



ENGAGEWINONA

EAST END/SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT



Bringing a neighborhood together to celebrate its history and imagine its future.

Presented June 2019



EAST END/SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT

Bringing a neighborhood together to celebrate its history and
imagine its future.

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EAST END/SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT

Bringing a neighborhood together to celebrate its history and
imagine its future.

SUMMARY REPORT

East Side+East End

Values+Visions

Businesses+institutions
Public spaces+parks
Housing+appearance
Transportation+infrastructure
Cultural+social
Heritage+preservation
Storytelling+placemaking

Mankato Avenue — a future vision

Social+engagement outcomes

Next steps



INTRODUCTION LETTER

June 20, 2019

Steve Sarvi, city manager; Mark Peterson, mayor; and the Winona City Council

Dear all,

The East End/Side Neighborhood Project was designed to bring together the full neighborhood to celebrate its history and imagine its future. From February to June, we:

- Connected with nearly 400 people and collected more than 3,000 unique comments
- Held more than 50 interviews and small-group gatherings with small and large business owners, neighborhood leaders, and community stakeholders
- Hosted several large public events and conversations that drew more than 250 people
- Provided online and in-person surveys, with more than 160 responses
- Engaged dozens of unheard and marginalized voices using targeted outreach
- Provided interactive activities and introduced unique, creative engagement approaches — like hosting a night of East Side Bingo at the East End Rec

The engagement was a huge success: We connected with diverse cross-sections of the community, built and strengthened neighborhood relationships and networks, collected rich stories of the neighborhood's history and culture, and heard a wide array of ideas for change.

We also followed residents' lead to identify two distinct neighborhoods: The East Side, from Franklin Street to Mankato Avenue; and the East End, from Mankato Avenue and east.

The full results of this work are included in this report, including many ideas for meaningful and achievable neighborhood change across several themes: Supporting businesses large and small, addressing housing and appearance issues, reimagining public spaces and places, assisting neighbors with hosting gatherings, using placemaking and wayfinding projects to deepen identity and pride, proactive community policing, and much more.

There's a lot here, and that's a good thing! It demonstrates how hungry folks were to share their ideas. Engage Winona's role is to fully communicate the voices of participants in ways that ensure they are heard, and curate them in ways that can lead to meaningful change. Prioritizing and focusing these ideas to meet the city's needs is the next step, and Engage Winona is here to help.



Collectively, the ideas and projects represent an opportunity to grow the city's relationship with the neighborhood. Neighborhood residents were deeply appreciative for the opportunity to be included, listened to, engaged, and empowered. Many have felt somewhat ignored as major projects and initiatives elsewhere, especially downtown, have appeared to take precedence. The city's investment in this project was widely seen as a large, positive step toward future investments in the neighborhood and its future.

This report marks the end of this project's engagement process. The work in other ways is just beginning. Engage Winona will serve as an ongoing resource for city staff, leadership and elected officials as they strategize and prioritize projects and ideas. Engage Winona will continue to assist neighborhood groups and individuals with grassroots projects that emerged from this project. And we will be continuing our collaboration with Art of the Rural around storytelling and placemaking in the neighborhood, with exciting news and projects yet to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to collaborate with the City of Winona on this important work! I so appreciate the ongoing investment the city is making in Engage Winona's mission-driven work around civic engagement and community problem-solving, and in our commitment to bringing folks together to imagine and build the future of a thriving community that works for all.

Sincerely,



Brian Voerding

Executive Director, Engage Winona

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SUMMARY REPORT

Overview

Introduction

The East End/Side Neighborhood Project brought together a full neighborhood to celebrate its history and imagine its future. Over the course of 4-5 months, we connected with diverse cross-sections of the community, built and strengthened relationships and networks, collected rich stories of the neighborhood's history and culture, and heard a wide array of ideas for change. We:

- Connected with nearly 400 people and collected more than 3,000 unique comments
- Held more than 50 interviews and small-group gatherings with small and large business owners, neighborhood leaders, community stakeholders
- Hosted several large public events and conversations that drew more than 250 people
- Provided online and in-person surveys, with more than 160 responses
- Engaged with dozens of unheard and marginalized voices using targeted outreach
- Provided interactive activities and creative engagement approaches — like East Side Bingo

Goals

- **Connect** diverse, representative groups of residents to build relationships and social capital
- **Facilitate conversations** to learn what neighbors value, seek to change, and dream big about creating in their neighborhood
- **Identify the current story and create a future vision** of the neighborhood
- **Create a report** that includes data and stories, top themes and priorities, and strategies
- **Assist city in aligning resources** to support projects and ideas
- **Empower neighbors** by training and guiding folks to take on changemaking projects

Outcomes

- **Created strong and lasting social bonds** among neighborhood residents
- **Identified the values, assets and resources** that make the neighborhood unique
- **Collected and curated the ideas and projects** neighbors want for their future
- **Connected the neighborhood to city resources**
- **Report created statement of need** to leverage grants and investments
- **Provided rich qualitative data to the city** on the neighborhood's values and future visions
- **Empowered neighbors with changemaking tools and resources**
- **Assisted neighborhood leaders** with strategies to carry the vision and projects forward
- **Strengthened a neighborhood's identity, story, and sense of place**



Participants+demographics

The project focused on connecting with East End and East Side residents, as well as neighborhood business owners and employees, and other stakeholders (former residents, landlords, etc.).

- About **75 percent** were neighborhood residents
- Other participants were **business owners (5 percent); employees (10 percent); and former residents (10 percent)**
- **Ages ranged from elementary-age students to seniors**, with a balance and range
- **Household income aligned with neighborhood demographics:** More than half had incomes between \$25-\$75,000
- **Education levels varied widely:** about 25 percent completed high school; 25 percent had a certificate or associate degree; and 25 percent had a four-year degree
- About **two-thirds of participants were female**
- **About 33 percent parents** or guardians of children
- **About 90 percent white**, with pockets of other ethnicities/backgrounds

East Side+East End

Participants chose to define two neighborhoods: The East Side, and the East End. The general consensus was the East Side is Franklin Street to Mankato Avenue, and the East End is along and east of Mankato Avenue.

The two-neighborhood approach wasn't planned! It arose because many initially said the East End starts at Franklin Street, but wanted to make a distinction for "the true East End."

Top overall projects

- East End dog park (and potentially walking park)
- Revitalize baseball culture at Gabrych Park
- Beautify the boulevards (flowers, gardens, etc.)
- Bytow Byway: Walking/driving tour of Polish East End sites
- Rental property cleanup, oversight
- Help with future of Athletic Club
- Address perception (and reality) of crime



- Branding signs, wayfinders for East End
- Activities for youth
- Host neighborhood block parties
- Programs, amenities at public parks
- Better infrastructure, support for pedestrians+bicyclists
- Share the story - East End is a great place to buy a home, live
- Help make St. Stan's a tourist destination and community hub
- Spruce Up Club - help neighbors in need with small projects
- Turn alleys into art, gathering places

Values+Visions

Values: What folks appreciate, like, and want to maintain.

Visions: What folks would like to change, and ideas for making it happen.

Businesses+institutions

What large businesses, small businesses, and institutions (schools, museums, etc.) value and seek to change about their relationship to the neighborhood; immediate and long-term challenges they face; how strong of a connection they feel to the neighborhood; interest in participating in and supporting neighborhood activities and change.

- Large businesses had few neighborhood-specific challenges or issues
- Small businesses face many challenges; few are neighborhood-specific. Successful owners attribute stability to building a community of supporters
- Institutions (St. Stan's Elementary, W-K, Polish Museum, East End Rec, etc.) are generally stable, with some concerns about fading support from the neighborhood and community
- Business owners and leaders are seeking to build stronger connections and collaborations with the neighborhood, but not sure how

Values

- Working-class neighborhood
- Industry-appropriate neighborhood
- Icons, especially St. Stan's Basilica
- Unique small and home-based businesses



Visions

- Better walking paths/sidewalks in industrial area
- Concerned about Athletic Club's future
- Desire for placemaking/wayfinding signs
- More homes, unique locations as businesses
- Creation of business associations - separate for large and small business owners
- Trains - still seeking Louisa Street overpass

Public spaces+parks

The perception of, use of, and value provided by public spaces and parks: East End Rec and land, Sobieski Park, Gabrych Park, and Sinclair Park; the desire for programming, activities and amenities. East Side and East End residents love their public spaces and parks and were filled with practical ideas for improvements and changes

Values

- East End Rec - by far the most-mentioned, and most-favored, with hundreds of comments; loved by multiple generations
- Historical baseball culture - once a showcase to the neighborhood and a way to bring the community together
- Sobieski Park Lodge - pleased with the neighborhood's grassroots effort to build a cornerstone facility
- East End Rec garden - would like to see more community gardens in other locations
- Sinclair Park - appreciated just as it is; no major changes suggested

Visions

- Dog park - by far the largest request for a public project in the East End
- Revitalized baseball culture at Gabrych Park - desire for tasteful redesign and upgrade, along with family-friendly programming, and a new name for the Chiefs
- More youth programming at East End Rec
- Sobieski Park - replace run-down tennis courts and reimagine use of green space
- A walking park near industrial area for lunchtime walks and walking meetings
- Connect Sobieski/Gabrych parks by removing Wabasha, adding green space, parking
- Opposition and questions about Friendship Center relocation to East End Rec - like the idea of the Center in the neighborhood, but not combined with the Rec

Housing+appearance

The condition and upkeep of neighborhood homes, owned and rentals; the desire to help people maintain their homes; thoughts on shotgun houses; and other housing issues and opportunities.

- Neighborhood seen as affordable housing by some, a neighborhood to avoid by others
- Residents have seen a transformation in the last 20-30 years, with many longtime residents and multi-generational families moving out, with many homes converted into rentals



- Transition has greatly diminished the once-dominant Polish culture and influence
- A cultural and social division between owners and renters

Values

- Neighborhood is a go-to for inexpensive homes for a variety of needs — single person, married couple, young family, retiree-age couple looking to downsize
- Residents appreciate the variety of unique home designs and styles
- One of the largest strengths is longtime neighbors and residents
- Shotgun houses: Residents have mixed feelings. Some have attachments to the homes, and see potential for unique affordable housing; others note many were cheaply built and are now rundown rentals

Visions

- Spruce Up Club: A grassroots group that volunteers across the neighborhood on small repairs for homeowners unable to do or afford to do them
- A coordinated effort to beautify the boulevards, especially in the East End
- Widespread desire to see rental property appearances improved
- Change the narrative around home buying - East End is attractive
- More awareness and promotion of home programs - city loans for income-eligible homeowners, Habitat's A Brush With Kindness
- Coordinated effort to buy rundown properties, then redevelop sections of blocks
- Placemaking/wayfinding signs for sense of place, make neighborhood a destination

Transportation+infrastructure

How neighborhood residents travel — by car, foot, or bike; what they appreciate about the infrastructure that exists; what they'd like to change or add.

- Love that the neighborhood is a destination, with little traffic passing through and no busy streets outside of Mankato Avenue
- Neighborhood is convenient and accessible to many other areas
- Biggest frustration is with train delays and backups
- Lack of consistent sidewalks and pedestrian infrastructure

Values

- Convenient location
- Low traffic - feel safe and more comfortable biking and walking

Visions

- Interested in Louisa Street overpass, not optimistic; opposed to Mankato overpass
- Notification signal and signs for train switching at Mankato
- Bike path, lane connections from neighborhood to other areas, including Lake Park
- Convenient walking connections to retail area - walking bridge over Shives Creek



- Sidewalks, crosswalks in retail area and large parking lots to address safety concerns
- More consistent sidewalks in industrial area
- Address industrial area parking - some areas clogged during work hours

Cultural+social

The sense of belonging and place; whether residents feel welcome and accepted; how neighbors gather and come together; ideas to build closer connections.

- The neighborhood once had incredibly close bonds that they celebrated and worked hard to maintain, though many bonds have faded in the last few decades
- Older and younger residents both hungry to revitalize social connections, but most aren't sure of where to start
- Residents appreciate the communities already in place, like corner bars, bingo nights, and more, and are looking to build new ones

Values

- Neighborhood bars continue to be primary social centers of the neighborhood
- Residents (for the most part) appreciate the growing diversity, especially in the East Side, with younger couples, families, and people of color
- Neighborhood culture and design encourages face-to-face interactions
- East End historically known as a close-knit neighborhood where residents took care of each other and looked out for each other

Visions

- Informal neighborhood associations/councils
- Informal social events in comfortable public places
- More block parties, especially held on streets or in alleys
- More activities for youth, to serve kids and bring families together in culture and community-building
- Ways of welcoming homeowners and renters to the neighborhood
- Mankato (or Mankato Avenue) Days, a neighborhood festival

Safety

Residents' general feeling of safety; the amount and types of crime observed; ideas for organizing and community policing.

- Focused on the presence of drug houses and the desire to get rid of them
- Value in neighbors coming together to address safety issues
- Opinions on how safe the East Side and East End are vary widely; perspective matters

Values



- East End Neighborhood Watch has had a significant and lasting impact in empowering neighbors to address issues and turn around trends

Visions

- Combating the presence of apparent drug houses in rentals; residents have loosely organized to record and report activity, but aren't sure what else to do
- Increased police presence, not patrol cars but community police officers
- East End Neighborhood Watch founders hoping for renewed energy, new members

Heritage+preservation

The desire to maintain, preserve, share, and expand knowledge around the history and heritage of the neighborhood and its residents.

- East End (and East Side) one of the richest cultural and historical neighborhoods of Winona
- The history and culture is fairly well-known, both by long-time and newer residents; it also may be the best-known neighborhood history among the larger Winona community
- Most can point to the large influence and presence of Polish (and German) immigrants, the large working-class families, the prevalence of industry and manufacturing, “the hog line,” the shotgun houses, and other elements

Values

- Most well-known history is the prominence of Polish immigrants and their work to build the neighborhood, provide labor, and create the iconic St. Stan’s Basilica
- Working-class culture that started with immigrant families is still dominant
- The Catholic heritage of the neighborhood also a strong part of residents' identity

Visions

- Widespread desire among residents and the Polish Heritage Museum to celebrate Polish heritage and culture with a series of coordinated community events
- St. Stan’s Basilica is exploring ways to create more interest and tourism

Storytelling+placemaking

Ways to increase a sense of place and identity through infrastructure, storytelling, or other projects.

- Most prominent idea: placemaking and wayfinding signs for the East End neighborhood
- Some East End residents find the “hog line” phrase mildly insulting, a way for outsiders to perpetuate tired stereotypes about the neighborhood’s cleanliness, safety and quality

Visions

- Wayfinding, “Welcome To” signs for the East End, to strengthen place and increase pride; some suggested an arch or gateway at a main intersection



- Similar signage or other elements to brand the East Side
- The Polish Museum has long been interested in establishing an alleyway art program
- The Polish Museum's vision of Bytow Byway, a walking/biking/driving tour of the East End, could serve as a significant attraction for tourists and locals
- A neighborhood newsletter, either digital or a printed handout delivered to doors
- Imprinting poetry or designs, created by neighborhood residents, into sidewalks

Mankato Avenue—a future vision

This project included working with residents, business owners, and neighborhood leaders to imagine a future for the Mankato Avenue corridor. The general consensus was:

- Individual bright spots, but lacking an overall vision and the kind of structures and support that would lead to a critical mass of diverse businesses
- Many stable service and retail businesses have built a community of regular supporters
- Small business owners highly supportive of creating a new vision for Mankato, especially if there's an advisory group they can participate in

Values

- Businesses are, with few exceptions, locally owned and operated and cater to local needs
- Multiple businesses operate out of unique buildings, including converted homes
- Many businesses build strong community among customers and supporters

Challenges

- Design of and heavy traffic on Mankato Avenue presents a significant barrier
- The experience of getting stuck waiting for a train is a detriment to daytime, lunchtime visits
- Individual businesses are destinations, but little reason to visit Mankato Avenue as a whole

Visions

- Biggest desire for Mankato Avenue was for a restaurant - a sit-down restaurant that wasn't a chain, a coffee shop with space for gathering, and other suggestions
- Participants enthusiastic about unique, locally owned stores, especially kid- and family-friendly, an artist-run store and gallery featuring neighborhood artists, and others
- Any number of redesigns for Mankato, including traffic calming measures, a landscaped median, crosswalks with flashing signals, dedicated bike lanes, and other elements
- A widely expressed need for a focus on pedestrians and bicyclists, with well-labeled crosswalks and striped or dedicated bike lanes
- Concern that new businesses could fundamentally change the character of Mankato Avenue, with a desire to maintain the uniqueness, including turning homes into businesses



Social+engagement outcomes

The process of bringing people together in lively and challenging conversations, and then engaging them in bringing to life the projects and ideas that emerge. Successes included:

- Neighbors overcame or set aside political differences to focus on shared interests
- Strengthened social and neighborhood bonds to combat social isolation and loneliness and contribute to building a thriving, healthy, connected community
- Collected opinions, projects and ideas in a way that both allows the city to prioritize its future investments and empowers neighbors to drive their own change
- Bringing together diverse cross-sections of the neighborhood in energizing and fun ways
- Hundreds of neighbors got to know each other, with many never having met each other
- On multiple occasions, people at the same table discovered they lived next to each other

East End Bingo

We debuted East Side/End Bingo as a creative and accessible way to bring neighbors together. The game featured images of East Side and East End icons and places, and provided trivia. It was so popular at a May event that several dozen residents played at once, with many others waiting, and children jumped in to be callers and card-holders. The games continued for two hours straight until all of the prizes were gone!

Next steps

City of Winona's potential roles

- Prioritize and focus the wealth of ideas into manageable projects and steps
- Seek quick wins with projects that will require focused efforts, but not substantial resources
- Focus on small, incremental change
- Focusing on one project or one issue, in collaboration with the neighborhood
- Share what's already happening with a gathering, or reaching out to neighborhood leaders
- Communicate regularly with the neighborhood going forward

Engage Winona's potential roles

- Providing guidance to folks launching some of the projects and ideas they've imagined
- Create a project tracker that documents all of the ongoing efforts in the neighborhood
- Convened a leadership group, and will be checking in on progress, feedback, and ideas
- Continue collaboration with Art of the Rural on telling stories and creative placemaking





EAST END/SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT

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FULL REPORT

East Side+East End

Values+Visions

- Businesses+institutions
- Public spaces+parks
- Housing+appearance
- Transportation+infrastructure
- Cultural+social
- Heritage+preservation
- Storytelling+placemaking
- General vision+values

Mankato Avenue — a future vision

Social+engagement outcomes

Next steps

EAST SIDE+EAST END

(and, “the hog line”)

Introduction + goal

Traditionally and historically, the East End has been referred to as the neighborhood east of Mankato Avenue, or “the hog line,” though there has never been a single accepted definition. We asked hundreds of people to define the East End in conversations, surveys and at events, primarily folks who live in the residential areas from Franklin Street east to the city limits, and from the Mississippi River south to Shives Road. The goal was to define the neighborhood’s boundaries based on the opinions of residents, and to provide that definition to the neighborhood, city and community in the spirit of potential future projects to create a stronger sense of place.

Analysis

Many participants suggested the East End started at Franklin Street, but said they needed a distinction between East Winona and what they called “the true East End” at Mankato Avenue.

So instead of defining just the East End, folks chose to imagine two neighborhoods: The East Side, and the East End. The general consensus was that the East Side comprises Franklin Street to Mankato Avenue, and the East End is anything along and east of Mankato Avenue.

- East of Franklin Street is the East Side
- Mankato Avenue and east is the East End
- North-south boundaries are Mississippi River to Sarnia, Shives Road

There were several other ideas about where the East Side starts:

- Main Street (mostly based on the incorrect idea that East addresses begin at Main)
- Center Street (any address with an East in it)
- Laird Street (Bloedow Bakery)
- Hamilton Street (The main thoroughfare between Franklin and Mankato)
- Carimona Street (St. Stan’s)

There was also general consensus on what not to include:

- The retail area (Menards, Walmart, Target, Fleet Farm, strip malls)
- Residential areas south of Hwy. 61, including around Sugarloaf

Folks were undecided on others, and suggested it should be up to them:

- Winona Health (including Winona Health leadership)



- Sugar Loaf Senior Living and the new facility being built
- Mugby Junction and other small area businesses

Visions

Neighborhood associations/councils: These stronger neighborhood identities have the potential to increase local pride, engagement, and investment, and provide the opportunity for organizing informal structures like neighborhood associations or advisory councils. Winona does not have formal neighborhood boundaries or definitions, and no neighborhood structures like councils or other groups to serve their neighborhoods and advocate for them on a city level.

East End placemaking, wayfinding: Many residents and business owners suggested that branded wayfinding and “Welcome To” signs for the East End would create a strong sense of place and lead to increased pride (More about these ideas in the STORYTELLING + PLACEMAKING section).

“The hog line”

Mankato Avenue has long been colloquially referred to as “the hog line.” The phrase comes from the time when hogs were led along Mankato Avenue to the Interstate Packing and later Swift & Co. meat packing plant (now the site of Peerless Chain).

East End residents were quick to bring up the phrase. Many find it mildly insulting. While folks are deeply proud of the East End’s distinction as a long-time working-class neighborhood, many said they see “the hog line” as a way for non-residents to perpetuate stereotypes about the neighborhood’s cleanliness, safety and quality. Some residents, by comparison, said they use it to refer to their own neighborhood as a point of pride and identity.

Key comments

- Franklin and east feels like the east end - the neighborhood changes
- Anything east of Franklin St. Anything west of Franklin I would consider part of downtown
- I grew up on Broadway and Laird and to me (and the local police, I was a skateboarder and cops said we could skate downtown) and to our group east end started on Franklin St.
- Mankato Avenue is the ultimate divider of the east end
- I’m split to be honest. I think of an “east ender” as someone living past the Hog Line, but I say that I live on the East End (I’m on Kansas St). I don’t consider where I’m at to be “true” East End. Now that I think about it - my definition may have changed because I used to live in the “true” East End and still identify with it.
- I think the east end stops in about the middle of downtown
- Typically, I think east of Hamilton as the East End. But, the areas between Hamilton and Franklin are more East End then West End or the college area
- Bloedow's to Severson Oil
- I don’t see Menards, Walmart, Lake Boulevard as the east end - it’s east, but something else
- My husband great up on the East End - that’s the hog line and east



VALUES+VISIONS

Introduction

The values and visions are organized by primary themes:

1. Businesses+institutions
2. Public spaces+parks
3. Housing+appearance
4. Transportation+infrastructure
5. Cultural+social
6. Safety
7. Storytelling+placemaking
8. Heritage+preservation
9. General vision+values

Each theme includes a description, analysis, opportunities and priorities, and key comments:

- **Description:** The primary kinds of comments and topics sorted into the theme.
- **Analysis:** Condensing and discussing the most common input and ideas for the theme.
- **Values:** What folks appreciate and want to keep or maintain.
- **Visions:** What folks want to change, with a focus on *meaningful* and *achievable* ideas: Ones that 1) have the most immediate relevance and significance and 2) have the strongest possibility of being accomplished.
- **Key comments:** A hand-selected collection of the most prominent and compelling comments from participants. Responses represent the true voices and language of participants and are selected to show diversity and range, not prevalence.



1. BUSINESSES+INSTITUTIONS

(~525 comments)

Note: Ideas and visions for Mankato Avenue are in a separate section below.

Description

This section is framed around businesses' and institutions' relationships to the neighborhood, not any general health or industry-specific opportunities or concerns. It includes what large businesses, small businesses, and institutions (schools, museums, etc.) value and seek to change about their location; what immediate and long-term challenges they face; how strong of a sense of place and connection they feel to the neighborhood; and their interest in participating in and supporting neighborhood activities and change.

Analysis

Most large businesses are stable and comfortable. Several, but far from all, small businesses are struggling. Institutions are also generally stable, though many feel like their location creates a challenge for building community and attracting visitors or members. With a few exceptions, owners and leaders said they wanted to build stronger connections and collaborations with the neighborhood, but weren't sure how.

Large businesses had few challenges or issues to discuss related to the neighborhood. They were generally appreciative of their location, both those with long-time presences and those who located to the neighborhood more recently. They feel comfortable surrounded by other industry and not having to worry about the effects of truck traffic, noise, and other impacts on any residential areas. Their primary challenge related to the neighborhood is with train backups. Smaller challenges were a lack of space to provide employee parking, and occasional issues with appearance and cleanliness practices by neighboring businesses. Most large businesses are not planning immediate expansions or significant changes. Those that have considered expansions recently were mixed on whether they had enough land available, but did not view it as a significant concern.

Small businesses face many of the same challenges of small businesses elsewhere, few of which are community- or neighborhood-specific. The most successful small business owners said they have created their own community of strong supporters that have allowed them to thrive. This was the case for many bars, and also service businesses like Boomer's Plumbing and Pac 'N Mail, and retail businesses like Paperbacks and Pieces. One challenge for small business owners is the neighborhood is a destination — especially the East End, east of Mankato Avenue, where there is little car and pedestrian traffic. Another is that Mankato Avenue creates a challenging business environment. It's a thoroughfare folks travel to get from one part of town to the other, and has the reputation of being deeply frustrating to drive on because of train backups.



Institutions are generally stable, with some concern about fading influence and support. Both St. Stan's Elementary and Washington-Kosciusko Elementary are stable, though dependent on the larger forces within the Catholic and public school systems. St. Stan's leaders said they don't feel strongly connected to the neighborhood; many students and staff come from elsewhere. W-K feels very strongly connected; their students and families largely live in the neighborhood. Leaders of the Polish Heritage Museum and St. Stan's Church said they have committed but shrinking communities, and feel like while they're widely known, they're not always widely supported outside of the neighborhood. Both expressed strong desires to be seen as tourist and visitor destinations.

Values

Working-class neighborhood: Many residents and business owners see the East End and its prevalence of industry, especially heavy industry and manufacturing, as continuing the long working-class tradition of the neighborhood.

Industry-appropriate neighborhood: Many large business owners appreciate that zoning has appropriately clustered them together and not spread throughout the residential parts of the neighborhood. They feel free to conduct business.

St. Stan's the icon: Residents love the iconic presence and look of the St. Stanislaus Basilica, and see it as one of, if not the, defining image of Winona's East Side.

Unique small and home-based businesses: Many residents said they appreciate and try to actively support the small businesses in the neighborhood. Many love the existence of home-based businesses, and other businesses built into or in front of homes.

Large retail: Folks generally appreciate the presence of Walmart, Target, Menards and Fleet Farm. There was a resistance to describing the area as part of the East End; participants saw it as separate from the residential and industrial/manufacturing part of the neighborhood.

Visions

Better walking paths/sidewalks in industrial area: Several business leaders said they would appreciate having a more consistent network of sidewalks in the industry-heavy part of the East End. They were concerned about safety related to heavy truck traffic and pedestrians. They also said their employees would use paths for taking walks during lunch, or for walking meetings.

Athletic Club's future: Many participants expressed concern about, and a desire to help work on, the future of the Winona Athletic Club. They described it as a business and cultural institution that's long been a neighborhood cornerstone, and represents a big opportunity to serve the diverse social and cultural needs of the neighborhood. (More in the MANKATO AVENUE section).



Placemaking/wayfinding signs: Many large businesses recruiting employees and small businesses seeking customers said placemaking and wayfinding signs would create a significant benefit by instilling a sense of place and pride and making the neighborhood more of a destination. (More in the STORYTELLING+PLACEMAKING section).

Houses as businesses: Some residents were interested in the idea of launching service or retail businesses in homes in residential neighborhoods, but hadn't considered that it was possible.

Business associations: Many small-business and large-business owners said they would appreciate and benefit from being more organized and connected. They suggested informal networking and resource-sharing groups for small-business owners and for large-business owners.

Trains/Louisa Street overpass: Most large business owners said their biggest complaint was their trucks getting stuck waiting for passing and switching trains, primarily on Mankato Avenue, and continued to express desire for an overpass at Louisa Street.

Key comments

- Athletic Club was the center of the East End - but now what?
- One thing we value about the east end is how close we are to Target, Fleet Farm, Menard's, those stores - I'm joking but I'm really not, we do need them and there was nothing on this end in the 80s - now it seems like it's all over here
- The East End feels entrepreneurial because of the houses-turned-businesses and the businesses-turned-houses
- St. Stans is an enduring example of how a community can grow and invest in its own future
- In the little area I just moved to, I love having the bike store across the street and W-K is such a beautiful building, I love that it is still in use
- Would love a restaurant, maybe Mankato Avenue or somewhere right in the neighborhood
- Because the east end is a destination folks don't even know what kind of businesses are out here - like Anova, which makes those popular coated picnic tables and outdoor furniture
- If we (business) were looking for places to expand, I'm not sure where we would go. The plan is to grow, but that's on a longer timeline
- The Basilica needs attention and tourism. There are only 2 Basilicas in Minnesota and we have one right here on the East End
- It is concerning that there is only one public school in the East End which is on two blocks with over 300 kids. We have a lot of young families, but where do they send their kids?
- Very few new businesses or ideas coming to life. Little to draw people to the area - restaurants, etc. - except around the big box stores
- If you are not a native East Ender, it can be a bit unfriendly to go to establishments that have "regulars"
- Would like to see a deeper (neighborhood) connection from businesses taking social responsibility seriously



2. PUBLIC SPACES+PARKS

(~400 comments)

Description

The perception, use of, and value provided by the public spaces and parks on the East Side and East End: East End Rec and land, Sobieski Park, Gabrych Park, and Sinclair Park; the desire for programming, activities and amenities at the parks and spaces; the imagination of future parks and public spaces in the neighborhood.

Analysis

East Side and East End residents love their public spaces and parks and were filled with practical ideas for improvements and changes. In the survey, more than 70 percent of folks said they spend time regularly in at least one public space or park.

Values

East End Rec: The East End Rec was by far the most-mentioned, with more than 125 comments specifically naming it as a favorite neighborhood place. This was prevalent among youth, families and grandparents, as well as couples and adults in the neighborhood who said they appreciated a space that serves youth or enjoyed using the outdoor amenities.

Historical baseball culture: Many longtime East End residents talked about the huge cultural impact baseball had historically on the neighborhood, both as a showcase to the neighborhood and as a way to bring what felt like the whole city together around a shared activity.

Sobieski Park Lodge: Many participants praised the work of the neighborhood to raise money for and help build the new Lodge, and said they see it as a cornerstone neighborhood gathering place.

East End Rec garden: Many participants said they enjoy the community garden and would like to see more opportunities for community gardens in other neighborhood locations.

Sinclair Park: Neighbors love Sinclair, from the basketball court to the playground, and offered no suggestions outside of a few requests for more playground equipment. Some kids suggested the park be renamed to what they call it — The Purple Dinosaur Park, or The Dinosaur Park.

Visions

Dog park: A dog park was by far the largest request for a public project in the East End, with hundreds of comments in support. Participants said it was a big neighborhood need, and would help



build community and social connections. Most said the city's existing dog park is much too far to travel to regularly. The land behind WKM Properties has long been an informal neighborhood dog park, with the owner tolerating it but annoyed by those who don't clean up after their dogs.

Revitalized baseball culture at Gabrych Park: Many residents said a renewed interest in East End baseball, supported by infrastructure, culture and programming, could transform the neighborhood. The desire wasn't to yearn for the return of what once was — the large grandstands, thousands of fans — but a tasteful redesign and upgrade to the field and seats, family-friendly programming, and other suggestions, like a new name for the Chiefs (“Griffins,” “Long Johns”). Many suggested investment in field upgrades, followed by a pursuit of a pro or semi-pro team to locate in Winona.

East End Rec changes, youth programming: Participants were asked to imagine what changes they would like to see at the East End Rec. The top comments included:

- Teen activities
- East End Rec should be more well known and used more often. It needs programming to welcome more people of all ages.
- Bird sanctuary
- I love the indoor Farmer's Market!
- I like the community gardens and community gatherings (Earth Day)
- Continued community lunches
- Events like movies in the park
- More markets and fairs
- More family programs at the East End Rec Center
- Newer better more fun bigger playground equipment
- More established nature play area incorporating art as play structure
- Neighborhood race/obstacle course
- Get kids involved they need exercise and community work
- I would like to see the "natural" park improved. It's never been great since day one
- Environmental and DIY workshops
- Better basketball hoops (outdoors) at East End Rec - and nice nets
- More drinking fountains
- Nerf wars

Sobieski Park changes: Comments primarily focused around the run-down tennis courts and the use of the overall green space. The top comments included:

- Pavilion at Sobieski should have events there outside of space rentals
- Take Wabasha between Sobieski and Gabrych and turn it into grass - half into grass, the other half into parking
- Sand volleyball court - another great use of the park
- Bigger park with swings, slides, monkey bars
- Improve the tennis and basketball courts at Sobieski Park. Add Frisbee golf. Add a pet zone
- Sobieski Park - having basketball court and tennis courts redone
- Wall ball, Gaga ball, whatever it's called with the pit - my kids would love that



Walking park: Many businesses and residents said a walking park would be a great addition for employees who walk and/or picnic for lunch, and for residents uncomfortable walking through the industrial section that lacks consistent sidewalks. Some suggested this could be created in combination with a dog park — a larger path that circled the park or wound through it.

Sobieski/Gabrych connection: Several participants asked whether the city would consider closing Wabasha Street between Steuben and Buchanon streets in order to connect Sobieski and Gabrych parks, and turning it into a combination of green space and parking for the park. They said it would create a safer, integrated space with more room and ease on-street parking during events.

Winona Friendship Center relocation: Folks who were aware of the interest in exploring a combined Winona Friendship Center and East End Rec were largely opposed, in part because they worried it would diminish the Rec's focus on serving youth — particularly at-risk youth. Broadly, they liked the idea of the Center moving to the East End and having a neighborhood presence.

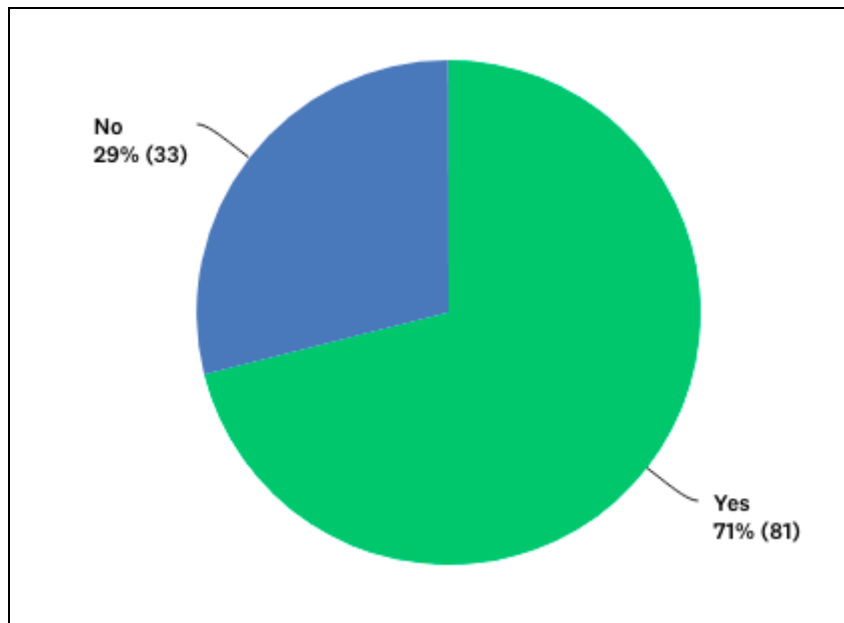
Key comments

- One really good thing is the East End Rec. Lots of families go there. I go there and take older neighbor ladies there - big Thanksgiving dinner. Have other dinners and whatnot, too. Lots of families will go to that. You'll see a lot of neighbors there.
- I love the East Rec and think it's a reason the neighborhood is thriving as much as it is
- The Rec especially in the winter cz there ain't nothing to do with 4 kids cz its too cold outside to play n the playground
- Sobieski Park, it's wrapped up in my family heritage. MANY MANY great memories of events
- I forgot when asked about a dream project ... BRING BACK the covered stands on the Sobieski Park ballfield. As a kid there were all sorts of happenings there
- Sobieski Park. Best green space in the area. Good ability to keep track of kids
- East End Rec. Our kids enjoy going there to stay active, but also play board games with staff etc. I don't feel it's a good idea to put the friendship center and east end rec together. I think sometimes it's good to keep generations separated and housed in their own facilities
- Baseball needs to re-live its glory days on the east end
- Rename the Winona Chiefs - a cringeworthy name today - to the Winona Long Johns
- Would love to see the culture of baseball return - it was already gone when we moved here in the 1980s, the grandstand and bleachers down - the games there but not a lot of people
- Marry the Sobieski and Gabrych parks together by taking out the road
- East End Rec should be more well known and used more often. It needs programming to welcome more people of all ages
- Dog park would be great - off leash. The current dog park is too far away!
- Connect Lake Park bike path to east end
- Sobieski just now finally has a building, so I'm excited about what's next for that space. Maybe outdoor dances or horseshoes or bags contests?
- Maybe an East End food truck day or two per year?



Graphics

Do you or your family spend time at East End Rec, Sobieski Park, or Gabrych Park?



What would make you want to spend more time in public spaces/parks?



3. HOUSING+APPEARANCE

(~300 comments)

Description

This category combined housing with appearance, given that the vast majority of comments related to appearance were connected to houses. It focuses on: The overall condition of neighborhood homes, including cleanliness and upkeep; the conflict around rental properties and renters; the desire to see grassroots organizing to help owners and renters maintain their homes; the perception and attitude about shotgun houses; and other housing issues and opportunities.

Analysis

The East End has long been seen as an affordable housing neighborhood, or a neighborhood to avoid. According to residents, it has undergone a transformation in the last 20-30 years, with longtime residents and multi-generational families moving out of homes, with many bought and converted into rentals. The transition has diminished the once-dominant Polish culture and influence, and led to cultural and social divisions between owners and renters.

Values

Inexpensive homes: Residents love that the neighborhood is a go-to place to find a good, inexpensive home for a variety of needs — single person, married couple, young family, retiree-age couple looking to downsize. As one participant put it: There are “no pretentious big houses.”

Home variety: Many residents pointed to the variety of home designs and styles, saying they appreciate how they give the area a unique feel, sometimes even block by block.

Longtime neighbors: Many residents said the largest benefit of the neighborhood was having longtime neighbors and residents, and not seeing a lot of turnover in home ownership.

Shotgun houses: The narrative outside the neighborhood is that the half-lot shotgun houses are something of a Winona icon, representing the industriousness of working-class immigrants. The narrative within the neighborhood is more complicated. While some residents have attachments to the homes, and others see them as having potential as a unique affordable housing solution, others noted that many were cheaply built and are rentals suffering years if not decades of neglect.

Visions

Spruce Up Club: Many residents suggested a grassroots effort to volunteer across the neighborhood on small exterior repairs for homeowners who were unable to do or afford to do



them. They would need a central organizer to connect with neighbors in need and schedule jobs. They would benefit, they said, from having it organized through a public or central space like the East End Rec, where they could meet and store tools.

Beautify boulevards: Several neighbors suggested a coordinated effort to beautify the boulevards, especially in the East End. A few neighbors are willing to champion the effort, and need guidance from the city in terms of what is allowed.

Clean up rental properties/landlord oversight: There was a widespread desire to see rental property appearances improved, though folks were challenged by how to accomplish that. Some suggested coordinated reporting of issues, or assistance in organizing landlords for discussions.

Work with realtors, community on changing the narrative around homes: Many neighborhood participants, as well as many community members engaged in this project, said they were explicitly encouraged not to buy a house on the East End — primarily by real-estate agents, as well as family members and friends. These were folks who had bought recently, or as far back as the late 1970s.

More awareness around existing resources, programs: Many residents were unaware of programs like city loans for income-eligible homeowners, or Habitat's A Brush With Kindness; more education, from workshops to appearance at public events to door-to-door outreach, was requested.

Teardowns or renovations: Some suggested a larger, coordinated effort to revitalize the neighborhood, pointing to examples in other cities where public development companies would buy rundown properties, then redevelop sections of or whole blocks. Neighbors stressed that the vision was similar-sized and designed homes, not larger properties.

Branding, signs, wayfinding: This idea arose again as a way to beautify the neighborhood; placemaking and wayfinding signs would instill a sense of place and pride and make the neighborhood more of a destination. (More in the STORYTELLING+PLACEMAKING section).

Key comments

- Houses have character
- Cheap houses are perfect for a first home
- Housing is inexpensive
- The entire rental market in the east end really emerged in the last 20-30 years or so as folks have aged out of their houses - there didn't used to be nearly any rentals
- I was told not to buy a house on the East End - that it had a reputation of being impoverished, and unsafe, lots of drug activity - told that by my realtor and my family
- Real estate people are warning folks not to buy houses on the east end - still doing that, at least maybe if they think you can afford another neighborhood
- Pretty quiet and safe I think, lots of older residents
- Would love to help create raised beds on the boulevards for neighbors to take care of



- There are a lot of cluttered properties, some due to mental health, some due to stubborn people, and others just like it that way
- Would love to see a return to shotgun-style houses - maybe that's Winona's answer to affordable housing in a landlocked city
- The lot across from Miller (Ingenuity) that's always being used like a junkyard - lately it's trailers, recently it was big snowpiles
- Having flowers out front has led to some folks, especially young families, coming on by, stopping to introduce themselves - great to see the young energy in the neighborhood - hard to believe we're the old energy now and not the young energy!
- Rental properties cleaned up - that would be huge - not sure how you enforce that, but that's a consistent problem
- Would be great to have a development company that buys blocks, tears them down, rebuilds - buys one property at a time as they come up for sale, then tear down and redevelop when you have enough in a row
- Tear down the shotgun houses - they're a pain - mostly rentals now, falling apart
- The hoarding porches, I call them - it seems like a trend here (and maybe elsewhere, too) - people putting all their junk in the screened and glass-window porches where it can be seen from the street
- Maybe connecting Habitat Brush with Kindness programs to the East End - how active are they over here? Is it that people don't know how to reach out?
- More spruce up-style programs and help
- Maintain what you do have - how can we help folks do that?
- Chore service would be great - to get some good work rolling - but two years ago Volunteer Services tried to start that, sent 90 letters, got one phone call
- More owner-occupied housing. Fewer rentals
- Shoveling alleys in winter, going to help each other - small projects like that
- Could use some space for a Spruce Up Club - somewhere to keep tools, other items
- Consistent, serviceable, quality housing. There are plenty of rentals, but few are kept up to a level where I'd be proud to live in them. I rent, and I feel lucky to have a generic looking spot with a kind, understanding landlord who only owns two properties instead of 20
- Below (east of) Mankato seems to be having a nice comeback, but above Mankato for several blocks seems to have lots of run down houses and unkempt yards
- Some people do not have the money or resources to maintain their homes, but it would be nice to see all houses and yards nicely maintained/painted, etc .
- I would also like to see fewer abandoned-looking homes ... overwhelmingly, it's landlords who need to be held responsible. In some cases, it's not clear if anyone even lives at a property ... In some areas, the homes that are too far gone should be allowed to be redeveloped, maybe with some nice-looking row houses
- Help for those that don't have the energy/time/ability to have their houses look as nicely as they'd like to have them
- Planters and boulevard enhancements that promote street activity ranging from block parties to children learning to bicycle
- Flowers and gardens on every block and corner ("adopt a garden or yard?")



4. TRANSPORTATION+INFRASTRUCTURE

(~300 comments)

Description

How neighborhood residents travel — by car, foot, or bike; what they appreciate about the infrastructure that exists; what they'd like to change or add.

Analysis

Residents love that the neighborhood is largely a destination, with little traffic passing through and no busy streets outside of Mankato Avenue, and that the location is convenient and accessible to most other areas of Winona. Unsurprisingly, the biggest frustration is with train delays and backups. The other top concern was the expressed lack of consistency in sidewalks and bicycle infrastructure.

Values

Convenient location: Residents said the neighborhood offers easy and quick access to most parts of town, including downtown, the retail area, and Hwy. 61.

Low traffic: Many residents said the low traffic in the residential portions made them feel safe and more comfortable biking and walking, especially those with families.

Visions

Train backups/switching — Louisa Street overpass: The largest concern was related to train backups. Residents and business owners overwhelmingly said they were still interested in a Louisa Street overpass, but not optimistic it'll be built. They stressed their opposition to a Mankato Avenue overpass; many believe the city is still actively considering the idea.

Train backups/switching — notification signal and signs: Many residents said they would really appreciate a warning signal and signs at the crossing to indicate when there will be a train backup.

Bike path, lane connections: Many residents said they would like to see connections from the neighborhood to other paths and areas — to the Lake Park bike path, more defined bike lanes that run in and out of the neighborhood, a way of getting to the retail area, or crossing Hwy. 61.

Walking connections to retail area: Several residents noted the difficulty in walking from the neighborhood to the retail area (Walmart, Target, Menards) — having to cross only at Louisa or Mankato. Some suggested negotiating with landowners to build a walking bridge over Shives Creek.



Sidewalks in retail area: Many residents noted how difficult it was to walk in the retail area, navigating a lack of sidewalks and dodging cars on wide streets and large parking lots — many asked for more sidewalks, suggested crosswalks with notification blinkers on Frontenac Drive, and having companies paint clearly marked walking paths within their parking lots.

More consistent sidewalks: Residents would like more consistent sidewalks in the neighborhood, especially in the industrial area. Some homeowners resisted the idea.

Industrial area parking: Some areas of the neighborhood's industrial section are clogged with on-street parking during work hours. Residents and business owners said they were concerned about safety issues, especially with the volume of industrial traffic like trucks and buses, but weren't sure of the solution unless companies were willing to build or add parking.

Key comments

- Just need the notification signs for trains switching - that would be a big deal
- Connect Lake Park bike path to east end
- It's really hard to walk from the east end to the retail - Walmart, Target, etc. - nowhere easy to cross, and lots of traffic with no crosswalks
- Could really use sidewalks near manufacturing companies - lot of employees take walks on their lunch breaks and it's a kind of free-for-all, people in streets and walking around trucks
- We've been talking about overpasses for 40 years - I can't imagine any more that one is going to happen
- Lots more trucks on Mankato these days
- It's easy to bike and drive to places. Everything is pretty close
- Mankato is an irritant because of the train; leaves a negative impression of the whole area
- Fleet Farm road - the fake road through the parking lot - is a real problem. Can't believe there hasn't been a major accident there, or that Fleet Farm hasn't regulated it. People shoot through there on and off Hwy. 61
- Move the switching yard - that'd be a big positive change for the East End
- All the parking on the street (near businesses) is problematic for us - creates lots of traffic, some safety issues - really dangerous for sight lines, for buses
- Make safe routes for bikers & walkers to cross Broadway and Mankato
- Alleys are so messy and need to be paved! Plow the alley so older folks can get out
- Bike path on levee from downtown to neighborhood
- Louisa Street - connect with an overpass to Highway 61. Would do a lot for safety
- Bike path that crosses Highway 61
- Walkability, more benches
- Railroad crossings (grr!)
- Better traffic enforcement and protected bikeways!
- I feel like the East End needs to have all controlled intersections to prevent accidents and make safer places for pedestrians to walk
- Curb extensions on every street corner, promoting walkability



5. CULTURAL+SOCIAL

(~250 comments)

Description

Residents' sense of belonging and place in the neighborhood; whether they feel welcome and accepted; how neighbors gather and come together, informally and formally; the activities, events and structures residents would like to help them build closer connections and relationships.

Analysis

The neighborhood once had incredibly close bonds they celebrated and worked hard to maintain, driven by formal (Athletic Club) and informal (backyard picnics) gathering places. Many have faded in the last few decades. Older and younger residents are both hungry to revitalize social connections with neighbors, but most aren't sure where to start. Residents appreciate the social structures already in place, like communities created at corner bars, bingo nights, and more, and are looking to build new ones that welcome multiple generations and the growing diversity in the neighborhood.

Values

Neighborhood bars: Neighborhood bars continue to be the primary social centers of the neighborhood, building unique and hyper-local communities. Whether some of the bars are welcoming to newcomers was up for debate, with some saying it was challenging, but most saying it's just perception, not reality.

Growing diversity: Residents for the most part appreciate the growing diversity of the neighborhood, especially in the East Side, with younger couples, families, and people of color.

Face-to-face connections: Many residents said the neighborhood culture and design (small lots) encourages face-to-face interactions, with neighbors getting to know and helping each other.

Deep-set historical sense of community: The East End historically was known as a close-knit neighborhood where residents took care of each other and looked out for each other; while most agreed that sense has faded, it's still present and highly valued.

Visions

Getting to know the neighbors: Most residents, business owners, and community leaders don't feel like they have a clear idea of who lives in the neighborhood today — and suggested a variety of ideas to make connections, especially regular informal social events.



Block parties: Many residents advocated for more block parties, especially held on streets or in alleys, as opposed to in central public locations. Several residents said they plan to begin hosting block parties, and would appreciate assistance and guidance — even just in the form of a handbook — from the city when it came to navigating street closures and other elements.

Activities for youth: Many residents said priority for culture and community-building was more activities for youth — both to serve kids and bring families and neighbors together.

Community-building at Belleview East: Belleview East residents in particular said there was a lack of programming and intention in bringing them together, either making connections to the larger neighborhood or through better use of the community room.

Welcome, integrate renters: Several residents suggested a welcoming committee or some way of welcoming renters to the neighborhood and building relationships, as a way to ease some of the challenges that have arisen, from cleanliness to noise.

Neighborhood-wide festival/celebration: Some residents mentioned Mankato (or Mankato Avenue) Days, a neighborhood festival that could be held by shutting down a few blocks of the street. They said a return to a neighborhood-wide celebration would be an important way to revitalize the neighborhood's identity and sense of place while bringing people together.

Key comments

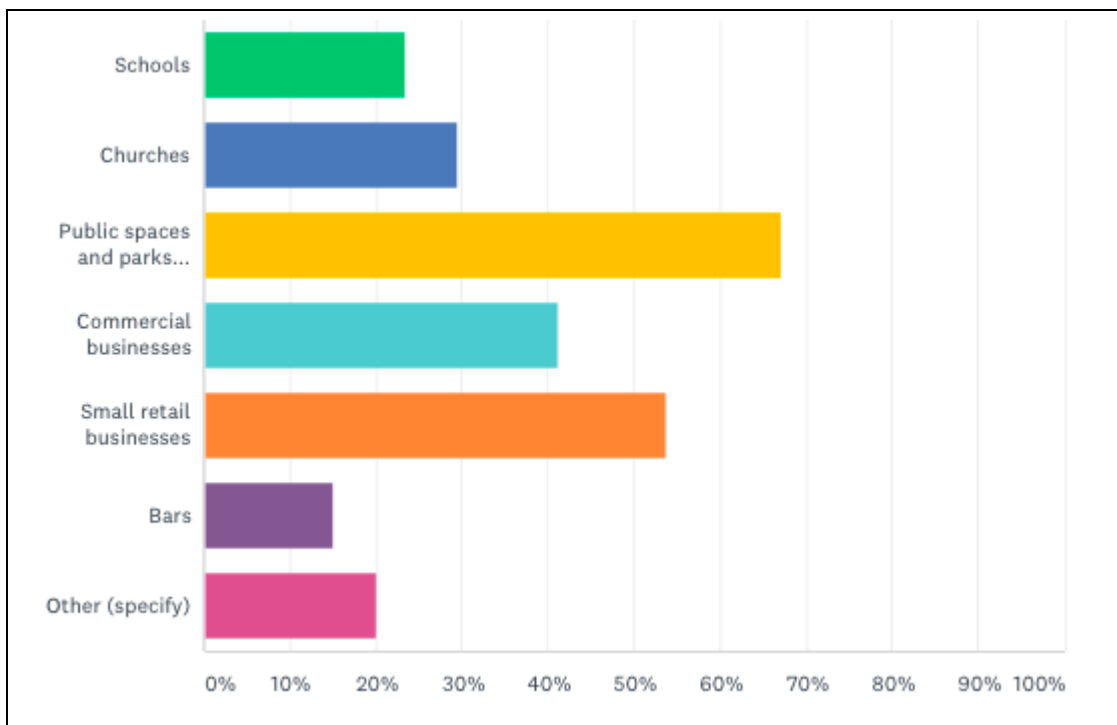
- There is a full spectrum/variety of people on the East End
- Mixed income levels together
- The East End is intergenerational, families stay here
- Good balance of age groups
- East End had some strong community back in the day, but it's waning now
- There's a mix of people of different ages and backgrounds
- Nice that the college is not very close so we don't have the student apartment problem
- In some ways the neighborhood feels really old-fashioned in a good way - older folks, looking out for each other, watering each others' plants when they're on vacation
- East End seems to be an old neighborhood, older folks, but I'm not sure - just what I observe
- Bars were gossip central, you always knew what everyone was up to
- Block parties used to be rampant and numerous
- Kids in the neighborhood played sandlot ball, went fishing
- As a company we're not that involved in the east end neighborhood - we've participated in some events but not recently, nothing we're closely involved in
- Polish culture values generosity and openness
- I'd like to get to know my neighbors using social media, but I hate Facebook
- Neighbors had picnics, spontaneous picnics - that doesn't happen any more
- Warm, kind, and welcoming. The East End accepts everyone and I was part of the family right away



- We know who in our neighborhood needs help (with sidewalks) and people help them out
- Strong sense of community - talk over the fence, baking things for fun
- Love the quiet and community. I come from an even more rural setting, so after living from Goodview to downtown Winona, I've found myself happiest here
- People on their front stoops or interacting with the street on the sidewalks and public spaces in front of the home
- The east end is its own small town community mindset that makes Winona special
- Alleyway potlucks - those would be amazing
- Can we find ways to integrate renters into the community
- Don't have to be friends with people - just have respect for each other as a community
- More block parties would be fantastic - is Street Meet still around?
- Mankato Days brought back
- As everywhere a lack of community interaction. Isolation from each other.
- Neighborhood identity is being lost in the name of "diversity"
- More stuff for teenagers to keep them out of trouble
- BLOCK PARTIES ALL THE TIME!

Graphics

Where do you spend the most time in the neighborhood, outside of work and home? (select all that apply)



Note: The “other” answers primarily consisted of walking or biking outside.



6. SAFETY

(~200 comments)

Description

Residents' perception of the neighborhood's general safety; the amount and types of crime observed in the neighborhood; the influence of perspective on residents' opinions; ideas for grassroots organizing and community policing to address ongoing issues.

Analysis

Crime and safety is a big neighborhood issue — but wasn't talked about as much as other themes, in part because folks weren't sure how to address it. Residents focused on the presence of drug houses, and the value of neighbors coming together when needed to address safety issues. Opinions on how safe the East Side and East End are varied widely. Perspective matters. Many long-time residents traced an arc of feeling very safe historically, to increasingly unsafe in the 1990s and 2000s, to again feeling fairly safe after years of activity and organizing. Newer residents generally described the neighborhood as safe and low-crime. Several residents who relocated from large cities and higher-crime neighborhoods said it was by far the safest and quietest place they've ever lived, pointing to the absence of violent crime.

Values

Neighbors organize when challenges arise: Many residents said they appreciated the willingness of neighbors to come together to face challenges, noting the East End Neighborhood Watch in particular, and generally how neighbors and blocks have loosely organized to watch and report criminal activity.

East End Neighborhood Watch: Many residents praised the creation of the Watch (around 2007-08), and the significant impact it had in empowering neighbors to address persistent issues and turn around a trend of rising crime.

Visions

Address drug houses: By far the largest issue residents cited were apparent drug houses in rental properties — traffic at all hours, different people coming and going for short periods of time. Neighbors said they have organized at times to record and report activity, but weren't sure of the most effective process and felt frustrated by what they described as a lack of police response.



Community policing: Several residents asked for increased police presence, not patrol cars but in the form of community police officers — those willing to build relationships with neighbors, pass along information, and be responsive to calls and complaints.

Revitalized East End Neighborhood Watch: Folks who founded the Watch and have kept it active for more than 10 years said they would like to see a renewed energy and spirit in the form of new members, either to keep the group going in its current form and name or reimagine it.

Key comments

- Parents feel safe enough to let kids play outside together
- The East End Neighborhood Watch started around 2007, 2008 - it wasn't planned, it was just neighbors getting together to work together
- East End has a reputation for not being safe
- Our teachers feel nervous at night
- Neighbors are getting old, but are still watching and talking
- Used to be this feeling on the East End that you were going to get beaten up - it probably wasn't real, but it sure felt like it
- I think it has gotten much, much better. Don't think people are as bad and afraid of things like before. The only thing I see and hear about are drug dealers.
- There are some drug houses on the east end - can see by the traffic, but they mostly keep to themselves
- People say it's a safe neighborhood - we don't have any safety concerns for our employees
- Used to be the safe environment- now there are too many drug houses
- I've been frustrated with the police presence - watching for two years, some of these houses, and they haven't done anything
- Liked walking my dog along Front Street down by the levee. I wouldn't do that for love or money now. Think a lot of it goes on down there.
- It's not as safe as it was when I was a kid growing up.
- Lots of crime (burglary, graffiti)
- Get rid of the drug houses
- When I compare the neighborhood to when I grew up in it and to how my daughter is growing up I just don't feel it's as safe



7. HERITAGE+PRESERVATION

(~200 comments)

Description

The desire to maintain, preserve, share, and expand knowledge around the history and heritage of the neighborhood as a place, and of the people who built it and lived there; the stories residents tell today about the neighborhood's history, both true and rooted in mythology; the values and sense of place that have historically informed people's opinions of the neighborhood.

Analysis

The East End (and East Side) is one of the richest cultural and historical neighborhoods of Winona. The history and culture is fairly well-known, both by long-time and newer residents; it also may be the best-known neighborhood history among the larger Winona community. Most folks can point to the influence and presence of Polish (and German) immigrants, the large working-class families, the prevalence of industry and manufacturing, "the hog line," the shotgun houses, and other elements.

Values

Polish immigrants: The most well-known history is the prominent historical population of Polish immigrants, primarily from the Kashubian region, and their work to build the neighborhood, provide labor for Winona's largest industries, and create one of Winona's most celebrated icons, St. Stan's Basilica. While the Polish population and cultural influence has faded, and at an accelerated pace over the last 20 years or so, the story of the neighborhood remains rooted in their presence.

Working-class/blue-collar neighborhood: Some residents prefer the plainspeak of "poor"; others prefer the language of working-class or blue-collar. Regardless, the culture of immigrant and newcomer families doing the best with the little they had and working hard to build better lives for themselves and their families is a dominant narrative across the neighborhood — one that continues today, especially among younger working-class families.

Catholic heritage: Several residents also pointed to the Catholic heritage of the neighborhood, and the current presence of iconography like statues and crosses decorating lawns, porches, and homes.

Visions

Bytow Byway: The Polish Museum's vision of a walking/biking/driving tour of the East End, with signs and historical markers noting several different sites, complemented by a printed guide. It would serve as a significant tourist attraction, as well as for backyard/local tourists and even residents seeking a larger understanding and appreciation of Winona's Polish culture and heritage.



Revitalize the Athletic Club: Many participants expressed concern about, and a desire to help work on, the future of the Winona Athletic Club. They described it as a business and cultural institution that's long been a neighborhood cornerstone, and represents a big opportunity to serve the diverse social and cultural needs of the neighborhood. (More in the MANKATO AVENUE section).

Promote, celebrate Polish culture: There was widespread sentiment among residents and the Polish Heritage Museum to celebrate Polish heritage and culture with community events, storytelling, and other avenues, as a way to revitalize interest across the community and bring attention and resources to the neighborhood and the museum.

St. Stan's Basilica as a destination: St. Stan's Basilica leadership is exploring ways to create more interest and tourism around the basilica, both from visitors and from locals.

Key comments

- Where you lived in Winona was based on ethnicity and class. If you were poor, a laborer, and Polish, you lived in the East End
- The hog line moniker is a recent "cutsey" label - more derogatory than directional
- The shotgun-style homes, that's true - that is a key cultural part of Polish and German immigrants settling into the east end - they couldn't afford anything more so they came together and split lots
- Everyone lived close by to the sawmills - that was another reason for the shotgun houses - no way of affording or even getting transportation
- The Athletic Club was the Polish embassy - not sure if it still is - home base for civic clubs
- The Historic Preservation Commission has studied shotgun houses on the east end - there isn't a single block with unmodified houses - many of them have the big bay windows
- The story of Polish people founding all of Winona is a bit overblown - before Polish immigrants arrived the west end was building up, sawmills and lumber were in full swing
- The culture here was you show up and do the work, and be content with it
- Nobody wanted to support the Sobieski Park pavilion - we had to do it on our own - real genuine people, helping each other
- Everyone was Catholic - a few Lutherans didn't associate
- When I was young the Polish were dominant on the East End. I remember Mankato Ave being called the hogline and I was told I could not associate with anyone below Mankato Ave. Little did my parents realize most of my friends lived below Mankato Ave.
- My father worked at Swift and Co. packing plant. Many stories of pigs and cattle running the streets. At one time, there was a grocery store on nearly every block (taverns, too)!
- Salt of the earth immigrants
- The city invariably designates 'historic districts' and renewal areas as ending at Franklin St. We always feel abandoned
- Where are the cultural access points to Polish heritage on the east end? Nowhere. We're trying to build them - street signs, alley garage paintings, others - but can't get much support



8. STORYTELLING+PLACEMAKING

(~150 comments)

Description

Ways to increase a sense of place and identity for the East End and East Side neighborhoods, through infrastructure, storytelling, or other projects.

Analysis

The most prominent idea revolved around wayfinding signs for the East End neighborhood. The idea had broad support, from companies recruiting employees and welcoming salespeople and guests to residents wanting more definitive boundaries to establish a sense of neighborhood identity. Other ideas focused on alleyway art, a neighborhood newsletter, and sidewalk poetry.

A note on “The hog line”

Mankato Avenue has long been colloquially referred to as “the hog line.” The phrase comes from the time when hogs were led along Mankato Avenue to the Interstate Packing and later Swift & Co. meat packing plant (now the site of Peerless Chain). East End residents were quick to bring up the phrase. Many find it mildly insulting. While folks are deeply proud of the East End’s distinction as a long-time working-class neighborhood, many said they see “the hog line” as a way for non-residents to perpetuate old stereotypes about the neighborhood’s cleanliness, safety and quality. Residents, by comparison, said they use it to refer to their own neighborhood as a point of pride and identity. (also referenced in EAST SIDE+EAST END section).

Visions

East End placemaking and wayfinding: Many residents and business owners suggested that branded wayfinding and “Welcome To” signs for the East End neighborhood would create a strong sense of place and identity and increase pride. Some business owners suggested prominent elements, like an arch or gateway at a main Mankato Avenue cross-street, like Sanborn or Broadway.

East Side placemaking and branding: While most of the discussion focused specifically around the East End (Mankato Avenue and east), others suggested similar signage to brand and mark the East Side, based on the consensus definition of the residential neighborhood east of Franklin Street.

Alleyway art: The Polish Museum has long been interested in establishing an alleyway art program, where volunteers would paint garages and other structures along alleys. The need is to work with neighbors to get buy-in and commitment, starting with one full block; the Museum would also need assistance with developing resources to cover the paint, materials, and time of the artists.



Bytow Byway: The Polish Museum's vision of a walking/biking/driving tour of the East End (more details in the HERITAGE+PRESERVATION section).

Neighborhood newsletter: Some said a neighborhood newsletter, either a digital one or a printed handout delivered to mailboxes, would be a huge benefit to building relationships, sharing information, and getting folks out to events.

Poetry/designs on sidewalks: Several residents suggested imprinting poetry or designs into sidewalks across the neighborhood; it's a popular program in other cities, often using local artists, including youth, to create the poetry and designs.

Key comments

- Our (Polish Museum) current project is 'Alley Art'. We offer to paint Polish ethnic designs on doghouses, sheds, garage doors, fences, to make your alley a destination rather than a place to pile rubbish and boat trailers ... Why alleys? Polish don't push their heritage in front of your face - we're too modest - you have to come find it for yourself
- We need a little historic signage, not just Hog Line. Derdowski's birthplace, Polish Stock Chlebanjol, original Hot Fish Shop. Maybe even Eskimo Avenue and Little Italy, original Athletic Club, Sobieski Park, Knitting Mills, etc....even just printed on sidewalks if not a sign
- Better marketing is needed on this end of town, people don't always know what is happening
- Family and friends have the narrative that the east end is not a place to be, or to live - people have long memories, so who knows what event decades ago created that story
- It'd be great if the east end was distinctive, appealing, different - could help boost our employee recruiting effort
- I'd like to see the same kind of signage, name consistency, across the whole neighborhood - gateways on the main entrances, Broadway and Sanborn streets
- What do the visitors guides say about the East End? Could we have a hand in changing those?
- There should be an alley art competition between blocks
- Invest in branding for neighborhoods on the East End to promote the area's history
- Polish street names in East End
- Poetry sidewalks great way to get people out of their houses, out walking
- No reason to pass through the east end unless you live or work there. Out of sight, out of mind?
- I would love more community art
- Make the conversations about the location more positive, honor the past but celebrate the now and its future
- Rename 1st through 5th street to give them Polish names
- Alley and garage art projects



9. GENERAL VISION+VALUES

(~75 comments)

Description

A home for comments that didn't fit neatly into other categories, but reflected current and historical opinions and perspectives on the neighborhood's past and current values and future visions.

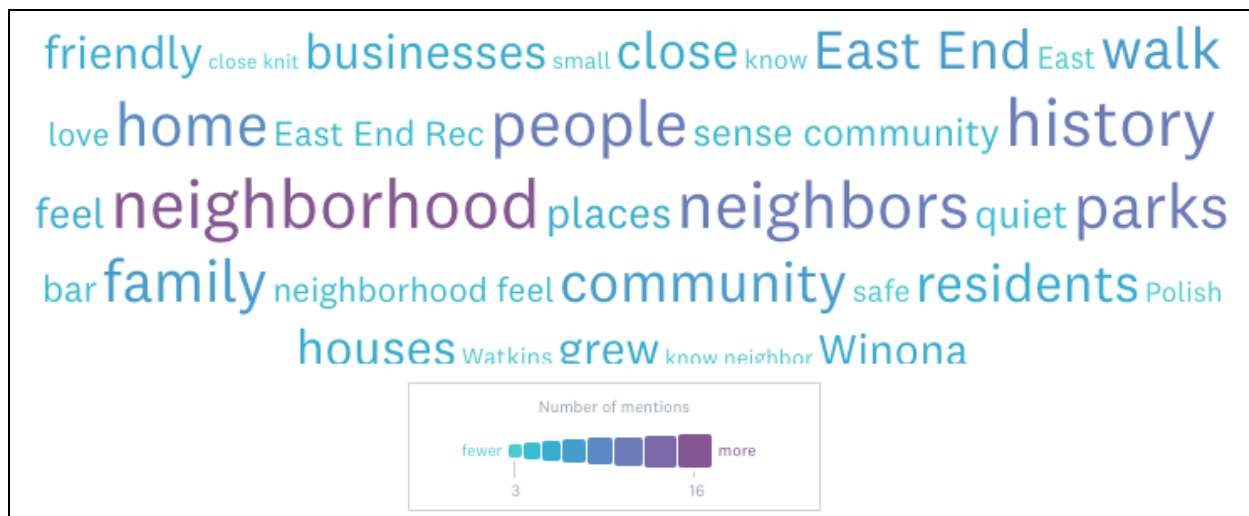
Key comments

- (The East End is) outside of the mainstream of Winona politics and concerns. It is the last neighborhood to have any projects done
- I think it has lost most of the stigma it had as a rough neighborhood. It is more of what gets stuck in our mindsets. Some of the neighborhood bars have transformed; Industrial has grown; people take more pride and keep the areas nicer
- I see the East End as the health and wellness hub in the next 10 years, with the YMCA, lake, Winona Health, bike path, river, etc.
- The city's regulations need to get out of the way to allow the type of incremental, organic growth that made the East End the East End occur again. There is a lot of potential among the people of the East End and if those people face hurdles every time they try to do something entrepreneurial or innovative, they aren't going to keep trying and we, as a community, will lose out on their talent and entrepreneurship. Using a bar like the Hei 'n' Low as an example, it is clearly a net community benefit, operating as a third place for the community to gather and connect. It has no parking, it has no setbacks, it isn't in a business zone, yet it is probably doing more for the East End community than any single residential building ever would at that location
- I want to see the city invest money into the East End, they keep promising and not delivering
- Humble and proud: We need to toot our own horn about how family friendly the East End is
- The city is more into all of the other projects in other neighborhoods - they seem to keep forgetting about the East End

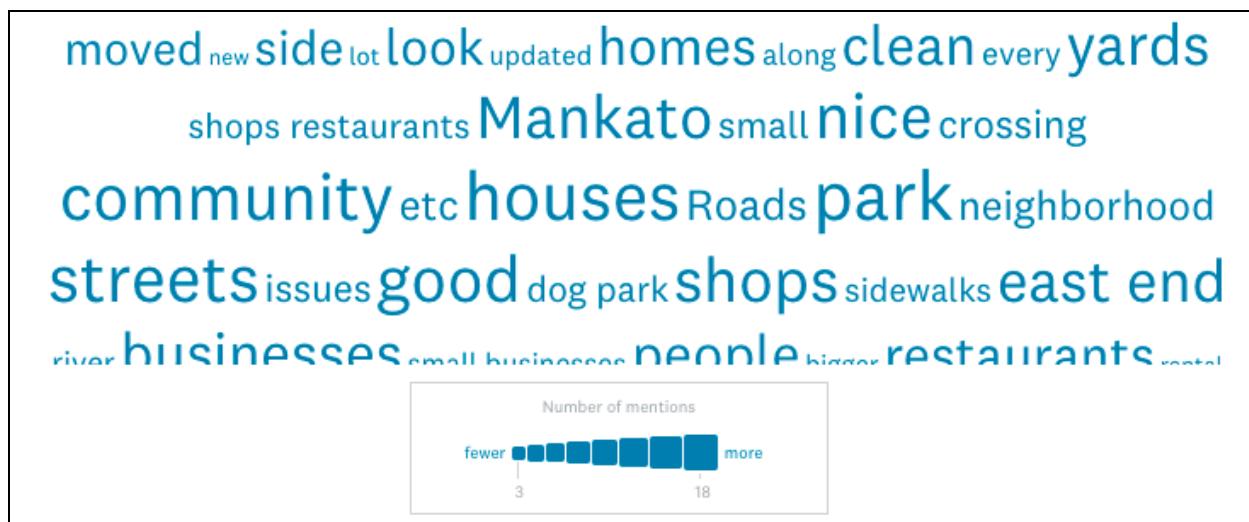


Graphics

What do you value the most about the neighborhood?



Dream big - what does the neighborhood look like in 10 years?



MANKATO AVENUE—A FUTURE VISION

Overview

We worked with residents to imagine a future for the Mankato Avenue commercial corridor, focused on establishing the kinds of businesses that would be supported by and provide value to the neighborhood, while also drawing customers from nearby employers and across the Winona community.

Residents and participants were invited to offer ideas during regular conversations and through surveys. Additionally, the process included Mankato Avenue questions in one-on-one interviews posed to several small business owners, both along Mankato Avenue and on neighboring streets; other neighborhood small business owners; and larger employers and their employees.

Analysis

The general consensus was Mankato Avenue has individual bright spots, but lacks an overall vision and the structures and support that would lead to a critical mass of diverse businesses to transform the corridor. Mankato Avenue has a handful of destination service and retail businesses that have remained stable for a long time in large part because they have built communities of regular supporters; a handful of newer businesses with similar potential have also emerged in recent years.

Small business owners along Mankato Avenue were highly supportive of the effort, saying they would expect to benefit from increased attention and traffic to the area as a whole — they see their businesses as neighborhood anchors that could help serve as catalysts for larger change.

This was very preliminary visioning, and would benefit from a deeper standalone process. Business owners noted they had no formal organization or connections, like a neighborhood business association. Most said they would need to lean heavily on the city for developing supportive structures, incentives, and vision. Many said they would be interested in being part of a group and a followup process focused specifically on Mankato Avenue's future.

Values

Unique places: Mankato Avenue businesses are, with few exceptions, locally owned and cater to the needs of the neighborhood and community. Several exist in residential neighborhoods.

Unique spaces: Multiple businesses operate out of unique buildings, including converted homes.

Community-building focus: Many businesses put energy into building community among their customers and supporters, through special events, incentives, sales, and other approaches.



Challenges

Mankato Avenue: Many said the design and use of Mankato Avenue presents a significant barrier: Four lanes, heavy truck traffic, and its primary use as a Point-A-to-B road to get to the retail area, Winona Health, and Hwy. 61.

Train backup energy: Several participants, especially neighborhood employers and employees, said the experience of getting stuck on Mankato for a train is and would be a detriment to daytime and lunchtime visits. As one business owner put it: “Just driving on Mankato, you feel that bad energy of frustration, whether or not there’s a train; it doesn’t make you want to stop anywhere.”

Not a destination: Individual businesses are destinations, but there’s little reason to visit Mankato Avenue as a whole. This was frequently expressed, though it’s a common chicken-or-egg argument that would disappear with a critical mass of thriving and diverse businesses.

Visions

Athletic Club future: Many said a Mankato Avenue transformation starts and would be sustained by a revitalized Athletic Club. They described it as a business and cultural institution that’s long been a neighborhood cornerstone, and represents a big opportunity to be reimaged to serve the diverse social and cultural needs of the neighborhood.

Restaurants: The biggest desire for Mankato Avenue was for a restaurant. The majority of participants said they’d be interested in a sit-down restaurant that wasn’t a chain. Some said they wanted a coffee shop with space for gathering and sitting, and offering light meals like sandwiches.

Unique stores: Ideas ranged widely: Kid- and family-friendly stores, an artist-run store and gallery featuring neighborhood artists, craft stores, gift shops, more. All focused on unique, local concepts.

Mankato Avenue redesign: Participants suggested any number of redesigns, including traffic calming measures, a landscaped median, crosswalks with flashing signals, dedicated bike lanes, and other elements. Most noted the significant amount of time and resources this would take, and said even small and incremental changes would go a long way.

Walkability/bikeability: There was a widely expressed need for a focus on pedestrians and bicyclists, with well-labeled and visible crosswalks every block and striped or dedicated bike lanes. Many said the presence of those would lead them to use , and would begin to influence traffic

Businesses in converted homes: Several participants, including Mankato Avenue homeowners and residents, expressed concern that new businesses could fundamentally change the mixed-use character of Mankato Avenue. They welcomed the approach of turning homes into businesses, and asked whether the city would offer support for that approach.



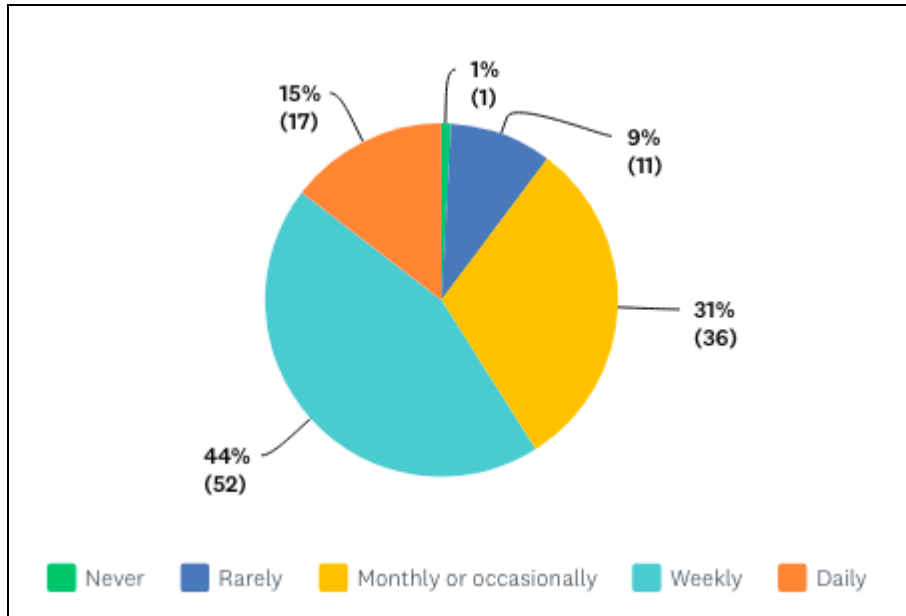
Key comments

- There seems to be good development and cleaning up of Mankato Ave.
- Mankato Bar is a flagship of the East End
- Pac 'N Mail is a huge asset for the East End. Would rather go there than the post office
- Coffee shop would be nice, though there is Kwik Trip and Mugby farther down - a coffee shop where you can actually sit down and meet
- More businesses on Mankato would be great, specifically a sandwich or lunch spot for those working on the East End. Put in a thriving, LOCAL, business
- Would love to see all kinds of new businesses on Mankato Avenue
- Sandwich shop, a real local place
- A coffee shop you can sit down at
- I don't think the east end could support a nice restaurant - downtown can't support one, so how could one go here?
- Like having the toy store (Brian's Toys) on the East End - should have a retail part of the space where people can shop
- Locally owned restaurant or coffee shop (not chain)
- Revitalize the Hog Line with shops, cafes, and reasons to be there. People would want to live here if we had a nicer space
- Athletic Club should be an art incubator
- Mixed use buildings like the Muddy Waters/coffee shop/apt building downtown
- Businesses with apartments on top
- Revival of corner stores
- Breakfast place
- Rocco's leaving Athletic Club really hurt - could something new come in there?
- Find a way to access community interest and contributions for Athletic Club
- I'd like to see more family-friendly places
- More shopping & eating places (not pizza or Mexican)
- More restaurants and retails shops would be nice
- The continuation of unique businesses (Hei 'N Low, 929, bike shop, book shop), with a few more - ideally a coffee shop
- A second downtown on Mankato
- Artsy community shops, restaurants, art
- Burger King, butcher shop, miniature golf course
- A Dog Wash :)
- Healthy fast food restaurant. We desperately need some in this town
- Dining, novelty, boutiques, books, crafts (hobby lobby)
- Small cafe, a "general store" located an appropriate distance from Kwik Trip
- There aren't many business front in the East End, and many of them are bars where visitors do not feel welcome. I see this as a huge detriment to growth
- I like that NAPA moved to the east end!
- Restaurants - I miss Chong's!
- Bowling alley. Any sort of non-fast-food joint

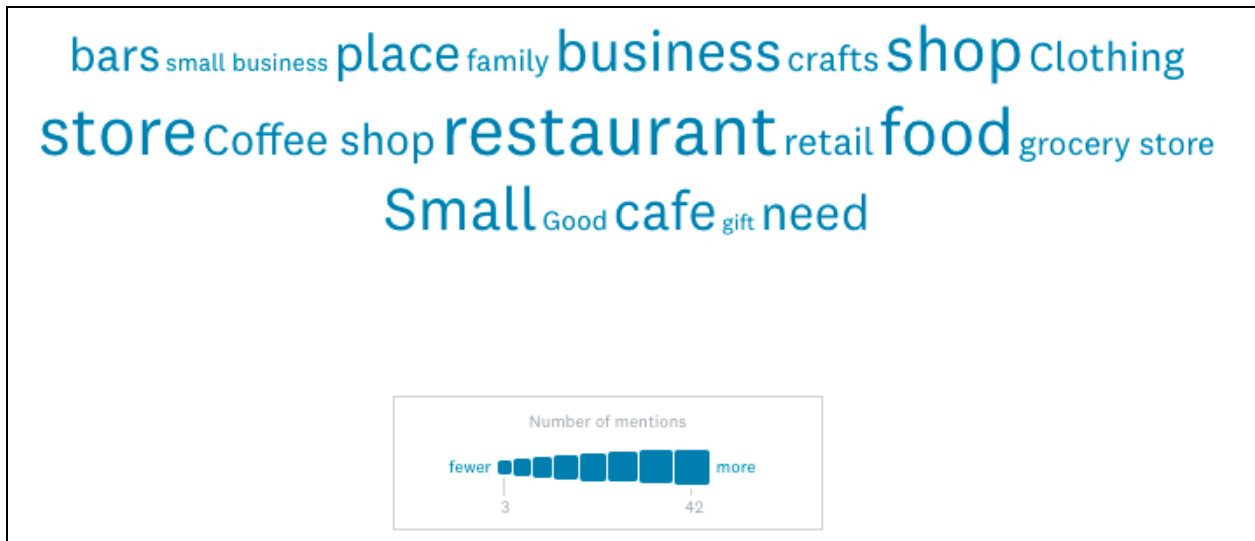


Graphics

How often do you patronize neighborhood businesses?



What types of neighborhood businesses would you patronize?



SOCIAL+ENGAGEMENT OUTCOMES

Overview

Engage Winona believes deeply that our process of bringing people together in lively and challenging conversations, and then engaging them in bringing to life the changemaking projects and ideas that emerge from those conversations, is its own outcome: strengthened social and neighborhood bonds that combat social isolation and loneliness, and a sense of empowerment of contributing to building a thriving, healthy, connected community.

This project was designed to bring together diverse cross-sections of the neighborhood in energizing, creative, and fun ways to foster strong and sustained connections. Here are some of the key social and engagement outcomes of this project:

- Neighbors overcame or set aside political differences to focus on shared interests around neighborhood projects and ideas
- Hundreds of neighbors came together in new ways and got to know each other, with many never having met despite living in the same neighborhood — or even on the same block
- On multiple separate occasions, people sitting at the same table in conversation discovered they lived next door to each other
- The Polish Heritage Museum was able to bring dozens of folks into its space for the first time, and has attracted new energy around long-desired projects
- St. Stan's Basilica leadership made new connections with neighbors as part of ongoing efforts to build community connections
- Renewed interest arose in associations, including the East End Neighborhood Watch
- New movement arose around a grassroots effort to support the Winona Athletic Club

East End Bingo

We debuted East Side/End Bingo, created and designed by Winona artist Nate Bauman and Art of the Rural, in May at the East End Rec as a creative and accessible way to bring neighbors together. The game exclusively featured images of East Side and East End icons and places, and provided trivia and facts to residents to help them deepen their sense of place and pride in the neighborhood.

Bingo was so popular that several dozen residents played at once, with many others waiting their turn — the games continued for two hours straight until all prizes were gone! Children jumped in and helped lead, holding up caller cards and calling games on the microphone. Older and younger folks sat together and helped each other. Residents brand-new to the neighborhood felt comfortable sitting next to long-time residents. Several folks left the game with new connections, with some agreeing to get together in the coming days and weeks.



Photos

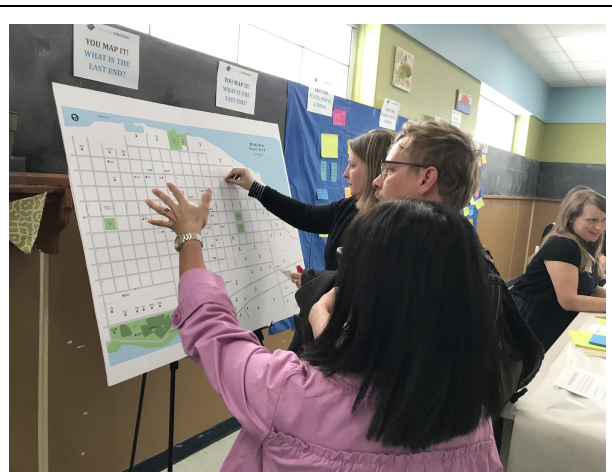


EAST END PROJECT OR IDEA

East End dog park (and/or walking park)



VOTE! (PLACE STICKER HERE)



NEXT STEPS

Overview

This section is simply suggestions for the roles the City of Winona and Engage Winona can play going forward, both independently and in collaboration, to continue serving the East Side and East End neighborhoods.

This project was designed to stand on its own by engaging the neighborhood in imagining its future, and collecting and curating the voices, opinions and ideas of hundreds of neighbors into this report and other materials to offer a roadmap for collaborative change and transformation across the East End and East Side.

It was also designed to lay a foundation for potential future engagement and investment in the neighborhood.

The project came at a critical time for the East Side and East End neighborhoods, with residents increasingly seeking assistance from the city in projects and changes to cultivate a thriving neighborhood, but feeling somewhat neglected because of the city's priorities in other areas. The city has the opportunity to transform its relationship with the neighborhood by carrying out some of the ideas and projects neighbors have imagined — focused, incremental change will be the key.

Engage Winona, meanwhile, plans to continue assisting neighborhood groups and individuals with projects and ideas by offering guidance and resources using its model for empowered grassroots change, as well as continue work around cultural storytelling and placemaking in collaboration with Art of the Rural.

City of Winona's role

- **Prioritize and focus:** There's a lot in this report — that's intentional! Engage Winona doesn't want to assume what the city is able or unable to take on. The next best step is sorting and focusing the wealth of ideas into some manageable projects and steps, weighed against the city's resources, priorities and focus areas.
- **Seek quick wins:** There are multiple projects and ideas within this report that will require focused efforts, but not necessarily substantial resources.
- **Focus on small, incremental change:** Most of these projects and ideas break down into small steps, which when completed begin creating a strong and consistent narrative that change is underway.
- **Consider "What One Thing":** Consider focusing on one project or one issue at a time. Start with: What is the one project or issue most important to address, and right no, for the neighborhood?



- **Share what's already happening:** Several things the neighborhood asked for are already in the works — let them know! Host a neighborhood gathering, or reach out to neighborhood leaders, to spread the word.
- **Communicate regularly with neighborhood:** The contact lists and networks this project built will be helpful going forward. Consider a quarterly email that details progress and continues the engagement process by asking for feedback.

Engage Winona's role

- **Assisting individuals and groups:** We'll provide guidance to folks beginning to launch some of the projects and ideas they've imagined, through gatherings, communication, and connections to needed resources.
- **Project tracker:** We'll create a project tracker that documents all of the ongoing efforts in the neighborhood, working to keep it updated and using it as a way to nudge and renew efforts and advocacy as needed.
- **Check-ins with leadership group:** Engage Winona has convened a leadership group of neighborhood residents, and will be checking in with them occasionally on their progress, feedback, and ideas.
- **Storytelling and placemaking:** We'll continue our collaboration with Art of the Rural on working with neighborhood residents to tell stories and engage in creative placemaking to strengthen the neighborhood's identity and sense of place.

It's Engage Winona hope to find the financial and logistical resources that allow us to continue to be active in this neighborhood and in this work of assisting residents in building the neighborhood and community they've envisioned. Regardless, as a mission-driven nonprofit dedicated to moving Winona forward, together, we'll continue to do what we can to serve folks in the neighborhood and help them turn their good ideas into reality.





EAST END/SIDE NEIGHBORHOOD PROJECT

Bringing a neighborhood together to celebrate its history and
imagine its future.

APPENDICES

PARTICIPANTS+DEMOGRAPHICS

PROJECT DESIGN

CONVERSATION DESIGN+USE

SURVEY DESIGN+USE



PARTICIPANTS+DEMOGRAPHICS

Overview

The project focused on the East Side and East End of Winona, with all work done in the residential and industrial neighborhoods east of Franklin Street running to city limits, and the Mississippi River south to the retail area that also includes Winona Health and other businesses. The goal was to connect with a diverse cross-section of the neighborhood, with an additional focus on engaging unheard and marginalized voices.

These demographics are primarily from surveys, which were completed both online and in person at conversations and events, as well as from other collection methods used at neighborhood-wide events and activities.

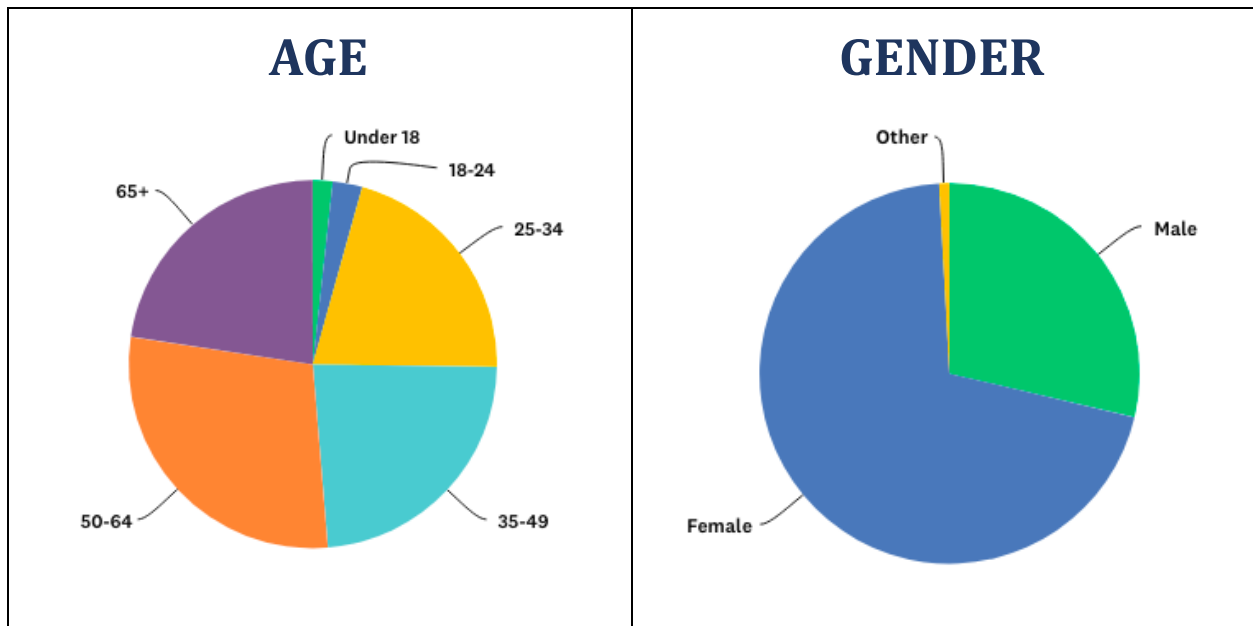
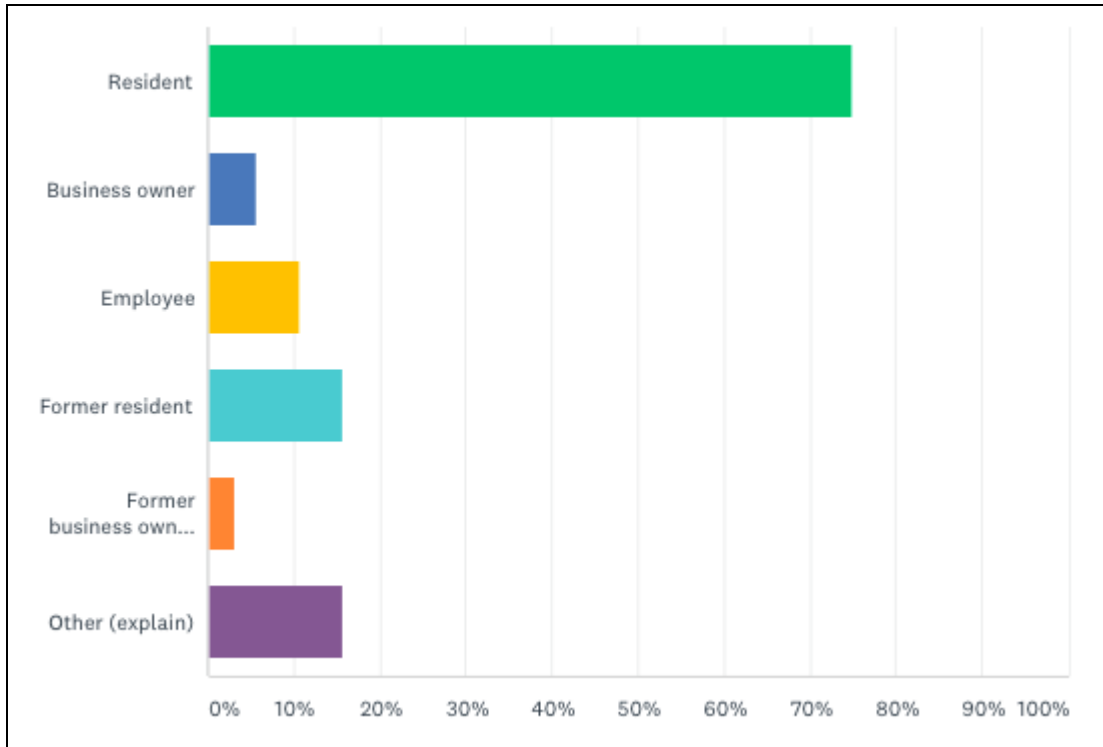
Note: Demographics were collected primarily from surveys, and to a lesser degree at community gatherings. Gatherings had two distinctions from the numbers below: More racial and ethnic diversity, and more of a gender balance.

- About **75 percent** were neighborhood residents
- Other participants were primarily **business owners (5 percent); employees (10 percent); and former residents (10 percent)**
- **Ages ranged from elementary-age students to seniors**, with a balanced distribution of between 20-25 percent each in primary demographics: 25-34, 35-49, 50-64, and 65+
- **Household income aligned with neighborhood demographics:** about 25 percent reported \$25-\$50,000; about 33 percent reported \$50,000-\$75,000. About 8 percent reported \$100,000 or higher.
- **Education levels varied widely and represented the neighborhood:** about 25 percent completed high school; 25 percent had a certificate or associate degree; about 25 percent had a four-year degree; and the final 25 percent had worked toward or completed advanced degrees.
- **Gender skewed toward female**, representing about two-thirds of participants
- **About 33 percent are parents** or guardians of children under the age of 17
- **About 90 percent white**, with pockets of other ethnicities/backgrounds

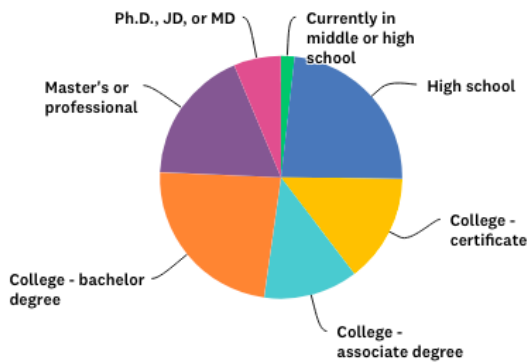


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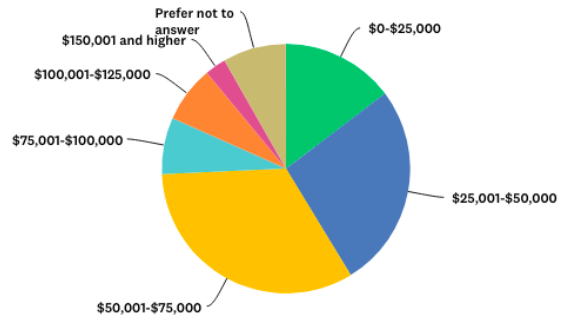
What's your connection to the neighborhood?



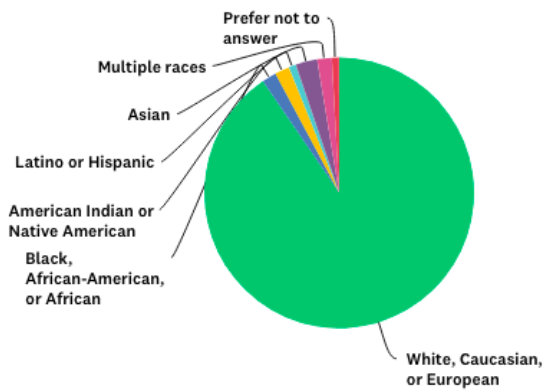
EDUCATION



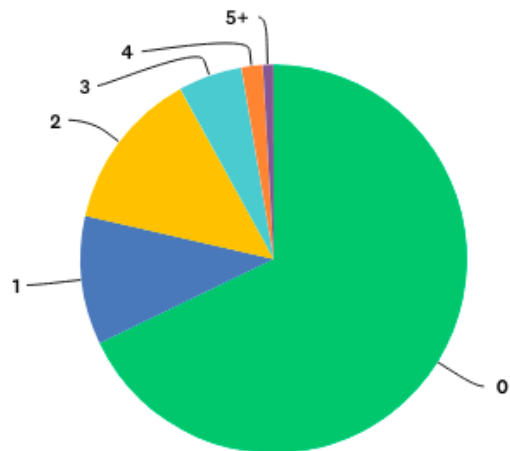
INCOME



RACE/ETHNICITY



CHILDREN AT HOME



PROJECT DESIGN

The East End/Side Neighborhood Project was conducted between February and June 2019 through a combination of neighborhood-wide events, group and individual conversations, and an in-person and digital survey. The project collected robust data from and worked collaboratively with a variety of neighborhood and community leaders, business owners, neighborhood associations, stakeholder groups, key decision-makers and residents across the East Side and East End.

The project was designed to:

- **HOST EVENTS THAT CONNECT** diverse, representative groups of neighborhood residents, to build relationships and social capital;
- **FACILITATE CONVERSATIONS** to learn what neighbors value, seek to change, and dream big about creating in their neighborhood;
- **IDENTIFY THE CURRENT STORY** of the neighborhood's history, values and sense of place;
- **CREATE A FUTURE VISION** for the neighborhood, including desired places, spaces, features, events, and community projects;
- **IMAGINE AN ART OR PLACE-BASED PROJECT** by working collaboratively with a group of neighbors on ways they can tell the neighborhood's current and future story;
- **CREATE A PLAN AND ROADMAP** that includes data and stories on the neighborhood, a report on top themes and priorities, and strategies to assist neighbors with change;
- **ALIGN CITY RESOURCES** to assist with changemaking projects;
- **EMPOWER NEIGHBORS TO CREATE CHANGE** by convening, training, and guiding individuals and groups to take on changemaking projects.

The outcomes included:

- **Create strong and lasting social bonds among neighborhood residents**, including diverse residents who may have not felt included in previous neighborhood engagement;
- **Identify the stories, values, assets and resources** that make the neighborhood unique;
- **Provide a concrete vision and plan for the neighborhood's future**, based on local needs;
- **Connect the neighborhood to city resources**, including zoning, economic development incentives, and others;
- **Create a clear statement of need** for projects in order to leverage grants, private investments, and other revenue to improve the neighborhood
- **Provide rich qualitative data for the city's comprehensive plan** on a neighborhood's values, priorities, dreams for change, and vision for the future
- **Empower neighbors with changemaking skills, tools and resources** to participate in building their neighborhood's future;
- **Assist neighborhood leaders** with strategies to carry the vision and projects forward;
- **Strengthen a neighborhood's identity, story, and sense of place**, both among neighbors and within the Winona community



CONVERSATION DESIGN+USE

Through conversations and events Engage Winona collected more than **3,000 unique responses and insights** from **nearly 400 individuals** representing a diverse cross-section of neighborhood residents and stakeholders. Conversations were designed to be responsive to each group, with questions tailored to the demographics and perspectives present.

A baseline set of questions was used to guide the conversations. The questions varied widely, and were adapted based on the experience and conversational threads of each group. Examples of primary questions included:

GENERAL

- What do you value about the east end?
- What would you like to change about the east end?
- Dream big, no obstacles: What does the neighborhood look like in 10 years?

COMMUNITY IDENTITY

- What boundaries do you use to define the east end neighborhood? Why?
- What words would you use to describe the east end community?
- What's the history and story of the east end the way you understand it?
- What makes the east end different than any other Winona neighborhood?
- How strong is the east end's sense of community today? How has it changed?
- Where do people gather in the neighborhood?

NEIGHBORHOOD

- What are the big issues in the neighborhood?
- What are the trends in the neighborhood? (Aging, business transitions, crime, etc.)
- What are the strongest community projects or groups right now?
- What community projects or groups are fading or no longer around?
- How well do you know your neighbors?
- When did you move (house, business, job) to the east end?
- Do you plan on leaving the east end? Why or why not?
- What one thing would make or makes you strongly consider staying? How about leaving?

NETWORK, ASSET BUILDING

- What are the biggest assets and resources in the neighborhood?
- Who else do we need to be talking to about this project?
- What resources/contributions could you offer? (Space, time, talent, etc)
- Do you have an email list or other contact list you can use to help us get the word out?
- Who are the unofficial leaders of the neighborhood? Historians? Troublemakers?



SURVEY DESIGN+USE

Through the use of hard-copy and digital surveys, Engage Winona collected **161 completed sets of responses** from a variety of current residents, stakeholders, and some former residents. Two surveys were designed and provided: One was given to all participants at the end of in-person conversations; a longer one was provided and marketed digitally to Winona community members who did not participate in conversations. Both versions were designed to capture demographic information, as well as detailed input, with questions closely related to those asked during in-person conversations.

Here's a look at the online survey (without the demographic questions):

What's your connection to the east end? (Check all that apply)

- Resident
- Business owner
- Business employee
- Former resident
- Former business owner or employee
- Other (describe)

How would you define the western border of the east end?

- Franklin St.
- Hamilton St.
- Mankato Avenue
- Other (describe)

Do you see the retail area (Walmart, Target, Menards, etc.) as part of the east end?

- Yes
- No

THE NEIGHBORHOOD

What words or phrases would you use to describe the east end's community?

What's the story of the east end's history, the way you understand it?

What are the big issues in the east end?

What do you value about the east end?



What would you like to change about the east end?

Dream big (time, money - nothing's in your way!): What does the neighborhood look like in 10 years?

SPACES AND PLACES

What neighborhood places do you spend the most time at? (Check all that apply)

- Schools
- Churches
- Public spaces and parks
- Commercial businesses
- Small retail businesses
- Bars
- Other (list)

Which one neighborhood place is the most important to you, and why?

Do you frequent one or more east end small businesses?

- Yes
- No

If so, which ones? (List)

What types of businesses would you support if they opened on the east end?

Do you or your family spend time at the East End Rec or Sobieski Park?

- Yes
- No
- Explain

What programs, activities or features would make you interested in spending more time there?

Where do people gather on the east end?

Is there a place you'd like to see on the east end that doesn't exist?

CONTRIBUTIONS

Join the neighborhood leadership group - it meets regularly and decides where this project will go!



- Yes - sign me up!
- No
- Maybe - email me more details

Do you have a contribution you're interested in offering?

- Host: I have a space that can be used for events
- Conversationalist: I can interview neighborhood folks or facilitate a small group at events
- Potluck champion: I can offer food, snacks, refreshments for events
- Networker: I'd be happy to help get the word out to people I know
- Boots on the ground: I can help with event setup/takedown, getting and transporting materials, and other work
- Other:

Are you a business able to offer financial sponsorship at any level? Funding goes directly to neighborhood activities and projects.

- Possibly - reach out with more information
- No, not at this time

Who do we need to reach out to and get involved in this project? (Individuals, groups, associations, businesses, organizations, etc.)

Anything else you want to say?

