

PROJECT SUMMARY

The 163-unit Gallery Flats project is located along 8th Avenue in Hopkins. Eighth Avenue is an important quarter-mile link between Mainstreet and the future Downtown Hopkins station on the METRO Green Line Extension. The project introduced both market rate and affordable rental units along 8th Avenue, with the possibility of converting ground floor residential space to commercial uses. The corridor along 8th Avenue is branded as “The Artery”, which reflects plans to incorporate public art along the street. Gallery Flats responds to the demand for urban-style living in a historic suburban downtown, where residents are within walking distance of local shopping, transit, recreation, and entertainment.



Hopkins, 8th Avenue. Gallery Flats creates activity and visual interest along an important walking route from Mainstreet to the future LRT station.

HOW DOES THIS PROJECT SUPPORT TOD (AND LIVABLE COMMUNITIES)?

Connect: The City of Hopkins envisioned that the 8th Avenue Corridor would become a more walkable and inviting connection between the Downtown Hopkins LRT station and Mainstreet. Using a grant in the amount of \$875,000 from the Hennepin County TOD grant program, the City of Hopkins purchased a large portion of the Gallery Flats site, which they saw as an opportunity to set the tone for future development and a better pedestrian experience along 8th Avenue.

The project includes two separate buildings with an interior landscaped plaza above underground parking. The City had hoped the design would create a visual connection with the nearby Downtown Park, thereby expanding the inventory of open space in the downtown environment.

Intensify: The project replaced a one-story medical clinic and small commercial building with a multi-story residential development with underground parking. The project has a residential parking ratio of 1.1 space per unit, lower than many new developments in suburban settings. Parking includes one space for each unit plus a small amount of shared parking for guests. The project makes efficient use of the site, with 163 units on roughly 1.2 acres of developable land.

FAST FACTS

PROJECT FACTS

Developer:

Klodt Development, LLC

Total Development Cost:

\$25,180,082

Total Public Investment:

\$1,912,000

Dwelling Units: 163

Percent of Affordable Units:

53% at 80% of area median income (AMI) or below

TOD METRICS

Stories: 4

FAR: 2.2

Dwelling Units/ Acre: 135

Residential Parking Ratio:

1.1 stalls per unit

STATION AREA

Transit:

METRO Green Line Extension

Station: Downtown Hopkins

Station Area:

Street grid with direct pedestrian connections to main-street retail as well as transit, parks, and trails.

Metropolitan Council Livable Communities Grants

Applicant: City of Hopkins

Year: 2011-2012

TOD grant amount: \$1,037,000

Funded elements:

land acquisition, asbestos abatement, environmental monitoring, soil remediation, geotechnical, grading, and design and engineering for 8th Avenue streetscape

Demonstrate: The project demonstrates development in a market that is evolving to a more pedestrian- and transit-oriented character. The development includes units on the ground floor that can be accessed from the exterior. This accommodates flexibility in use, as market conditions allow, for residential, commercial, or live/work space.

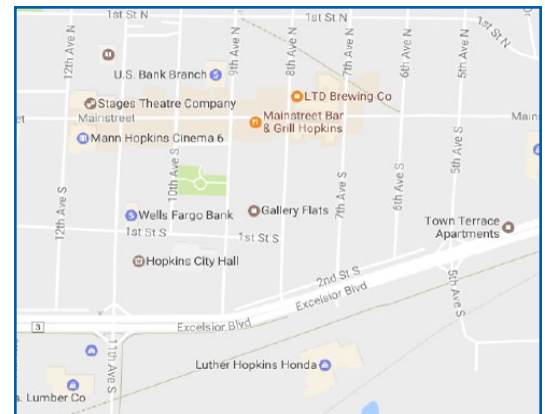
CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Challenges for Project Developer

This project was the first time the developer used public funds in a development. Grants administration added complexity, including subcontractor documentation and invoicing for grant-funded activities. While these funds were critical to allowing the project to move forward, the developer found them complicated to manage.

Challenges for City Staff

Developers told the City that retail along 8th Avenue would not be feasible until after the METRO Green Line Extension was operational. Nevertheless, the City wanted to preserve opportunities to generate activity and visual interest along the 8th Avenue frontage. The City worked with the developer to create walk-up “flex space” on the ground floor that could be used as either residential, commercial, or live/work units. The units were initially leased as residential, but the City’s goal is to support the eventually conversion of these spaces as the market allows. The developer sold the building to a company that was concerned about the low parking ratio. The City responded by leasing an additional 34 spaces in a nearby city-owned parking facility. The City speculates that this additional demand for parking will subside after light rail transit service begins.



Click on image for an aerial view of the project.



Gallery Flats includes a landscaped plaza on top of underground parking.

Lessons Learned by Project Developer

The landscaped plaza was a component of the project that was important to the City, but it added additional cost to the project. However, the plaza is a key selling point and amenity for the apartments, and it has become a well-used gathering place for residents.

Lessons Learned by City Staff

The City worked with the developer to allow for public access through the landscaped plaza to build a green connection between 8th Avenue and Downtown Park. However, the design does not feel as “public” as the City anticipated. The walkways are not well used. In the future, the City would work with a landscape architect or urban designer to ensure that such a concept would function better.

LEARN MORE

Project-related web sites

City project site: www.hopkinsmn.com/development/current/galleryflats

Marketing web site: www.galleryflatsapts.com

Marketing video: www.vimeo.com/78235071

Staff Contact

Kersten Elverum, Director of Economic Development & Planning

City of Hopkins

kelverum@hopkinsmn.com

FEEDBACK

Did you find this information useful? Do you have questions or suggestions for improvement?

Contact us at

TODGuide@metc.state.mn.us