

Capsule Summary: Citizen/Stakeholder Participation and Outreach

A program of public participation to review master planning progress and provide reaction and input to the planning team was formulated. The individual components were tailored to provide breadth of public review and comment as well as focus on specific interest groups such as neighborhood leaders, elected officials, regulatory agencies, businesses, or real estate developers. Public meetings were both small and informal, as well as large and formal. Following are capsule descriptions of participation techniques and objectives:

- **Public Workshop Meetings**

A continuing regular series of well publicized public meetings at locations within the study corridor were scheduled at critical points in the process. They were planned to solicit broad input to the process. Citizens at large were asked to review and comment upon various aspects of the master plan's evolution. Participants were provided opportunities to speak and write comments or answer questions on prepared comment cards. Spoken comments were recorded as part of the meeting's documentation. These meetings have attracted a consistent public following, usually numbering over 120. At the request of the community, meetings were held at various locations in North & Northeast Minneapolis. Meetings were publicized through neighborhood weeklies, the daily Star Tribune, a postcard mailed to the mailing list four weeks prior, and newsletters one week prior. The meetings were well reported in the Star Tribune with major stories immediately proceeding the meetings.

- **Officials Briefings**

Periodic meetings were scheduled with public officials at milestones in the process. Although they focused on elected City officials, invitees also included Minneapolis Park Board Commissioners, Minneapolis Planning Commissioners, Hennipen County Commissioners, Minnesota Legislators, MNRRA officials, MnDOT officials, St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board, and Metropolitan Council members. They were planned to solicit focused commentary regarding jurisdictional, regulatory, administrative, or political aspects of the plan. These briefings provided policy direction and awareness of the varied interests of the institutional members involved in the process.

- **National Advisory Panel**

At major decision points in the process, a select group of nationally known and respected advisors were assembled to provide the consultant team, client group, and elected officials with their unbiased view of the work. After initial familiarization and back grounding, the panel reviewed the premises underlying the directions of the plan, and the content of alternative concepts. Initially the panel was called to focus on real estate and economic development aspects. Additional panels are planned to deal with the creation of an implementation entity and environmental design in the preferred plan.

- **Kitchen Table Meetings**

Prior to broad public meetings, over twenty informal and small group meetings were held with community based groups from residents to businesses to institutional participants. These were designed to gain insight and early response from a range of stakeholders in

the process. These were useful in gaining understanding of the community's expectations, and their collective attitude toward the master planning process. Meetings were held at private homes, coffee shops, union halls, offices, restaurants, and the office of the Consultant.

- **Community Comment Workbooks**

Following the initial presentation, discussion and community feedback regarding alternative concept plans, these workbooks were created to provide those interested with the means to "study" them in a more in-depth manner. Workbooks and formal comment sheets were distributed to six locations within the study area (typically community centers and public libraries). Readers were also directed to the voice mail comment line to have their comments formally entered in the process.

- **Project Newsletters**

Tied to the schedule of public workshops, a series of informational newsletters were mailed to advertise meeting topics and to preview the content of the workshops. This was printed and mailed to over 1000 recipients on the mailing list. Descriptive text and graphics informed interested participants on overall schedule, results of progress and previous meetings, and what events were anticipated in the near future. The newsletter also offered participation via two other methods: a project website and a voice-mail comment line.

- **Project Website**

Created specifically for the Upper Mississippi Master Plan, the website (www.chan2e.org/uppermiss) offered those with computer access the opportunity to view selected graphics and information about the Plan's progress and content. The site also recorded email comments from visitors.

- **Voice Mail Comment Line**

The telephone comment line (612.661.4863) was created to provide a basic tool for people to respond privately to a newsletter, voice an opinion from a public meeting or kitchen table session, or simply provide input to anything concerning them regarding the plan. Each comment has been transcribed and logged by the consultant team. Comments have been valuable in providing the planning team with information and personal insight from responders.

Upper River Master Plan

Public Workshop Meetings

June 23, 1998	Hennepin County Government Center
October 20, 1998	Logan Park
October 21, 1998	North Regional Library
December 2, 1998	Webber Park
January 21, 1999	Webber Park
April 14, 1999	Jenny Lind Elementary School
June 15, 1999	Logan Park
September 30, 1999	Franklin Middle School