



# A Hub of Economic Activity and Innovation

Infrastructure, public services and community assets support business and commerce.

## What strategies are working?

### **PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS BENEFIT BUSINESS AND THE COMMUNITY.**

- Public-private partnerships provide a high level of services that are long-lasting and sustainable. In an era of shrinking government resources, partnerships let us provide a higher level of service than we could otherwise. Examples include special service districts, which provide designated areas with enhanced services, and community gardens, which allow community use of public land.
- Government is committed to bringing all parties to the table to promote, engage in and maintain public-private partnerships. The key to success is shared objectives and mutual benefits.

### **EXCELLENT COMMUNICATION ENSURES ALL PARTIES ARE WELL INFORMED ON CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS.**

- Communication is excellent. The City sends out letters and emails, hosts public meetings, issues news releases and posts information on social media and the City's website. These days, people can't legitimately complain that they didn't know about a project.
- The communication effort about the Marquette-Second Avenue (MRQ2) transit improvement project is an example of communication done right. The public knew what was being done and why.
- Public Works has gone far beyond its responsibility to communicate with small businesses. It has made an exceptional effort to provide information to businesses and listen to businesses' concerns and needs.
- Property owners appreciate the City's proactive outreach on street construction.

### **EMPLOYEES ARE COMMITTED TO PUBLIC SERVICE.**

- Public employees work in a fishbowl, and we recognize that we are only as good as our last contact with the public. The City is getting better at training employees in outreach, communication, ethics, customer service and efficiency. Public sector employees find purpose in serving the community.

### **THE CITY IS INVESTING IN COMMUNITY ASSETS.**

- Government acts as the steward of public spaces and protects public interests.
- The City is investing in bike lanes, protected bike routes and bike parking.

### **THE CITY IS WILLING TO TAKE A HARD LOOK AT ITS PROCESSES AND BE MORE FLEXIBLE.**

- The City is putting clarity in the front end of the development review process. Developers and business owners know what they are getting into.
- City staff works across divisions to identify issues earlier in the development review process and negotiate solutions. Businesses are being heard and are getting answers.
- City staff understands that situations are unique and are open to creating custom solutions. Rather than just saying no, the City offers options that solve problems so business can get it done.
- City staff recognizes that business types and business owners have changed over the years. Staff is willing to listen and adapt to the needs of business owners, including immigrant business owners.

## What strategies are not working?

### **REDEVELOPMENT IS A CHALLENGE BECAUSE MINNEAPOLIS IS A FULLY DEVELOPED COMMUNITY.**

- There aren't any sites in the city that haven't been touched, so there will always be issues with infill redevelopment. We will always be challenged by outspoken opponents on one side of a project and businesses looking to get around important protections on the other side.
- The City doesn't have a budget for acquiring key parcels of land to spur development.

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## **COMMUNICATION CAN ALWAYS BE IMPROVED.**

- Although efforts are good, more needs to be done to reach out to immigrant communities.
- At most road construction sites, there are no signs telling drivers or pedestrians what's going on.

## **THERE ISN'T ENOUGH MONEY TO MAINTAIN OUR INFRASTRUCTURE.**

- The condition of our roads and green spaces is deplorable.
- We aren't investing in our streets, parks, sidewalks or water infrastructure.
- Central cities and suburbs produce a vast amount of resources for the state, but when resources are distributed by the State, the City isn't treated equitably. The Legislature doesn't recognize that we are the lifeblood of the state and need support.

## **COMMERCIAL AREAS NEED MORE HELP TO REDUCE WASTE AND HANDLE GARBAGE COLLECTION EFFICIENTLY.**

- Some commercial areas have 30 different trucks serving a small area. There are dumpsters and trucks everywhere. It's ridiculous.
- In many commercial areas, there are no bins for passers-by to recycle containers or dispose of food waste for composting.
- The City doesn't have an outreach person who is responsible for helping businesses learn how to comply with the environmental packaging ordinance and reduce waste.
- Efforts to reduce waste are all over the place. Some businesses do a lot, and others do very little.

## **OUR PROCESSES AREN'T COORDINATED AND SOME ARE TOO CUMBERSOME.**

- There is no internal process or central clearing house that allows departments to learn about proposals to change zoning, ordinances or policies. Without notice of a possible change, staff can end up giving a developer outdated information or not being able to provide important input into the proposal.
- Multiple departments are involved in development review, but they don't review the project at the same time. One department can finish its review only to have another department delay the whole project because it is just beginning its review. Efforts aren't coordinated.
- The City doesn't have a strategy for addressing sewer access charges.
- You have to pull a permit for every single banner. That's a cumbersome process.

## **WE NEED TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO HELPING EMPLOYEES GET TO AND FROM WORK.**

- Local businesses don't know all the transportation options available to their employees. There are so many agencies involved that it's overwhelming. Businesses need coordinated assistance.
- Transportation needs more attention, and we need to recognize that transportation needs go beyond getting people to and from downtown. Other areas of the city need transportation options.
- Sidewalk snow removal is sporadic. Employees can't count on clear paths from the buses to their jobs.

## Working in partnership, what strategies could we pursue?

### **CONTINUE TO UPDATE CITY CODES WHILE KEEPING THE PUBLIC'S BEST INTEREST IN MIND.**

- Review and update the zoning code continuously. The zoning code is a living, breathing organism that must keep evolving to reflect changes in businesses and society.
- Remain committed to protecting people when changing ordinances, the zoning code and other regulations. The City's checks and balances are appropriate. Don't let businesses skirt reasonable regulations that are designed to protect the public.

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## **EXPAND CONSTRUCTION PROJECT COMMUNICATION TO THE STREET LEVEL.**

- Invest in electronic message boards to provide construction project updates. Place message boards where passers-by are confronted by a project and make sure the board tells what is being done, what the project will accomplish and when it will be completed. Street-level message boards will reduce frustration because people will know what's going on.
- Replicate the Marquette and Second Avenue communication effort on other construction projects.

## **IMPROVE COMMERCIAL WASTE HANDLING AND HELP BUSINESSES REDUCE WASTE.**

- Municipalize commercial waste handling to improve collection efficiency and enhance the appearance and livability of commercial areas.
- Emulate zero waste efforts in the 50th and France Special Service District.

## **CREATE AN INTERNAL PROCESS TO ENSURE STAFF KNOWS ABOUT PROPOSALS TO CHANGE ORDINANCES OR POLICIES.**

- Create a central clearing house for staff from all departments to learn about proposals going before City Council committees that involve possible changes to zoning, ordinances and regulatory policies.
- Institute a work plan for all departments that could be impacted by an ordinance or policy change to work together to examine the issue and assess the impact of the change.

## **EXPAND COLLABORATION AND IMPROVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES.**

- Collaborate with Hennepin County to boost recycling and organic waste collection in commercial areas.
- Expand partnerships and coordinate zero waste efforts in special service districts.
- Work with adjacent cities for partnerships and resources in parking, neighborhood improvements and waste reduction.
- Improve our relationship with the State Legislature so it better understands the contributions and needs of central cities.
- Improve our partnerships with the watershed district, Hennepin County and the Metropolitan Council.

## **CONTINUE EFFORTS TO MAKE MINNEAPOLIS A BETTER PLACE TO LIVE, WORK AND DO BUSINESS.**

- Mend geographic gaps in special service districts.
- Define the community assets that drive Minneapolis' economic growth, and then work to support these assets to ensure continued growth and vitality.
- Expand placemaking initiatives beyond Downtown to make other commercial areas more engaging.
- Keep moving forward with Complete Streets and efforts to enhance commercial corridors.
- Take advantage of publicly owned land to enliven areas and generate revenue.
- Establish an end-of-trip service space for bicycle and pedestrian commuters that offers bike parking, locker rooms, showers, etc.
- Improve transportation to help commuters get to all areas of the city, not just downtown.

## **PROVIDE MORE ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL BUSINESSES.**

- Hire an outreach person to help businesses comply with the environmental packaging ordinance, and find options for improving recycling and reducing waste.
- Help local businesses understand all the transportation options available to their employees.
- Coordinate the development review process so multiple departments work on the same project at the same time. Simultaneous review will reduce project delays.

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## **HELP COMMUNITIES HAVE LARGER VOICES.**

- Reach out to underserved communities as construction projects are planned and implemented.
- Teach businesses and community groups how to request neighborhood improvement funds from neighborhood organizations. At the same time, work with the neighborhood organizations to ensure they are receptive to new voices, not just the groups they have historically worked with.
- Help businesses and community organizations access resources offered by the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department.

## **GIVE THE CITY A BUDGET TO BE PROACTIVE IN FACILITATING REDEVELOPMENT.**

- Give the Community Planning and Economic Development Department a budget to acquire strategic parcels to unlock development potential. This will allow the City to act strategically, rather than always reacting.

This conversation had representatives from Mayor's office, City Coordinator's office, City Council office, Community Planning and Economic Development, Public Works, Lake Street Council, Hillcrest Development and Minneapolis Downtown Council.