

# West Side Flats

## Master Plan and Development Guidelines



# PROJECT OVERVIEW

**Four issues necessitating update of the *West Side Flats Master Plan and Development Guidelines***

## **Urban design and land use**

- New look at land use and development assumptions
- Explore more general, flexible regulatory approach

## **Stormwater management**

- More detailed, sophisticated stormwater management plan
- More visible, bio-oriented green infrastructure

## **Sanitary sewer**

- Review existing capacity
- Capacity requirements for planned development

## **Expanded planning area**

- Planning area expanded east of Robert Street
- Maintain industrial/employment base



# STUDY AREA





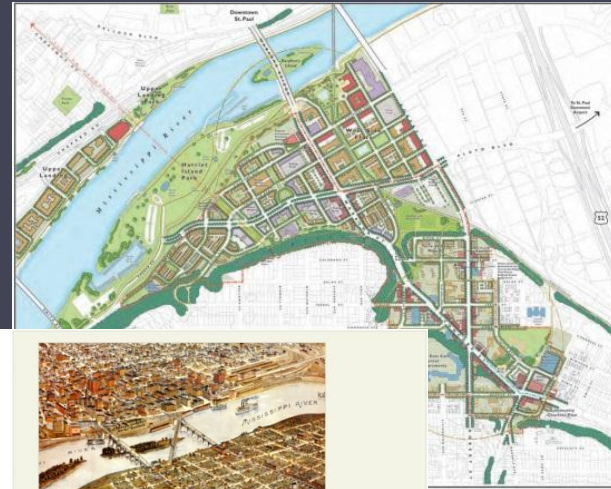
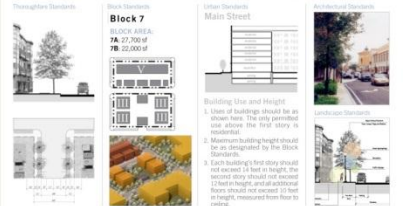
# PLANNING FOUNDATIONS



**The West Side Community Organization**  
An Addendum to the Saint Paul Plan  
Recommended by the Saint Paul Planning Commission  
Adopted by the Saint Paul City Council

## Development Guidelines

The Development Guidelines are composed of a variety of standards that describe the desired built form of the neighborhood. They include: Throughway Standards, Block Standards, Urban Standards, Architectural Standards, and Landscape Standards. Throughway Standards guide the right-of-way of neighborhood streets and provide dimensions for moving lanes, parking, planting and pedestrian systems. Block Standards include specifications about each block, such as street, use and building type. Urban Standards determine the placement of buildings on individual lots and blocks. Architectural Standards provide general information about the desired character of individual buildings. Landscape Standards suggest plant material, tree species and guidelines for signage, lighting and paving materials.



## HARRIET ISLAND / DISTRICT DEL SOL FINAL CONCEPT PLAN



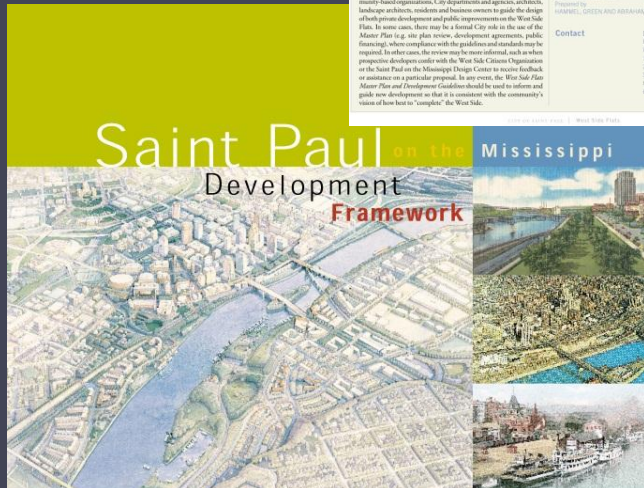
## West Side Flats

Master Plan & Development Guidelines

### Executive Summary

The West Side Flats is a 45-acre area bordered by Wabasha Street, Plato Boulevard, Robert Street and the Mississippi River. While the area has suffered from disinvestment over the last several decades and is currently the location of several acres of vacant land, the Flats hold great promise to be transformed in a way that will complement the greater West Side area and reconnect it to the Mississippi River. A mix of residential, commercial, entertainment and recreational uses will fill this "hole in the urban fabric" and revitalize this long-neglected section of the Mississippi Riverfront.

The West Side Flats Master Plan and Development Guidelines are rooted in strong, deeply-held visions shared by the larger West Side community and the City as a whole, including the Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework, West Side Flats Development Strategy and West Side Flats Conceptual Master Plan. Each of these documents further refines the overarching vision of a city of neighborhoods connected to the Mississippi River, and sets the stage for the specific guidelines and standards of the West Side Flats Master Plan.



Master Plan  
Metropolitan Council 2003

## GREAT RIVER PASSAGE

more natural . more urban . more connected  
A Master Plan for Saint Paul's 17 Miles of Mississippi River Parklands

Addendum to Saint Paul's Comprehensive Plan  
Adopted April 10, 2013



# PROJECT MEETINGS and COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Community Task Force Meetings

Project Management Team Meetings

Stakeholder Interviews

Developers Roundtables

Design Charrette

Listening Sessions

WSCO Board/RDLU Meetings

Public Open Houses

Project Website/Open Saint Paul



# VISION STATEMENT

## *A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Riverfront Urban Village*

The West Side Flats will emerge as a thriving riverfront urban village that connects the larger West Side community to the Mississippi River and downtown Saint Paul. With its unique location in the Mississippi River floodplain, the presence and movement of water will be reflected in land use patterns, street design, building massing, stormwater features, and public realm design. The West Side Flats will have strong physical and visual connections to the river's edge and bluffs, walk/bike-friendly streets, a well-designed network of public spaces, restored natural systems, urban neighborhood design, a complementary mix of high-quality and human-scaled buildings, a variety of housing types and public art. The West Side Flats will recapture its identity as a place that welcomes and integrates a broad mix of people, cultures and destinations into a vibrant mixed-use community. By restoring a more balanced mix of neighborhood, business and natural systems, it will be a model for economic, environmental and social sustainability. The employment-oriented district will continue to provide high-paying commercial/industrial job opportunities for the region and local residents, as it evolves into a more diverse, higher-intensity, and visually attractive business district over time.

# GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Integrate a broad mix of complementary land uses
- Promote a diverse mix of housing types
- Re-establish an urban neighborhood block and street pattern
- Create a prominent public realm
- Sensitively integrate stormwater runoff
- Provide a balanced, convenient, safe and comfortable network for movement within, to and from the neighborhood
- Encourage a variety of building heights and massing, while preserving important views
- Create an urban ecology
- Improve the business functionality, land use diversity and visual character of the commercial/industrial employment district east of Robert Street
- Support community cultural development opportunities
- Create a unique and welcoming public edge along the riverfront
- Engage all members of the West Side community

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Stormwater and Sanitary Sewer System Analysis



# LAND USE CHARACTER AREAS

## Mixed Residential

- Primarily residential uses
- Mix of residential types and densities
- Affordable housing options

## Mixed Use Corridors

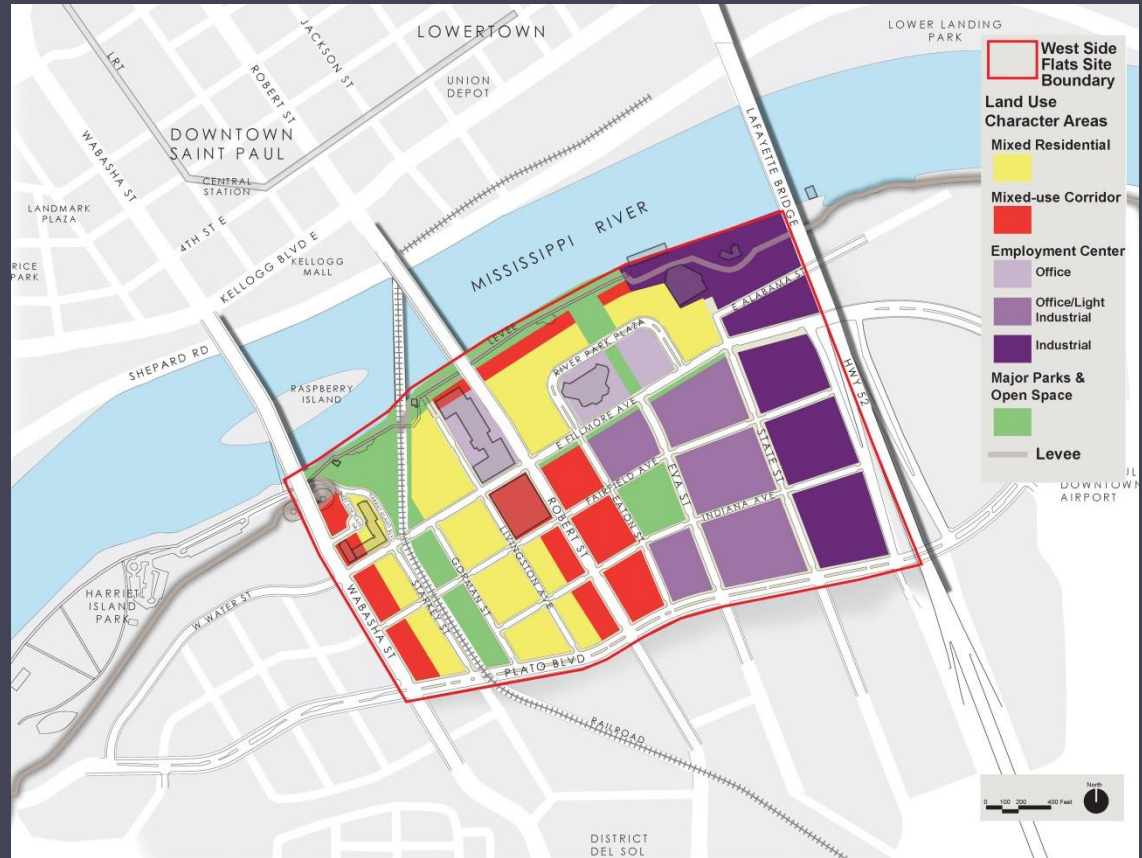
- Vibrant ground floor uses
- Mix of housing and employment uses

## Employment Center

- Primarily employment uses
- Increased densities

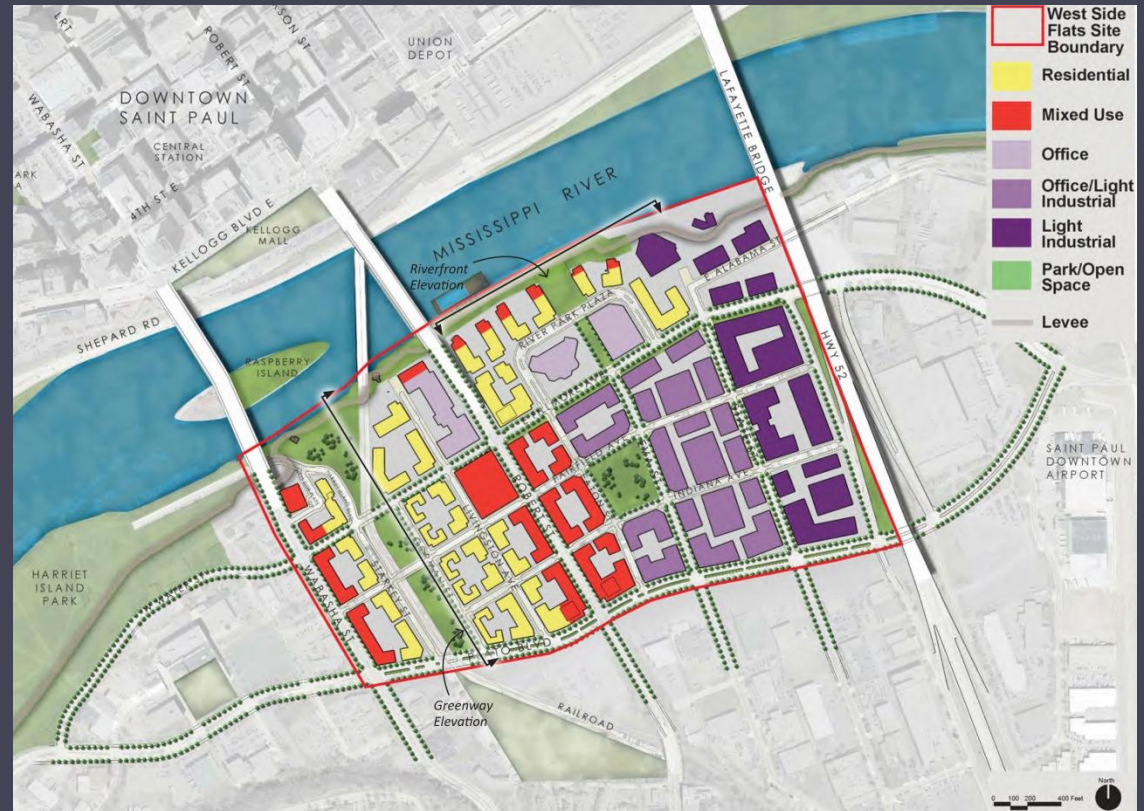
## Riverfront Esplanade

- Residential uses
- Vibrant esplanade level uses



# URBAN DESIGN

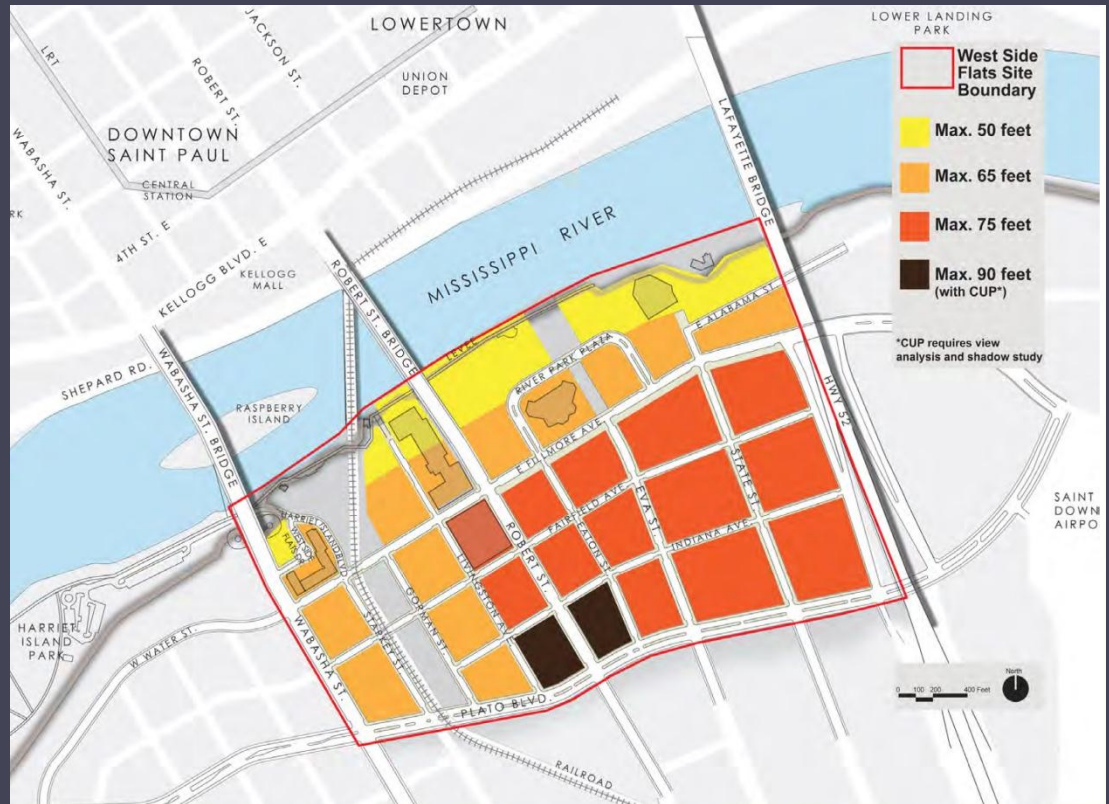
- Design sites and buildings that fit the scale and form of an urban riverfront neighborhood
- Place and design buildings that create an urban environment
- Provide community gathering places
- Create a vibrant, urban and public riverfront
- Manage parking to enhance the urban environment
- Integrate sustainable practices into site and building development





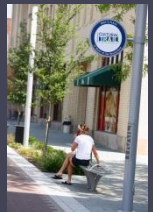
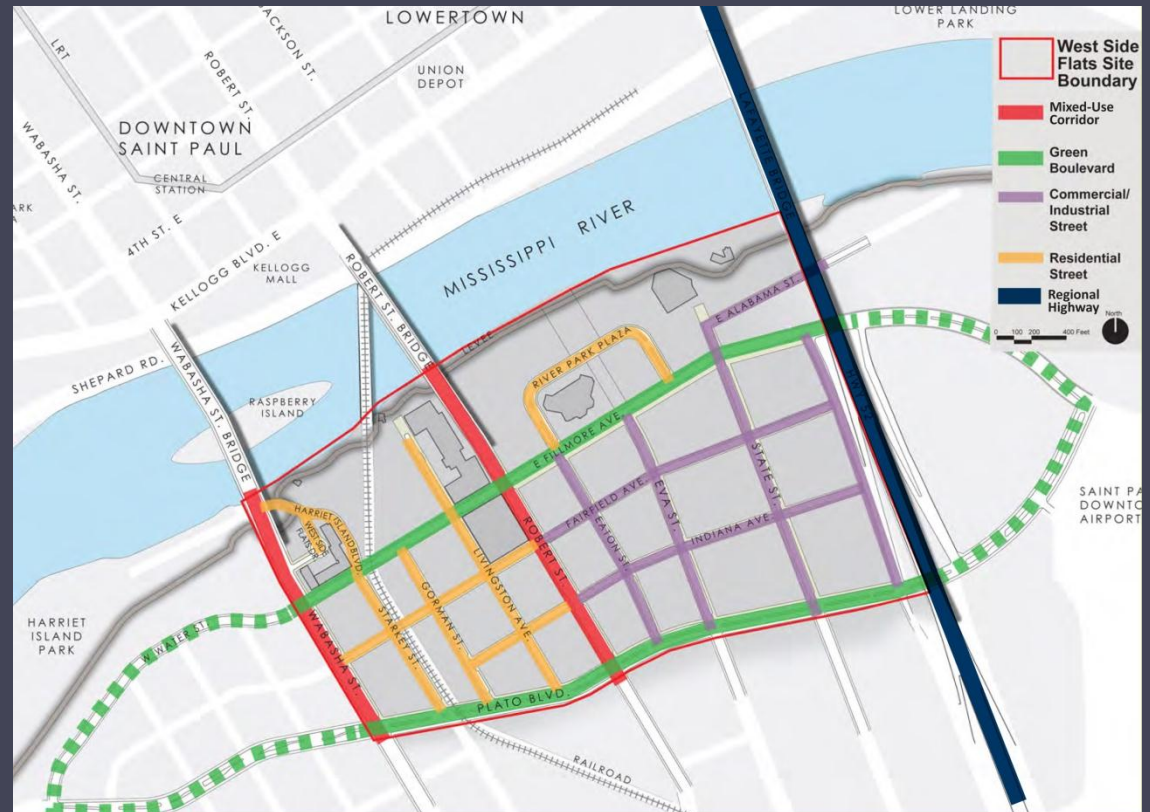
# ACCEPTABLE MAXIMUM BUILDING HEIGHTS

- Design buildings that fit the scale and form of an urban riverfront neighborhood
- Provide a variety of building heights
- Focus on taller buildings along Robert Street
- Design buildings to be lower at the river's edge and taller towards Plato Boulevard



# STREET SYSTEM

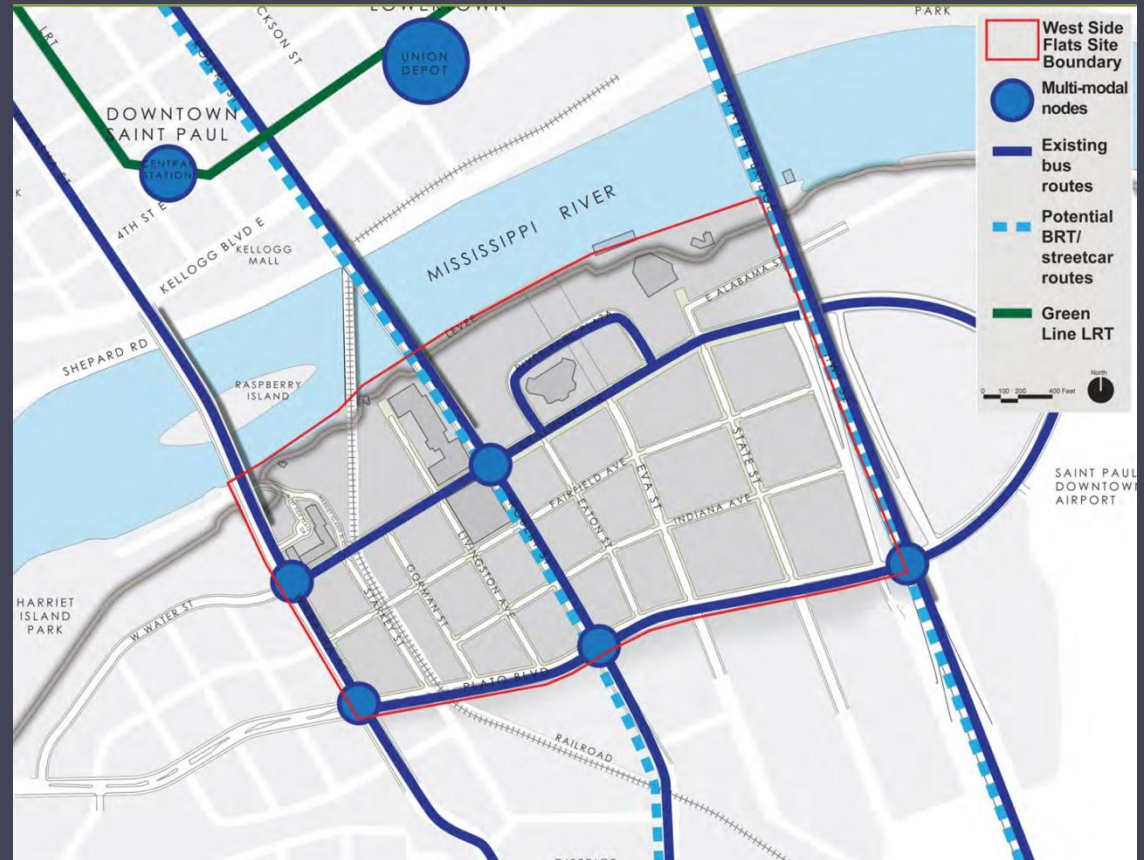
- Restore street grid and smaller block pattern
- Establish and design a hierarchy of street types
- Design and build complete streets
- Integrate green infrastructure into the streetscape design
- Incorporate public art opportunities into streetscape design





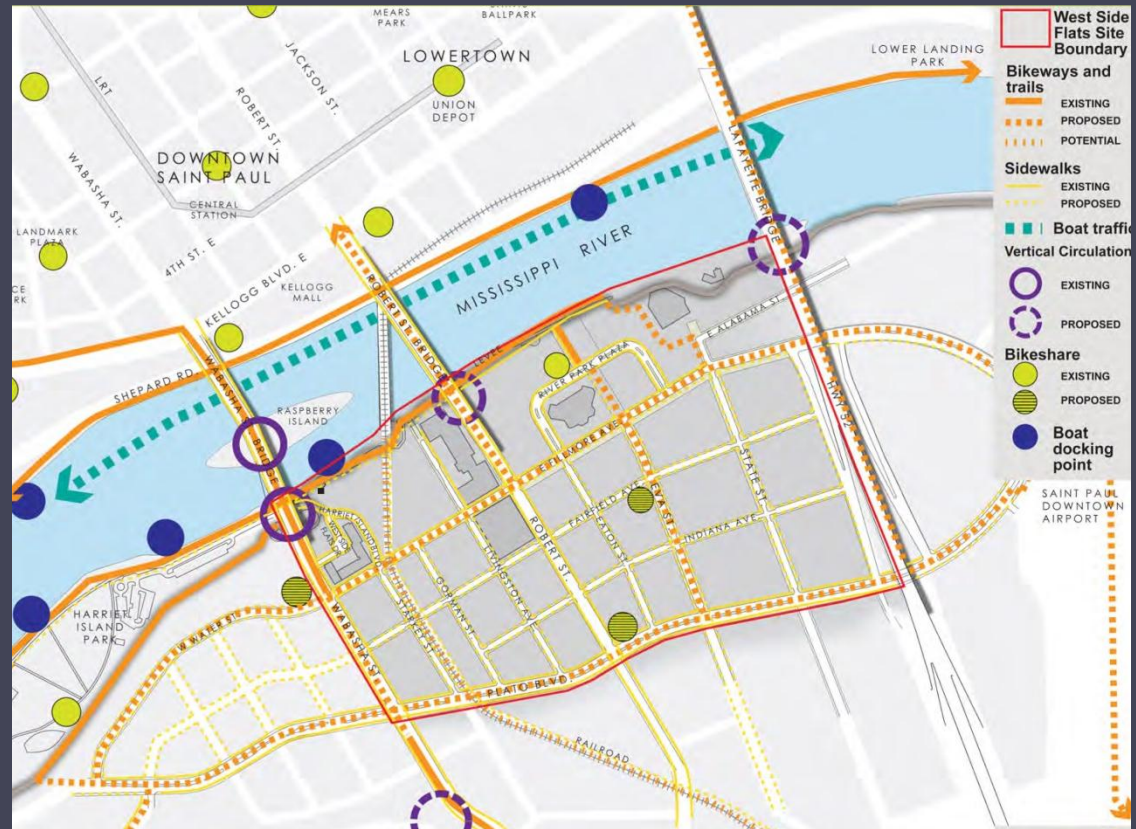
# TRANSIT SYSTEM

- Provide public transit service on all major routes
- Pursue potential for bus rapid transit and/or streetcar transit
- Develop multi-modal nodes
- Enhance mobility to multi-modal nodes
- Provide transit supportive facilities at multi-modal nodes
- Encourage transit supportive uses along Wabasha and Robert streets



# PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE CIRCULATION

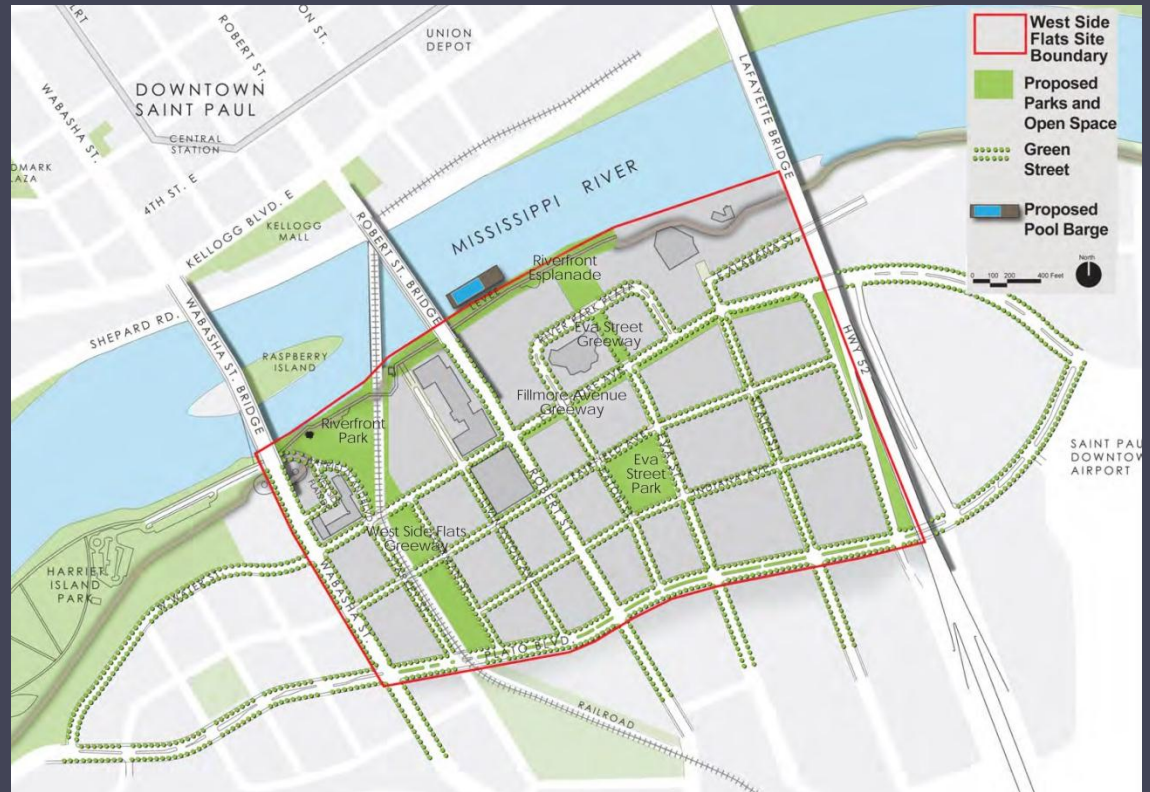
- Design and build complete and connected system of sidewalks, trails and bikeways
- Connect pedestrian and bike facilities to regional systems
- Design streets to be pedestrian and bike-friendly
- Enhance pedestrian and bike connections to the riverfront
- Provide bike facilities at the multi-modal nodes
- Explore the potential for vertical circulation at bridges and bluffs





# PARKS and OPEN SPACES

- Enhance connections to the river
- Strengthen the riverfront esplanade
- Provide well-designed public gathering spaces
- Integrate park design with stormwater management needs
- Incorporate public art
- Incorporate community gardens
- Program and maintain parks and open spaces

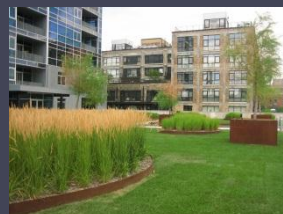


# GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Incorporate stormwater into the urban landscape

Establish a comprehensive stormwater management system

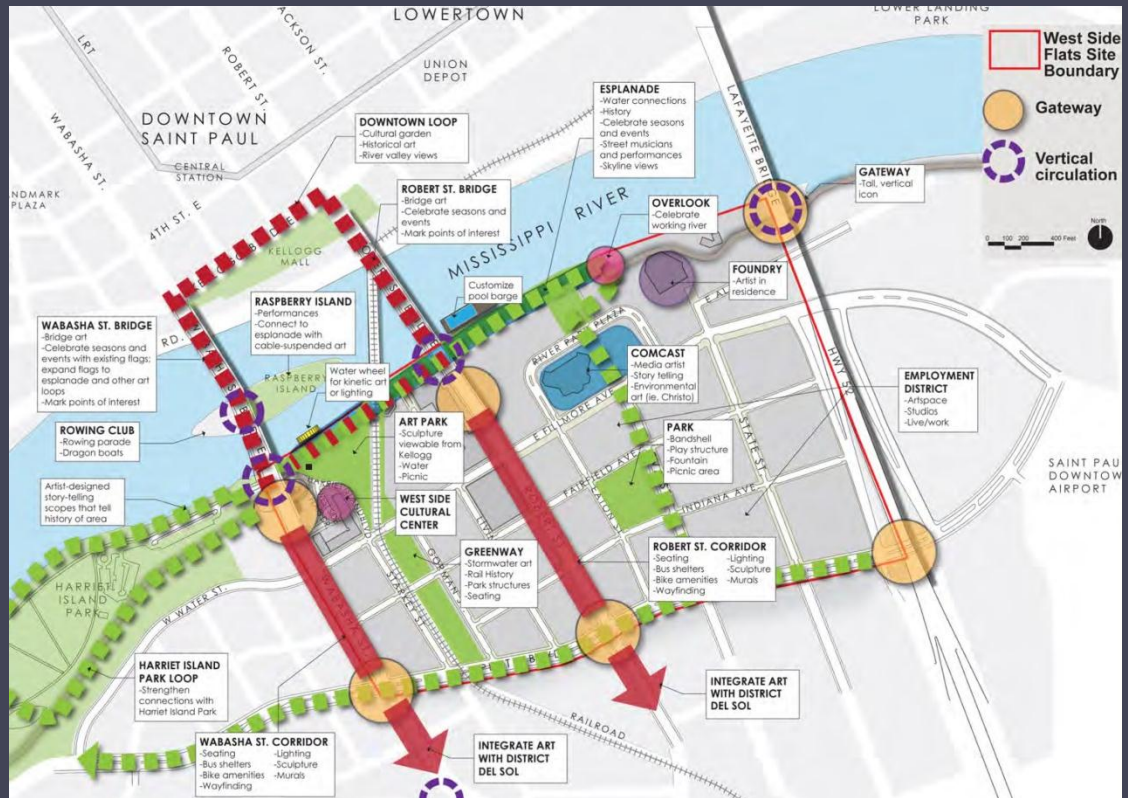
- Green fingers/corridors
- Parkways
- Green streets





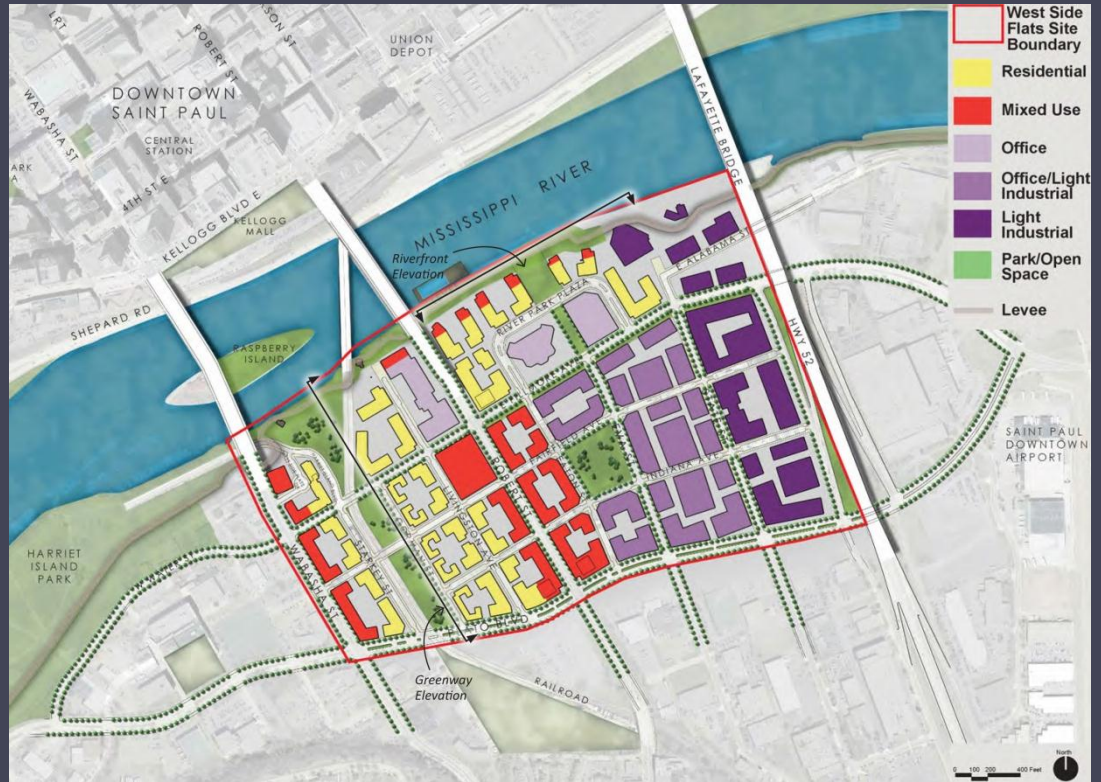
# ARTS OPPORTUNITIES

- Build on existing public art initiatives
- Follow the City's public art policies
- Communicate the West Side's rich history
- Embrace and celebrate the river
- Provide incentives for artists to live and work in the area
- Incorporate artist-designed elements
- Placemaking



# ILLUSTRATIVE PLAN

This illustrative plan is not intended to represent a specific development proposal. It is intended to illustrate the general direction for building configuration and orientation, land use, parks and open spaces, off-street parking and new street locations.





# DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

Provide more detailed guidance for specific design elements in the public and private realms

- Streets
- Site Development
- Buildings
- Parking
- Stormwater
- Public Art

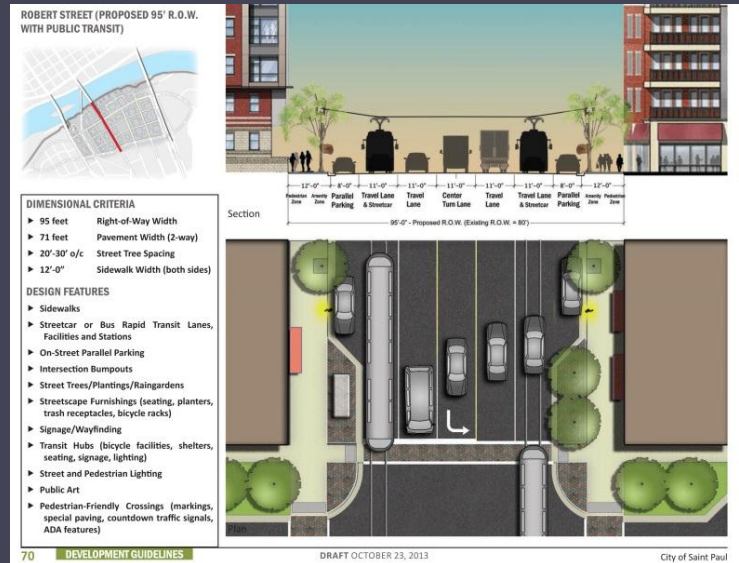
## Buildings

### Building Placement & Setbacks/Frontages

- 1) Riverfront buildings should face and be built up to the riverfront esplanade edge.
- 2) Residential buildings should incorporate a transition zone between private space and the public sidewalk/riverfront esplanade. Possible transition techniques include a change in grade, stoop, stairway, porch, deck, or landscaping.
- 3) Recessed building frontages for front door entries, outdoor seating, plazas and public art are encouraged along mixed-use corridors and the riverfront esplanade.
- 4) Buildings located on corner lots of the riverfront esplanade and connecting streets/pathways should be oriented to both public rights-of-way.
- 5) Buildings adjacent to transit stations/stops should be placed to shape outdoor spaces/plazas.
- 6) Buildings located at key street intersections and viewsheds should have the appropriate scale and placement to create attractive and identifiable gateways.
- 7) Consistent setbacks should be maintained for all buildings on a block face in order to reinforce the scale and character of the street and to facilitate the ease of pedestrian circulation between uses.

### Building Heights & Massing

- 1) Design buildings with the appropriate scale to frame and enclose the street, which is achieved by a building height that is proportionate to the width of the adjoining street. A ratio of building height to street width of one-to-two creates a strong "room-like" street, while a one-to-three ratio provides good street definition and proportion. Shorter buildings of one story facing broad streets will not achieve the desired relationship.
- 2) Buildings should generally be lower in height along the riverfront and increase in height as they approach Fillmore Avenue.
- 3) Along mixed-use corridors including the riverfront, buildings should be designed with setbacks for upper stories in order to present a pedestrian-scale base at street level and the riverfront esplanade level.
- 4) Building heights along Plato Boulevard should be varied to prevent the creation of a wall of taller buildings along the street that does not provide an appropriate transition to the lower scale development scale south of Plato Boulevard and the District del Sol.



## Transit Facilities

- 1) Transit shelters and stops should be sited and designed as integral elements of the streetscape with design features (e.g. materials, patterns and colors) that communicate the character of the West Side Flats.
- 2) A heated shelter, seating, lighting and bike parking should be provided at major transit stops.
- 3) The City's public art initiative should be incorporated into the design of transit shelters and stops.

## Landscaping

- 1) Street trees should be planted at regular intervals that are appropriate to the root structure and canopy of the tree species chosen.
- 2) A minimum of two tree species should be planted per block face.
- 3) A similar mix of street tree species and spacing should be installed on both sides of the street along a given block.
- 4) Native tree and plant species should be used, whenever possible, to protect and restore the unique character and environmental qualities of the Mississippi River Valley, reduce maintenance, reduce carbon emissions, and reduce the urban heat island effect.
- 5) Low-maintenance/drought-tolerant plants and trees should be planted to reduce irrigation needs; consider allowing exceptions for higher-maintenance materials in areas with high pedestrian traffic and community gathering spaces.
- 6) The use of turf grass should be minimized for planted areas directly adjacent to public streets.
- 7) Artificial plant materials should not be used as part of landscaping.
- 8) Structural soils should be used where street trees are planted within paved areas (e.g. sidewalks, plazas, and parking lots) to support deep tree root growth beneath the paved area and prevent heaving of sidewalks, plazas, curbs, and gutters.
- 9) Flowering plants in hanging baskets or planters should be installed along mixed-use corridors and commercial streets to create a welcoming pedestrian environment and contribute to the unique identity of the West Side Flats.
- 10) On mixed-use corridors and commercial streets, plant materials should be selected that minimize visual obstruction of businesses facing the street.
- 11) Plant materials, fencing, or landscape improvements should not encroach into the sight lines of any street intersection or driveway.



# IMPLEMENTATION

Identify and recommend actions for implementing the vision, guiding principles and strategies of the master plan

- City Policies and Regulations
- Public Improvement Projects
- Partnerships and Financing Options
- Phasing Approach

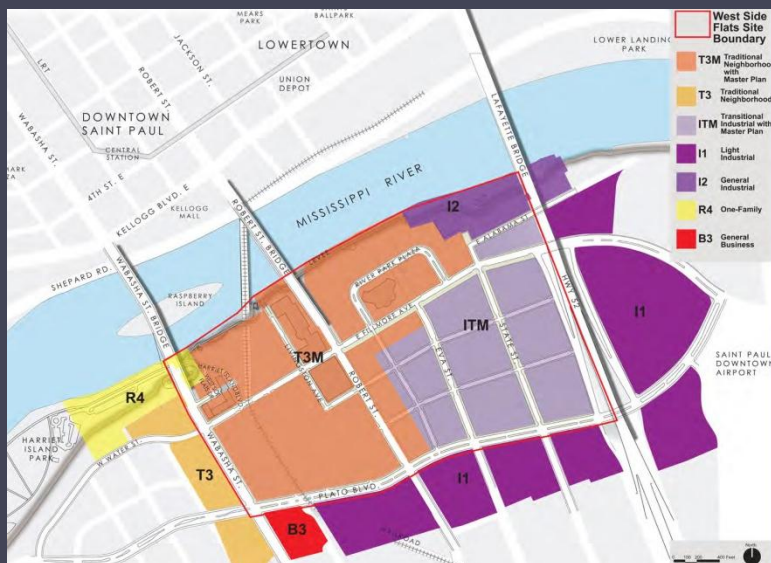


Figure xx. West Side Flats Phasing Diagram



Figure xx. West Side Flats Phase I Diagram



## Phasing Approach

### Public Improvements Phasing

#### PHASE I

- Evaluate potential needs for sanitary sewer upgrades, including regional sewer interceptor and lift station, to accommodate future build-out of WSF study area.
- Develop a stormwater/green infrastructure plan for the WSF similar to the Green Line's plan.
- Develop the program and site design plan for the entire WSF greenway.
- Create a WSF Streetscape Master Plan.
- Design and construct streetscapes within the Phase I area, including Wabasha Street, Fillmore Avenue, and Livingston Avenue
- Construct the park and greenway connection between the Mississippi River and Fillmore Avenue, both sides of the rail line.
- Construct Plato Boulevard multi-use trail.

Figure xx. West Side Flats Phase II Diagram



Figure xx. West Side Flats Phase III Diagram



Figure xx. West Side Flats Phase IV Diagram



#### PHASE II

- Acquire additional right-of-way along Robert Street required to expand right of way to 95' width
- Acquire right-of-way for proposed streets in the Phase II area, including Starkey Street, Gorman Street, Fairfield Avenue and Indiana Avenue
- Acquire land for greenway/park between Fillmore Avenue, Plato Boulevard, Starkey Street and Gorman Street
- Submit railroad crossing application to Union Pacific
- Design and construct streetscapes within the Phase II area, including Wabasha Street, Plato Boulevard, Robert Street, Starkey Street, Gorman Street, Fairfield Avenue and Indiana Avenue
- Program, design and construct the greenway/park between Fillmore Avenue, Plato Boulevard, Starkey Street and Gorman Street

#### PHASE III

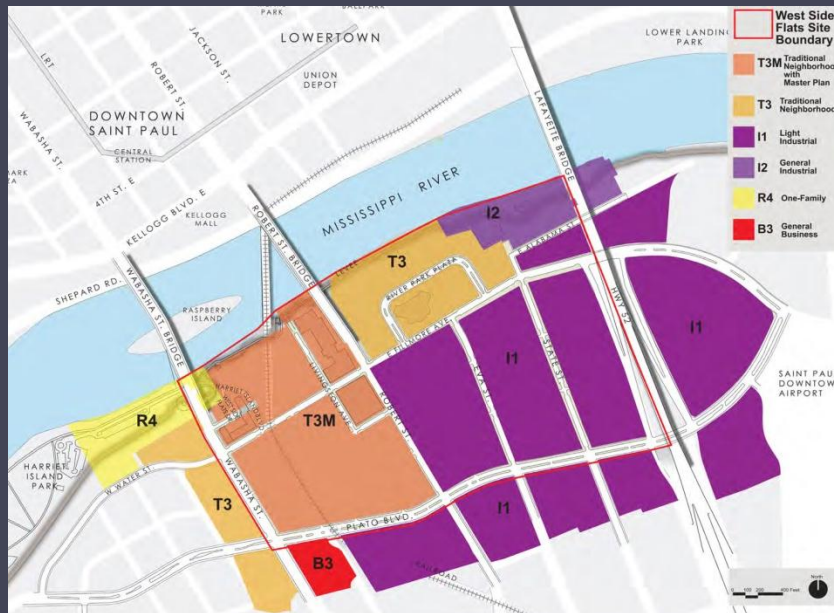
- Acquire land for greenway/park between the river and Fillmore Avenue
- Acquire right-of-way for proposed streets in Phase III area
- Design and construct streetscapes within the Phase III area, including Fillmore Avenue, River Park Plaza, Eva Street, and Alabama Street
- Program, design and construct the greenway/park between the Mississippi River and Fillmore Avenue
- Design and construct vertical circulation from the Robert Street Bridge to the riverfront esplanade
- Add overlook feature to eastern end of riverfront esplanade

#### PHASE IV

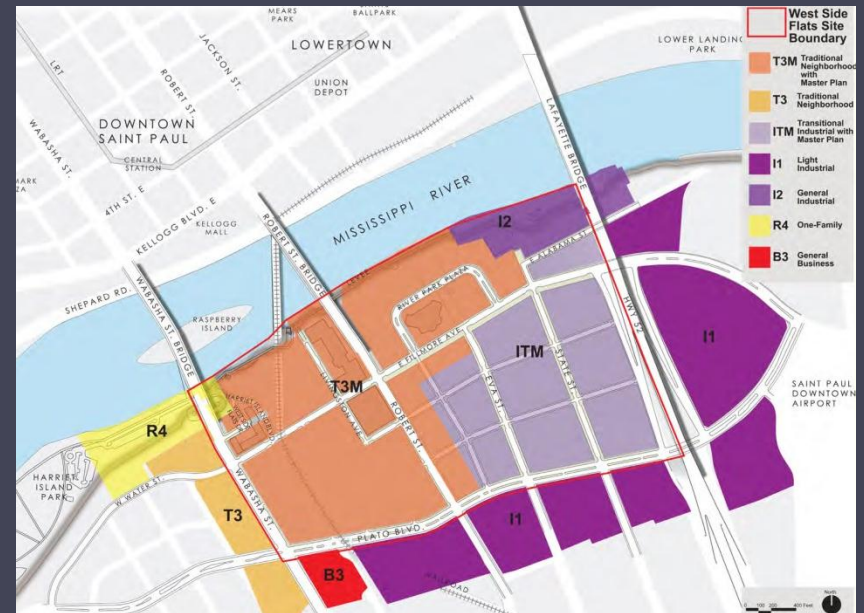
- Acquire right-of-way for proposed streets in the Phase IV area, including Fairfield Avenue, Indiana Avenue, and Eaton Street
- Acquire land for park between Fairfield Avenue, Indiana Avenue, Eaton and Eva Streets
- Design and construct streetscapes within the Phase IV area, including Fairfield Avenue, Indiana Avenue, Eaton Street, Eva Street, State Street and Plato Boulevard
- Program, design and construct the park between Fairfield Avenue, Indiana Avenue, Eaton and Eva Streets



# PROPOSED REZONING



Existing Zoning



Proposed Zoning

# PROPOSED REZONINGS

## GOALS:

- Allow for future land uses and urban form consistent with the *West Side Flats Master Plan and Development Guidelines*.
- Permit higher densities and transit-oriented development along Robert Street.
- Maintain and increase job densities in Riverview.



# PROPOSED REZONINGS

**34 parcels proposed to be rezoned:**

- **I1 to T3M – 4 parcels**
- **T3 to T3M – 8 parcels**
- **I1 to ITM – 22 parcels**

**“M” designation indicates parcel is covered by the *West Side Flats Master Plan and Development Guidelines*.**

**All existing uses “grandfathered” in.**

**No non-conforming uses created.**

# APPENDIX



## West Side Flats

MASTER PLAN & DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

### APPENDIX: STORMWATER & SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM ANALYSIS

JULY 2014



# NEXT STEPS

- **Planning Commission release of draft Plan** - *December 5, 2014*
- **Planning Commission public hearing on draft Plan and proposed rezonings** – *January 30, 2015*
- **City Council consideration/public hearing on draft Plan and proposed rezonings** - *February 2015*
- **City Council adoption of Plan and rezonings** - *March 2015*