

# Peavey Plaza Revitalization Project – FAQ

## What is the impetus behind this project?

- Peavey Plaza is nearly 40 years old, badly deteriorated and difficult to maintain. The plaza is not ADA compliant, not functional for modern-day needs and usage nor is it living up to its full potential as a lively gathering and venue space in the heart of downtown Minneapolis.
- The Minnesota Orchestra, located next door to Peavey, is planning a major renovation of Orchestra Hall to be completed in 2013 – making this the ideal time to gather momentum for a revitalization of the entire City block that encompasses both Peavey Plaza and Orchestra Hall.



## Have you involved the community in this project?

- Yes. It has been a central goal of the City to involve community residents, Peavey users, neighborhood businesses and other interested stakeholders in this project.
- To this end:
  - a 20-person Community Engagement Committee has been meeting for the past 18 months about Peavey
  - the Landscape Architect interviews were open to the public
  - two Public Open Houses have been offered with a third scheduled for October 19
  - Oslund and Associates conducted dozens of user interviews and posted a public online survey for users to comment on. 234 responses were received.

## Will Peavey be restored to its original 1974 design?

- No, although the new schematic is respectful of the original Peavey design by M. Paul Friedberg and sympathetically reinterprets it by using the signature design elements and the modernist spirit of the original design.
- Peavey usage has changed considerably over the last 40 years and the revitalized design offers much greater functionality for current-day uses.
- Elements that people may “recognize” from the original design include amphitheater-style concrete stairs flanking a sunken plaza; multiple tiers or elevations; a large rectangular reflecting pool, other significant water features; formal plantings of honey locust trees and many sculptural objects.
- Restoration is a very expensive option as all the plumbing and concrete will need to be replaced as part of the project.
- The new design will allow for more cost effective and economically sustainable approaches to operations and maintenance, and it allows the opportunity to fix flaws of the original, such as a lack of disabled access; materials and systems that have not aged well; and poor visibility within the space that has led to security issues.
- Later in the design process the Minneapolis Historic Preservation Commission will hold a public hearing and consider an application for a demolition permit. All HPC decisions are appealable to the City Council.

## How will the new design make Peavey more “accessible”?

- Peavey was designed and built before the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which mandated full and equal enjoyment of services and facilities of any public place to all people regardless of age or disability. The current design does not comply with these accessibility requirements technically or in spirit.
- The one existing ramp on the 12<sup>th</sup> Street side of the plaza is too steep to comply with current ADA and State of Minnesota requirements for accessible routes.
- The spirit of ADA is to provide dignified access to the disabled. The new accessible route provides direct access from the same place most visitors enter the plaza: at 11<sup>th</sup> and Nicollet. The new design accomplishes this central goal while enhancing visual access to the space and providing integrated terraced seating.

## How do you anticipate Peavey will be used? How do programming and design inter-relate?

- The vision is for a space that is flexible enough to accommodate active programming (i.e., events and performances) and passive use (allowing people to hang out and relax).
- The design allows active and passive uses, featuring:
  - A bustling street-level entrance to Peavey that connects to the Nicollet Mall and offers direct access to food vendors.
  - A pergola running the length of Nicollet Mall that will provide seating, shade from the sun, illumination at night and a place for people to meet, sit down, and have coffee or lunch.

- A concession located at the corner of Nicollet and 12<sup>th</sup> that will serve food and increase lunch-time traffic as well as create a vibrant and welcoming entry gateway at 12<sup>th</sup> and Nicollet.
- A recessed water feature and ample seating that create a calm space away from the street. This area is flexible enough to accommodate large crowds for performances using both chair seating and the surrounding amphitheater-style step seating.
- A further recessed “game room” area, ideal for activity such as lawn bowling or bocce ball.

#### Will there still be a water feature?

- Yes. Community members and Peavey users said a water feature was important, especially the sound of water – so this remains a significant part of the new design.
- The new pool – which features a quarter-inch deep water and animated jet fountains—is more sustainable, environmentally friendly, and flexible than the current reflecting pool.
- The new water feature will use only a fraction of the amount of water used by the current reflecting pool. The water can also be turned off and stored for reuse rather than simply discharging 112,000 gallons of water into the sanitary sewer. The new water feature will be designed to keep storm water drainage and the treated water fountain systems separate which is now a regional requirement.

#### Why isn't the fountain part of the new design?

- The fountain, which hasn't been fully functional for years, is in a state of extreme disrepair.
- After investigation, the “repair” of the fountain isn't feasible due to worn and cracked concrete that cannot simply be fixed. Fixing the fountain would require dismantling the original and re-building a new fountain to look like the old.
- We determined this was not a good use of funds (it is extremely costly) nor true to the spirit of preservation.

#### What will happen to the trees?

- Peavey will be re-planted to reflect the original design philosophy of featuring an “understory” of low plantings and a high “over story” of canopy trees with little “middle story” in between. This planting approach also further serves the principles of safe design that allow people to see and be seen.
- Our arborist has determined that the current trees are alive but struggling. New technologies exist for planting urban trees that will thrive better and we'll employ these methods in the re-designed landscape with newly-planted trees.

#### What is the Orchestra's role in the renovation of Peavey?

- The Minnesota Orchestra is a champion of the Peavey project and has been working closely with the City to try to align timelines for the renovation of Orchestra Hall and Peavey Plaza.
- The Orchestra will not build onto any publicly owned portion of Peavey Plaza to accommodate its own expansion.

#### When will the redesigned Peavey re-open?

- The ideal scenario is that a rejuvenated Orchestra Hall and Peavey Plaza re-open simultaneously in the summer of 2013, but we are still working through timelines for the Peavey renovation. The Peavey Plaza renovation may not be finished until later in 2013.

#### What is the cost of this project? Who is paying for it?

- The total cost of the project (hard and soft costs) is estimated at between \$8M and \$10M.
- The State of Minnesota has already granted a \$2 million bonding allocation for the renovation of Peavey and additional funds will be raised through private fundraising.

