



CITY OF SOUTH ST. PAUL MEETING AGENDA

WORK SESSION

Training Room
125 3rd Avenue North
South St. Paul, MN 55075

Monday, September 22, 2025
7:00 PM

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - A. Hardman Triangle - Public Realm Concept Discussion
 - B. City Administrator's Update
- 3. COUNCIL COMMENTS & QUESTIONS**
- 5. ADJOURNMENT**



WORK SESSION AGENDA REPORT

DATE: September 22, 2025
DEPARTMENT: Economic Development
PREPARED BY: Ryan Garcia
AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 2.A.

MEETING TYPE

Regular Meeting

AGENDA ITEM

Hardman Triangle - Public Realm Concept Discussion

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED OR DESIRED OUTCOME

The EDA's design consultant, Urban Ecosystems, will guide Monday's charette-style discussion of the two schematic design concepts included in tonight's agenda packet. Council is encouraged to review the concepts in detail prior to the worksession, and come prepared not necessarily to choose one concept over the other but to identify those elements of one or both concepts that resonate well (or not so well) as we look to shape the "public realm" within the Hardman Triangle.

OVERVIEW

The City's [2017 Economic Development Strategy \(Updated in 2021\)](#) identified an approximately 20-acre area lying between Concord Street, Hardman Avenue, and Grand Avenue as a key focus area for redevelopment. The City's [2040 Comprehensive Plan](#), adopted by Resolution 2019 - 180, formalized the City's intentions to "Establish a community mixed-use destination area in the vicinity of the Hardman/Concord Triangle" (Goal 4.26). In early 2020, the City's [Hardman Triangle Redevelopment Plan](#) established a framework for development of a vital mixed-use district at this key location in the community, and in March 2025 the EDA and City Council approved the [Hardman Triangle District Master Plan and Stormwater Guide](#). In addition to giving definition to the desired development and land-use mix for the Hardman Triangle, the 2025 District Master Plan introduces a network of new public streets, public open space, and stormwater management features to serve the neighborhood. Monday's worksession will focus specifically on the continued schematic design work that has been undertaken to give definition to these "Public Realm" elements.

At the [July 7 City Council meeting](#), Council directed Staff to proceed with the planning, budgeting and bidding for the relocation of the Armour Gatehouses to the Grand/Concord area. While the topic isn't intended to be a singular point of focus for Monday's meeting, Council will note that the attached schematic design concepts both include the Armour Gatehouse structures as features within the public realm. Working with our consultant team ([Urban Ecosystems](#)), the Public Realm planning process has identified the Hardman Triangle location as the most practical and meaningful opportunity for synergy and celebration if the Gatehouses are to be relocated and retained. The "All-in" budget estimate for implementing either of the concepts

depicted in the schematics is \$625,000 - \$650,000. This includes restoration of both structures by a historic preservation/masonry contractor, preparation and construction of new footings/foundations and ground improvement (rammed aggregate piers), and removal of the structures from their existing foundations, stabilizing and relocating the structures to the Hardman Triangle.

The Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission reviewed the concepts at their meeting on September 9, responding quite favorably to the opportunity to supplement the City's parks system with this uniquely designed and situated public open space. The spirit of repurposing the existing natural and man-made landscape and built environment, and embracing the site's and the City's history while remaining forward-looking in the design resonated quite strongly with the Commission. Creative/unique "play" elements (utilizing remnants of existing buildings and hardscape rather than fabricated playground structures, for example), interpretive and artistic/cultural elements, and the great lawn/river overlook were favorite elements. The Commission was slightly concerned about whether on-site or nearby parking could accommodate community-scale events, and also recognized the potential for significant costs to fully implement the concepts and questioned how funding would be sourced. While the relocated Armour Gatehouse concepts were generally well-received and there was a preference towards integrating them as a "gateway" to the park (Concept 1a), the commission did not feel strongly that their retention and integration were essential to the success of the public realm; one or two felt the anticipated cost to relocate the structures could be better allocated towards other elements identified in the concepts or other City priorities.

Staff and Urban Ecosystems are looking forward to receiving Council's feedback and further direction at the Worksession, with the anticipation that this feedback will be synthesized into a preferred design concept for the public realm that we can advance for design development and ultimately bidding and construction as the redevelopment of the Hardman Triangle moves forward.

SOURCE OF FUNDS

Costs related to public infrastructure and the planned open space are eligible for funding through a combination of pooled TIF, grants from federal, state, and county environmental cleanup and redevelopment programs, and various City / EDA funds (capital programs, infrastructure, utilities, development fund).

ATTACHMENTS

1. Hardman Triangle - Public Realm Draft Concepts

HARDMAN TRIANGLE PUBLIC REALM SYSTEM

19 September 2025 DRAFT

Public Realm System Alternative 1A

1. South entrance drive with Development Phase 1 subsurface rainwater volume storage and bioretention in ROW. Standard 11 foot drive lane width all new streets, standard 9 foot wide parallel parking (as shown).
2. Park Gateway Plaza, with relocated and refurbished Armour gatehouses; with stockyards history interpretation and seating area.
3. Multi-purpose sidewalk (16 ft width) with shaded seating, riparian trees, and foot path in meadow grasses and flowers (no mow).
4. River Overlook (+15ft) with sidewalk and small paved area. Hill slide and stairs on north slope. Potential snow sledding on north and west slopes.
5. Rainwater Gardens, provides stormwater filtration/bioretention.
6. Metal grate decking walkway above rainwater gardens (increases storage volume in lieu of landform+sidewalk)
7. Picnic Porches, with tables, seating areas, and porch swings at edge of rainwater gardens, along sidewalk
8. Park Observatory, with rainwater garden patio (ground level), climbing wall (1st floor/+10 feet above ground) and river overlook (3rd floor/+30 feet). Includes limited in-place re-use of existing building structural columns at northeast corner of building for new stairwell structure.
9. Picnic shelter/shade canopy (875 GSF) and Restrooms (550 GSF).
10. Play plaza, with non-traditional play obstacles and play mounds, partially fabricated from reclaimed building materials.
11. Rainwater plaza and BBQ areas. Portions of former reservoir's outerwalls reduced in height and repurposed as Phase 1 rainwater storage. Stored rainwater becomes a "water feature", with ground level channels in pavement for overflow into surrounding landscape areas.
12. Greenway public easement for ramped sidewalk to Concord Ave
13. Greenway public easement for sidewalk to E. Grand Ave
14. Sun Lawn landform, gradually sloping lawn (5%) with mown turfgrass and sidewalk; 3h:1v side slopes with meadow grasses and flowers (no mow). Landform provides location for required soil excavation to create rainwater gardens. Also shown on Alt 1b.
15. Deconstructed "Poultry Building", with select low height brick walls retained at parking perimeter. Potential option for roof to create open air parking (at developer discretion).



HARDMAN TRIANGLE PUBLIC REALM SYSTEM

19 September 2025 DRAFT

Public Realm System Alternative 1B

1. South entrance drive with subsurface rainwater volume storage and bioretention in ROW. Standard 11 foot drive lane width all new streets, standard 9 foot wide parallel parking (as shown).
2. Relocated and refurbished Armour gatehouses, with multi-functional plaza suitable for temporary festival stage or movie screen.
3. Cottonwood Promenade. Multi-purpose sidewalk (12 ft width) with shaded seating, riparian trees, and foot path in meadow grasses and flowers (no mow).
4. River Overlook (+15ft) with seating and regional river map in pavement. Potential snow sledding on north and east slopes.
5. Rainwater Gardens, provides stormwater filtration/bioretention.
6. Community table picnic and small group gathering area.
7. Metal grate decking walkway above rainwater gardens (increases storage volume in lieu of landform+sidewalk)
8. Picnic Lawn (flat topography, same elevation as adjacent sidewalk)
9. Refurbished Long Cheng building (east portion only), with interior elevator and staircase from ground floor to roof.
Potential Program in public/private partnership includes:

Ground Floor:	Restroom and Parks office
Ground Floor:	loading dock deck with shade canopy
Second Floor:	Equipment rental storage
Third Floor:	Community black box studio
Fourth Floor:	Reception/rental space with outdoor terrace
Roof Deck:	River Overlook
9. Splash pad plaza
10. Pasture Meadow "Gardens", perennial gardens with seating, swings, and livestock pasture relics.
11. Stockyards history plaza, with partial reservoir wall providing "gallery" for large-format maps, murals, and local public art.
12. Poultry building playground (12), partial deconstruction for playspace and ramped sidewalk (13) to Concord Ave. Program includes:

Partial second floor for slides and climbing
Brick walls for climbing wall
Traditional and non-traditional play equipment
14. Greenway sidewalk public easement to E. Grand Ave.
15. Mississippi River Greenway trail spur and parking area. Trail spur at Hardman Ave (16) requires re-stripping travel lanes to accommodate on-street bike lane.





WORK SESSION AGENDA REPORT

DATE: September 22, 2025
DEPARTMENT: City Administrator
PREPARED BY: Ryan Garcia
AGENDA ITEM NUMBER: 2.B.

MEETING TYPE

Regular Meeting

AGENDA ITEM

City Administrator's Update

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED OR DESIRED OUTCOME

For information and brief discussion only. Council may request additional detail or formal action on any of these topics at a future meeting.

OVERVIEW

The City Administrator will provide brief updates on the following:

- EDA Property Clean-up
- Jiffy Stop Acquisition
- Hardman Triangle Environmental Investigations / Surcharge
- UP/NS Merger - Requested Letter of Support

SOURCE OF FUNDS

NA

ATTACHMENTS

None