

Dear Minneapolis City Planners and members of the Minneapolis Planning Commission, these recommendations are being offered on behalf Citizens for a Loring Park Community (CLPC). They were approved unanimously by the CLPC Master Plan Steering Committee, CLPC Land Use Committee and the CLPC Board of Directors.

The Loring Park community would like to thank you for your work on the rezoning study currently being conducted to align zoning in the Loring Park neighborhood with the City-adopted Loring Park Neighborhood Master Plan. The plan is the product of a multi-year community planning process conducted in cooperation with the City of Minneapolis. This process to update zoning is an important step forward in allowing the Loring Park neighborhood to grow in a smart and sustainable way.

The Steering Committee agrees with the general interpretation of the Master Plan by city staff but there are a few locations where the plan may have been better understood. We will outline these parcels below and explain why the staff's recommendations should be corrected in these locations. But first, we would like to make a few comments regarding our general support for the City staff recommendations in two important focus areas of the neighborhood Master Plan.

The first of these areas is the new Loring Village Activity Center, which includes much of the convention center and the area surrounding Nicollet Avenue south of Grant Street. Our residents live in close proximity to the downtown commercial zone because we enjoy being a short walk from all the benefits it has to offer. The Master Plan predicts the need for increased zoning in the Loring Park neighborhood and calls for increasing the density of zoning in this activity center. We agree with City staff that parcels previously zoned B4S1 would be better zoned as B4N. The B4N zoning, as developed during the rezoning of the North Loop, seems an appropriate zoning to ring the central commercial district and transition to residential neighborhoods. Extending this zoning into the area north of 14th Street and East of 1st Avenue will best capture the intent of the Master Plan as adopted in 2013 by the City Council. In the area of the Activity Center that is south of 14th Street we believe that the change to C3A zoning will allow for increased development appropriate to the vision outlined in the Master Plan. The C3A zoning does not match the higher height designation called for in the Master Plan's Built Form Plan in the Loring Village Activity Center. However, we believe that the Master Plan provides a pathway for the community to support sensitively designed larger projects, including towers, based on the criteria found in the plan's *Developer's Checklist*. This same tool is available for other near-downtown portions of the neighborhood where height is also supported by the plan.

The second focus area in the Master Plan where the Steering Committee strongly supports City staff recommendations is the Loring Hill District where OR2 zoning has been recommended for the majority of the area. This unique corner of the city, which takes up less than one quarter of the Loring Park Neighborhood, is an area of special concern for our residents and institutions. It has been the focus of more discussion and planning in the last ten years than any other part of the neighborhood. There is broad consensus in the Loring Park community that current zoning is too tall and bulky for the overall character of this cherished district. Loring Hill has the distinctive mix of a green hillside setting, historic mansions, low-rise apartment buildings and important institutional landmarks. While there have been a handful of structures built over the years that break from this character, we believe that zoning should not be based on these exceptions, but rather on the overall existing characteristics that are valued by the community.

Given that the hill contains many properties with historic designation and is largely fully developed, this is fully consistent with wider City policy supporting preservation and sustainable development.

Thank you, Citizens for a Loring Park Community

Christopher Hoffer, CLPC President  
Jana Metge, CLPC Executive Coordinator

### **Parcels where changes to the city staff recommendations are requested:**

#### 1) 1500 LaSalle Ave. S. (Buckingham Apartments)

Current Zoning: OR3

2015 City Staff Draft Recommendation: C2

2015 CLPC Master Plan Steering Committee Recommendation: **OR2**

**Rational for the Change:** *We believe this parcel is consistent with the adjoining Courtyard Row sub district of the Loring Hill and should have the same zoning*

#### 2) 1219 Marquette Ave.; 117 12th St. S.; 1200 2nd Ave. S. (Convention Center Parking/Plaza Block)

Current Zoning: B4S-1

2015 City Staff Draft Recommendation: C3A

2015 CLPC Master Plan Steering Committee Recommendation: **B4N**

**Rational for the Change:** *These parcels include several historic buildings. We believe that the master plan's Built Form Plan showed lower building heights at some locations based on the presence of historic buildings. While it is the intent of the master plan that valued historic buildings be preserved, we understand that zoning should be based on the desired character of the larger area rather than an individual parcel (some exceptions for parcels with institutional uses). We are therefore recommending that these parcels be changed to B4N in order to be consistent with the rest of the zoning in this area of the neighborhood.*

**Additional note:** *The Steering committee believes that the B4N zoning district is appropriate for the near downtown areas of the Loring Park Neighborhood. The area which is south of 12<sup>th</sup> Street is several blocks removed from the central commercial district. It is fully developed with residential and institutional uses. Because of this it is entirely consistent with the intent of the City's Downtown Neighborhood Zoning District B4N. If there should be a development that proposes to go beyond the 10 stories that would be granted by right under B4N, the master plan offers a process for the neighborhood to consider variances and conditional uses. The master plan supports height in this area.*

#### 3) 1226 Marquette Ave. (adjacent to Westminster)

Current Zoning: B4S-1

2015 City Staff Draft Recommendation: C3A

2015 CLPC Master Plan Steering Committee Recommendation: **B4N**

**Rational for the Change:** *see rational for item #2 above*

#### 4) 1225 Yale Place (Parcel near Loring Green East)

Current Zoning: B4S-1

2015 City Staff Draft Recommendation: OR3

2015 CLPC Master Plan Steering Committee Recommendation: **B4N**

**Rational for the Change:** *This parcel is part of a larger property within the Loring Greenway District. For consistency we believe that this parcel should be included as part of the B4N district of the adjoining area.*

5) 210 W. Grant (at Grant & Willow), 28 Willow St. & Other Addresses (Greenway Gables Town homes), 1421 Yale Place (The Salvation Army High-rise)

Current Zoning: OR3

2015 City Staff Draft Recommendation: B4N (OR2 at Greenway Gables)

2015 CLPC Master Plan Steering Committee Recommendation: **OR-3**

**Rational for the Change:** *We believe that the intent of the master plan is for there to be a consistent six story height limit along the east side of Loring Park. We therefor believe that these parcels should retain their current OR3 zoning designation.*

6) 88 N. 17<sup>th</sup> Street (Basilica of St. Mary), 28 Willow St. & Other Addresses 1421 Yale Place

Current Zoning: OR3

2015 City Staff Draft Recommendation: OR2

2015 CLPC Master Plan Steering Committee Recommendation: **OR-3**

**Rational for the Change:** *Due to the uniqueness of the location, and to potential future uses (as apposed to built form) we believe that these parcels conform more to OR3 zoning in the plan than OR2.*