

# LEARNING TABLE #1: PUBLIC SAFETY - SESSION NOTES

Minneapolis Public Works plans to reconstruct the intersection of 38th & Chicago (George Floyd Square) and will begin this effort by engaging with the community. Engagement throughout the project is intended to help redesign the area in a way that reflects community needs.

## Learning Table #1: Public Safety



Learning Table: Public Safety  
August 29, 2022



Upcoming Learning Table: History of the Community  
September 26, 2022 ; 6pm; Sabathani Community Center

NEOO Partners and Public Policy Project hosted the first of a series of monthly Learning Tables for the 38th & Chicago, Re-Envisioned project. Created by Public Policy Project, The Learning Table provides the “learning water”; a place to ask critical questions and develop the “learning glue”; a place to develop relationships, create partnership, share ideas, and make commitments, to explore for incorporation in the 38th & Chicago Re-Envisioned Project. At the Learning Table, we Learn Together; Create a Shared Approach; Coordinate Efforts; and Ensure Community Benefit.

**The first Learning Table topic of Public Safety was chosen in response to recent tragedies occurring in and around George Floyd Square** at 38th and Chicago, to show respect and concern for the community and to facilitate direct feedback on the complex realities and deep connection that exists. Attendees of the first Learning Table, focused on Public Safety were presented with questions to discuss and answer in small groups. The notes on following pages are responses to those questions.

## THEMES FROM PROJECT

The common themes below summarize the variety of comments provided during small group report back. Responses from each question are categorized into these themes that continue to show up throughout engagement.

### SOCIAL JUSTICE

Justice, anti-racist investments, atonement, and healing are common comments expressed by community stakeholders. The murder of George Floyd ignited a global awakening of the inequalities that exist in this country and world, and the intersection of 38th and Chicago continues to be an important place for the voices of community stakeholders that want continued social justice improvements.

### PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety continues to be a critical concern expressed amongst community stakeholders. There are differing perspectives regarding what public safety means, but there is consensus that community stakeholders want to explore options for improving their safety and well-being.

### ECONOMIC VITALITY

The economic health of businesses within the 38th & Chicago area continues to be a common concern raised by community stakeholders. The pandemic, murder of George Floyd, subsequent civil unrest and the closing and reopening of the intersection have all severely impacted local businesses. The businesses that remain continue to struggle through these challenging economic times.

### INFRASTRUCTURE (STREETS & SIDEWALKS)

Infrastructure comments mainly focused on the level of vehicle access that the intersection should allow. Ideas range from full vehicle access (transit, business deliveries, residential/business vehicle access, parking, and emergency vehicles) to no vehicle access (preserving the intersection for pedestrians, art, memorials, and community gathering, transit accessibility and supporting local businesses.)

#### Contact

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## What We Heard

The 55 attendees of the first Learning Table were presented with questions to discuss and answer in small groups. The notes below are responses to those questions.

### QUESTION 1: WHAT DOES PUBLIC SAFETY MEAN TO YOU?

#### THEME: PUBLIC SAFETY

- World Wide Outreach for Christ- Freely able to do church outreach and youth activities on the parking lot
- Products sold safely on church parking lot
- Feeling comfortable to walk on the street- no stray bullets
- Safe parking
- No harm to people
- No gunplay/violence
- No bullets through windows/walls
- Safe all hours of the day- daytime and evening
- There can be policing
- Being able to walk at anytime
- Protect and serve on all levels
- Not having to worry about our families safety
- Feeling safe when you're out in public
- Having good and accurate information about incidents not rumors, misinformation and fear mongering
- Streets that are safe for people
- Being safe in community at various scales
- Confidence that police will not kill in the square
- Conflict resolution
- Safety of people in need/crisis
- Safety for everyone, regardless the reason for being in the area
- Harm reduction
- Ability to walk through the neighborhood without fears of violence and crimes
- Public safety officers we can trust and who are properly trained (including cop offices)
- Neighbors watching out for neighbors
- Security and protection

#### THEME: INFRASTRUCTURE

- Ability to have community events at 38th & Chicago (all 4 directions )
- Bus returns to the area
- Ability to walk and drive through intersection
- Place for cars, pedestrians and public transit
- Restrictions for autos, prioritize use for pedestrians
- No vehicles - focus on pedestrians

#### THEME: SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Ability to express themselves
- Comfortable (emotionally) in a space
- Feeling of belonging and wellbeing for everyone
- Investment in people - proactive
- Sharing positive stories of what's happening in community
- Feeling connected to community/neighbors
- Resilience to climate change
- Justice brings safety
- More people of all ages out and about
- Active block clubs
- Free resources: food, water, shelter and bathrooms
- Mental healthcare, physical healthcare
- Strong communication among neighbors
- Welcoming to visitors
- Vagrancy amnesty
- Ability to live a peaceful life (safe in home/outside)
- Resources available for those who need (mental health, addiction)
- Situational and appropriate help
- Climate communication, community familiarity
- Willingness to help
- Transparency, fairness and equity

#### THEME: ECONOMIC VITALITY

- Economic development (reason to be safe)
- Opportunity for youth - training



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## QUESTION 2: HOW CAN WE ACHIEVE IT?

### THEME: PUBLIC SAFETY

- A lot of people don't know what public safety is
- More police officers doing what they need to be doing, more investigations to match other cities
- Police - Actually dealing with crime instead of moving it to other neighborhoods
- Lack of service has been the flip-side of the police brutality
- Consequences for police
- Increasing clearance rate for solving murders
- Equal service for all neighborhoods, get children (experiences) out of the city
- Strengthen neighborhood watch
- Recognize people who commit crimes are human
- Address the question "why do people commit crimes?"
- Recognize people as humans
- Support law enforcement
- Police have to be invested in the community
- Prevention and intervention
- De-escalation program
- Go to youth detention center and adult detention center
- Accountability
- Listen to local ideas and solutions
- Consistent and clear communication, transparency
- Models of transformative justice - from the city and our community interpersonally
- Restorative justice
- CCP officers
- Adopt livability and safety platform
- Different types of crimes
- Not getting shot, lots of gun-play

### THEME: INFRASTRUCTURE

- Bus returns to the area
- Metrics/data
- Create a space that respects and acknowledges that George Floyd was murdered there by the MPD- honoring the culture of GFS
- Speed bumps/ speed control
- No vehicle traffic or parking in the square (pedestrian plaza)
- Space for vendors
- Resting places and public bathrooms
- Spaces and programs for kids
- Maintain memorial as a space for people to mourn and pay respects
- Accessibility for people with mobility devices/disabilities
- Assessment analysis (ie. what you can share)

### THEME: SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Youth programing - investment in youth programs, program to take youth out of the city
- People who live in the neighborhood
- Reasons to be present
- Support of the community
- Not having the same two organizations receive funding
- Block + and block clubs working with each other
- More resources for community
- "Helpers", mental health housing etc.
- More social opportunities to "mix and mingle"
- Support for the free food garden, people's closet and integrative health services
- MN cooperative conflict collaboration
- Harm reduction
- Group/inclusive art making
- Freedom of movement \ engaged in community
- Freedom from fear
- Eye opening issues-peace of mind, justice/social justice, right to protest
- Redeploy resources
- Leveling the playing field
- Legitimate opportunities
- Disenfranchisement = disengagement
- Community mutual support
- Obtain funding to get children out of city
- Mentoring program
- Get men involved in community
- Participation in community is key
- Community has to be apart of the decision
- Break down mental blocks- perception
- Neighbors as equals
- Prioritizing it authentically- top down
- Do the right thing (everybody)
- Justice B/B bodied
- Density
- Young folks
- Know your neighbors
- Activity night - intergenerational
- Get to the heart of the matter
- Pride
- Two way flow of information, feedback loops

### THEME: ECONOMIC VITALITY

- Opportunity-communication-be inclusive
- Businesses/art that people want to frequent
- Support business in area
- Longevity of small and local businesses

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## QUESTION 3: HOW CAN THE DESIGN OF THE INTERSECTION FACILITATE PUBLIC SAFETY?

### THEME: INFRASTRUCTURE

- Milwaukee Avenue Design
- Prioritize space for pedestrians; pedestrian only walking/ pedestrian plaza
- Lighted (not stadium bright)
- No blind spots, No bottleneck areas
- Functional intersection
- Open intersection
- National historical landmark included
- Buses included in future design
- Designers should live in the community
- Move barriers for better traffic flow
- Maintaining the traffic circle and sculpture is important for slowing down traffic
- Having signs slightly outside of the intersection informing that there is a community space and it should be respected
- Ideal scenario would be little to no traffic
- Presentation of sacred space for reflection and healing
- Encourage traffic through the space in the form of community events
- Lighting
- Traffic control on 38th & Chicago
- Memorial of impact and off the street
- Resting places
- Public bathroom
- Safe play areas for youth
- Graffiti
- Wall for evolving art
- Preserving the memorial space
- Charging stations for phones and electronics
- Public assembly space
- Deeply affordable housing for displaced residents
- Create a remembrance, memorial, museum of some kind, look at the community to lead that - we keep us safe
- Lower or better directional street lights
- Traffic circle
- Narrower streets (driving lanes)
- Adequate space for pedestrians
- Delineated space for George Floyd murals where everyone is welcome
- Recognition of the power of the action: street "portal" indicating "you are entering"
- Speedway turned into permanent memorial
- Windows- connection to the street
- Park installation- stage
- Addressing the abandoned buildings

### THEME: PUBLIC SAFETY

- Harm reduction- needle boxes, first aid
- Violence prevention with minimal police presence
- Right sized and appropriate resources for a public safety department response (less over- reaction from MPD, feeds into distrust and fear mongering)
- It is a lot to ask that this infrastructure design project to pay for the sins of MPD (whose function is to protect the wealthy and state)

### THEME: SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Keep youth busy- productive and safe activities
- Incorporating/ maintaining current services, including garden, closet, library, map tours
- Honor the spirit of what the space is and the community that has been created, what it evokes for people
- It is a powerful place, how do you reflect that in the design? How do you change it without taking from it? Requires some tough choices/ will create a lot of anger- lean into that
- One that facilitates the sense of community
- Welcome/ safe space designed for gathering and other activities
- Create a culture of belonging- Similar to the feeling after George Floyd was murdered, in the square
- Cadre of greeters/ welcoming- the church has been doing this
- 21 demands posted- remembering
- Fun, jobs, social activities

### THEME: ECONOMIC VITALITY

- No vacant buildings
- Encourage businesses to return with design
- Support for businesses



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