

To: City of Minneapolis Planning and Economic Development
From: Kingfield Neighborhood Association compiled by the KFNA, Redevelopment Committee
Regarding: 2040 Comprehensive Plan
Date: July 22, 2018

The Kingfield Neighborhood Association recognizes the importance of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan in shaping the future of Minneapolis. We understand that the policies and guidance set out in this document will shape the future of its residents' lives, the neighborhoods in which they live and the outlook for the city as a whole. As a vibrant, active and connected community we are deeply invested in ensuring that the Kingfield neighborhood continues to grow and thrive over the next twenty years. This document seeks to comment, support and question the policies laid out in the 2040 Comprehensive plan as they relate to our neighborhood.

We recognize that our perspective is limited but have made a conscious effort to consider our neighborhood wholesically in the broader fabric of Minneapolis. While these comments don't represent all of the residents of Kingfield, we have done our best to consider multiple perspectives and focus on the broad and inclusive topics that affect our community.

Background and Context

Beginning in 2017, KFNA gathered public comments about the important issues facing our neighborhood through three major outreach efforts. First, we tabled at several community events. Second, we distributed an online survey through the Kingfield eNews and Facebook account. Finally, we did an evening of door-knocking in randomly selected sections of the neighborhood. Through each of these outreach efforts, we asked residents to select the issue that they thought was the most important facing the community, and for them to provide comments about the issue. 278 people were reached through these efforts, of whom 133 left a detailed comment. The top three issues were education, public safety, and affordable housing. In the Minneapolis 2040 Draft Comprehensive Plan, education and public safety are not listed as goals. Based on the feedback from our community we would like to see these two topics covered in more detail.

Based on this input from our community, KFNA developed a community value statement:

“Kingfield residents believe that Minneapolis should be a place where affordable housing, a good education, a sense of safety, and accessible transportation options are available to all people.”

We then worked with adjacent neighborhoods that also straddle 35W to compare our perspectives and develop a statement that represented our joint community values. We felt that this was important because our communities differ from each other in terms of demographic characteristics like race and economics, as well as in access to opportunities. Together we developed a set of guiding values that include:

- Acknowledging systemic racial and economic disparities is integral in building a unified community.
- Access to safe, affordable, long-term housing is a basic human right.
- Everyone in our city should have the freedom to be safe from violence, harassment, and crime.
- Neighborhoods where new infrastructure, housing and commercial developments are being built should have a voice in determining the types of collective benefits the community enjoys from a specific development.
- Access to affordable, healthy food, as well as common household necessities, make our neighborhoods more inclusive and accessible to people from all walks of life.
- A successful community invests in its people, not just its infrastructure.

KFNA feels that both the values and process we went through are important to mention here in our analysis of the 2040 Comp Plan. While the Plan addresses many of these items (such as affordable housing, acknowledging systemic racism, and neighborhood access to food and services), it also neglects to acknowledge other priorities adequately (including education, public safety, investments in people, and local influence over the future of communities and neighborhoods).

In regards to the Draft Minneapolis 2040 Comprehensive Plan specifically, KFNA also helped locate and advertise the 2040 Comp Plan meeting at MLK Park in Spring 2018. Additionally, KFNA held public meetings for residents, advertised through our eNews and postings on social media platforms in May and June via the KFNA Redevelopment Committee and has been gathering information through them, as well as working to educate people on the city plan through our print publications and social media outreach.

We thank you for taking the following comments into consideration.

Sincerely,



Sarah Linnes-Robinson, KFNA Executive Director,
on behalf of the Kingfield Neighborhood Association Board of Directors

Plan Evaluation

The Kingfield Redevelopment Committee has adopted the following priorities (KFNA Design and Development Guidelines, 2004):

1. Increase Housing Opportunities

2. Promote New Commercial and Mixed Use Developments
3. Enhance the Unique Character of the Neighborhood
4. Respect the Environment
5. Encourage Public Art
6. Collaborate with Developers

We feel that it is important to look at the 2040 plan through the lens of these priorities and evaluate how the 2040 plan helps further these goals.

Kingfield Neighborhood is broader than it's built environment. KFNA has goals focused on 'greening' the neighborhood via plantings, gardens, reducing traffic and parking impacts, and providing safer bike and walkways within, and out of, the neighborhood, to name a few. Services and activities for youth, families, and seniors in the neighborhood are also a priority.

The 2040 goals that address these priorities seem less developed than those that are focused on the built environment, housing and commercial development. This inconsistency in the plan makes it hard to comment evenly. We would suggest that the City provide more detail on how these goals could be achieved and continue to work with communities to evaluate priorities as it relates to these goals.

Instead of an insular view that everything Kingfield needs should be provided within the boundaries of the neighborhood, Kingfield often looks at ways to support other neighborhood's initiatives and those of the City. This ensures that work isn't being duplicated and others' hard work is reaching the neighbors that live in Kingfield. While maintaining the identity of Kingfield neighborhood is important, being an effective and connected piece of the City of Minneapolis is too. As it relates to the 2040 plan we understand that Kingfield is both an individual neighborhood and an integral piece of the broader city.

Kingfield wants to be an inclusive community both economically and racially but do find that these two indicators are often tied together. While we have actively sought out affordable housing opportunities for our neighborhood with a variety of partners the base price of regular housing is still climbing and preventing anyone of even moderate income from buying into the neighborhood. Although the 2040 plan talks about access to housing as the way to reduce disparities between whites and non-whites, the plans put forth to allow for development of low-income housing are not specific enough to guarantee that the housing being built will actually be low income. We would encourage the city to develop more detailed plans and policies on how more housing can create more affordable housing.

As a neighborhood and organization we have reviewed in detail the built form and land use maps in the neighborhood. We understand that these are broader vision maps for the neighborhood but would encourage the city to engage with local organizations and residents on more detailed zoning maps as they are developed. There are many unique situations in our neighborhood that don't fit neatly into a broad brush stroke. While some of these scenarios are

recognized in the draft document many are not. We would be more than willing to work with the City to evaluate these discrepancies in detail.

Document Organization and Details

Document Organization

We have heard from many residents that the organization of the document made it difficult to consume. While the goals/policy structure makes sense the number of policies and their ordering makes it difficult to quickly review specific policies and policy groupings. We would recommend that the city combine similar policies into broader categories and organize these policies in a way that allows for easier consumption of policy groupings.

We would also encourage that the final document be more accessible in print form to allow for easier consumption both on and offline.

Drawings and Representations

We encourage the City to update its drawings of built form to reflect the best local architectural patterns. For example, building on the far left of Interior 1 appears to have slider windows instead of the typical Minneapolis double hung windows, and a very awkwardly designed porch. The only clearly identifiable retail storefront is on the left side of the Corridor 4 drawing. The Corridor 6-Corridor 50 drawings have first floors that could be retail or empty office lobbies. While we realize these drawings are in place to describe building size, the City should use every opportunity possible to showcase exemplary building design in the 2040 Plan.

Goal and Policy Comments

Below we have addressed the three broad goals of 1) Increasing Housing Opportunities 2) Livability 3) Community Growth/Connections. We have pulled out relevant policies within these categories that we felt were especially important to these goals.

Increase Housing Opportunities

Policies: 1,33,34,35,36,37,38,39,40,41,42,43,44,45,46,47

Kingfield is proud to be a neighborhood with a diverse range of homes, from small apartment buildings to duplexes to single family homes on small lots. As KFNA's NRP action plan has stated for two decades, maintaining a diversity of housing, including size, price, and owner and renter status is important. This requires zoning laws that allow for multiple units on lots, without permitting uses that radically change the neighborhood's diverse character. We would encourage the city to re-consider a blanket fourplex policy and review ways to increase housing opportunities and types, while recognizing that targeted density planned in conjunction with neighborhoods may be a better tool. Policies governing new development should ensure that naturally occurring affordable housing is not replaced by unaffordable housing. Further, new development must be accompanied by municipal investment in affordable housing in all neighborhoods, including our own.

Policy 1

Access to Housing

Increase the supply of housing and its diversity of locations and types

Affordable housing is a major concern in the Kingfield neighborhood. Housing prices have risen substantially in the last 10 years in Kingfield. While this increase is good for residents who own homes, the cost of housing has greatly limited who can live in the Kingfield neighborhood and has pushed individuals and families out when life changes require them to find different housing options. This affordability concern does not only affect homeowners but renters as well. A limited supply of rental units in Kingfield equates to high rental costs and low/non-existent vacancies.

As a neighborhood we would support and encourage the City of Minneapolis to actively pursue policies that allow for neighborhoods like Kingfield to regain their affordability. We would support policies like those laid out in the comprehensive plan that seek to encourage the building and maintenance of life-cycle housing, protect existing affordable housing and grow the housing supply in a sustainable and logical way. As noted in many of the other policies, the design and implementation of new developments must be intentional, thoughtful and proactively work to limit negative externalities on residents. We would encourage the city of Minneapolis to work with and engage neighborhood organizations and local residents in these processes.

We feel that it is important that the City of Minneapolis supports neighborhood organizations in activities that seek to protect and grow housing options/affordability. With each individual neighborhood situation varying it is essential that policies reflect the unique situations and characteristics of the neighborhood. Neighborhood organizations can play an important role in this, though it is equally important that neighborhood organizations be structured so that they include the voices of all neighborhood residents.

Policy 34

Affordable Housing Preservation

Preserve existing housing using targeted, priority-based strategies

With anticipated development in the Kingfield neighborhood and the growing commercial corridors of Nicollet and Lyndale, the Kingfield neighborhood needs to not only develop new affordable housing but actively work to protect the existing affordable housing supply. As anticipated development happens in and near the Kingfield neighborhood we would encourage the City of Minneapolis to develop policies and practices to ensure that 'growth' does not wipe out affordability.

The concern that development will actually decrease affordability is a concern for many in our neighborhood. We would encourage the city to directly address and implement policies that ensure that future development does not remove affordable housing to make way for unaffordable housing.

The impact on affordability should especially be taken into consideration with the future development of the Kmart site and the 'reconnection' of Nicollet at Lake Street. This correction will drastically change the development dynamic not only at this intersection but all along Nicollet running south. The impact on affordable housing should be specifically considered when plans are developed for this corridor.

Policy 36

Innovative Housing Strategies

Pursue innovative housing strategies to maximize the creation and preservation of affordable housing.

We would encourage the City of Minneapolis to reach out to neighborhoods to learn about potentially innovative solutions already being implemented by local organizations and neighborhood organizations. The concept of affordable housing should be a commitment by all residents and organizations not just city government. The City of Minneapolis should not only pursue top down approaches to affordable housing but encourage and facilitate the environment for bottom up solutions. If we are to truly make an impact on affordable housing in the city we must think about it as less of a policy and more of a necessity and practice that all residents and organizations are committed to.

KFNA has partnered with a number of housing organizations in the past to create additional units in our neighborhood. Although the funding we could provide to Habitat, PPL, Minneapolis Public Housing, Beacon Interfaith Housing, City of Lakes Community Land Trust, and the county to assist in the development of these homes does not amount to much, it has kept us at the table and given us a speaking point to our neighborhood about the continued importance in the investment of affordable housing in our community. It also gives us a foot in the door to talk with our community about the issues that often come along with the people seeking affordable housing including racism, homophobia, child abuse, immigration, and prior incarceration and how we can work together to create a welcoming neighborhood for people who have had a rough start in life.

We would encourage the City of Minneapolis to continue to pursue, promote and invest in partnerships with other organizations and work to collaborate with these organizations to increase affordable housing. Small scale projects and organizations should not only be allowed, but encouraged, to take on pilot projects and treated as learning grounds for new and innovation housing strategies. The City should invest in these projects and organizations as R+D for citywide policy and best practices.

Livability

Policies: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14, **16**, 17, 26?, 28, 30, 49, 50, 51, **53**, 61, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 71, 76, 77, 78, 80, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 88

Kingfield prides itself on being a livable neighborhood where residents benefit from easy access to a wide range of businesses, access to a variety of transportation options, and public spaces. The 2040 plan should support this quality of life by building and maintaining the infrastructure necessary for this vitality, in Kingfield and in other neighborhoods. This requires density supportive of commercial corridors and nodes, infrastructure conducive to a range of transportation options, and public spaces.

Policy 4

Access to Commercial Goods and Services

Improve access to goods and services via walking, biking and transit

The health and vibrancy of Kingfield's commercial corridors and nodes makes the neighborhood a great place to live. Whether its Nicollet Ave, 46th Street or any of the other local commercial nodes the incorporation of small businesses, restaurants and coffee shops creates a walkable and connected community. As a neighborhood who currently benefits from existing access to commercial goods and services we support policies that work to improve and ease access to these areas. As shown in the proposed 'land use' map we encourage the simplification of 'zoning' along community corridors like Nicollet and movement away from low-density uses. As noted in other policies we would encourage the improvement of the public realm within these corridors to accommodate for more residents and traffic. We also strongly believe that along with more dense uses must come improved transportation infrastructure to respond to not only the increased traffic but changes in how people are using and interacting with these spaces.

Policy 16

Environmental Impacts of Transportation

As a neighborhood we feel that it is important to reduce the energy, carbon, and health impacts of transportation through reduced single-occupancy vehicle trips and phasing out of fossil fuel vehicles. The neighborhood would like to see "Complete Streets" planning lead to fewer car trips originating, or ending, in the neighborhood.

We believe the city should incentivize “green” transportation options, like walking, biking, and public transportation, to cut down on greenhouse gas emissions in the neighborhood:

*Create a dense network of complete streets that connect to business nodes in the neighborhood to accomplish this.

*Linking network of complete streets to jobs outside of the neighborhood through public transit and protected bicycle facilities to further incentivize green transportation options.

Policy 53

Quality of Life

Perpetuate a high quality of life for Minneapolisians that includes safe, open and welcoming cultural and social institutions, as well as natural and built infrastructure.

Quality of life is an essential metric in determining how a city is serving its residents. We would encourage the City of Minneapolis to develop quality of life metrics to determine how well the City is working for specific populations, neighborhoods and the city as a whole. These metrics should be owned by residents, organizations and city government. These goals could drive policy decisions and help bring city government together with different organizations and residents to work towards common goals.

In the Kingfield neighborhood we would like to see metrics around things like access to parks, accidents between bikes/peds and cars, representation on neighborhood boards and overall feeling of acceptance and community.

Community Growth/Connections

Policies: 8,9,10,15,16,17,18,19,20,24,25,30,32,54,55,56,58

A large part of what makes the Kingfield neighborhood great is its walkability/bikeability and general access to a wide variety of businesses, restaurants, and places to visit. We feel that mixed use neighborhoods create vibrant and resilient communities. The 2040 plan addresses community connections but we feel that more detailed planning and policies are needed to determine how these goals are to be achieved.

We would encourage the City to continue to engage with local residents and organizations on how transportation and connectivity can be implemented on a local level.

Policy 17

Complete Streets

Plan, design, build, maintain, and operate the city’s transportation system in a way that prioritizes walking first, followed by bicycle use, and lastly motor vehicle use.

As our neighborhood grows vertically along commercial corridors and density increases in the neighborhood, it is important to include “Complete Streets” philosophies.

The goal of complete streets can be accomplished by recognizing that neighborhood roads, including major corridors, are used by not just vehicle traffic, but also by pedestrians, bicyclists, and public transit-users.

Any changes to streets as part of regular maintenance should have designs considered by CLIC and the BAC, to look specifically for opportunities to improve safety and overall quality of the street.

Separation, using vegetation, between sidewalk and roadway should be maintained or expanded, where applicable.

New bicycle facilities should be considered, and protected bicycle facilities should be prioritized over parking, where applicable. Parking studies may need to be planned for to ensure businesses won't lose customers as result of changes.

Consideration of new east-west and north-south protected bikeways and bicycle boulevards in neighborhoods should be considered as density increases and new business nodes are created, possibly shrinking driving lanes and parking to widen sidewalks in the process.

Additional Resident Concerns/ Comments

The following is a summary of comments/conversations with residents of Kingfield that occurred over three KFNA Re-Development Committee meetings and individual discussions spurred on by outreach in the KFNA neighborhood wide newsletter, Facebook and other neighborhood events.

Generality of the Plan and Lack of Specifics

Community members have voiced concerns over the plan's lack of specifics on how goals and policies will be achieved. Many neighbors commented that they agree with the overall vision and goals of the policies but can't see how this plan will be achieved. We feel that while some of the “action steps” of the plan's “policies” offered some specifics many of these action steps were too vague or open ended to understand how these policies would be realized. We would encourage the city to provide more detail on the priority steps to accomplish these goals.

Concerns over Specific Properties and Impacts to Properties Adjacent to ‘Community Corridors’

Neighbors have voiced concerns over the plan's impacts to their specific properties, especially along "Community Corridors" where the land-use and built form map are proposing changes to the current zoning code. We would encourage continued discussion and investigation on how to mitigate impacts of development on homeowners adjacent to or in proximity to changing uses or built form. The city should work to create policy and process that allows for development but provides local neighbors and organizations specific mechanisms to shape these developments.

Questions Over Process, Timing and Implementation

Many of the questions asked during our community discussions focused on the process, timing and implementation of the plan. While we do understand that the 2040 Website addresses this in some detail we would encourage the City to find ways to help community members better visually understand the implementation process after the plan is adopted.

Concerns over Blanket Density Policies

Many neighbors have been concerned about a 'one-size-fits all' blanket density policy around recommendations in the plan to provide high density housing in residential areas. These comments have been mostly focused around fears of fourplex units. We would encourage the city to reconsider a blanket fourplex policy and review ways to increase housing opportunities and types while recognizing that more targeted density may be a better solution during high growth and change in the city.

Questions about Coordination with Other Public Agencies

Community members in Kingfield have voiced a concern over the lack of coordination between the 2040 comprehensive plan and other government agencies, specifically the 'Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board', Minneapolis Public Schools, and MN DOT. While we understand that the City of Minneapolis does not have direct influence over either of these organizations we feel that further long term planning and consideration should be made between all government agencies in Minneapolis working to serve Minneapolis residents. As part of this comprehensive plan we would recommend that the city insert policies and plans for further coordination with these organizations.

Detailed Concerns and Comments

The following lists more specific questions/concerns voiced during our community engagement:

- Interest in residential energy efficiency strategies and ways to improve and promote residential energy efficiency.
- Concern that the plan doesn't touch major transportation issues like transit service.
- Questions around density policies being implemented through zoning and policy changes. General confusion about how these broad goals will be accomplished.
- Question and concern around the fact that zoning may change all at once but actual development and growth will happen over time. How to address incremental change and possible "incompatible" uses where new zoning runs into current conditions.
- Concerns over parking availability and increases in density.
- Interest in senior housing and transitional housing.

- Questions about what this means to other policies like liquor permit, specific business type regulations, etc.
- Comment to encourage working groups made up of citizens to determine more detailed action steps and recommendations on how policy can be developed to accomplish these goals.
- Encourage more mixed use developments and walkable communities.
- Comments supporting electric city vehicles and garbage trucks.