

**Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association
205 Park Avenue South Development Priorities
Survey Summary**

OVERVIEW

205 Park Avenue South is a city-owned lot in the Mill District of Downtown Minneapolis. The City of Minneapolis will soon solicit development proposals for the site. Through a competitive review process, the City will sell the land and development rights to a developer based on the uses and merits of their proposed development. To provide decision-makers with more information on the community's priorities and hopes for the site, the Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association Land Use Committee circulated an electronic survey. A total of 303 individuals completed this survey between 12/18/15 and 1/9/16.

SURVEY DISTRIBUTION

An 18-question electronic survey was administered through Survey Monkey. The DMNA disseminated the survey through its e-mail list and Facebook ads. DMNA volunteers and a handful of building managers posted fliers promoting the survey in some residential buildings in the Mill District as well as distributed the survey through their internal building e-mail lists. The Downtown Journal referenced the survey in its Development Tracker published on 12/31/15.

RESPONDENTS

The pool of 303 respondents included strong representation (68% of total respondents) from individuals who either live or work within 4 blocks of 205 Park Ave. S. However, the mix of respondents fell woefully short of reflecting the social and economic diversity of Downtown East and West. The majority of respondents were Caucasian (95%) and own a residence Downtown (65%). Though not demographically diverse, respondents provided a diverse range of opinions. Within this diversity of opinions, a few themes emerged, as outlined below. Refer to the "Respondent Demographics" section at the end of this document for more detailed information.

Most questions asked respondents to rank or rate options. However, respondents were given multiple opportunities to expand upon their numeric response through additional comments. We received 436 comments, ranging from short phrases that emphasized a person's rating (e.g. "No more rentals!!!!") to detailed arguments on such topics as architectural style, green space, and sustainability. While these comments do not lend themselves to simple quantitative analysis, they are useful for interpreting patterns of responses on specific questions, illustrating the emotional intensity of some participants' view points, and generating insights on relevant design issues.

RESULTS

Preferred Types of Use

Respondents were asked to score their support/opposition¹ for a series of potential uses² to be included in a new development at 205 Park Ave S. The survey also asked respondents to identify the “most important” and “second most important” use that should be included.

- **Among the options listed, restaurants, retail and owner-occupied residential units received the most support from respondents.**
 - Inclusion of a restaurant, closely followed by retail and market-rate owner occupied residential received the highest average “support score” from the pool of respondents.
 - When asked to select the “most important use,” condos, restaurants, and retail were also chosen by the highest volume of respondents. (Market rate condos were selected by 30% of respondents, followed by restaurant (24%) and retail (14%).)
- **An above ground parking structure is the only use among the provided selection for which the overwhelming majority of respondents reported opposition.**
 - 48% of respondents reported that they “strongly oppose” this use. An additional 29% said they either “somewhat oppose” or “oppose” (13% and 16%, respectively) above ground parking.
 - Just 1% of respondents selected above ground parking as the “most important” use to include.
- **Affordable housing opportunities received mixed support. Providing affordable opportunities for homeownership received more support than the inclusion of both affordable and market-rate residential rental units.**
 - The inclusion of affordable homeownership opportunities received more support than opposition. When asked about opportunities for affordable homeownership, 41% of respondents reported that they either “support” or “strongly support” (22% and 19%, respectively) its inclusion, while 32% reported that they either “oppose” or “strongly oppose” (12% and 20%, respectively) the use.
 - The inclusion of affordable opportunities for homeownership received a slightly higher score on the support/opposition scale than market rate rentals (0.24 and 0.10, respectively).
 - The inclusion of affordable rental units received more opposition than support. 36% of respondents reported that they either “support” or “strongly support” (20% and 16%, respectively) the category, while 39% reported that they either “oppose” or “strongly oppose” (12% and 27%, respectively) its inclusion.
- **The additional comments demonstrate that, beyond the matters of preferred use, respondents are greatly concerned about design issues. Survey participants repeatedly insist that the project must respect the architectural integrity and historical distinctiveness of the Mill District. Numerous comments express a strong endorsement of an earlier proposal for a residential building designed as a mirror-image of the Park Avenue Lofts.**

¹ Respondents selected from Strongly Support, Support, Somewhat Support, No Opinion, Somewhat Oppose, Oppose and Strongly Oppose. Options were assigned a numeric value from 2 to -2. The weighted average of the score was used to determine which uses received the strongest support/opposition.

² The survey asked about the following uses: Market Rate Homeownership, Inclusion of Some Opportunities for Affordable Homeownership (i.e. below market rate condos with an income-eligibility cap, Market Rate Apartments (i.e. residential rental units), Inclusion of Some Affordable Rental Units (i.e. below market rate residential rental apartments with an income-eligibility cap, Hotel, Office, Public Parking Structure - Above Ground, Public Parking Structure - Below Ground, Restaurant, & Retail

Preferred Public Amenities

Respondents were asked to score the importance of including various public amenities³. The survey also asked respondents to identify the “most important” and “second most important” amenity to include from the list provided.

There was some degree of support for all of the amenities listed. When asked to prioritize among this list, amenities that encourage a green and vibrant public realm were favored. The inclusion of generous landscaping/trees received the highest degree of support, while public art and outdoor seating also received high levels of support.

- The inclusion of generous landscaping/trees received the highest average “support score” with 4.3 out of a possible 5. This was followed by outdoor seating (3.6), public art (3.5) and bike parking (3.5).
- When asked to select the “most important” amenity to include in a new development at 205 Park Ave, 57% of respondents selected generous landscaping/trees. Each of the other listed options were selected by just 7% to 9% of respondents.
- When asked to select the “second most important” amenity, the most respondents chose public art (24%), followed by generous landscaping/trees (22%) and outdoor seating (21%).

Maximum Height

Respondents were asked to select⁴ the ideal maximum height for a new development at 205 Park Ave. S.

- **Results showed mixed opinions on ideal maximum height. One third of respondents favored 9 stories or greater, while in total, over half of respondents selected lower density options.**
 - Over half of respondents selected lower-height options. 25% selected 5-6 stories. 20% selected 3-4 stories. 6% selected 2 stories.
 - 35% of respondents selected 9 stories or more.
- **When we isolated responses from individuals who identified as having a connection within 0-4 blocks of the project site (live, work, own business/property), a preference for lower density became more pronounced.**
 - 29% selected 5-6 stories, 27% selected 3-4 stories. Just 7% selected 2 stories.
 - 20% in this pool selected 9+ stories.
- **Height of the development is an issue that many participants feel strongly about, as evident by comments added to multiple sections of the survey. Some of the comments reflect a preference for high density, as a matter of general principle. A larger and more emphatic group of comments expresses the importance of a building height that is compatible with that of neighboring buildings on 2nd Street and Park Avenue--often with specific reference to the Park Avenue Lofts (4 stories) and sight lines to the historically significant Washburn Lofts/Mill City Museum building. Other comments noted that additional height should be accompanied by larger set-backs from the streets.**

³ This list included Public Art, Generous Landscaping, Outdoor Seating, Bike Parking, Public Dog Area and a Minneapolis Police Substation. Respondents were asked to the importance of including each amenity on a scale of 0 (not important at all) to 5 (very important). A weighted average for each use was calculated.

⁴ Respondents were provided with the following options: 2 stories, 3-4 stories, 5-6 stories, 7-8 stories, 9 stories or more

Sustainability

Respondents were asked to rank the degree to which they agree/disagree⁵ with the following statement: "It is important that any new development at 205 Park Ave. pursue a high standard of environmental sustainability."

- **The majority of respondents agreed that it is important for any new development at 205 Park Ave. S to pursue a high degree of environmental sustainability.**
 - 44% of respondents selected "strongly agree" and 37% selected "agree" when asked about the statement above.
 - 4% disagreed with the statement above. 1 respondent strongly disagreed.

K-9 Neighbors

Respondents were asked to rank the degree to which they agree/disagree⁶ with the following statement: "If 205 Park Ave. includes residential units, it is important that the developer provide private dog-relief facilities (i.e. an appropriate space for the dogs of residents to relieve themselves on site)."

- **The majority of respondents agreed that it was important if a new development at 205 Park Ave. S were to include residential units, that facilities be provided on-site for the dogs of residents to eliminate biological waste.**
 - 40% of respondents selected "strongly agree" and 35% selected "agree" when asked about the statement above.
 - 5% disagreed with the statement above. 3% strongly strongly disagreed.
- **The results of this question, paired with the question that addressed priority public amenities, indicate that respondents are interested in ensuring that a new development manages its own "dog waste" needs, but do not strongly support allocating space in the public realm to dogs. The inclusion of "Public Dog Area"⁷ received the lowest amount of support among the listed options.**

RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Proximity to the project site

- Respondents were asked to identify how closely they live, work or own property to the project site. 41% were within 0-2 blocks, 27% were within in 3-4 blocks and an additional 18% were within 5-8 blocks.

Connection to Downtown (live, work, own property, visit, etc.)

- Downtown homeowners comprised 65% of respondents. Downtown renters comprised 12% of respondents. No respondents reported living in a shelter or transitional housing facility.
- 36% of respondents work Downtown. 4% of respondents own a business Downtown. 2% of respondents own commercial property Downtown.
- 25% identified as "visitors" of Downtown.

Race, Ethnicity, Gender & Age

- 95% of respondents identified as Caucasian. 4% as identified as Black or African-American. 2% identified as Asian. Less than 1% identified as American Indian.
- 2% of respondents identified as Hispanic.
- 58% of respondents identified as male. 41.0% identified as female. Less than 1% identified as non-binary.
- 41% of respondents identified as between 25 and 44 years of age. 39% were between 45 and 64 years of age. 15% identified as 65 or older. No respondents identified as under 18.

⁵ Respondents were provided with the following options: Strongly Agree, Agree, No Opinion, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

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