We would like to acknowledge that this parcel, hereby known as the project site, is located on the ancestral and traditional territory of the Ochethi Sakihin and Wahpekute. We respect the historic connection to the land, the waterways and living biomes on which we are imposing our values, and all proposals presented here are a work in progress to learn how to be better stewards of the land we inhabit.
1.1 Urban Framing

Most notably recognized as the urban parcel that obstructs Nicollet Avenue’s natural circulation, the site is known for its complicated and contended history. It is currently slated for a new roadway and public space to anchor intersecting networks that exist on the site today.

SITE METRICS AT A GLANCE

Site Area: approx. 10 acres
Engagement Area: approx. 625 acres (defined by E 26th Street, Portland Avenue, E 34th Street, Lyndale Avenue)

entwine intends to capture infrastructure already in place for a financially sustainable proposal to help south Minneapolis thrive. The following spreads frame the site as a space that will become an extension of the existing notable environmental network and culturally significant spaces.

CENTRALITY

Located at the center of South Minneapolis, the project site is strategically situated at the intersection of crucial natural greenways, transportation corridors, and holds great potential for future development initiatives. Our proposal aims to seamlessly weave together public access, sustainable real estate financing, and city development to form a fulcrum at the confluence of converging networks, harnessing the existing, natural forces that define Minneapolis’ urban fabric.

See 1.3 Accessibility for additional details on existing transportation and connectivity.

NATURE

Named after the Dakota phrase Mni Sota Makoce – meaning the land where the waters reflect the skies / clouds, Minneapolis is intricately tied with the greenway / water systems – from the natural systems that give life and places of respite for the local community and all living beings, to the economic flourishing of the industrial sector that was reliant on the waterways. It is without doubt that the “land of a thousand lakes” owes its identity to the natural landscape, which should be celebrated and protected as a part of the city’s future plans.

DEVELOPMENT HISTORY

Situated at the edge of a historically redlined area, the site has a challenged history and is ruptured metaphorically and physically as a palimpsest of multiple planning overlays. The result manifested in conflicts of interest, and in multiple instances minority or indigenous communities faced hostility and violence from white neighborhoods and the state.

See 1.2 Housing & Economics for breakdown on housing statistics.
See 1.4 Culture & Demographics for additional details and statistics on existing population.
1.2 Housing & Economics

HOUSING

The neighborhoods surrounding the K-Mart site are characterized by a high rate of rental units, notable cost burdens for both homeowners and residents, coupled with healthy home values that suggest a wealth building opportunity for the 30% of homeowners within the area.

Percent of Households that Rent

Renters dramatically outnumber owners within the site area. This is higher than the metro rate and the national rate. Whittier and West Phillips both boast particularly high rental rates of 88% and 87% respectively. The high number of renters suggest pent up demand for homeownership options at an accessible price point.

Housing Cost Burden

While renters in the site area face roughly the same housing burden as renters across the metro area, there is a higher proportion of cost-burdened homeowners in Whittier, Lyndale, Central, Phillips West, and surrounding neighborhoods than a metro region. The Central neighborhood represents a disproportionate share of this burden given the neighborhood's higher rates of homeownership (50%) and people of color.

Median Home Value

Home values around the K-Mart site trail metro area home values by roughly 12%. Home value appreciation will likely accelerate with the transit improvements on W. Lake Street and Nicollet Avenue in combination with the public investment on the K-Mart site. Value capture may be needed to ensure current residents – particularly renters - benefit amidst increased private sector attention to the area.

ECONOMICS

While residents in the neighborhoods surrounding the site are more credentialed than many neighborhoods, high poverty and inadequate income still beset many. The K-Mart site has the potential to build future opportunities for entrepreneurship and job creation amidst abutting vibrant neighborhoods.

Median Household Income

Area median household income lags behind household incomes at the metro level by 35%. Roughly 19% of households make less than $25,000 a year, 57% of households make between $25,000 and $100,000, and 24% make more than $100,000 per year.

Educational Attainment

Defined as completion of a bachelor's degree or higher by those 25 years and older, the educational attainment is roughly the same between our site area and Twin Cities region.

Poverty Rate

More than two and a half times as many residents around the K-Mart site live in poverty relative to the metro region. The prevalence of poverty amidst high-earning households speaks to the need for wealth building opportunities and rent-stabilized housing.

Data Source: American Community Survey 2021 – 5-year estimate
Site area includes census tracts (fully) within 1-mile of site
1.3 Accessibility

The site has excellent accessibility by bus, bike, and car, with the potential to become an intermodal hub of exchange between bus lines and future light rail.

- **597 bus departures** on weekdays (#18, #21 and Orange line)
- **12 mi of city bike lanes** spanning from the site in all four directions
- **More BRT in 2025** with Silver Line B running along Lake Street, proposal for Light Rail in Midtown Greenway

The site’s proximity to Uptown and the CBD, the excellent service of Minneapolis’ bus system in the area, and easy access to bike lanes and I-35 provide the K-Mart site with great accessibility.

Today, the site is served by two high-frequency bus routes (18 and 21), with the Orange line in close vicinity. In total, almost 600 buses stop every day in the site and its close surroundings, making this area one of the most connected areas outside of downtown.

In addition, the site is also a major crossing between relevant regional bike routes: the Midtown Greenway, connecting the Mississippi River and the Cedar Lake Trail, and the Blaisdell Avenue bike lane, spanning from downtown to city’s southern limit.

The area is also easily accessible by car - with ramps to the I-35 in close vicinity - and offers adequate pedestrian infrastructure, with recently redone sidewalks in an unfriendly walking environment.

Nonetheless, the connectivity of the area is set to improve, as the 21 bus line is expected to be converted into a BRT Silver line B service in 2025. In addition, in the long term the Midtown Greenway is also slated to provide light rail service.

1.4 Culture & Demographics

Located at the overlap of diverse cultural communities, programming on the project site should engage with immediate neighborhoods, and celebrate diversity through creating opportunities for development and income generation for financially sustainable communities.

- **58.7% POC population**
  - Minneapolis average: 39%
  - Minneapolis average: 39%
  - Foreign ancestries with the highest population:
    - Somali, Indian, Mexican, Laotian
  - Tree Equity Score* (372th out of 395 in Minneapolis)

This proposal intends to continue existing relationships with public space and advocacy groups, such as Whittier Alliance neighborhood and Lake Street Council, to integrate lived experiences and local preferences into site design and future proposals. The list below includes a sample collection of potential collaborators that could be referenced for future project intervention. Site specific activation and engagement would require a case-by-case evaluation and RFP release as next steps to this proposal.

The City of Minneapolis has already completed extensive engagement efforts with public space and advocacy groups, such as Whittier Alliance neighborhood and Lake Street Council, to integrate lived experiences and local preferences into site design and future proposals. The list below includes a sample collection of potential collaborators that could be referenced for future project intervention. Site specific activation and engagement would require a case-by-case evaluation and RFP release as next steps to this proposal.

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For a more comprehensive list, please see the Public Engagement Framework - Stakeholders Register (last revised 2021.)
1.5 Previous Planning Efforts

Minneapolis 2040
Duration: 2016 – 2019

• The city's comprehensive plan serves as an overarching policy document that is rooted in resident priorities and offers guidance to departments and elected officials on how to advance the city.
• The Minneapolis 2040 engagement effort prioritized marginalized communities including people of color, indigenous populations, renters, and low-income residents.
• Establishes goals and strategies to address key priorities such as affordable housing, living wage jobs, and eliminating racial disparities.
• Provides context to adopt new built form standards to encourage housing development, walkable neighborhoods, and greater access to amenities.

Phase I: Launch and Listen
Duration: August 2022 – January 2023

• City staff and community partners hosted more than 20 engagement events to garner feedback from residents, visitors, and businesses.
• Received more than 10,000 survey responses and almost 2,800 from residents in adjacent neighborhoods: Whittier, Lyndale, Central, and Phillips West.
• Collaborated with Urban Land Institute Minnesota to host a technical assistance panel focused on identifying displacement pressures, mitigation strategies, and wealth-building opportunities.
• Released reports: Desired Outcomes (May 2023), Community Engagement Summary (May 2023), and ULI’s Future of the K-Mart Site (March 2023).

Phase II: Public Space Plan
Duration: June 2023 – February 2024

• Phase will produce New Nicollet Concept Layout Plan & the Public Space Framework.
• The New Nicollet Concept Layout Plan will design and engineer a new site layout including curbs, pedestrian facilities, bicycle accommodations, and a new bridge over the Midtown Greenway.
• The community will generate ideas for public space as a part of the Public Space Framework.
• Elected officials will review recommendations presented by staff.

Phase III: 2023+
Duration: February 2024 onward

• Phase III will continue conversations with shareholders and local community members to ensure their participation in the established project moving forward.
• Reference list of shareholders can be found in the Former K-Mart and New Nicollet Initiative’s Public Engagement Framework (2021) - Stakeholders Register (revised November 2021.)

DEVELOPMENTS IN SURROUNDING AREAS

1. Karmel Mall
2. Abyssinia Cultural Center
3. The Lago Apart.
4. Lyndy Apartments
5. Core Lifestyle Clinic Uptown
6. Lime Apartments
7. Blue Apartments
8. Track 29
9. Midtown Lofts
10. The Miles Uptown Apartments
11. Inspire Apartments
13. Flux Apartments
14. Lumos Apartments
15. MoZaic East
16. Lagoon Terrace
17. Hennepin County Library
18. The Asher
19. Uptown Row
20. Sonder at REVEL
21. Calhoun Square

Based on documentation from Former K-Mart and New Nicollet Initiative by City of Minneapolis (pub. 2021)
1.6 Opportunities and constraints

The preliminary analysis shows that the site has great potential for providing a unique experience for city living. However, key lessons must be incorporated from surrounding developments to meet community needs.

Growing housing demand in the area, yet commercial opportunities remain limited

The location of the site offers an excellent opportunity to create a mixed-use development: along the Lake street corridor and with easy access to downtown, well served by transit and offering access to the Midtown Greenway. As such, the development will follow the eastward growth taking place from Uptown in the last decades. Adjacent developments have brought new residents to the area, but new retail leasing options are constrained.

Excellent transit coverage, yet dominated by auto-centric infrastructure

The site is served by several high-frequency bus routes, allowing easy access to and from downtown Minneapolis and St. Paul. In addition, it is also intersected by two major bike-ways, thus offering easy and convenient alternatives to the car for reaching relevant destinations. However, the proximity of the I-35 and the heavy traffic on Lake street also requires a response to the need of car traffic and storage, which has to be minimized and well located in order to avoid negative impacts on the public realm and the livability of the space.

Natural corridors that connect to large open spaces, yet partially locked from the site due to future plans

The Midtown Greenway is a unique asset to the site, providing green space, a valuable bike lane, and connection to large open spaces as the Mississippi river to the East and the lakes to the West. However, the Greenway is not directly accessible from the site, as rail rights-of-way impede access to the greenway from the south. In addition, the redevelopment of the access to the Greenway is to be located in 1st Avenue instead of Nicollet, further disconnecting the site and the greenway.

A site with extensive planning efforts, yet in need of consolidation

The site has largely been rethought by authorities and the community, while citywide plans offer an excellent framework for action. However, the different options and proposals articulated through time have not found a clear, unique direction that has generated the support of neighbors and authorities alike.

Chance to build a mix of affordable and market rate, yet at a risk of displacement in the area

Existing housing policies and the size of the site allow for a combination of different typologies, where affordable and market-rate units can be located, guaranteeing access for all income brackets and the viability of the development. However, demographic data shows that surrounding residents are mainly low-income and renters, and thus unmitigated property value appreciation can easily prompt displacement in the area.
2.1 Mission & Guiding Principles

This proposal was developed around a series of intersections, each representing a unique aspect or opportunity of the site area and region.

The five guiding principles on this spread serve as the conceptual pillars of our proposal. By focusing on intersections, the development can look beyond individual urban or social factors to create a comprehensive and holistic impact.

The collective impact of these pillars defines our mission: to re-imagine the New Nicollet site through equitable, community-oriented, sustainable, and actionable planning and design.

Where Minneapolis and Saint Paul meet: a beginning of a new major centrality
By positioning the development in this strategic location, the development will become a hub, initiating the creation of a significant central area where the two cities meet. This centrality will attract diverse activities, businesses, and communities, fostering economic growth and urban development in the region.

Where housing and retail meet: a mixed-use neighborhood for all income levels
The project aims to create a diverse and inclusive community by combining residential and commercial spaces within the same area. By integrating housing options alongside retail establishments, the neighborhood becomes a vibrant mixed-use environment where residents have easy access to essential amenities, services, and employment opportunities. Furthermore, by providing housing options for different income levels, the neighborhood promotes socio-economic diversity and affordability.

Where city and nature meet: a connected and sustainable district
The project is deeply rooted in the connection between the city and nature. By embracing our relationship with the environment, we can create a future where sustainable living is not only achievable but also enriching and fulfilling for all. The project features nature-facing design with opportunities for passive and active recreation and the extension of natural habitat into the site.

Where bus and bike and walk meet: a transit and active mobility-oriented neighborhood
The project highlights and embraces all mobility types within the neighborhood. The development will prioritize accessibility and connectivity through various modes of transportation, including buses, bicycles, and pedestrian pathways. By promoting active mobility and providing efficient transit options, such as bus routes and bike lanes, the neighborhood encourages residents to rely less on cars, promoting a healthier lifestyle.

Where today and tomorrow meet: planning for present and future needs
The development focuses on the future of community well-being, but also the idea that tomorrow is made from today’s actions. The development embraces innovative technologies, sustainable practices, and adaptable design to ensure resilience and flexibility. By considering the evolving demands of urban living, the neighborhood becomes a dynamic and future-facing community that can thrive in our changing world.
The name “entwine” is inspired by the concept of linked cities and the blending of intersecting neighborhoods to create a new centrality. The project represents a future that integrates neighborhoods, transportation, and nature into an urban environment that has it all. entwine will foster a sense of community and connection among its inhabitants. It is the nexus of multi-modal transportation and the balance of life, work and play. Shared community spaces will encourage social interaction and foster a deeper connection between its inhabitants.
3.1 Land Use & Program

A unique built environment where heights adapt to the context and rules are flexible, ensuring quality and diversity.

Parcel Area: 238,400 sq ft
Open Space: 205,600 sq ft

The existing zoning regulations in the area (CM4 Zoning District and Transit 15 Overlay District) allow for high densities and require ground-floor activity in street frontages, fulfilling two of the following three requirements: occupying at least 60% of street frontage, 20% of footprint area, or 5% of GFA.

As such, the proposal does not require any rezoning, as the proposed densities fall well inside of the allowed range. When it comes to active ground floors, it is considered that only frontages towards streets with vehicular traffic can be taken into account.

Shaping the area in human-scale blocks
Excessively large blocks in the area offer an uninviting environment for pedestrians: long distances with no variation or chances to reroute. To resolve this, the proposal creates small blocks that are fit for development and allow for pedestrians to use the space and access multiple destinations easily. In addition, pedestrian streets break the orthogonality of the grid, so that walking distances are shorter and moving on foot is prioritized over other mobility modes.

Scaling heights and shapes from avenue to green space
The proposed volumes create more dense massing towards main roads, while reducing heights in inner pedestrian streets and towards green areas. Consequently, buildings adapt to the surrounding environment providing different environments for a rich experience: from cozy, pedestrian, low-rise streets to bustling avenues. In addition, setbacks are incorporated into the tallest buildings, to maintain the human scale in largest buildings.

Intertwining city and nature
The proposed building shapes create an intermediate space between the Midtown Greenway and the development, where buildings open up towards the green space, creating a comb of interlocked green spaces and buildings. Therefore, the volumes create a gentle contact with the greenway, opening up courtyards towards the green area and allowing for residents to enjoy the green space, while also creating generous park spaces for all.

Providing flexibility for building design
With small blocks and descending heights as set parameters, the final formalization of volumes is flexible. The plan sets a maximum square footage per block, which is smaller than the maximum perimeters. In doing so, the plan provides flexibility to developers to shape buildings depending on their needs and market changes, and allows the plan to be durable in time, as building volumes will be able to change in response to evolving housing needs.
3.1 Land Use & Program

The proposed development will provide over 750 new residential units, including at least 36% of them at affordable rates. A diversity of housing stock, including market rate, affordable rental, limited-equity affordable ownership, senior independent living, and live-work artists studios assures that the district fulfills broad community needs.

An FAR of 4.5 exceeds the minimum requirement of 1.5 for the site’s Transit 15 Built Form Overlay District, but allows for the massing to respond to adjacent building heights and the Midtown Greenway.

GFA: 1.08 million sf

FAR: 4.5
In 2021, Minneapolis created “Parks for All”, a comprehensive plan for the city's parks on open space system. The public realm concept is designed to increase site connectivity, provide a diverse range of space types and opportunities, and align with the specific goals of “Parks for All”.

Key Takeaways from past community engagement, regarding public space
- Flexible Public Space
  - Pedestrian friendly New Nicollet Ave.
- Little disruption to existing green space
- Enhance the existing, without adding new lane bike access

In reference to MPRB Comprehensive Plan 2021-2036

Designing for “Parks for All” Goals

1. **Foster Belonging & Equity**
   A central public plaza at the heart of the development for communities feel empowered to hold events and gatherings.

2. **Steward a Continuum of Nature & Recreation**
   Balance of passive and active recreation areas encourage outdoor gatherings, habitat restoration, and nature-based play.

3. **Expand Focus on Health Equity**
   Provide senior independent living, affordable housing, and local food options to promote wellness and health for all.

4. **Strengthen Ecological Connections**
   Sensitive landscape interventions surrounding Midtown Greenway nurture ecological connections with the broader natural context.

5. **Connect through Communications and Tech**
   New community hub provides opportunity for locally hosted & organized programs, education, and engagement workshops.
### 3.2 Public Realm

#### Community Plaza

Community plazas are situated strategically at major intersections, visible corners and in-between buildings to maximize indoor-outdoor program integration, while encouraging existing and proposed circulation through and across the project site. These flexible open spaces are designed to support proposed transit infrastructure and promote outdoor activity, including site element selection, grading and other site amenities that are designed with safety and accessibility in mind.

Site elements designed with climate risk mitigation in mind, alleviating urban heat island and other anthropogenic effects. This can be achieved, for example, through dappled shade provided by planting urban-resistant trees approved by the MPRB, in accordance to the Minneapolis Urban Forest Policy. Through fostering excellence in maintenance, community plazas can live to their fullest potential as spaces that encourage collaboration, support educational programming on climate justice and, and other local institutions partnerships on culturally relevant events. Community plazas are also designed to accommodate activities all year round, with outdoor furniture for visitors of all ages and abilities.

#### Connection to Midtown Greenway and the broader public realm

Given the proximity to Midtown Greenway, the project will capitalize its adjacency and connectivity to natural assets, such as the Soo Line Community Garden and the broader Minneapolis Lake of the Isles trail systems. Through community-led activities and nature-centric workshops, engaging with the natural space helps nurture community stewardship and identity with neighboring public parks.

The proposal includes an ADA accessible ramp off of the newly reconnected Nicollet Avenue, provided that the existing one is in poor condition and is already slated for reconstruction. Connectivity to the Midtown Greenway opens up opportunities for a wider array of programming and extends existing momentum into the project site. The adjacent open space will be designed to be climate resilient, while supporting healthy lifestyles for visitors of all ages. The integration of native, flood resistant planting provides habitats for urban wildlife, and in turn encourages pollinators and birds to gather.

The community center in the background facilitates outreach opportunities, particularly events that support and promote local businesses - through seasonal events like Eat Street or MPLS Open Streets.
3.3 Mobility

A community where pedestrians and cyclists are centered and a transit interchange hub facilitates more sustainable living.

The site has a unique opportunity to provide a car-free environment. Frequent and reliable transit service and easy access to bike lanes can make the use of cars in daily life redundant for the inhabitants and visitors of the community.

To do so, the proposal enforces the link between buses with quality public space and amenities, makes it easy to bike and walk with pedestrian streets and bike lanes, and ensures that parked cars do not take over public space by providing off-street spaces.

Enforce a major bus line interchange hub

The site has excellent service and sits at the crossing of three high-frequency bus lines: route 18, route 21 (soon to be Silver line B), and the Orange line. In order to make the most of this, bus stops are located to allow for easy transfers, and nearby generous public spaces improve the transit rider experience.

In addition, the surroundings of bus stops will be served by retail and dining options, in order to cater to residents and commuters alike.

Offer a safe environment for cyclists and pedestrians

The neighborhood puts bikes at the center, by providing a safe bike lane at Nicollet Avenue and ensuring that the redeveloped access to the Midtown Greenway links directly to it. In addition, the proposal also contemplates a community bike hub, providing safe parking areas and additional services for cyclists. In addition, most of the streets and public spaces have limited vehicular access and are destined for pedestrians to feel safe in a human-scale environment.

Manage parking to activate streets

Despite the excellent transit service and the cycling and walking accessibility, new residents might still need to park their cars in the site. To do so, the development proposes two centralized parking areas, accessed from the perimeter of the site, where residents and visitors can park and enjoy all the amenities in the area without moving their car. In doing so, centralized parking promotes street footfall, while fostering resident encounters in public space.

Foster intermodality, leveraging future opportunities

By offering a walkable environment connecting several transportation modes, the site fosters intermodality. Residents and visitors can leave their cars behind, or change modes from car to bus, or bus to bike within the site. In addition, the development contemplates the future creation of a Light Rail service in the Midtown Greenway, creating a green space that could slope towards the greenway and access a potential station.
3.4 Community & Retail

Supporting business, community, and residents' economic choices and opportunity

**Community Hub**

The community center on the northeast of the site is designed to foster stronger connections by inviting people in to gather and socialize. The space can be subdivided to meet pressing community needs: high-quality daycare, bike parking and repair, an after-school tutoring space, etc. This multi-use facility is accessible year-round, can host community events and neighborhood meetings, all while ensuring a dynamic and versatile environment for existing and new residents.

**Live Work**

Paying homage to Minneapolis’ reputation as a vibrant art community, enTwine includes 42 live-work studios for artists. Creatives often struggle to manage the combined weight of paying rent for housing and a studio. Positioned along Nicollet and Blaisdell, 42 residences will allow resident artists to save on potential space. These housing-and-work units are another example of range of housing and retail spaces featured across the project.

**Local Foods**

Reconnecting Nicollet through the site will help carry the dynamism and recognition of “Eat Street” to enTwine and beyond, amplifying the number of food choices residents have. Finally, enTwine will host an anchor tenant that can help residents get the goods and services they need.

**Neighborhood Services**

Many residents relied on K-Mart for basic goods and essentials. The enTwine project will include an anchor tenant with 32,500 of square feet at the northwest corner of Nicollet and W Lake. That anchor tenant together with small vendors will collectively meet the need that K-Mart once served. More than 22,500 square feet of smaller, flexible retail spaces front the east side of Nicollet.
3.5 Housing

Housing of all types, at all price points, for all types of residents.

Just like there is no silver bullet in housing policy, there is no single housing type that will meet the community’s goals on this site. That’s why this proposal features a total of 715 residential units: 198 deeply-affordable rental units, 60 wealth-building homeownership units, as well as 98 senior independent living apartments, 42 live-work artist studios, and 359 market-rate units. All programs feature a preference for residents who are already in the community. Finally, a Housing Tax Increment Financing District shall be implemented to mitigate residential displacement and ensure surrounding neighborhoods benefit from these investments.

Develop deeply-affordable housing via Faircloth-to-RAD

HUD’s Faircloth-to-RAD development process turns America’s history of undermining public housing into an opportunity for new residents. The Faircloth Amendment capped section 9 public housing unit counts at their 1999 levels. Housing authorities have the ability to convert the operation and capital funds that they would receive from HUD into a project-specific rental subsidy. Faircloth-to-RAD contract rents form a strong base that can be combined with other subsidy sources including vouchers and the Minneapolis Affordable Trust Fund.

Wealth building through limited-equity opportunities

Limited-equity ownership units will be available for renters earning less than 80% AMI. The city’s Department of Community Planning and Economic Development will collaborate with the City of Lakes Community Land Trust to expand the Perpetually Affordable Housing Ownership Land Trust program on the Nicollet site. Residents will be able to build wealth while maintaining the unit affordability through income-restrictive covenants. Furthermore, local CDFIs or institutions should be engaged to provide Islamic loan products like Murabaha, Ijara, or Musharaka.

Housing Choices for Neighbors

A mix of housing types is imperative to accommodate the diverse population in Minneapolis. In addition to multi-family affordable units and limited-equity land trust homes, the site will feature senior independent living apartments, live-work artist studios, and market-rate apartments. Since the site is owned by the city, a 25% neighborhood preference can be applied without concern for violating fair housing laws (based on Goetz & Sepulveda’s 2020 analysis). This range of unit types will create a vibrant neighborhood for Minneapolis’ diverse individuals and families.

Distribute Benefits to Combat Rising Housing Costs

The City of Minneapolis will establish a Housing Tax Increment Finance District to ensure that surrounding residents benefit. Before implementation, advocates should seek an expansion of allowed uses from the Minnesota State Legislature. While TIF funds can currently be used for new affordable housing construction, definitions must be expanded to allow for other neighborhood stabilization tools. Under an expanded definition, TIF revenue could be used to bolster the NOAH Preservation Fund or fund home repairs to mitigate potential residential displacement.

Housing Typologies

1 / Live-work units

This live-work spaces are often attractive to entrepreneurs, artists, freelancers, and small business owners who seek the convenience of combining their home and workspace. These properties typically feature amenities such as separate entrances, dedicated workspace areas, ample natural light, high-speed internet access, and flexible layouts that can adapt to various business needs.

2 / Senior Independent units

These units are specifically designed to accommodate the needs and preferences of older adults who desire an independent living arrangement. These housing options cater to seniors who are capable of living on their own and appreciate accessibility, safety, and the availability of supportive services.

3 / Affordable Ownership units

Land trust units are available for renters who want to buy a home, but may not be able to afford a traditional home or condo. They have to earn less than 80% of the area median income.

4 / Affordable Rental units

Affordable rental units are available for renters earning less than 60% of the Area Median Income.

5 / Market Rate units

These units cater to a broad range of tenants who are willing to pay market-based rents. These units can come in varying sizes, including one-bedroom, two-bedroom, or three-bedroom configurations.
3.6 Sustainability

To ensure the highest level of sustainability is achieved, the built structures and the open spaces will source local expertise, materiality and the highest-level green building technologies (e.g. prioritizing LED light, efficient heat pumps, greywater management), such that construction and long-term management is financially feasible. By being context sensitive, our proposal capitalizes on existing infrastructure and potential to ensure the project is delivered on time and on budget. This proposal also recognizes extensive engagement completed in the past, and acknowledges community strengths and industries to promote community stewardship over the proposed development, which is sustainable in terms of management and extends longevity of the project.

Sustainability through Design
Buildings are sited and oriented to encourage passive heating and cooling while green spaces serve as an ecological buffer and enhance outdoor thermal comfort. Buildings will be built to be LEED certifiable, ensuring that structures meet globally recognized sustainable real estate criteria through incorporating energy efficient HVAC systems and smart building management systems that minimizes energy consumption. Material choice should be context sensitive and sourced locally if possible.

Nature as a Living Resource
The project proposes to integrate greywater reuse into proposed development, to ensure responsible and sustainable use of natural resources. Beyond building envelopes, public realm construction choices and strategies would work to slow stormwater runoff, for example through rainwater gardens as retention basins and selection of native plants to reduce water use across the site.

Solar as a Community Benefit
The Inflation Reduction Act’s Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund will allow enTwine to feature a community solar installation that will benefit low-to-moderate income residents on site. By directing the program’s benefits to low-to-moderate income households on site, the power generated will earn residents the full retail value, dramatically offsetting their energy costs.

A Place for Healthy Living
The combination of amenity density with multi-modal connections give enTwine residents the opportunity to thrive without a personal vehicle. Furthermore, the integration of green space and trees will allow the community to rest and relax on this site. Finally, hosting farmers’ markets and local food options during the warmer months on site will ensure access to healthy food.
4.1 Procurement & Financing

While its well-recognized that the built environment is a manifestation of our values, how we build is also a reflection of our priorities. A unique approach is necessary to chip away at the racial wealth gap and economic concentration that besets the Twin Cities.

Unbundle Contracting Opportunities

The City and partners will unbundle infrastructure and development contracts where ever possible rather than seeking a master developer. Unbundled contracts provide smaller, local enterprises an opportunity to bid and win public contracts. Dividing the site into sections and decoupling services will help drive economic development beyond the usual suspects.

Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Goals

This project shall feature and attempt to surpass a 30% procurement goal with businesses owned by women and people of color. While this is the legally defensible goal based on the City’s 2017 Disparity Study, surpassing this goal should be an important priority for the City given the significance of this project.

4.2 Phasing

The phasing strategy first contemplates dense development along the Lake street edge, while providing amenities and parking space that can easily spur further development in the remaining polts and surrounding vacant areas.

Development Community Council

An advisory committee comprised of stakeholders from Whittier, Lyndale, Central, Phillips West alongside other key partners such as NAACP Minneapolis, the Minnesota Somali Chamber of Commerce, and the National Association of Women Business Owners will help shape request for proposals, review bids, and advise on the procurement process for the redevelopment of the K-Mart Site. This Council is both designed to create an equitable procurement process and amplify business opportunities to local and marginalized business owners.

Financing Parking

The City’s Public Works Department will leverage the Municipal Parking Fund to finance two garages on site. Centralizing parking will provide other developments flexibility and avoid saddling each building and all their tenants with parking costs. Together, these garages will provide 674 parking spaces accessible via 1st Avenue & Blaisdell Avenue respectively. Transit and multi-modal options will be prioritized on site through transit and bike connections, allowing for minimal parking provision. Developers can choose to rent spots for their tenants and excess spots will serve visitors.

Year 5

Building 1 + Nicollet ave.

GFA

264.750 sq ft

Year 7

Building 2 + Plaza + Parking lot

+120,500 sq ft
Total 385,250 sq ft

Year 10

Buildings 4+5 + Park

+145,570 sq ft
Total 826,820 sq ft

Year 9

Building 3 + Pedestrian st

+296,000 sq ft
Total 681,250 sq ft

Year 15

Buildings 6+7 + Park

+253,200 sq ft
Total 1,080,020 sq ft
4.3 Framing in Context

The site has the potential to grow in surrounding blocks in order to become a major mixed-used centrality, making the most of transit, and connecting to other relevant centralities along the Lake street corridor.

The development creates a new centrality along Lake Street, halfway between Uptown and the Lake/Chicago area. As such, it creates a new central intensity that can attract more citizens to the corridor, both at Lake street and the Midtown Greenway.

In addition, future plans may make the development even more crucial. On one hand, the proposal to create a light rail service in the Midtown Greenway could easily provide a station to the area, which would cater the I-35 Orange Line stop and the bus interchange at Lake/Nicollet. On the other hand, surrounding parking lots could be redeveloped to reinforce the centrality of the site.

Opportunity for growth in surrounding blocks
In all blocks around the site, at least 30% of the surface is occupied by surface parking lots, thus offering the opportunity for densification. As such, the Exchange is the first step for a full redevelopment of the area.

Relating to other centralities
The site sits exactly halfway between Uptown and the Lake/Chicago area, where the Abbott Hospital is located. Thus, the development will thrive further when finding synergies with surrounding developments.

Increasing demand for transit
The increase in population and retail destinations in the area will create new trips, which will be easily captured by transit. This will allow to sustain service levels and eventually create the need to increase them.
4.4 Alignment to City Goals

The project strives to help meet the goals outlined in Minneapolis 2040. Key goals and relevant next steps are listed below.

The following list is not exhaustive, and the project influence is by no means limited to the following, but simply an overview of key alignments with city goals. The comprehensive list can be found in the Minneapolis 2040 - City Comprehensive Plan (2020.)

**Goal 2 | More Residents and Jobs**

Introduction of locally owned business frontages, and strengthen connection with central Minneapolis businesses to provide jobs. Introduce opportunities that empower blue collared workers to strengthen economic resiliency.

Next Steps: Work with existing organizations and institutions to implement training programs and job introduction; seek municipal funding to support local businesses.

**Goal 3 | Affordable and Accessible Housing**

Through providing a range of housing typologies that helps alleviate cost-burdens and encourages home-ownership, for both residents and business owners.

Next Steps: Engage with relevant developers neighborhood stakeholders to implement market policies that prioritize benefiting local businesses.

**Goal 6 | High-Quality Physical Environment**

Carefully designed public space can encourage outdoor activities and a healthy lifestyle. Encourage use of green building technologies to ensure sustainable development.

Next Steps: Collaborate with local contractors and landscape architects / urban designers for institutional knowledge on locally-driven and sourced construction.

**Goal 8 | Creative, Cultural, and Natural Amenities**

By extending existing programs from surrounding neighborhoods, the site can reconnect neighborhoods and nurture a stronger sense of identity by celebrating cultural diversity.

Next Steps: Reach out to local artists, indigenous communities and local businesses on potential opportunities and desires for the future.

**Goal 9 | Complete Neighborhoods**

Integration of cycle lane and other public space infrastructure will encourage pedestrian-level activity, and therefore visibility of new businesses to spur economic vitality.

Next Steps: Ensure compliance with public realm ROW and form-based codes, consult transportation engineers and urban designers on feasibility studies / typical street design.

**Goal 10 | Climate Change Resilience**

Thoughtful management of stormwater, context-sensitive planting strategies, and use of green building technology will produce a climate resilient anchor for the community.

Next Steps: Engage with municipal planners, local landscape architects and architects to design climate sensitive development and resilient public space.

05 Summary of Proposals

entwine encompasses design and strategies which addresses a number of pressing issues in the site area and region. The development is planned to be impactful, future-facing, and actionable. Below is a summary of our proposals, a brief overview of each goal, and specific recommendations to achieve them.

**Build Housing for All**

Provide a diverse set of housing options across the spectrum of affordability to meet the needs of a diverse community.

Develop deeply affordable housing. Allow for neighborhood preference. Develop limited-equity ownership units. Establish a Housing Tax Increment Finance District

**Foster a Vibrant Community**

Provide space for community gathering, allow art and culture to flourish, support small business to create a vibrant community at this intersection.

Build community center & support programming. Develop live-work units for artists and entrepreneurs. Support local businesses through small retail spaces. Provide neighborhood services through anchor tenant

**Enhance and Connect Transit**

Build a development which connects to existing transit systems and provides access to more residents, encouraging a car-free lifestyle.

Create residential density along Route 18 and future Silver Line. Build infrastructure that prioritizes biking and walking. Centralize and minimize parking to promote transit use

**Design for Sustainability**

Integrate a range of passive and active sustainability strategies to serve as a model for progressive development across the region.

Design for passive heating / cooling and outdoor thermal comfort. Require sustainable certifications. Build green infrastructure systems for water management and treatment
06 Project Team

We are a group of planners, architects, landscape architects, and designers from diverse backgrounds, collaborating to re-imagine the future of the New Niccolot site.

Mikel Berra Sandin is a first-year Master's in City Planning student at MIT with a concentration in City Design and Development. He completed his BArch/MArch in the Polytechnic University of Barcelona, with an interest in integrated planning, transformation of mobility infrastructures, and analysis of economic activities in cities.

Sofia Chiappero is a first-year Master's in City Planning student at MIT with a concentration in City Design and Development. Her background is in Architecture and Urban Design in Latin America, with an interest in economic development, community participation and strategic planning.

Zak Davidson is a first-year Master's in City Planning student at MIT with a background in municipal government and policy analysis. He completed his undergraduate studies at Tulane University in New Orleans and is passionate about the intersection of affordable housing finance, zoning, and climate mitigation.

Hannah Leung is a first-year Master's in City Planning Student at MIT with a concentration in City Design and Development. She completed her BLA and BALAS in Economics from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, with an interest in valorizing nature-based solutions and conservation of ex-urban landscapes.

Cale Wagner is a first-year Master's in City Planning Student at MIT with a concentration in City Design and Development. He completed his BA in Environmental Design from the University of Colorado at Boulder, and is interested in the densification of urban fringes and the integration of emerging technologies into the urban design toolkit.

07 References

Data Sources

Census Data

2021 American Community Survey 5-year Census

Open Data Minneapolis (https://opendata.minneapolismn.gov/)

Citations


