Brief Summary from Spring Comprehensive Plan Survey

Question #1: Should green building practices, which emphasize resource conservation and waste reduction, be a city priority? What should be the city's role in promoting green building practices?

- Majority of respondents believed it should be a **high priority**
- A minority voiced opposition not because they opposed the concept so much as they did not want it to take resources from **core city functions** (public safety, infrastructure, etc.)
- General support for **incentives**, less so for mandatory requirements
- Balance **market realities** with requirements to prevent economic hardship
- Need for **education** of public, developers, city staff, etc.
- City should **lead by example** with its own facilities and practices, and with requirements in projects where it has financial participation

Question #2: What should be the city's role in promoting alternative energy sources and encouraging energy conservation? What about natural resource conservation?

- Majority of respondents believed the city should have an **active role**.
- Focus on **education** and awareness for the general public regarding options
- General support for **incentives** for alternative energy usage
- City should **lead by example** with alternative energy for buildings, vehicles, etc.
- Focus on **partnerships** with utilities, county, U of M, state, etc., to develop and promote options since this is not just a local issue
- Support for investments in **public transportation** and bike/pedestrian facilities
- Particular interests in **recycling**, rain barrels, rain gardens, and solar/wind energy

Question #3: What should individual property owners do to support the city's goals for sustainable growth?

- Many said basically: reduce, reuse, recycle
- Maintain property and yard in environmentally friendly manner
- Conserve energy, including lighting, appliances, transportation, and building construction and maintenance
- Become informed, aware, and **proactive**
- A number expressed a desire for more **education** on what needs to be done and what their options are; some also requested **incentives**

Question #4: What elements of Minneapolis are most in need of preservation, including landscapes, buildings, and other resources?

- Generally, respondents had a **broad view** of preservation not just designated properties, but all elements of the city they thought worth protecting
- **Historic buildings** were mentioned frequently as needing preservation; in particular, areas Downtown and the Mill District
- There were numerous mentions of preserving **natural areas** in particular, green spaces, lakes, the river, and parks
- Neighborhoods were mentioned often as well, including homes, schools, and libraries
- Some mentioned **commercial areas**, particularly those with unique character
- Significant support for **adaptive reuse** of historic structures

Question #5: How can we conserve our history, including those areas or structures that are not officially designated as historic?

- Provide financial **incentives** for property owners to rehab older structures, particularly homes
- **Investigate** and document historical value of properties
- Educate the public about the importance of preservation
- Restrict new development that might damage the historic character of neighborhoods
- Enforce city regulations regarding property **maintenance** and upkeep
- Develop an **alternative designation** for these areas and properties that provides some level of protection

Question #6: How should preservation be balanced with other values and priorities as projects are developed? In what situations should public time and money be used to preserve historic resources?

- There was a **wide range** of responses: some thought that preservation needed to be the top priority, while others were more concerned with promoting redevelopment or other public priorities
- Some thought **public benefit** should be a major consideration, including the property's value, accessibility, and functionality for the public
- Some thought the **economic viability** of the project should be a consideration
- Some thought the **historical value** of the property should be carefully considered, including why it is valued, and by whom; not all may be worth saving
- Some thought that historic preservation had been ignored in the past, and therefore needed to be **top priority** (once it's gone, it's gone)
- Some thought that if it was a priority, but not economically feasible, it was appropriate to put **public or nonprofit** dollars in the project to make it happen
- Some thought that it was impossible to establish a clear rule for this, and that it would just have to be determined on a **case by case** basis

Question #7: Do you think it is important for the city to grow? How can the city accommodate growth through increased density in a way that protects the character of existing neighborhoods?

- For most respondents, the answer to the growth question was **yes** though some questioned how much more we could accommodate
- Most commonly, people indicated that the highest level of density should be directed to nodes and centers (like Downtown, Uptown, and the Warehouse District) as well as along transit corridors; support for mixed use in these areas
- Many indicated that growth should be **stepped down** from high levels on corridors to surrounding neighborhoods, where any new development should be at a scale respectful of neighborhood character
- Many stressed the need to strengthen critical public infrastructure to support
 growth, including schools, libraries, trails, green space and public transit, as well
 as addressing public safety concerns and attracting jobs
- Regarding design, people favored that **consistent** with existing development, and said how it looked at street level was very important
- People asked for a **diversity** of housing types, in terms of incomes (not all high-income, not all low-income)

Question #8: Where should auto-oriented businesses and large-scale (big box) retail be located, and how should their design be regulated?

- Opinions on big boxes were split. A majority favored **keeping** them in the city, but a significant minority suggested they should be only in the suburbs.
- For those who favored having big boxes, they suggested **commercial corridors**, as well as downtown, industrial areas, and areas near freeways as potential sites
- **Good urban design** was considered critical for big box development multistory, concealed parking, pedestrian-friendly design, etc.
- Most seemed OK with smaller scaled **auto-oriented** uses spread throughout the city (as they are now), though urban design again was an important concern

Question #9: Beyond the park system, what publicly accessible open spaces in the city do you most value? What are your favorite gathering places, and why? What can be done to protect and enhance these places?

- The most frequent open spaces cited were the city's **streets and sidewalks**; this often referred to walkable commercial areas, but also to neighborhood streets
- Frequent requests for additional **greening** and other "streetscape" improvements to streets and sidewalks, particularly in Downtown
- Downtown was frequently cited for open spaces; the most commonly mentioned spots were **Nicollet Mall** and **Peavey Plaza**
- Favorite **gathering places** included libraries, community gardens, churches, and coffee shops/restaurants particularly those with **outdoor seating** areas
- In addition to greening, one of the highest priorities for improvement was addressing **public safety** concerns