

Visioning Workshop 1: Summary

The City of Minneapolis and the engagement team (4RM+ULA and the Cultural Wellness Center) conducted Visioning Workshop 1 on April 30, 2024.

Approximately 100 people attended the event at The Square at the Chicago Ave Shops. At the event we discussed what matters most to the community, and focused on memorials and the Peoples Way at George Floyd Square.

A brief presentation was shared by the Cultural Wellness Center identifying the agenda and sharing some historical context for the work we are pursuing. Six group leaders were identified and paired with a note taker from either the City of Minneapolis staff or a member of the engagement team from The Cultural Wellness Center and 4RM+ULA.

Group A:

Victor Jones - Leader, Rebecca Parrell - Note Taker

Group B:

Audra Robinson - Leader, Nathan Koster - Note Taker

Group C:

Phi Khaler - Leader, Lyssa Washington - Note Taker

Group D:

Lynn Hinkle - Leader, Heidi Garrido - Note Taker

Group E:

Sally Gordon - Leader, Noa Havilio - Note Taker

Group F:

Zena Kocher - Leader, Alexander Kado - Note Taker

Highlights and Themes from Workshop 1

General Highlights and Themes

- Frustration with the process and continued meetings. People want action now.
- Desire for transparency of the process and desired outcomes.
- People need help now.
- GFS is a sacred place. Any modifications need to keep that in mind and be thoughtful of the hard work people have already put into the place.
- Do not let future plans disrupt what is already happening in the square.

Memorial Specific Highlights and Themes

- GFS is a Sacred Place and should be designated as such.
- George Floyd family should be included in the development.
- The actual place of the murder is important.
- Keep, understand and be respectful of the existing memorials.
- Memorialize the murder, the response and the movement.

- The community should have a voice, lead and benefit.
- Consider making George Floyd Square a designated cultural or historic district.

Peoples' Way Specific Highlights and Themes

- Indoor and outdoor gathering spaces should be included in any future development plan.
- Provide outdoor canopy in future development plans.
- Keeping the existing building is not important, however the existing memorials are very important to retain and incorporate in the future development.
- Programming and activities that have developed on site should be maintained, including mutual aid.

Right-of-Way Specific Highlights and Themes

- Right-of-way planning should develop in close coordination with memorial planning and the Peoples' Way development.
- Roundabout is a good component of the square - it slows people down moving through the square.

Contact

For reasonable accommodations or alternative formats please contact Office of Public Service, Alexander Kado, 38thandChicago@minneapolismn.gov, 612-673-3080. People who are deaf or hard of hearing can use a relay service to call 311 at 612-673-3000. TTY users call 612-263-6850.

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Group Breakout Session Highlights

Group A

Victor Jones - Leader, Rebecca Parrell - Note Taker

Memorials:

- Acknowledge there is an existing Memorial
- The square should evolve and develop into a place that is worthy of being the center of the world in the fight for racial justice.
- Any work on memorials needs to engage the creators of the existing memorials.
- A future memorial needs to remain on the location where George Floyd was murdered
- How do we address what is there now, and what is maintained in place?
- It is important to maintain access for pedestrians, bicyclists, and maybe transit to be able to see and get to the memorials.
- The area needs more lighting on all the streets - Chicago and the side streets.

Peoples Way:

- Indoor and outdoor gathering space must be included in any future development
- Outdoor gathering space should be covered for shade and rain/snow.
- Most of the group agreed that keeping the existing building is not a priority, however preservation of the memorials murals on the building should be incorporated into a new site design.
- Consider indoor space for rotating exhibits highlighting the protest movement that grew out of the protest of George Floyd's murder. Include art that was created in the moment and offerings that continue to be left at the site.
- Mutual aid programs that the community started during the movement should be integrated into the future plans, they could include: The Peoples' Closet, little free library, medical assistance, public restrooms, food assistance.

What are we memorializing?

- Stolen black lives
- 2020 uprising that happened around the world after the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis Police
- Understand why this happened
- Explain why it happened at 38th and Chicago in

Minneapolis

- Explain institutional racism
- Share what happened that day

Group B

Audra Robinson - Leader, Nathan Koster - Note Taker

General:

- Intersection speaks to me.
- Don't want square to be tourist destination.
- Humanize being Black.
- What happens now versus long term?
- Community wants to be empowered, not told/informed.
- Community wants/needs resources to support the community.
- RFP after RFP is getting data without action.
- 100 people = 100 interpretations.
- Disingenuous for the City and people to profit from the death of a Black man.
- Fear from the City not to do harm - community wants action.

Memorials:

- Epicenter of the story
- Get creative, align with community
- Point young people to life not death
- Community member has almost 1000 offerings and community created art, currently storing at their own expense - who is curating art and memorials?

Peoples Way:

- Transparency around process - The City currently owns - how is it being transferred.

Right-of-Way:

- Like the roundabout, but not sure it will work long term.
- Incorporate a pass through area.
- Important for traffic - emergency route

What are we memorializing?

- Moment of 2020 and the murder of George Floyd.
- Process for accountability and goals.

Group Breakout Session Highlights (Continued)

- What happened and where we went.
- Start with the history of the community.
- Honor the life and legacy of George Floyd.
- Memorialize the community process.

Group C

Phi Khaler - Leader, Lyssa Washington - Note Taker

General:

- Desire to see change.
- Hold the timeline.
- Create the outcome (The 'Request' Demand).
- How do we move to address the block and movement to the City.
- Desire to see change.
- Desire for healing - address homelessness.
- Acknowledge the police brutality.
- Respectful treatment/honor the space.
- Not a tourist attraction.
- Share history with context.
- Noticeable change in the neighborhood.
- Move from meeting to organizing

Memorials:

- Proper memorial - permanent and impactful
- Preserve the murder site
- Understand existing memorials.

Peoples Way:

- Community member shared speedway concept.
- Indoor and outdoor spaces for gathering and art/memorial.
- Need good lighting.

Right-of-Way:

- Roundabout - traffic calming.

What are we memorializing?

- We need George Floyd family blessing/permission and they need to be involved.
- Landmark/District - tell the story

Group D

Lynn Hinkle - Leader, Heidi Garrido - Note Taker

Memorials:

- George Floyd Square already has a memorial that the people have built - It is a sign of ongoing protest, using language memorial feels like "we got it settled, stop talking about it."

Peoples Way:

- Desire for global center for reparations.
- Could be National Racial Justice Healing Center. Important to acknowledge what the City has laid out and decide if we want to move on from that.
- Develop Peoples' Way concept first to help organize other components of the square.
- Need space sit and process - place where people can come together and talk about the pain, suffering.
- The City should not own or operate the future center at the Peoples' Way.
- Active programming at the site needs to be maintained: Meetings twice a day, People's Closet ...
- Love and hate activities/programming - believe we can do better.

Right-of-Way:

- Why can't roundabout be like other roundabouts in the City, without stop signs?
- Don't love cars that go through stop signs. A lot of people don't drive through square intentionally.
- Any discussion of right-of-way needs to look at traffic in surrounding area.

What are we memorializing?

- Death and life
- The moment and the events that led to it.
- Time to move on - moment should be memorialized
- Rituals are important
- The spirit of the community coming together
- The movement, the response - people marched all over the world against institutional racism - an inspiration for all to step up and fight white supremacy.

Group Breakout Session Highlights (Continued)

Group E

Sally Gordon - Leader, Noa Havilio - Note Taker

General:

- We should be talking with business owners. (Cup Foods, Smoke in the Pit, Walid, Win Hewet, PJ Hill, Dan Coleman, Rachel Cunningham, Demitris Key, Jamaican House, Agape Ministry, GFGM etc.)
- We should also be communicating with all organizations in the square

Memorials:

- Memorial should be authentic to how it was created in the first place. Keep and be respectful of what is already existing. It can be added to.
- We want this space to be designated as sacred ground.
- This is a place of praying - bring love and peace.
- Community member has already created a concept for a sculpture.
- It is a global Memorial, everyone should have a voice.
- Develop clear signage and way finding between memorials and square.
- The community should dictate, not the City. We want the community and the government united. United as one people. We want the government to be kind to us.

Peoples Way:

- Should remain in community control

What are we memorializing?

- The life of George Floyd and all others murdered.
- We want racial healing, an anti-racist society.
- Art by the community.
- We want the memorial to be a community coop, not done by a private developer. So that the community can benefit.
- Learning about policing

Group F

Zena Kocher - Leader, Alexander Kado - Note Taker

Memorials:

- What fits under the umbrella of memorial as a topic?
- Are there important locations to memorialize?
 - The spot where he was murdered should be protected.
 - I would love to see some nice things, some joy, not just tragedy.
- Important locations:
 - Say their names cemetery.
 - The Fist - It's the interruption of it that's important!
- Can we do overhead cabling?
- People want fountains.

Peoples Way:

- Clean it up, what does that look like to you? It used to be a gas station but it's no longer a gas station, but maybe it can be a center, a place where people can meet.
- Folks want it to be everything, but it should be more focused.
- We need affordable housing.

Right-of-Way:

- I see a lot of speeding, so I like the roundabout to disrupt that.

What are we memorializing?

- Livability

General Feedback Received After Breakouts Groups

Additional feedback and summaries were provided after the breakout sessions. Some general themes and comments emerged and are highlighted below. The facilitator asked community members to form of a statement as opposed to a question:

- We don't want people/organizations profiting off of black trauma. It's not about death. We want a space that will point people to life. Give people hope for the future.
- The actual place of the murder is important. A memorial that is informative, not exploitive, teaches the lessons for the future.
- Restroom facilities and other services that have been added during the uprising are important
- Need better lighting
- There are community care-takers, we want the maintenance to be done by the city.
- Want to keep the roundabout – slows people down, more respectful and honoring
- Keep the Say Their Names memorial
- We want the memorial to be beautiful
- Suggest that the city buys Cup Foods to be an extension of the memorial
- Why are people showing up in the meetings, what are their skills – take advantage.
- Build community
- Address the homeless situation, food shelf
- Reform policing
- Respect the history and the future
- A love of art
- This was a community before the murder. Make this community the best it can be.
- Involve businesses and residents. Hear stories. Generosity.

Acknowledging George Floyd Square is an international destination, the workshop participants were asked how close they lived to the Square:

- 75% lived within a mile.
- 50% lived within 8 blocks.
- 20% lived within 4 blocks.

The next Visioning workshop will be held on June 25th, 2024 at The Square at Chicago Ave Shops 3736 Chicago Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 555407.

Engagement Timeline

