

Date	June 25, 2025	Meeting Location	Hermantown City Hall/ YMCA Community Room
Project Name	Hermantown Uptown		
Project Number	24-227		
Subject	Stakeholder Engagement Sessions #1&2 June 23, 2025		

NOTES

Engagement Session #1 - Senior Group**Summary of Key Themes**

For this engagement session, roughly 16 attendees arrived from both Keene Creek HOA and the Hermantown Historical Society. Joe Wicklund gave a quick background overview and played a video giving a quick summary of what the Uptown project is. The consulting team then explained the extents of the study area, and some clarifying questions were asked. Once a clear understanding of what and where the Uptown project is was established, the team moved into the engagement questions. Below are the questions the team asked, and the answers received.

1. What are some of your favorite places in Hermantown? What made you choose to live here?
 - a. Boulder trail
 - b. History center
 - c. YMCA
 - d. Schools
 - e. Green space
 - f. Nature
 - g. Close to everything
 - h. Sports programs
 - i. Newer housing stock than Duluth
 - j. Condo housing with HOA like Keene Creek (the only one they could find in the area)
 - k. Access to retail
2. What types of places are missing from Hermantown today?
 - **Private Development**
 - Laundromat
 - Retail space for local businesses to lease
 - Coffee shop
 - Small grocer
 - Housing (condos maybe mixed-use)
 - HOA/housing where the exterior is maintained by central entity, one level for aging in place
 - Hair services

- Bridal shop
- Main Street
- Indoor + outdoor food/beverage linked to trails
- More diversity in types of restaurants (ethnic foods)
- Soup+salad restaurant
- Places to eat that can be safely biked to
- **Municipal/Government**
 - Community center with 55+ programming, and rental rooms for events
 - Library
 - Post office (this was echoed by several attendees throughout the session)
 - County services
- **Public Amenities**
 - Dog park
 - Places to rest along paths and trails
 - Public restrooms
 - Play areas/places for children to run
 - Separation of bike/pedestrian infrastructure from vehicles
 - Overall road network safety improvements, especially for pedestrians
 - ADA parking
 - Free parking
 - Transit (shuttle or dedicated route)
 - Green space is important
- 3. What concerns do you have about the development of Uptown?
 - a. 7-story buildings (not opposed, just warning, proposing this level of density will be met with concern from residents)
 - b. Impacts to traffic in surrounding area
 - c. Hermantown Rd. safety
 - d. Anderson Rd. safety
 - e. Safe access to Boulder Trail on Hermantown Road, and having a designated trailhead

Engagement Session #2 - Soccer Family Group

Summary of Key Themes

This meeting began the same as the last, with Joe giving a summary of the project and playing the video overview. This group, consisting of roughly 14 soccer parents and a few children, were initially hesitant to discuss Uptown and instead questioned the necessity of moving their facilities. Efforts were made to help understand the opportunities of relocating to a newer facility. Some seemed to become open to this idea, while others remained unenthusiastic. A compromise solution was proposed by a member of the group, suggesting a continued soccer presence at Uptown with development surrounding it. From there, people became much more willing to imagine what else could occupy the Uptown site.

1. What are some of your favorite places in Hermantown? What made you choose to live here?
 - a. Great access to amenities
 - b. Family-friendly community
 - c. Schools
 - d. Sports and activities for children
2. What types of places are missing from Hermantown today? What would you want to see in Uptown?

- **Private Development**

- Generally, it is a priority for local businesses/entrepreneurs to occupy spaces within Uptown
- More restaurant options
- Boba tea
- Ice cream shops
- Lodging for visitors
- Good paying jobs
- Bike shop
- Scheels/ full-service sporting goods store
- Food/businesses that can be biked to/front onto bike network (similar to regional trails/greenways in Minneapolis)
- 1-3 story housing options
- Higher density housing (some apprehension, but acknowledgement that this could be the place to do it)
- Maybe no housing
- Housing/job options that help keep people in Hermantown between graduation and retirement
- More housing diversity overall
- Performing arts venue- dance
- Adult sport leagues, and food and beverage to go with it
- Grocery store
- Food and beverage blended with sports
- Year-around destination
- Bike shop
- Multi-generational appeal

- **Municipal/Government**

- Community center
- Post office
- Library with enhanced learning programs, teen areas, storytime, communications lab, event room, cultural programs, and makerspaces with 3D printers

- **Public Amenities**

- Indoor sports complex
 - Indoor field house with turf

- Other sport facilities i.e. gymnastics
 - Outdoor sports facilities
 - One attendee mentioned it could be formal soccer field, as today, or large open spaces that can be utilized for sports on occasion
 - Playgrounds
 - Wheelchair accessible swings, play equipment, and fenced
 - Public Restrooms
 - Amphitheater
 - Outdoor community gathering space
 - Concessions
 - Safety for bikers
 - Better access for people with disabilities
 - Adult sporting leagues
 - T-Ball & wheelchair sports
 - Amphitheater/outdoor performance space
 - Multi-generational appeal
 - Year-round amenities
 - Walkable and bikeable for all, but mostly focused on youth, a connected network; ease of connection to schools
 - Expanded bike trail network
 - Cross-country ski trails
 - Hiking trails
 - Municipal Pool
 - Single-track mountain bike trails
- 3 What would you like to see in an improved soccer facility?
- a. Playground
 - b. Indoor soccer field
 - c. Restrooms
 - d. Cameras on the fields
 - e. Concessions
 - f. More seating
 - g. Better drainage for soccer fields
 - h. 6 soccer fields
 - i. In a place where they can host out-of-town teams in tournaments and have restaurants, places to stay, and exciting attractions for families.

Common Themes:

- Preserving Hermantown's Character: Maintain strong access to nature, recreation, and opportunities for active families as central to the identity of Uptown.
- Lifelong Community: Support efforts that enable residents to live in Hermantown through all stages of life.
- Support for Local Business: Prioritize local entrepreneurs and businesses when filling commercial spaces in Uptown.

- Expanded Dining Options: Increase the variety of food and beverage establishments beyond what currently exists.
- School System Consideration: Account for the impact of population growth on Hermantown's schools and educational resources.
- Safe, Connected Mobility: Develop a safe, pedestrian- and bike-friendly network that links neighborhoods with city amenities.
- Thoughtful Housing Conversations: Approach discussions about housing types and density with care and community sensitivity.