

Summary of Community Responses on Character of the Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District.

The following are summaries and direct quotes of the community responses on the Character Survey.

What makes up the visual character of the Historic District?

Massing & Scale

- Structures with zero setback
- Industrial Scale Structures (large, boxy massing; primarily 4–8 stories)
- Rectilinear buildings
- Buildings sit solidly on the ground; vertical linear edge along sidewalk regardless of height or width
- Variety of building widths
- Variation of height/mass within sub-areas of district
- Smaller buildings (toward the gateway district) tend to be more ornate, decorated, and have a humane proportion. Larger buildings that are deeper into the north loop (toward the viaduct) tend to be more massive
- Historical buildings w/ contemporary infill
- Mixed use properties (business & residential) w/ storefront commercial on 1st floor

Architectural Details & Materials

- Building facades w/ substantial architectural elements
- 1st floor visually differentiated from second, third, etc. floors
- Primary vs. Secondary facades
- Roof appendages such as water towers, penthouses, mechanical systems
- Projecting piers, stringcourses, and cornices dominate the gateway area, while flatter, punched window facades dominate the north loop area.
- Brick/Masonry/Stone structures
- Decoration as structural (e.g., lintels, cornice, corbelling, string courses, watertables)
- Decoration as applied (e.g., capitals, carved stonework)
- Large windows

- Exterior window placement that relates to interior structure/use
- Regular pattern of windows or intentional asymmetry on front facade; more random fenestration on secondary sides
- Recessed windows and their trim create shadow lines
- Design of items comprising units
- Adaptation and improvisation are evident on almost every (historic) building
- Balconies on modern buildings

Infrastructure

- Loading docks
- Street Alignment
- Historic Street Materials: Brick/Paver/Wood
- Railroad corridors (mostly functioning as alleys)
- Wide roads
- Bridges
- Pedestrian Friendly Walkways
- Minimal Greenery
- Parking lots

Other

- Remnants of mural paintings (ghost signs)
- Adult use industry

What visual characteristics should be preserved?

- Respect height of current buildings (4–8 stories)
- Interesting brickwork/use of brickwork
- Match existing detail
- Delicate detail on large facades
- Buildings with architectural interest and value.
- Warehouses
- Industrial aesthetic
- Urban/Industrial feel
- Trees and other vegetation
- Cobble stones/ Brick streets/Wood streets
- Railroad remnants & former rail corridors
- Loading docks
- Street lights

- Dynamic street life– the heart pulse – of the neighborhood can be maintained
- Match existing density

What visual characteristics are inappropriate?

Massing & Design

- Structures that are too large or too tall to fit in with historical characteristics; Excessive height
- Additions or buildings which are not consistent with the architectural details seen in surrounding buildings.
- Buildings setback from the R.O.W. line
- Parking in front of buildings
- Fake historic buildings
- Projecting balconies and curtain wall.
- Balconies done incorrectly
- Balconies on primary facades (perhaps difference between new construction and existing historic structures)
- Non–flat roof lines (mansard or gable roofs)
- New development that turns its back on primary street frontage
- Lack of street presence (no defined bldg entries, no windows on first and second levels,
- Big, blank walls on primary facades.
- Structures without multiple floors and a basement (low–density uses)
- Harsh or intrusive storefront or street lighting.
- Auto oriented uses–Drive–thru (e.g. Franklin Bank)

Infrastructure

- A cold industrial feel
- A belief that greenery is somehow inappropriate.
- Boulevard grass
- Excessive green space
- Narrow walks
- Poor sidewalks and curb cuts which are not conducive for wheelchair accessibility. Dilapidated buildings
- Fast–moving traffic.
- Highway viaducts
- One–way streets

- Mess of power lines
- Inappropriate public infrastructure that obstruct historic structures

Uses

- Large open parking lots
- Uses inappropriate to a primarily residential neighborhood (e.g. strip joints)
- Structures/Uses that are too commercial (e.g. large billboards)

Additional Comments

- I am concerned that "visual" is the only thing you are analyzing. This historic district also has a lot to do with use. Don't restrict height; it wasn't restricted when these buildings were built. Preserve, don't prevent new architecture.
- Nothing in this neighborhood should look remotely close to Skyscape, Grant Park, etc.
- Color: Is it necessary to dictate this? Colors today are weathered. Differentiate between historic and new construction?