

Transit Oriented Development

PROJECT PROFILE

Mill City Quarter Minneapolis, Minnesota



The central Plaza

PROJECT SUMMARY

Located at the northeast corner of South Second Street and Third Avenue South, Mill City Quarter is a 250-unit senior-friendly affordable apartment complex, whose property features the city's first "woonerf," a pedestrian-friendly shared street. In the downtown core in a wide mix of services and price points, units range from independent living to supportive, assisted, and memory care. The project consists of two buildings separated by a historic rail spur corridor that includes raingardens, small plazas, and connections to bike and pedestrian trails along the Mississippi River. Mill City Quarter is also within walking distance of two LRT platforms and a high frequency bus line.

HOW THIS PROJECT SUPPORTS LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

CONNECT → Emphasis on providing multiple transit options, along with pedestrian and bicycle links, integrates the project with the area it is located and the surrounding area outside of the TOD.

DEMONSTRATE → This project demonstrates the potential for affordable assisted living and memory care in a transit-rich section of the urban core. Proposed shared street concept shows how small plazas, parking, stormwater and bike traffic can be integrated in a dense urban environment and could be a model for other sites.

CATALYZE → Capitalizing on the private investment opportunities of tax credit investment, Mill City Quarter is designed to maximize the high traffic/high transit nature of the site, and drive attractive investment ratios.

TOD GRANT INFORMATION

Applicant:	City of Minneapolis
Funding Cycle:	2012
Grant Amount:	\$1,000,000
Other LCA Funding:	\$1,000,000 from TBRA-TOD
Funded Elements:	Trail connection to river, raingardens, pervious pavers, green roof, utility relocation and extension, bike share and public racks, public space/ connection between buildings, underground parking, geotechnical investigation and analysis

FAST FACTS

Developer: Lupe Development Partners & Wall Cos.	Estimated Total Development Cost: \$36.8 million
Project Type: Senior, affordable, redevelopment	Total Housing Units: 250
Acres: 5.5	Affordable Units: 125
	Jobs: 290, 120 temporary

TOD METRICS — STATION AREA

Stories: 3	Transit: METRO Green Line
FAR: .8	Station: Raymond Avenue
Commercial Parking Ratio: One space per 860 SF	Station Area: Mixed use corridor surrounded by industrial uses; strong employment focus with opportunity for adaptive reuse of industrial buildings

RISKS AND OUTCOMES

FROM PROJECT DEVELOPER

Due to the difficulty with redeveloping parking lots by an old Railroad right-of-way, only two developers responded to the city's request for proposals. "We look at ourselves as problem solvers," said Steve Minn, one half of the team, along with John Wall, who won the right to develop the property.

In 2015, the woonerf plan was presented to the park board. The board was involved because the developers applied for and received an exception to laws that require new projects to pay a park dedication fee, money that's used to help pay for parks and open spaces in the vicinity of developments. Under the exemption, Minn and Wall would develop park space themselves and make it available to the public in lieu of the dedication fee.

At the time, park board staff raised concerns about the design, but ultimately, as Michael Schroeder of the Minneapolis Park Board explained, "we may not have the design that we wanted, but the ability of people to move from the Mill District to the riverfront was really important."

FROM CITY STAFF

As a former surface parking lot, the site came with many risks and challenges, particularly in creating a "Woonerf," a concept from the Netherlands in which all modes of transport coexist, but priority is given to bikes and pedestrians to connect the riverfront to the site. Some challenges included: Dealing with the businesses that had rights to park on the lots (and that didn't want to give up all that parking), working with the owner of the rail right of way that split the two building parcels at a near 45-degree angle, addressing the pollution in the soil at the site, and reconciling the fact that the site was adjacent to historic buildings and in a historic district.

"This project represents the diversification of socioeconomic income in the neighborhood."

Jacob Frey

Former City Council Member and Mayor Elect



Before



After

ABOUT TOD

The 1995 Livable Communities Act (LCA) funds community investment that revitalizes economies, creates affordable housing, and links different land uses and transportation. The council awards 4 types of grants to communities. The Council's TOD grants promote moderate to high density development projects located within walking distance of a major transit stop that typically include a mix of uses such as housing, jobs, restaurants, shops, and entertainment.

TOD Contact: Ryan Kelley | ryan.kelley@metc.state.mn.us | metro council.org

LEARN MORE

Developer Contact: Steve Minn
steve.minn@lupedevelopment.com

City Contact: Carrie Goldberg
Carrie.Goldberg@minneapolismn.gov

Website: www.millcityquarter.com

