

February 2024



3000 MINNEHAHA

COMMUNITY FEEDBACK SESSIONS

Longfellow Community Council



BACKGROUND

3000 Minnehaha sits in the heart of downtown Longfellow and its future is of critical importance to not just the residents of the direct community but the whole of Minneapolis. For almost four years, the former 3rd precinct building remains in the condition it was left after the civil uprising ignited by the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police. The site remains a charred building surrounded by cement barricades and barbed wire.

It was thought that the City would conduct community engagement to determine the future use of 3000 Minnehaha Ave after the decision to move the new 3rd precinct/community safety center to 2633 Minnehaha Ave was made, however after a presentation by City staff to City Council, it was made clear that the City intended to place a voter service center at 3000 Minnehaha rather than employ a community engagement effort to determine how that location could best service the needs of the area.

Following the City Council meeting, Longfellow Community Council (LCC) decided to hold two community feedback sessions and conduct an online survey to gauge community input as to the best future use of 3000 Minnehaha.

LCC is not a decision making body for the City of Minneapolis and these findings are not meant to be inclusive of the entirety of the Longfellow community, the 3rd precinct, or the City itself. Rather these findings touch on the depth and breadth of feedback the City could receive should they choose to put resident needs at the forefront of their decision making process. The City has an opportunity to conduct meaningful and intentional community engagement. Based on our small sampling, the community feels their opinions aren't heard, considered, or acted upon by the City. The community would like a true engagement effort to be conducted and for the feedback from that engagement determine what happens at 3000 Minnehaha Ave.

OVERALL FEEDBACK ON LACK OF CITY ACTION AND ENGAGEMENT

Most small group discussions included conversation regarding the lack of action taken to improve the status of 3000 Minnehaha as well as the absence of a City process to engage community on this issue.

CURRENT CONDITION OF 3000 MINNEHAHA AVENUE

While discussing the question of what **will become** of the former 3rd Precinct building, many residents discussed the problem of **what is** currently on that site – barbed wire, barricades, and charred remains.

THE CITY'S LACK OF ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

During these conversations, participants expressed criticism regarding the lack of real engagement by the City to include community in any decisions regarding 3000 Minnehaha.

WHAT IS THE CITY'S CRITERIA FOR DECISION MAKING?

"Be clear, consider a prioritization, voting determined by what people really want. Let us impact how the decision is made not just what the final ideas are."

PROCESS MATTERS

"The values and process of engagement are more important than the speed in which the site is developed."

THE CITY HAS FAILED THE COMMUNITY

"There is no trust in the City, they have continuously disregarded the desires of the community."

HEALING NEEDS TO HAPPEN FIRST

"The City has not addressed the trauma the site holds for community, nor how they expect people to engage with it without efforts toward healing."



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SUMMARY

The question put to the community was simple: How should the former police precinct building at 3000 Minnehaha Avenue be best put to public use?



94% of participants wanted the building put to **community determined use**

6% of participants wanted the building used for police or a voter center

TOP FOUR REPEATED THEMES

1. Social services/Direct services and programs
2. Black Cultural Center
3. Green Space
4. A memorial honoring and embracing history

ADDITIONAL REPEATED THEMES

- Public Art
- Demolish and redevelop the site
- Housing (majority focus on affordable low-income housing)
- Facility that engages youth
- Inclusion of a healing focus in whatever is developed at that site

SUMMARY CONTINUED

Direct feedback from within the major themes expressed and supported by a multitude of participants

COMMUNITY GATHERING SPACE/USE

1. Community meeting space that is low cost or free and can be rented to racial justice orgs
2. Open it up to the community to take control of the space
3. Space for community to connect and access programs.
4. 24/7 access to public toilets and showers
5. A community-owned facility vs a city-owned facility that supports and brings healing to the community
6. Recreation center
7. Community run and lead services that are available to the public. These services would reflect the needs of the community and repair harm made by the presence of the 3000 building as a precinct.
8. Mutual aid components such as free clothing exchange, free meals, etc

SOCIAL SERVICES/DIRECT SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

1. Geared specifically toward communities that have been harmed and harassed by police - Black people, Indigenous people, and queer communities, among others
2. Mental and emotional health support
3. Harm reduction services
4. Job center
5. Center for citizen support – rent assistance, food security/food shelf, housing, etc
6. Resource center for non-violence
7. Shelter and supportive housing

BLACK CULTURAL CENTER

1. Including things such as a History/Journey museum, theater, memorial, wellness center, job training, education, athletic events, and restaurant
2. Something horrible happened in Minneapolis- originating at the 3rd Precinct. BUILD something there that is iconic and beautiful to bring us together

A MEMORIAL HONORING AND EMBRACING HISTORY

1. Given the history of the police in America oppressing the poor and marginalized, including their origins as community slave catchers, in my eyes the only appropriate use of the site is as a museum dedicated to the history of police oppression in this country and as a center dedicated to establishing a system of restorative justice.

DIRECT RESPONSES TO A VOTER SERVICES CENTER AT 3000 MINNEHAHA

Of the 255 individual suggestions provided, 3 were in support of a voter service center at 3000 Minnehaha Ave. One of the three listed that the location was convenient. Below are a selection of the responses submitted against a voter service center at that location.

“A voter center doesn't feel like a healing space; it's very transactional. Voting has also been used as a tool of oppression and traumatization of marginalized communities, and now we're going to ask people to go into a place (3000 Minnehaha) that contributes to the oppression and trauma within our community.”

“It just seems like the City is trying to solve one problem (voting) and ignoring a much deeper, larger problem. So really they aren't solving anything.”

“A voter center doesn't build trust. Building trust takes time, it takes transparency and it takes courage, things the City has not demonstrated. They are doing engagement in March, but are they going to use any of it? And why is it always engagement after there is a plan in place, after a decision has been made? Why are we not asked before? It's poor leadership.”

“At least I could appreciate it if the City would acknowledge what they are doing and what they are not doing. Even if I don't like it, I can appreciate the honesty and leadership in that. The explanation helps. That leadership and transparency leads to trust.”

“Site brings a lot of emotion out of folks – feels like this needs to be recognized. A voter registration building in a site of white supremacy is upsetting. Space has so much symbolism behind it and this needs to be recognized.”

“A voter and election services center is ignoring that history, it disregards what happened at the site and what happened in this city.”

“Voting (services) doesn't make sense, elections don't happen all the time and the building would have a lot of vacancy.”

“Will people want to vote at a site where a 3rd precinct building was?”

“Why does the city need THIS space to use as a voter services building, why not put the voter building into the new 3rd precinct site since they shared office space before?”



BY THE NUMBERS



255 TOTAL SUGGESTIONS

118 TOTAL PARTICIPANTS

72 participants attended in-person or via Zoom
46 participants utilized the online survey

89% MINNEAPOLIS RESIDENTS

Zipcodes: 55406 - 49%
55407 - 21%
55417 - 6%
55414 - 5%
Other - 19%

Longfellow Community Council looks forward to sharing this report with City officials and the City Council in hopes that the need for greater community engagement efforts are determined to be both needed and deserved.

Learn more at longfellow.org or follow us @[longfellowcommunitycouncil](https://twitter.com/longfellowcommunitycouncil)