm the Theater and risks its ability to operate this cherished cultural institution. Stated plainly, the Project, as currently designed, poses an existential threat to the Theater. This threat comes from two interrelated accessibility issues.

First, moving the Public Alley will frustrate access to the main entrance for patrons and vendors. The current location of the Public Alley allows vehicles to drive straight through from Snelling Avenue to Minnehaha Avenue and vice-versa. The relocated Public Alley would require vehicles to make a 90 degree turn at the intersection of the Public and Private Drives where they

¹ Although these comments are submitted on behalf of FG & C, FG & C has confirmed the Hook & Ladder agrees with the views expressed in these comments.

would join a public north-south alley. Creating these T- and L-shaped intersections would render the Public and Private Drives the Theater has long relied on impassable for large delivery trucks, artists' tour buses, and Metro Mobility vehicles. Vehicles that wish to use the Theater's entrance will be forced to either back into the Private Drive from Minnehaha Avenue or back out of the Private Drive onto Minnehaha Avenue. Forcing large vehicles to back in or out of the Private Drive presents unnecessary safety concerns because it requires blind, reverse crossing of a bike lane and sidewalk that already has limited visibility. The intersection of Minnehaha Avenue at Lake Street East, just one parcel north of the Theater, is a busy intersection that cars, public transit, bikers, and pedestrians frequently use. The largest vehicles will necessarily encroach on the intersection's crosswalk. The Theater's main entrance—moved to accommodate the City's bike lane—will be inaccessible for the many large vehicles the Theater, patrons, artists, and vendors rely on. Instead of navigating this treacherous layout, vehicles will be forced to park away from the main entrance. These accessibility issues will fall disproportionately on the mobility impaired, who rely on Metro Mobility and other large vehicles to attend events at the Theater.

These issues are exacerbated by the second accessibility issue: the loss of off-street parking in the South Lot. Parking is already limited and will get significantly worse with the elimination of nearly 50 percent of the parking spaces in the South Lot. Patrons will be forced to find on-street parking sometimes blocks away, reducing the attractiveness of the Theater to patrons and, by extension, performers. Those lucky enough to find parking on Snelling Avenue, will no-longer have a direct route from Snelling Avenue to the main entrance. They'll have to walk up Snelling to Lake Street, along Lake Street past the Minneapolis Democracy Center, then down Minnehaha Avenue, and, finally, along the Private Drive to the main entrance, nearly completing a full circle. Alternatively, patrons will need to walk along the relocated Public Alley, up the current north-south public alley, and over on the Private Drive. Tour buses will be forced to find on-street parking, potentially blocks away, and carry their equipment over long distances. These access issues will make the Theater unavailable for many events.

Finally, snow from the relocated Public Alley will likely be plowed to the back of the Theater because plows will be unable to negotiate the 90-degree turn. Associated road salt plowed into the back of the Theater is likely to reduce the structural integrity of the concrete block due to the road salt piling on the back wall of the theater.

Solution

Any solution must solve two problems: access to the main entrance for large vehicles and the loss of off-street parking. The Theater has engaged in several discussions with the City regarding potential solutions. The City's focus has been solely on fixing the alley issue. But this ignores the second, interrelated accessibility issue; the loss of off-street parking. Failing to address the loss of off-street parking only partially solves one of the problems. Any solution must:

1. Maintain the Public Alley with its existing lighting in its current location. Maintaining the Public Alley may be accomplished by moving the garage for the mobile voting booth, having a loading dock at grade, rather than sunken; and moving the screened refuse area. For the safety of patrons, it is critical that the lighting be maintained or improved.

June 1, 2026
Page 4

2. Include an agreement between the City, FG & C, and the Theater formalizing the current parking arrangement, allowing the Theater to use the parking lot at the Minneapolis Democracy Center for events at the Theater.

* * *

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments on behalf of FG & C. Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

DORSEY & WHITNEY LLP

Brian B. Bell
Partner; Local Department Head Regulatory Affairs

BRIAN B. BELL
Partner; Local Department Head Regulatory Affairs
(612) 492-6178
bell.brian@dorsey.com

June 16, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Andrew Frenz
Principal City Planner
Land Use, Design, and Preservation
City of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development
505 4th Avenue S, Ste. 320
Minneapolis, MN 55415
andrew.frenz@minneapolismn.gov

**Re: Supplemental Letter: Concerns with Minneapolis Democracy Center
Proposals**

Dear Mr. Frenz:

I write on behalf of FG & C, LLC ("FG & C"), the fee owner of the Hook and Ladder¹ to update the Minneapolis Planning Commission ("Commission") on discussions with the City of Minneapolis ("City") on finding a resolution to the access and parking issues presented by the proposed Minneapolis Democracy Center ("Project"). These comments supplement the June 1 Comments. Attachment A. Despite multiple discussions with the City and its architect, no material progress has been made to address the access and parking problems the Project imposes on the Hook and Ladder. The changes the City has thus far offered do not present a comprehensive solution to the problem. Finally, cutting off access and eliminating of parking will take all of the value out of the Hook and Ladder. Finally, the Project as proposed does not meet the criteria for the requested land-use approvals.

I. The City Has Not Resolved the Access and Parking Issues with the Project.

All the City has proposed to address the parking and access issues is to move the garage for the "Community Voting Trailer" slightly north. The City has also proposed to move a generator onto the roof. Finally, the City offered to widen the intersection between the public and private alleys. These gestures do not even solve one of the problems the Project causes. To resolve this access issue, both the garage and the screened refuse area must be entirely moved out of the area of the current public alley. Moreover, the loading dock must be put at grade. Even these changes would still leave the parking issue. Currently, there are 88 spots available for public use at the parking lot south of the Third Precinct building. A formal arrangement must be agreed to

¹ As with the attached comments submitted on June 1, 2026, FG & C has confirmed the Hook & Ladder agrees with the views expressed in these comments.

with the City that preserves all 88 parking spots. These spots should be available to patrons of the entire business district. These issues are discussed in greater detail in the June 1 Comments. Attachment A. The concerns with parking in Downtown Longfellow are also highlighted in the Downtown Longfellow Parking Survey, Prepared by Longfellow Rising ("Parking Survey"). Attachment B. Before proceeding, the City should add to this work by conducting an economic impact analysis of the combined effect of reducing access and parking for Downtown Longfellow while increasing demand with the Project and associated restaurant.

II. The Project as Proposed Will Severely Diminish the Value of the Property.

The City has already severely diminished the value of the Property through the presence of the burned out Third Precinct, Jersey barriers, and razor wire for the past six years. Eliminating building access will further diminish the value of the Hook and Ladder. FG & C anticipates that it could sell the building right now for only around \$150,000. Without the stigma imposed by the City, FG & C believes the building would sell for closer to \$1.5 million. Cutting off access will destroy the Hook and Ladder. Cutting off access would also constitute a compensable taking under the state and federal constitutions. Government action "that deprives a land owner of 'reasonable' or 'reasonably convenient and suitable access' constitutes a taking that requires compensation to the land owner." *C & R Stacy, LLC v. County of Chisago*, 742 N.W.2d 447, 458 (2007) (quoting *Johnson v. City of Plymouth*, 263 N.W.2d 603, 607 (Minn. 1978)). FG & C and the Hook and Ladder would be "entitled to compensation" if the Project moves forward as proposed because they would be "deprived of reasonable access." *Id.* Moreover, government action that "causes a definite and measurable decrease in the value of [a property owner's] property and interferes with the current practical enjoyment of the property [is] a compensable taking." *McShane v. Faribault*, 292 N.W.2d 253, 257 (Minn. 1980). Here, the City's action of vacating and moving a public alley, and eliminating parking would eliminate the value of FG & C's property and, therefore, would constitute a compensable taking.

III. The Project Does Not Conform to the Legal Requirements for the Approvals.

Given that the access and parking issues remain unresolved, the City does not meet its *own requirements* for the rezoning, PUD, CUP, and preliminary-plat approvals.

The Project meets none of the requirements for rezoning. First, the rezoning is inconsistent with the 2040 Comprehensive Plan ("Comp. Plan") provisions promoting arts and culture, see City of Minneapolis, Minn., Code of Ordinances § 525.490(c)(1), including Goal 8 (Creative Cultural and Natural Amenities), Policy 29 (Arts and Creative Spaces, Venues and Districts), Policy 30 (Emphasize the Value of Minneapolis' Arts and Culture), Policy 31 (Artists and Creative Workers), Policy 58 (Business Districts and Corridors), and Policy 93 (Stewarding Historic Properties). By cutting access and eliminating parking, the Project will be hamstringing, rather than promoting, arts and culture. And, because the Hook and Ladder is a historic building, the City will be degrading a historic resource, not stewarding it. Second, the rezoning is not in the public interest because it will mean the death of a beloved theater and venue, and will have serious adverse consequences on neighboring businesses. See *id.* § 525.490(c)(2). Third, the rezoning is plainly incompatible with neighboring uses because it will destroy and severely hamper those neighboring uses. See *id.* § 525.490(c)(3). Fourth, there are reasonable uses for the Third Precinct that do not require rezoning. See *id.* § 525.490(c)(4). Until recently, the City

was exploring renovations to allow it to house the Third Precinct again. It's inconceivable there are no uses the City could make of the property that don't require rezoning. Fifth, although there have been changes in the neighborhood over the last six years, none of them justify further destruction to the local businesses. See *id.* § 525.490(c)(5). The change in character of the neighborhood counsels against rezoning the Property and further harming businesses.

The Project also violates many of the standards for a PUD. See Code of Ordinances § 550.940. For example, the traffic generation characteristics are incompatible with vehicle access, parking and loading areas, and pedestrian access. *Id.* § 550.940(1)(a). These concerns are underscored by the Parking Survey. Specifically, the Project will cut off vehicle access to the Hook and Ladder and other businesses, eliminate essential parking for businesses along Minnehaha Avenue, and eliminate access to the Hook and Ladder's loading area. The Project will likely frustrate pedestrian access to the Hook and Ladder, which commonly uses the public and private alleys to access the Hook and Ladder. The Project likewise does not protect critical corridors, including critical pedestrian and vehicle access corridors to the Hook and Ladder, as required for issuance of a PUD. *Id.* § 550.940(1)(b) (PUD Requirement).

The Project also doesn't meet the requirements of a CUP because, for the reasons already stated, it "will endanger public health, safety, comfort, and general welfare" and "be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the vicinity." *Id.* § 525.380(c)(1)-(2). The CUP standards also cannot be met because the Project will "impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district." *Id.* § 525.380(c)(2). Specifically, the Project could frustrate plans to open the Pangea Theater, which will require access and parking, just like the Hook and Ladder. As noted, the Project is inconsistent with the applicable policies of the Comp. Plan, which is also a requirement for CUP approval. *Id.* § 525.380(c)(5).

Finally, the Project violates the subdivision ordinance. See Code of Ordinances, tit. 22. The preliminary plat cannot be approved as proposed because the Project does not conform to the Comp. Plan, also a requirement of plat approval, Code of Ordinances § 598.270(1). The preliminary plat is also deficient because, by cutting off access to this critical business district and eliminating parking, the plat will "be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity," and will "be detrimental to present and potential surrounding land use." *Id.* § 598.270(2). The plat will also "add substantially to congestion in the public streets," as patrons search for parking and the alleys are clogged by vehicles trying to get in and out. *Id.* § 598.270(2). Further, the land intended for building sites, namely, the garage, loading dock, and refuse area, cannot "be used safely without endangering . . . the surrounding area." *Id.* § 598.270(3). Vehicles will be unable to safely maneuver in the alley. Private buses, van services, and other vehicles may drop patrons and equipment off on Minnehaha Avenue, which is unsafe, especially given the presence of the bike lane.

Conclusion

To avoid these legal infirmities, the City must:

1. Maintain the public alley with its existing lighting in its current location.

June 16, 2026
Page 4

2. Include an agreement between the City, FG & C, the Hook and Ladder, and other business owners, formalizing the current parking arrangement, by allowing for public use of the parking lot.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments on behalf of FG & C. I look forward to discussing these issues with the Commission at its meeting on June 22.

Sincerely,

DORSEY & WHITNEY LLP

Brian B. Bell
Partner; Local Department Head Regulatory Affairs

Enclosures

Attachment A



BRIAN B. BELL
Partner; Local Department Head Regulatory Affairs
(612) 492-6178
bell.brian@dorsey.com

June 1, 2026

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

Andrew Frenz
Principal City Planner
Land Use, Design, and Preservation
City of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development
505 4th Avenue S, Ste. 320
Minneapolis, MN 55415
(612) 673-3790
andrew.frenz@minneapolismn.gov

Re: Concerns with Minneapolis Democracy Center Proposals

Dear Mr. Frenz:

The Hook & Ladder Theater (“Hook & Ladder” or “Theater”) has struggled to survive through numerous threats over the last six years. The civil unrest after the murder of George Floyd and COVID-19 pandemic are just the most high-profile challenges. These challenges have been difficult enough without the City of Minneapolis (“City”) actively pursuing a project that will inflict a fatal blow on the Theater. If the planned conversion of the former third-precinct building (“Third Precinct”) into the Minneapolis Democracy Center (“Project”) proceeds as currently proposed, it will be the 1,000th cut in a death by a thousand cuts. Unfortunately, many of the cuts along the way have been inflicted by the City itself, which is supposed to support, not hinder, residents.

This letter is submitted on behalf of FG & C, LLC (“FG & C”), the fee owner of the Hook & Ladder located at 3010 Minnehaha Avenue. In this letter, FG & C comments on two access issues that will bring an end to the Theater’s long and storied history. First, the letter addresses the proposed relocation of the public alley (“Public Alley”) that currently splits the Third Precinct from the parking lot to the south (“South Lot”). Second, the letter addresses the related accessibility issue of the loss of significant off-street parking. The Hook & Ladder can be saved only by addressing both of these issues: maintaining the Public Alley in its current location and formalizing the City’s parking relationship with the Theater. So far, the City has sought to address only the first of these two interrelated issues.

Background

The Hood & Ladder is a fiercely independent, artist-driven, inclusionary, multi-use event center located in historic Firehouse #21 in the Longfellow neighborhood. For 27 years, the Theater

50 South Sixth Street | Suite 1500 | Minneapolis, MN | 55402-1498 | T 612.340.2600 | F 612.340.2868 | dorsey.com

has served as a nexus and a host to diverse and multicultural arts endeavors across the entire metro area. The Theater hosts 250 live events a year, including the Juneteenth event, Soul of the Southside; Festival de las Calaveras, a Día de los Muertos Celebration; Roots, Rock, & Deep Blues; and the award winning summer concert series, Under the Canopy. Roosevelt and South Highs hold their performances at the Theater. And the Lake Street Council hosts its annual meeting there.

FG & C has owned the Theater for 27 years. Problems with the City started from the beginning. In the early 2000s, the City proposed to put the front door of their new addition on the private alley owned by FG & C north of the Theater ("Private Drive"). In the mid-2010s, to create a bike lane, the City reduced parking on Minnehaha Avenue. The reduction of parking required more patrons to park on Snelling Avenue and in the South Lot. The reduction of parking forced the Theater to move its iconic firehouse entrance on Minnehaha Avenue to the Private Drive. The Private Drive also serves as a parking lot, passenger drop-off, and loading area. Then came the murder of George Floyd. In response to the civil unrest that followed, law enforcement commandeered the Theater for a fourth defensive wall and prohibited the Theater from boarding up. When police withdrew from the Third Precinct, the Theater was a sitting duck. The Theater suffered \$400,000 worth of damage. The City has had Jersey barriers with razor wire on FC & G's property for nearly six years. These events in 2020, of course, occurred with the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, which was devastating for performing arts centers. Just as the Theater was recovering for these issues, not to mention inflation headwinds, Operation Metro Surge hit, which dramatically reduced patronage of the Theater.

After barely surviving through these turbulent times, in early May, FG & C learned of the City's Land Use Application for the Minneapolis Democracy Center to be housed at the former Third Precinct. As relevant to these comments, the Application proposes to: (i) vacate the Public Alley, which, in conjunction with the Private Drive, creates a direct connection between Snelling and Minnehaha Avenues; (ii) relocate the public alley approximately 75 feet southeast of its current location; and (iii) reduce the parking capacity of the South Lot by nearly 50%, from 86 to 46 spaces.

Comments

The FG & C and Theater¹ fundamentally and emphatically disagree with the City's contention that the Project, as currently proposed, would not negatively impact the surrounding properties. Application at 10-11, 23. The City never consulted the Theater regarding the impacts of the Project on the Theater. If it had, the City would have learned that the proposed reduction in off-street parking and alley relocation would irreparably harm the Theater and risks its ability to operate this cherished cultural institution. Stated plainly, the Project, as currently designed, poses an existential threat to the Theater. This threat comes from two interrelated accessibility issues.

First, moving the Public Alley will frustrate access to the main entrance for patrons and vendors. The current location of the Public Alley allows vehicles to drive straight through from Snelling Avenue to Minnehaha Avenue and vice-versa. The relocated Public Alley would require vehicles to make a 90 degree turn at the intersection of the Public and Private Drives where they

¹ Although these comments are submitted on behalf of FG & C, FG & C has confirmed the Hook & Ladder agrees with the views expressed in these comments.

would join a public north-south alley. Creating these T- and L-shaped intersections would render the Public and Private Drives the Theater has long relied on impassable for large delivery trucks, artists' tour buses, and Metro Mobility vehicles. Vehicles that wish to use the Theater's entrance will be forced to either back into the Private Drive from Minnehaha Avenue or back out of the Private Drive onto Minnehaha Avenue. Forcing large vehicles to back in or out of the Private Drive presents unnecessary safety concerns because it requires blind, reverse crossing of a bike lane and sidewalk that already has limited visibility. The intersection of Minnehaha Avenue at Lake Street East, just one parcel north of the Theater, is a busy intersection that cars, public transit, bikers, and pedestrians frequently use. The largest vehicles will necessarily encroach on the intersection's crosswalk. The Theater's main entrance—moved to accommodate the City's bike lane—will be inaccessible for the many large vehicles the Theater, patrons, artists, and vendors rely on. Instead of navigating this treacherous layout, vehicles will be forced to park away from the main entrance. These accessibility issues will fall disproportionately on the mobility impaired, who rely on Metro Mobility and other large vehicles to attend events at the Theater.

These issues are exacerbated by the second accessibility issue: the loss of off-street parking in the South Lot. Parking is already limited and will get significantly worse with the elimination of nearly 50 percent of the parking spaces in the South Lot. Patrons will be forced to find on-street parking sometimes blocks away, reducing the attractiveness of the Theater to patrons and, by extension, performers. Those lucky enough to find parking on Snelling Avenue, will no-longer have a direct route from Snelling Avenue to the main entrance. They'll have to walk up Snelling to Lake Street, along Lake Street past the Minneapolis Democracy Center, then down Minnehaha Avenue, and, finally, along the Private Drive to the main entrance, nearly completing a full circle. Alternatively, patrons will need to walk along the relocated Public Alley, up the current north-south public alley, and over on the Private Drive. Tour buses will be forced to find on-street parking, potentially blocks away, and carry their equipment over long distances. These access issues will make the Theater unavailable for many events.

Finally, snow from the relocated Public Alley will likely be plowed to the back of the Theater because plows will be unable to negotiate the 90-degree turn. Associated road salt plowed into the back of the Theater is likely to reduce the structural integrity of the concrete block due to the road salt piling on the back wall of the theater.

Solution

Any solution must solve two problems: access to the main entrance for large vehicles and the loss of off-street parking. The Theater has engaged in several discussions with the City regarding potential solutions. The City's focus has been solely on fixing the alley issue. But this ignores the second, interrelated accessibility issue; the loss of off-street parking. Failing to address the loss of off-street parking only partially solves one of the problems. Any solution must:

1. Maintain the Public Alley with its existing lighting in its current location. Maintaining the Public Alley may be accomplished by moving the garage for the mobile voting booth, having a loading dock at grade, rather than sunken; and moving the screened refuse area. For the safety of patrons, it is critical that the lighting be maintained or improved.

June 1, 2026
Page 4

2. Include an agreement between the City, FG & C, and the Theater formalizing the current parking arrangement, allowing the Theater to use the parking lot at the Minneapolis Democracy Center for events at the Theater.

* * *

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments on behalf of FG & C. Please feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

DORSEY & WHITNEY LLP

Brian B. Bell
Partner; Local Department Head Regulatory Affairs

Attachment B

The background image shows a parking lot with several cars parked. In the foreground, a silver Lexus is visible on the left, and a dark grey sedan is on the right. Behind them, other cars are parked. In the background, there are buildings, including a multi-story brick building and a white building. Trees with some autumn-colored leaves are also visible. The entire image is framed by a light blue border.

Downtown Longfellow Parking Survey July 2025

Survey Background

 **E Lake St & Minnehaha Ave**

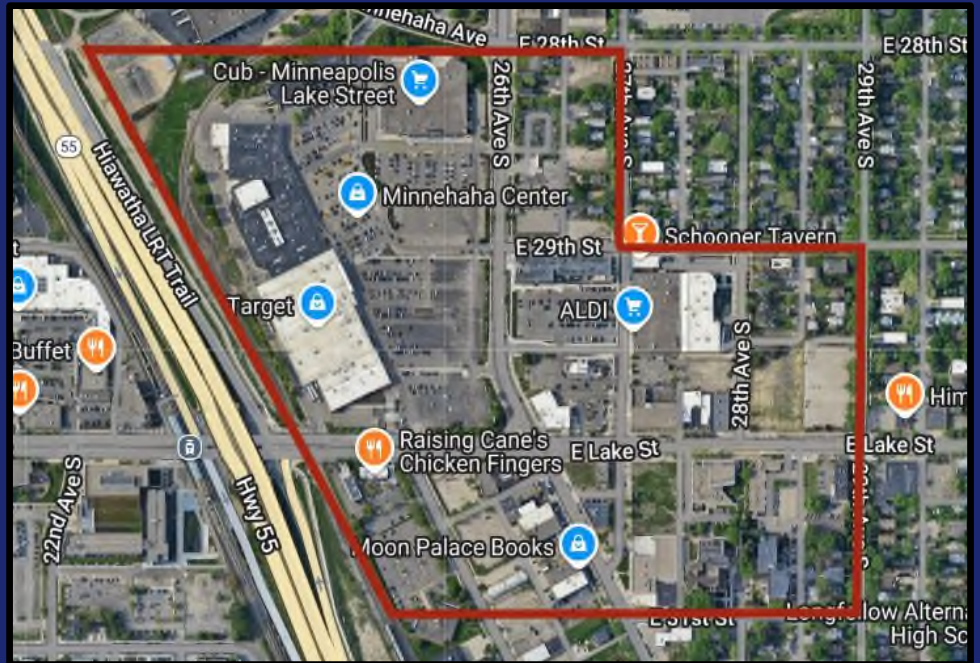
Purpose: Gather feedback from residents and patrons on parking needs in Downtown Longfellow

Goal: Request City of Minneapolis support for parking improvements.

Timeline: Open June 19 – August 7, 2025

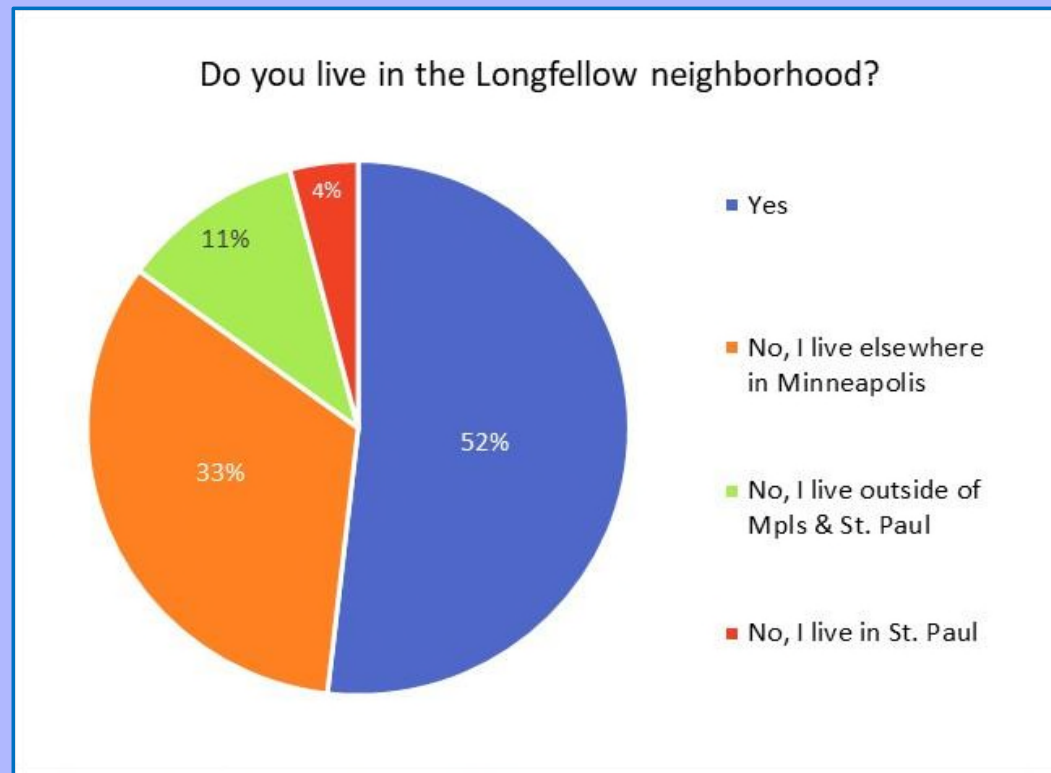
Responses: 467 total

LONGFELLOW
RISING



WHO WE HEARD FROM

Majority are local: 52% Longfellow 85% Minneapolis

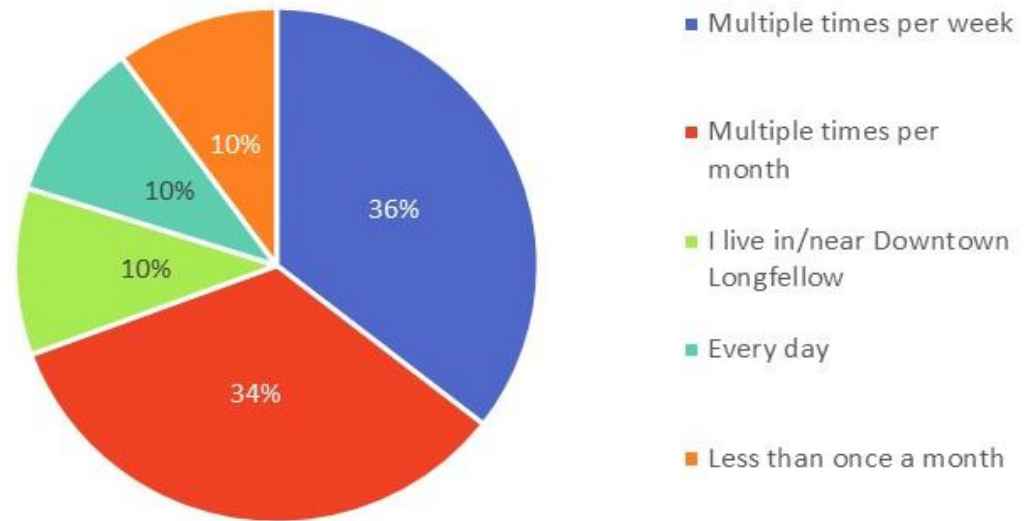


How Often They Visit

Visit Frequency

- 36%: Many times a week
- 34%: Several times a month
- **Others:** Daily, less than once a month, or live nearby

Approximately how frequently do you visit Downtown Longfellow?

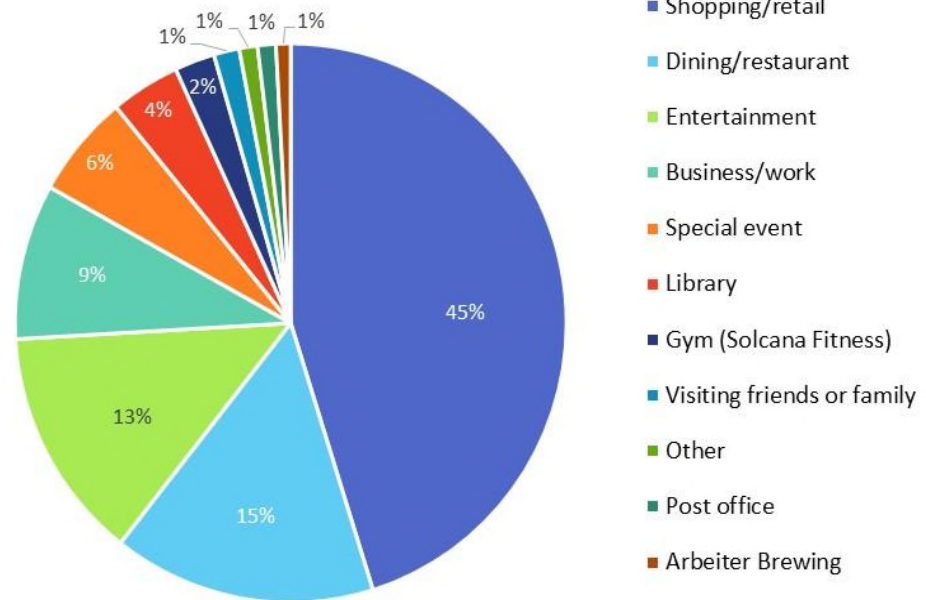


Primary Reasons for Visiting

Why People Visit

- 45% Retail shopping
- Other mentions: library, gym, post office, Arbeiter

What was the primary purpose of your most recent visit to Downtown Longfellow?



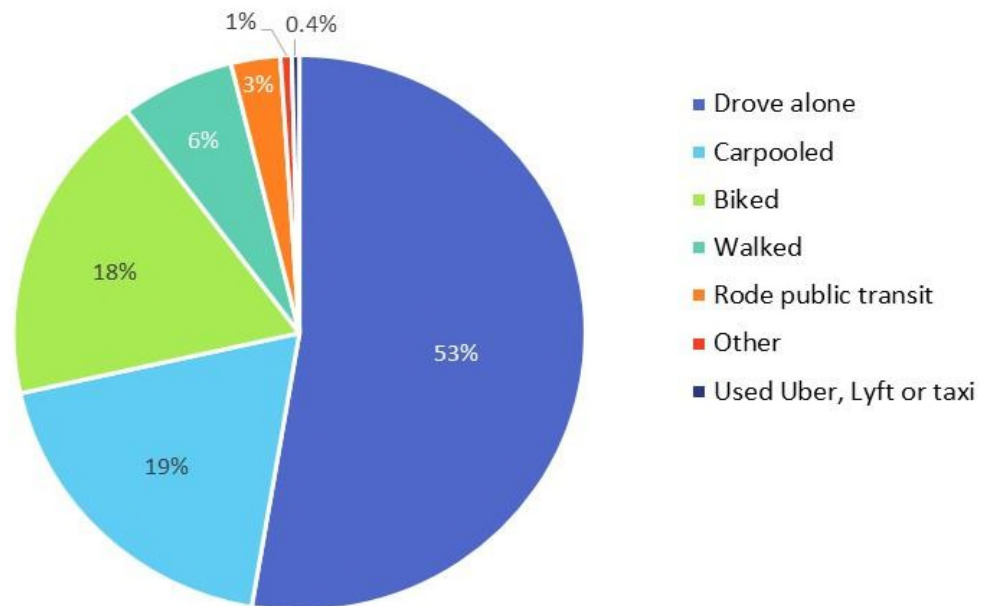
Mode of Transportation

(Most Recent Visit)

How people go here

- Majority drove alone (53%)
- Around 1 in 5 carpooled or biked

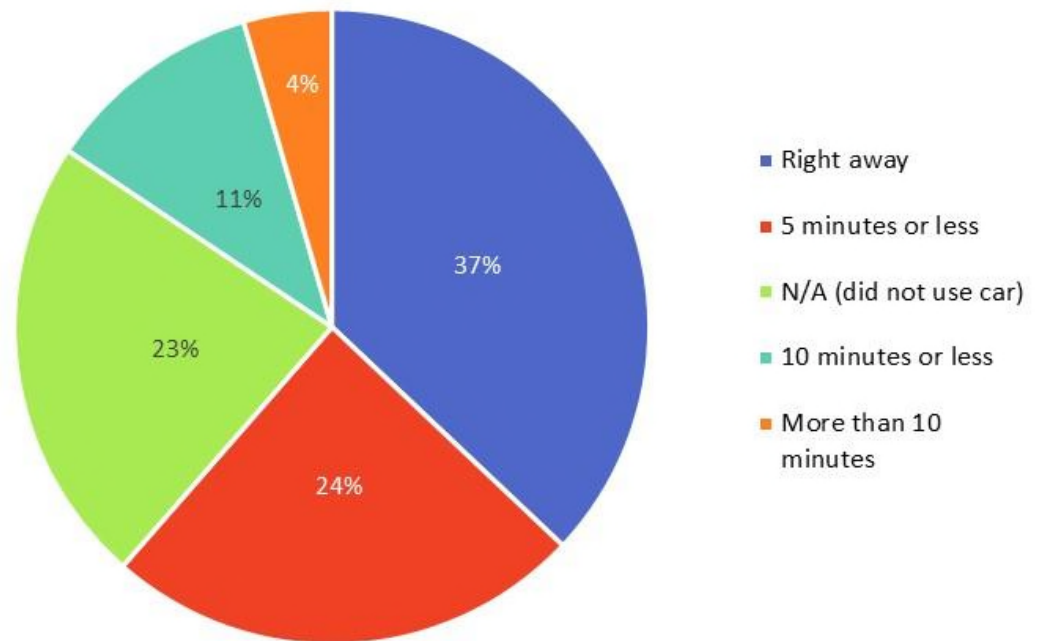
What mode of transportation did you use during your most recent visit to Downtown Longfellow?



Time it took:

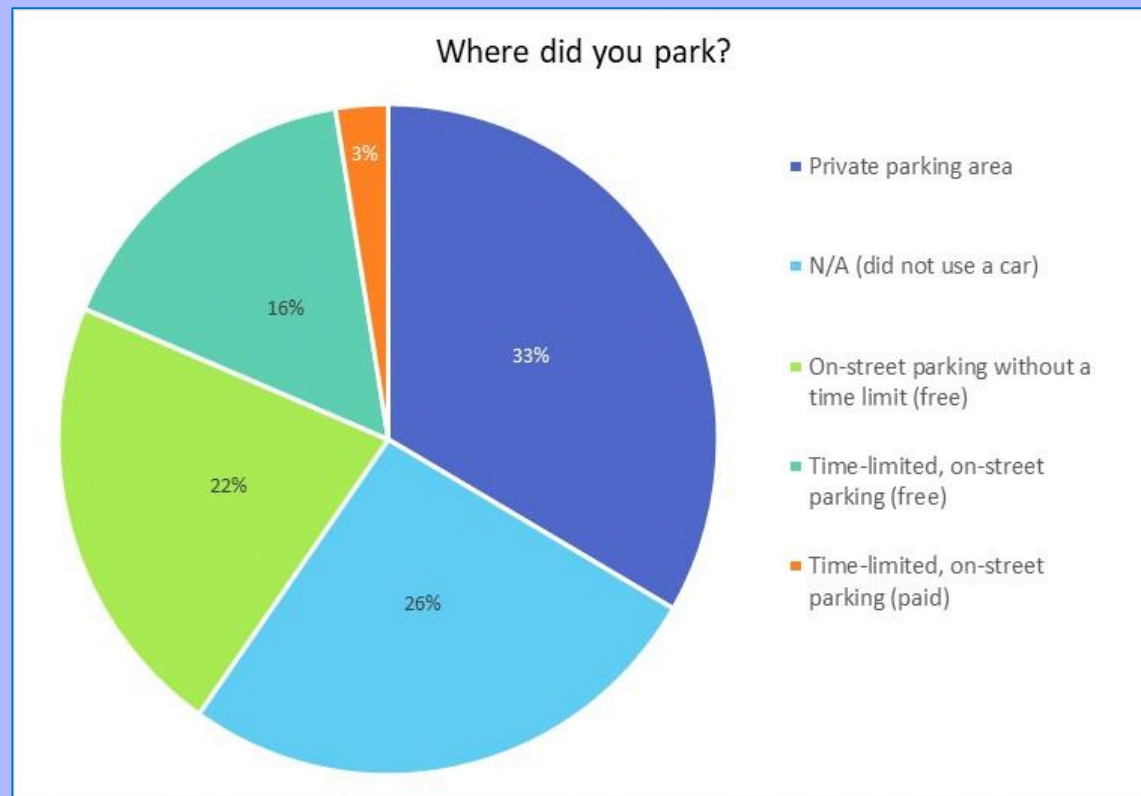
- Most found a spot quickly, over 60% within 5 minutes.
- Nearly 4 in 10 (37%) respondents found parking immediately.

How long did it take to find parking?



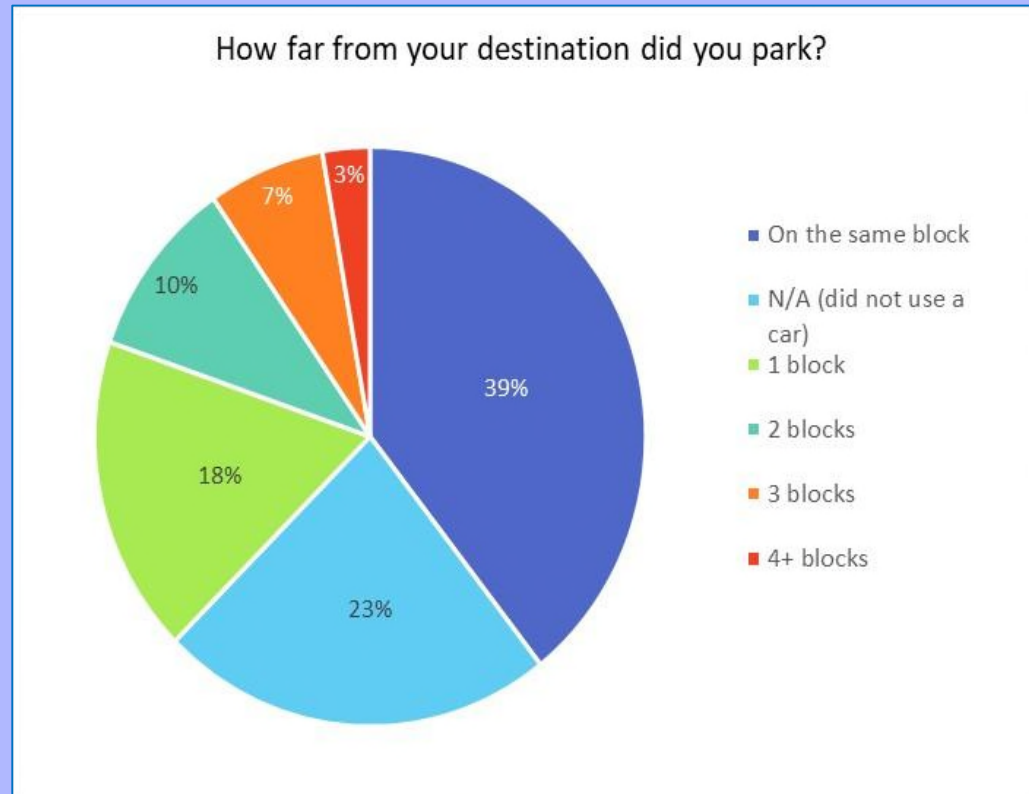
Where People Parked

- 33% used private parking
- 21% found free, unlimited on-street parking
- 26% didn't drive



Distance from Destination

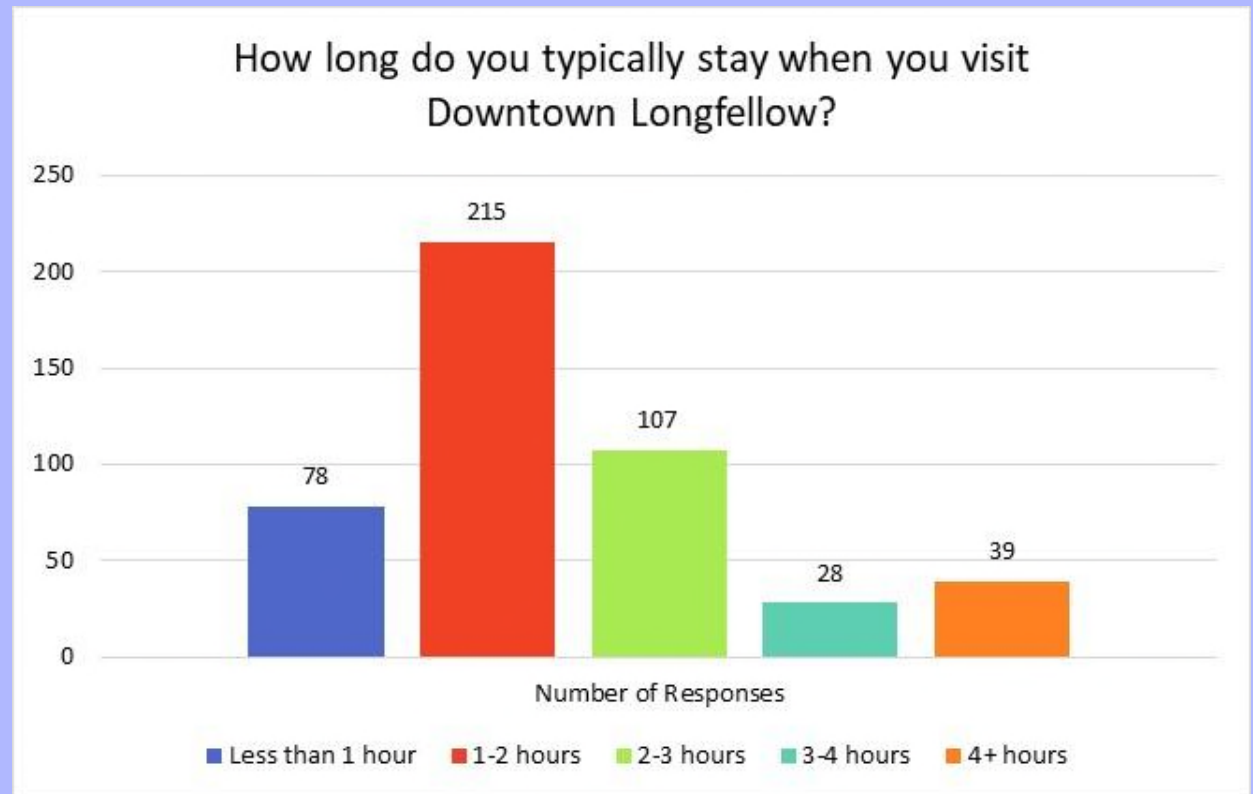
- 39% parked on the same block
- 18% parked one block away
- Nearly 60% parked very close to their destination



Length of Stay

Time Spent in the Area

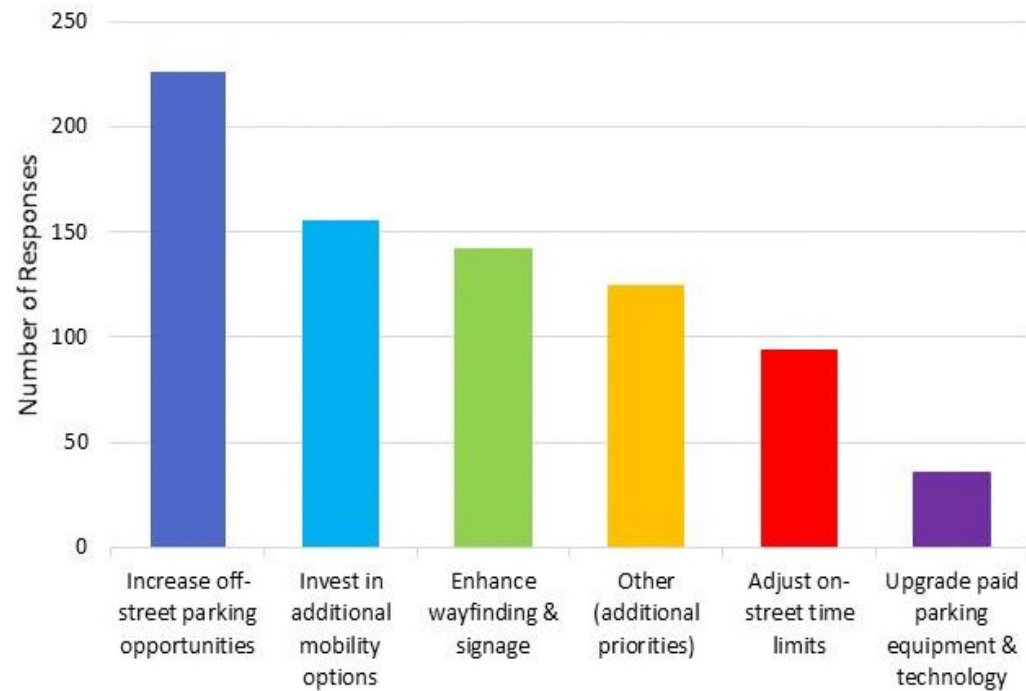
Nearly half of respondents spend **1–2 hours per visit.**



Top Parking Priority

"Increase off-street parking"

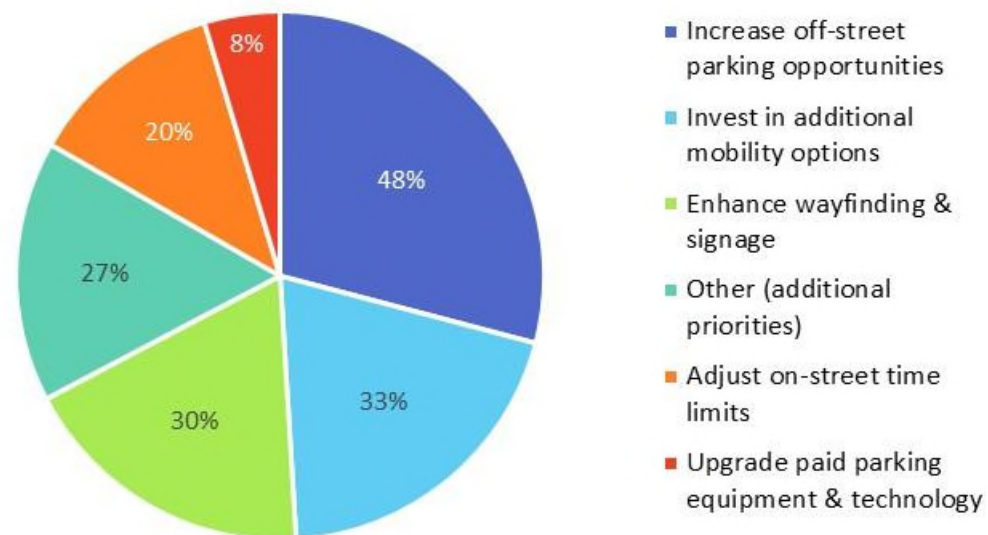
What parking and transportation priorities are most important to you? (Check all that apply) - by number of responses



Almost half of all respondents picked:

“increase off-street parking.”

What parking and transportation priorities are most important to you? (Check all that apply) - by percentage of all respondents





Magic Wand Question

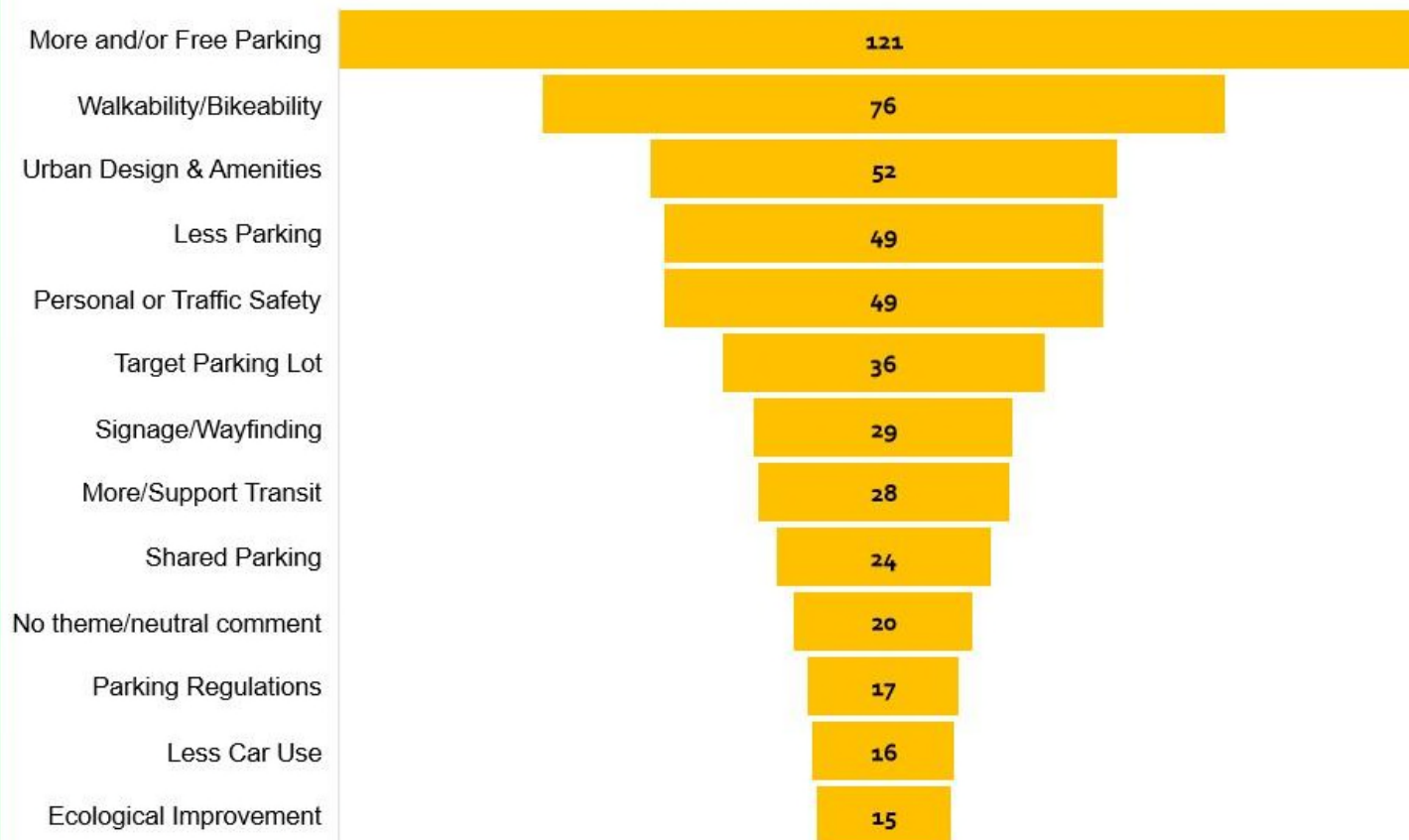
339 people responded to **"If you had a magic wand and could change, fix, or improve anything..."**

Many comments addressed more than one theme

Themes	Top Suggestions
• More and/or Free Parking (121) • Walkability/Bikeability (76) • Urban Design & Amenities (52) • Less Parking (49) • Personal or Traffic Safety (49) • Target Parking Lot (36) • Signage/Wayfinding (29) • More/Support Transit (28) • Shared Parking (24) • No theme/neutral comment (20) • Parking Regulations (17) • Less Car Use (16) • Ecological Improvement (15)	1. Better utilization of existing lots (e.g., Target, Aldi, Democracy Center). 2. Free or affordable parking with clear signage and time limits. 3. Improved walkability and bike infrastructure (protected lanes, safer crossings, bike parking); and more use of transit. 4. Enhanced safety measures (lighting, security cameras, traffic calming). 5. Urban redesign: Reduce oversized lots, add green space, housing, and businesses.



Major Themes



"Ample free parking convenient to the local businesses."

"Free parking everywhere."

"Stop focusing on parking there's so much already by land area and you can't just add more spots and alleviate the problem."

"Improved public safety, street and area cleanliness, a more well-lit and lively friendly atmosphere is much needed!"

"Improve the pedestrian crossings and bike infrastructure."

"Remove large surface parking lots, replace with community uses or buildings."

"The giant Target parking lot is an eyesore – I'd make a green space using part of it."

"I would like clear signage indicating the location of parking and what kind of parking it is—paid, time limited, etc.—rather than hunt around for a tiny sign and hope I've correctly guessed that the place I parked is part of that zone."

"More handicap and accessible parking."

"Dig up all that concrete, more green space."

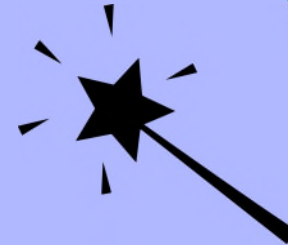
"Plant more trees!"

"Add EV car charging."

"Allow for shared parking of large parking lots."

"Increase public transit and foot traffic ... develop for a future free from car dependence."

"Enforce the 2-hour parking limits."



A few final thoughts ...

"Nothing. It's fine. It's weird that this survey presupposes that there's a problem."

"I don't see it as an issue. Always fairly easy to find parking - we live in a city."

"eliminate the gatekeeping anti-cat zelots"



Frenz, Andrew

From: jesse thehookmpls.com <jesse@thehookmpls.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 20, 2026 11:14 AM
To: Frenz, Andrew
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support a Better Democracy Center Plan

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

You don't often get email from jesse@thehookmpls.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To the City of Minneapolis (Attn: Andrew Frenz)

I work at The Hook and Ladder and patronize businesses in Downtown Longfellow. The Hook & Ladder Event Center and its neighboring businesses are important cultural, community, and economic assets that contribute significantly to the vitality of South Minneapolis.

I am writing in support of preserving access, parking, and economic vitality in the district as plans move forward for the Democracy Center development.

I support thoughtful redevelopment and investment in this neighborhood. However, I believe redevelopment should work alongside the businesses, arts organizations, and community spaces that have helped revitalize this area over the past decade.

I am concerned that the current proposal could reduce neighborhood parking and create access challenges for The Hook & Ladder Event Center and neighboring businesses. These organizations should not be negatively impacted by avoidable design decisions.

I encourage the **Planning Commission and City Council to explore reasonable alternatives** that preserve the existing alley, maintain direct access, and protect parking while still allowing the project to move forward. Specifically, I support **further review of the proposed RV parking location** and recessed loading dock design, as these appear to be key factors driving the loss of access and parking. I also **support conducting an economic impact study** to better understand how these changes could affect existing businesses, nonprofits, employees, artists, customers, and visitors.

We are not asking the City to choose between redevelopment and existing businesses. We are asking for a plan that successfully supports both.

Thank you for your consideration and your **commitment to creating a neighborhood that remains accessible, vibrant, and economically strong.**

Sincerely,

Jesse Brodd
612-730-7385
Marketing Director & Talent Buyer

The Hook and Ladder Event Center

3010 Minnehaha Ave, MPLS, MN 55406

@TheHookMPLS

<http://www.thehookmpls.com>

[EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the City of Minneapolis. Please exercise caution when opening links or attachments.

Frenz, Andrew

From: Amber Cleveland <amberacecleveland@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 20, 2026 12:07 PM
To: Frenz, Andrew
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Please save the parking and accessibility at the Hook & Ladder and surrounding local businesses

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

You don't often get email from amberacecleveland@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To the City of Minneapolis

I regularly attend performances and patronize businesses in Downtown Longfellow and specifically the Hook & Ladder. The Hook & Ladder Event Center and its neighboring businesses are important cultural, community, and economic assets that contribute significantly to the vitality of South Minneapolis.

I am writing in support of preserving access, parking, and economic vitality in the district as plans move forward for the Democracy Center development.

I support thoughtful redevelopment and investment in this neighborhood. However, I believe redevelopment should work alongside the businesses, arts organizations, and community spaces that have helped revitalize this area over the past decade.

I am concerned that the current proposal could reduce neighborhood parking and create access challenges for The Hook & Ladder Event Center and neighboring businesses. These organizations should not be negatively impacted by avoidable design decisions.

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We are not asking the City to choose between redevelopment and existing businesses. We are asking for a plan that successfully supports both.

Thank you for your consideration and your **commitment to creating a neighborhood that remains accessible, vibrant, and economically strong.**

Sincerely,

Amber ACE Cleveland

612-987-0654

[EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the City of Minneapolis. Please exercise caution when opening links or attachments.

Frenz, Andrew

From: Tim Koehler <takklm@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, June 21, 2026 4:06 PM
To: Frenz, Andrew
Cc: takklm@comcast.net; 'Chris Mozena'; 'Kristine smith'
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Letter for the record for 062226 hearing on 3000 Minnehaha and 3033 Snelling
Attachments: FPAC Comments on Plan Com mtg 062226.pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

You don't often get email from takklm@comcast.net. [Learn why this is important](#)

Mr. Frenz:

I am unable to attend the Planning Commission hearing in person on 062226 related to 3000 Minnehaha Ave and 3033 Snelling Ave.

I have attached a letter from the Firehouse Performing Arts Center (FPAC), who has run the Hook and Ladder for the past 10 years, objecting to the plan that will be presented at the hearing.

Please enter my letter into the public record for this hearing.

Tim Koehler
FPAC Chair

[EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the City of Minneapolis. Please exercise caution when opening links or attachments.

June 18, 2026

Subject: 3000 Minnehaha Ave and 3033 Snelling Ave written comments to the Planning Commission for use at the 6/22 hearing

Minneapolis Planning Commission:

I am writing this letter as the Chairperson of the non-profit Firehouse Performing Arts Center (FPAC) who has been operating the Hook and Ladder Theater for the past ten years. The proposal for the Democracy Center construction build-out as currently proposed at 3000 Minnehaha Ave and 3033 Snelling Ave is unacceptable to FPAC and will cause undue hardship, on The Hook and Ladder and adjoining businesses.

I attended the May 18, 2026 Planning Commission meeting and provided testimony representing FPAC. At that meeting I felt optimism that a solution would be able to be worked out.

After members of the Hook and Ladder and the building owner recently met with the city architects on this project, we are disappointed to report that they were seemingly unwilling to address the primary issues we brought forward, most notably the RV parking location and the issue surrounding recessed loading docks.

We at FPAC remain opposed to these current plans for the vast number of reasons, which can be easily summarized into two ongoing issues; guest access to The Hook and Ladder and greater neighborhood visitor parking, the proposal would reduce parking by 45%.

The primary issues with the existing design is that of an RV garage being built in the current alley location, and the use of recessed loading docks. If these two items were satisfactorily addressed, it would solve the necessity for the relocation of the alley, and without that we maintain the status quo in terms of both direct access and parking spot numbers.

We feel these are beyond reasonable requests and that they align with the community desire (and years of work towards a mutual goal) of a future entertainment district.

FPAC believe that this specific collective vision, or any future of The Hook and our neighbors, should not be threatened by a singular parking spot for an RV, especially when the city has a variety of viable & secure parking options and spaces already at its disposal. *We are also respectfully asking for an economic impact study while they further consider our design change request.

Thanks in advance for your thoughtful consideration and please do not hesitate to contact me directly with any questions or concerns.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Koehler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tim" and last name "Koehler" clearly distinguishable.

Tim Koehler – Chair FPAC

Frenz, Andrew

From: Mark Femling <femlingmark@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, June 21, 2026 7:06 PM
To: Frenz, Andrew
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support a Better Democracy Center Plan

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

You don't often get email from femlingmark@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To the City of Minneapolis and whom it concerns,

My name is Mark Femling, I am a Mental Health Professional, and I operate a nonprofit called Space Between out of the Hook & Ladder Event Center. I also regularly attend performances and patronize businesses in Downtown Longfellow and specifically at the Hook & Ladder. Space Between (www.spacebetweenmpls.org) is a nonprofit music mental health oriented organization that supports local musicians and music industry professionals through monthly peer-to-peer support groups and monthly open community jams. Space Between relies on the Hook and Ladder being a safe and accessible facility for our members, which this plan will negatively impact. Our members regularly park in the proposed impacted zones and are safer to participate in our programming by parking in those areas, given the decompensation of the neighborhood since 2020. The Hook & Ladder Event Center and its neighboring businesses are integral cultural, community, and economic assets that contribute significantly to the vitality of South Minneapolis.

I am writing in support of preserving access, parking, and economic vitality in the district as plans move forward for the Democracy Center development.

I support thoughtful redevelopment and investment in this neighborhood. However, I believe redevelopment should work alongside the businesses, arts organizations, and community spaces that have helped revitalize this area over the past decade.

I am concerned that the current proposal could reduce neighborhood parking and create access challenges for The Hook & Ladder Event Center and neighboring businesses. These organizations should not be negatively impacted by avoidable design decisions.

I encourage the **Planning Commission and City Council to explore reasonable alternatives** that preserve the existing alley, maintain direct access, and protect parking while still allowing the project to move forward. Specifically, I support **further review of the proposed RV parking location** and recessed loading dock design, as these appear to be key factors driving the loss of access and parking. I also **support conducting an economic impact study** to better understand how these changes could affect existing businesses, nonprofits, employees, artists, customers, and visitors.

We are not asking the City to choose between redevelopment and existing businesses. We are asking for a plan that successfully supports both.

Thank you for your consideration and your **commitment to creating a neighborhood that remains accessible, vibrant, and economically strong.**

Sincerely,

Mark Femling, LPCC, Founder

Space Between (www.spacebetweenmpls.org)

[EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the City of Minneapolis. Please exercise caution when opening links or attachments.

Frenz, Andrew

From: Space Between <info@spacebetweenmpls.org>
Sent: Sunday, June 21, 2026 7:08 PM
To: Frenz, Andrew
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Space Between Supports a Better Democracy Center Plan

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

You don't often get email from info@spacebetweenmpls.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

To the City of Minneapolis and whom it concerns,

My name is Mark Femling, I am a a Mental Health Professional, and I operate a nonprofit called Space Between out of the Hook & Ladder Event Center. I also regularly attend performances and patronize businesses in Downtown Longfellow and specifically at the Hook & Ladder. Space Between (www.spacebetweenmpls.org) is a nonprofit music mental health oriented organization that supports local musicians and music industry professionals through monthly peer-to-peer support groups and monthly open community jams. Space Between relies on the Hook and Ladder being a safe and accessible facility for our members, which this plan will negatively impact. Our members regularly park in the proposed impacted zones and are safer to participate in our programming by parking in those areas, given the decompensation of the neighborhood since 2020. The Hook & Ladder Event Center and its neighboring businesses are integral cultural, community, and economic assets that contribute significantly to the vitality of South Minneapolis.

I am writing in support of preserving access, parking, and economic vitality in the district as plans move forward for the Democracy Center development.

I support thoughtful redevelopment and investment in this neighborhood. However, I believe redevelopment should work alongside the businesses, arts organizations, and community spaces that have helped revitalize this area over the past decade.

I am concerned that the current proposal could reduce neighborhood parking and create access challenges for The Hook & Ladder Event Center and neighboring businesses. These organizations should not be negatively impacted by avoidable design decisions.

I encourage the Planning Commission and City Council to explore reasonable alternatives that preserve the existing alley, maintain direct access, and protect parking while still allowing the project to move forward. Specifically, I support further review of the proposed RV parking location and recessed loading dock design, as these appear to be key factors driving the loss of access and parking. I also support conducting an economic impact study to better understand how these changes could affect existing businesses, nonprofits, employees, artists, customers, and visitors.

We are not asking the City to choose between redevelopment and existing businesses. We are asking for a plan that successfully supports both.

Thank you for your consideration and your commitment to creating a neighborhood that remains accessible, vibrant, and economically strong.

Sincerely,

Mark Femling, LPCC, Founder

Space Between (www.spacebetweenmpls.org)

[EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the City of Minneapolis. Please exercise caution when opening links or attachments.

Frenz, Andrew

From: bri noboolpresents.com <bri@noboolpresents.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 10:46 AM
To: Frenz, Andrew
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support a Better Democracy Center Plan

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

You don't often get email from bri@noboolpresents.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Andrew,

We support redevelopment and investment in our neighborhood. We're simply asking for a solution that preserves access, parking, and the long-term success of the businesses, arts organizations, and community spaces that already call this area home. **Standing with us** helps ensure the redevelopment supports **both new investment and existing community assets**.

-Bri Becker

[EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the City of Minneapolis. Please exercise caution when opening links or attachments.

Frenz, Andrew

From: beckerverd@gmail.com Brianna Becker <beckerverd@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 10:47 AM
To: Frenz, Andrew
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Support a Better Democracy Center Plan

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

You don't often get email from beckerverd@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To the City of Minneapolis,

I regularly attend performances and patronize businesses in Downtown Longfellow and specifically the Hook & Ladder. The Hook & Ladder Event Center and its neighboring businesses are important cultural, community, and economic assets that contribute significantly to the vitality of South Minneapolis.

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Thank you for your consideration and your **commitment to creating a neighborhood that remains accessible, vibrant, and economically strong.**

Sincerely,

Bri Becker

[EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the City of Minneapolis. Please exercise caution when opening links or attachments.

Frenz, Andrew

From: Dani Erin <danierinmusic@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 3:49 PM
To: Frenz, Andrew
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Hook and ladder.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

You don't often get email from danierinmusic@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To the City of Minneapolis,

I regularly attend performances and patronize businesses in Downtown Longfellow and specifically the Hook & Ladder. The Hook & Ladder Event Center and its neighboring businesses are important cultural, community, and economic assets that contribute significantly to the vitality of South Minneapolis.

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Thank you for your consideration and your **commitment to creating a neighborhood that remains accessible, vibrant, and economically strong.**

Sincerely,

Danielle Mueller

[EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the City of Minneapolis. Please exercise caution when opening links or attachments.

From: [Frenz, Andrew](#)
To: [Council Comment](#)
Cc: [Sinatra, Amber](#)
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] The Hook and Ladder and its Historical building are in danger
Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2026 4:23:25 PM

Please include for public comment for 7/21 BHZ if it hasn't made it in yet.

Thank you!

Andrew Frenz, AICP
Principal City Planner
Land Use, Design, and Preservation

City of Minneapolis – Community Planning and Economic Development
505 4th Ave S – #320
Minneapolis, MN 55415

Office: 612-673-3790
andrew.frenz@minneapolismn.gov
www.minneapolismn.gov/cped

From: Forever Agate, LLC <foreveragatellc@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, July 14, 2026 12:24 PM
To: Minneapolis Democracy Center <MinneapolisDemocracyCenter@minneapolismn.gov>
Cc: Chowdhury, Aurin <aurin.chowdhury@minneapolismn.gov>; City Clerk
<cityclerk@minneapolismn.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] The Hook and Ladder and its Historical building are in danger

You don't often get email from foreveragatellc@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello to the Democracy Center People- We hope you are well today!

We are desperately reaching out for your help. We are hoping you can help save the historical 1894 firehouse! The location is 3010 Minnehaha Ave, MPLS MN 55406 - The beloved Hook and Ladder operates out of here for over 10 years. My husband and I (Forever Agate LLC) are contract for deed on this commercial property for over 10 years. We are the immediate neighbor to the south of the burnt down precinct. Nobool Production and FPAC operates out the event center. They do music concerts, fundraisers, weddings ++ and up to 1500 people could come through our doors any week. We love this building and try to care of it, the good people of Minneapolis and beyond love our venue as well. Things are starting to deteriorate a little, some crumbling foundation, tuckpoint needed, roof, hvacc replaced soon. When there was constuction in front of Minnehaha a while ago it made our ceilings crack and break and we had to repair that damage! Also we sustained over \$400,000 damage after the murder of George Floyd. We came back, we repaired and we are stronger then ever. We are like a mom and pop organization because the scope of work needed to be done for restoration and repair is overwhelming and we had no support or love from our good city of Minneapolis.

Also it is perhaps a more dire need is that the City of MPLS is proposing and moving along a major remodel and development of a Democracy Center at 3000 Minnehaha. We have major concerns about boundaries being altered with new construction. This is our formal opposition to the city's current proposal. and we want no vacation of the alley, or sharp dangerous 90' turn, compromise to our daily operations or physical operations, artist safety and community accessibility. There was a city planning zoning meetings (in early June) about this, we met with design firm, had another city meeting and now the city council will have to vote at the next meeting. The issue is that the design firm LSE Architects wants to vacate an alley and move it to the south of the 3033 Snelling and it butts up to our private drive area on the north part of the building. This is where the city couldn't approve the zoning change and this is where we are. We are opposing the alley because of safety to patrons, they are encroaching on eminent domain, encroaching on private dimensions and the disruption to a historical district and building. This is a MASSIVE redesign too that will completely bungle up and bottleneck the triangle corner. Will firetrucks be able to get through with out safety hazard of putting 400 concert/wedding guests into a narrow truck loading zone? Are there any easements under any city of mpls or the LSE architects that you know of or you can share? (there are non listed under Hennepin County) Can they keep the huge voting equipment anywhere else? Will you take any action to ensure the city's historical building is in good standing and supported? Will you encroach on our property during construction? will it vibrate the old bricks of the building? Are you worried about eminent domain? Will you hurt our business or events? **City Review Process:** If you are planning alterations, additions, or exterior work on a property designated as a local landmark or located within a historic district, Has the city or LSE undergone a design review through the City's CPED department to ensure compliance with SOI standards. We think that with all the massive construction they plan to do it will drastically hurt the building when 50' beer trucks and the public will have to make a 90 turn down the back alley west of the building. It will drastically hurt our business. They are taking away parking, the city has also taken land away when they built the cop station. That was a lot of information but I hope you understand how this remodel will screw up the building, literally mess up the block and hurt our neighbors like SolCana and Arbeiter Brewery.

Can you please help share the Project's Environmental Assessment Worksheet (eAW) and structural staging plans? I don't think the design firm has any idea or concern for our historical building and need to know how their construction and vibrations of said construction and impediment on our property will mess with our business. Will the 50' beer delivery trucks safety turn down the alley and not scrape it? Is there a way or time that someone could come out and see the building and space and attest that this development will be not complying with The Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historical Properties? We must block or have them alter these design blueprints!

We need these questions answered please. I don't think you understand how this will kill the arts and the integrity of this building or be a logistical nightmare with the new zoning! This is not democracy.

Thank you so much for anything you may be able to do!

Katie (and Chris) Mozena

Forever Agate LLC

3010 Minnehaha Ave

[EXTERNAL] This email originated from outside of the City of Minneapolis. Please exercise caution when opening links or attachments.



Friday, Jul 17, 2026

Dear members of the Business, Housing & Zoning Committee,

We wish to provide some perspective on the proposed Democracy Center project and how it can integrate itself into the Downtown Longfellow business, arts & entertainment district in that area. We appreciate the hard work the mayor's office and department staff have put into fashioning a constructive adaptation of the 3rd precinct building. Bringing the full range of voter support services to this section of south Minneapolis will stimulate greater participation in our election process, which is a goal we can all strongly support.

For all intents and purposes, Downtown Longfellow has become the eastern extension of the Lake Street Cultural District. Despite being at "ground zero" during the Civil Unrest of 2020, and enduring extensive property damage that still persists at some lots to this very day, this area has shown a remarkable vibrancy and resilience, a quality that should make all residents of Minneapolis feel immense pride.

The Lake St Council works with thousands of entrepreneurs and property owners each year, most of them are BIPOC or Immigrant owned. These businesses have struggled in the past few years due to an astonishing combination of social, infrastructural and economic challenges. Many of those that have survived still operate at very tight economic margins - we need to remain vigilant to what their needs are and to listen when they ask government agencies and officials to modify a policy or adjust an investment.

Which brings us to the Hook & Ladder theater. We are aware that they have a number of strong concerns regarding the build out of the Democracy Center facility and the impact on the local surface parking lot, and alley access. They are not the only Downtown Longfellow business to express these concerns, but they are the most directly impacted by the project. We urge city officials to directly engage with the

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Executive Committee At-Large
 Jackie Knight
Ackerberg Group

owner and her employees to find innovative solutions to their concerns. We ask that the City find a path forward that includes:

- 1) A conversation about formalizing a parking agreement with local businesses so that they can use the parking lot during off hours at the Democracy Center.
- 2) A reassessment of the placement of the RV parking garage and loading dock elevation in order to ensure clear lines of sight to the Hook entrance from Snelling; as well as a commitment to find ways to improve direct pedestrian access between Minnehaha and Snelling through the alley and parking areas (such as through a shared street design concept).

The good news is that we are still in the early stages of the project, where architectural renderings can be adapted, staging decisions can be modified and community requests can be met.

Why is this important?

We can all agree that the progress our community has made on the economic recovery of Lake Street needs to be sustained. The question is how? How can we accelerate the success that local businesses and community stakeholders have demonstrated over the last 6 years. Multiple vacant lots in the Longfellow section of Lake Street now have new owners and ambitious plans to redevelop and invest in the community.

Clearly there is a conflict in the vision of the build out of the Democracy Center, but it's not about whether the center should land in Longfellow, but how.

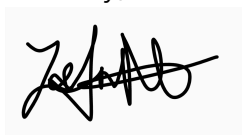
This area is still in a delicate state of recovery, and despite all the challenges it has experienced since the murder of George Floyd, local independent businesses have survived and in some cases flourished - why not sit down with these stakeholders and find a viable solution that the local leaders, who have worked incredibly hard to revive Downtown Longfellow, can abide by?

It's also important to recognize and value our local community assets. The Hook & Ladder is one of the key "anchor tenants" of the Downtown Longfellow arts & entertainment district - it is *a nationally recognized Independent concert venue* - a crown jewel in the local arts and theater community.

In that light, we urge city staff and the project's architects to continue to dialogue with the Hook & Ladder ownership team. Collaborate with local community members and businesses to shape and inform the final architectural plans. We're confident that a viable compromise can be fashioned if we all lean in on this challenge and show flexibility.

Thank you for your tireless efforts to make Minneapolis a more livable, prosperous and equitable city,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'ZoeAna Martinez', is displayed within a light gray rectangular box.

ZoeAna Martinez

Senior Community Engagement Manager, Lake Street Council

From: [Grant Johnson via Smartsheet](#)
To: [Council Comment](#)
Subject: Public Comment: Glory Ramsey
Date: Tuesday, July 28, 2026 9:57:30 AM



Public Comment: Glory Ramsey

Date: 07/28/26, 9:48 AM

2026-00848

I oppose the alley vacation for 3000 Minnehaha Democracy Center. Eliminating this right-of-way causes severe business disruption to the Hook and Ladder, cuts off vital infrastructure, and creates unnavigable turns for large production and delivery trucks. Please vote NO on the alley vacation. Pause the design until city planners adequately consult and accommodate the adjacent creative ecosystem and neighboring small businesses.

Ward:

<!--[if !mso]-->

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From: [Grant Johnson via Smartsheet](#)
To: [Council Comment](#)
Subject: Public Comment: Dan Krocak
Date: Tuesday, July 28, 2026 3:57:18 PM



Public Comment: Dan Krocak

Date: 07/28/26, 3:55 PM

2026-00848

I oppose the alley vacation for 3000 Minnehaha Democracy Center. Eliminating this right-of-way causes severe business disruption to the Hook and Ladder, cuts off vital infrastructure, and creates unnavigable turns for large production and delivery trucks. Please vote NO on the alley vacation. Pause the design until city planners adequately consult and accommodate the adjacent creative ecosystem and neighboring small businesses.

Ward: Ward 11

Business, Housing & Zoning (BHZ)

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