This report, and the recommendations herein, do not constitute a complete or part of a comprehensive plan for the area, as defined by the Metropolitan Council or the City of St. Louis Park.
SUMMARY

The Historic Walker-Lake area is the historic commercial center of St. Louis Park. While other areas within St. Louis Park have overtaken it in terms of importance, the district has the potential to continue its rise, and once again become a bustling commercial, civic, and community destination.

Assessment and Dominant Factors for Future Success

We feel that the future success of Historic Walker-Lake rest on two factors:

1. Connections: the district is well located, but difficult to access from surrounding neighborhoods, and key anchors within the district are disconnected from each other. The difficulty in knowing where it is limits positive spillover effects from the many good things that are already there. Thus, enhancing the quality of the pedestrian and bike connections to and through the Historic Walker-Lake area is a top priority.

2. Leveraging existing clusters/anchors to create more reasons to visit and stay: Historic Walker-Lake is home to strong educational, civic, recreational, and pet-service clusters. The experience of visiting these establishments should be improved and leveraged to foster further business development and social activity.

Summary of Recommendations

To create the conditions for future success, we recommend the following, which are outlined in more detail the report therein:

• Enhance bike and pedestrian connections to and within the district: The safety, activity, usefulness, and beauty of pathways is essential to the success of the district. High priority items include opening up the fence next to the community center to allow bike and pedestrian access and improving the safety of the bike lane on Wooddale Avenue

• Leveraging existing activity drivers to foster new business: thousands of people a day come to and from Historic Walker-Lake to go to the educational, community, civic, and pet-service facilities. These uses should be better linked and their users leveraged to foster the addition of a coffee shop, café, and/or sit-down restaurant

• Create more daily activity: the more there is to do, the longer people stay. The longer people stay the more they get to know each other and patronize businesses. Several low-cost additions like lawn and board games, outdoor seating, dog facilities, additional game-day festivities, and allowing people to use the stadium area during non-game or practice times would all greatly enhance the visitor experience

• Increase awareness of the district: Now that the district has a name, more needs to be done to build the awareness of it and what is there in the mind of the public. Easy, low cost ways to do that include the creation and distribution of posters, lawn signs, and banners

• Establish long-term capacity to organize the continual improvement of the district: Successful business districts have ongoing capacity for collective action. The creation of an entity that brings together the district’s businesses, civic and public organizations to mobilize and coordinate around advancement of the area is essential to enable the recommendations become a reality. This could take the shape of a formal group of volunteers, a membership organization, or a district-wide special services district.
CORE ASSUMPTIONS AND APPROACH

The Strategy of Place
1. If people have **positive and useful experiences** in a place, then they will
2. **Use it more frequently**. By frequently using the space they establish
3. **Habits and routines**. These habits are the foundation that support enterprise and;
4. **Relationships**, between people and the space itself. These relationships are non-portable and create locational
5. **Value**. A place where people want to be is the essence of real estate’s “location, location, location” value proposition

Core Assumptions
We can create this value by creating places where people want to be: places that are social, active, beautiful, and convenient. Places like these draw people, who then want to do things nearby: live, work, shop, eat, play, and more.

Much of quality of these places is shaped by the experiences people have in their shared and common areas. These spaces must not be treated as mere pathways to deliver visitors from their parking spaces to the front door, but as staging areas for experiences.

The experiences within any given space is shaped by the interplay between its:
- Physical environment
- Management of that physical environment
- The activities and events that occur there

By creating more dynamic experiences for users within a budding commercial center such as Historic Walker-Lake:
- More people will visit the district
- Once there, people will stay longer in the district
- The longer people stay in the district, the more likely they are to buy things and participate in community offerings

Our Approach
We combine our experience designing, programming, and managing public spaces and commercial districts with a robust research methodology and community process to make recommendations about how the broader Historic Walker-Lake district can become a place where people want to be.
Leveraging the success of the Walk and Talk on Historic Walker-Lake event, The Musicant Group crafted this activation plan to set the stage for short- to long-term enhancements to the business district.

**Paving the Pathway of Place**
This activation plan is crafted to allow the myriad of stakeholders in the Historic Walker-Lake area to participate in and benefit from placemaking within the district. The plan allows actors of all kinds to make meaningful contributions in a variety of monetary and non-monetary ways over a number of years.

**Goals**
- Enhance the visitor experience and social environment within the district
- Increase the rate at which customers patronize businesses in the Historic Walker-Lake area
- Increase the amount of time users spend in the Historic Walker-Lake area

**Strategies**
- Increase opportunities for socializing within the area
- Build relationships person-to-person, as well as person-to-place
- Strengthen weak connections and overcome barriers between main street and surrounding destinations
- Create systems of use and maintenance that maximize partnerships in order to minimize public expenditures
- Improving commercial opportunities within the area

**Tactics**
- Create activities, events, and amenities that are attractive and engaging keeping people in the area longer
- Create and enhance destination experiences that attract visitors to the district
- Create as many unique things to do, see, and experience for pedestrians and bikers within the Historic Walker-Lake area as a method to: increase visits, lengthen stay, and enhance connections
- Utilize programming, activations, merchandising, and traditional wayfinding strategies to strengthen connections between surrounding destinations to drive new customer visits
Compete in Historic Walker-Lake’s Most Promising Areas

Historic Walker-Lake has the foundation to become a bustling destination for residents, and the entire city. This area should strive to be the best unique version of itself. It is a well located but underutilized commercial and community hub within St. Louis Park. While no serious problems currently exist, the district is far from reaching its full potential in serving existing and future businesses, community organizations, and St. Louis Park overall.

Two overriding opportunities are:
1. Creating more reasons to visit the Historic Walker-Lake Area
2. Enhancing the quantity and quality of the bike and pedestrian connections within the district and from the district to the surrounding areas

Historic Walker-Lake’s Competitive Advantages

Our analysis finds that the Historic Walker-Lake district currently has, or has the potential for the following amenities, uses, and experiences, raising it above competing commercial districts.

1. Unique community destinations that drive significant everyday visitation, which include: the high school, stadium, and Community Center.

2. Unique destination mostly locally owned business clusters, which include: pet services, arts and music, health and wellness, and food and beverage. The last three of these being fledgling with a lot of opportunity for growth.

3. Walking and biking within the district. There is much room for improvement, but the street grid and traditional Main Street building type and the proximity to regional bike trails and the light rail stop provide a unique foundation to build off of relative to other suburban areas.

4. Opportunities for social interaction. This is not happening that much right now, but the proximity between commercial and community uses can and should be a potent mix in the future.

Inputs for the Analysis

- Consultant site visits
- Survey of residents, visitors, and high school faculty
- Walk and Talk on Historic Walker-Lake event and feedback
- City of Saint Louis Park staff meetings and feedback
- Heart of the Park framework report
- Hoodstarter ideas: stlouispark.hoodstarter.com/
The consultant team had two areas of focus:

1. **Primary area**: we focused most of our attention on the stretch of West Lake Street between Walker and 34th Street as well as Walker Street to Library Lane and Library Lane to West Lake.

2. **Secondary area**: the primary area is heavily influenced by how it connects to the users, activities, and communities around it. This secondary area of influence was bound by Highway 7 from Louisiana Avenue to the future Wooddale LRT stop, Wooddale Avenue to St. Louis Park High School, and 2nd Street to the Northwest.

**Location**

The Historic Walker-Lake district is one of the oldest parts of St. Louis Park, in the center of the municipality. The area is surrounded by highly desirable single-family homes and some multi-family housing options. There is an increasing array of retail and service amenities south of Highway 7. Despite this proximity, the area is fairly cut off from the surrounding neighborhoods by Highways 7 and 100 as well as Louisiana Boulevard. Along with Louisiana Boulevard, Wooddale Avenue and Lake Streets are the only streets that connect the district to the surrounding neighborhoods.

*Potential Impact of Southwest LRT Transit-way*: The future expansion of light rail would enhance people’s access to and from Historic Walker-Lake. The new Southwest LRT will have a station 0.5 miles away from the Historic Walker-Lake area at Wooddale and West 36th Street.

**A Clear Center of The Historic Walker-Lake District**

The clear center of the Historic Walker-Lake district is the St. Louis Park high school stadium. But despite it being the center of the district, it also creates empty space all around it with inactive edges that do little to support other uses. Three low cost, high impact changes could be made to improve this:

- Opening up the locked fence next to the Community Center to allow bike and pedestrian access around the stadium’s perimeter
- Replacing the grass that surrounds the stadium with more attractive, lower maintenance, and ecologically friendly/native plants
OVERALL DISTRICT EXPERIENCE

Disconnected: looking towards St. Louis Park High School stadium, community education, and main street
Activities and Uses: Reasons to Come to Historic Walker-Lake

People will visit, stay in, and enjoy a place based on the uses, activities and experiences that are delivered. These experiences are delivered through a combination of physical elements, management systems, events, merchants, community organizations, public bodies, and communication platforms. Below is our assessment on how those factors currently come together, what is latent and not fully formed (but should be!), and what large gaps that exist:

Primary Reasons to Visit Historic Walker-Lake

There is a rule of thumb that every thriving place (no matter how big or small) should have at least 10 different things to do. We identified the 9 major activities and reasons to visit Historic Walker-Lake, with community uses being a significant attraction:

1. Eat low-cost grab-and-go food: frozen yogurt, McDonald’s
2. Shop for: pet services
3. Shop for attire: sports and dress making
4. Seek convenience services: laundry or barber shop
5. Watch a sports game, go to the theater, conferences, etc. at St. Louis Park High School
6. Go to school/work at St. Louis Park High School or the Community Center
7. Pick up your kids from either school
8. Play at playground or park
9. Volunteer at an organization

Latent activities that visitors can do, but that should be strengthened in order to generate more trips, commerce, and community, include:
- Walk around the Historic Walker-Lake and residential areas
- Socialize with neighbors and fellow visitors
- Activities to do with one’s dog
- Healthcare, fitness and wellness services and activities: inside and out
- Enjoy non-sports related entertainment
- Go to an event at the St. Louis Park Historical Society (events at the nearby Depot)
- Visit the destination of Park Tavern, the Library, and Louisiana Oaks Park and the Historic Walker-Lake area without getting in the car
- Take the bike trails

Notable activities, features, and amenities not available in Historic Walker-Lake but could likely be viable and strengthen the district include:
- Cafe or coffee shop
- Convenience and/or pharmacy
- Gift shop and florist
- Niche and thrift apparel
- Sit-down, casual, or ethnic dining
- Antique shopping
- Dog walking amenities and/or a dog-run
- Drinking fountain
- Public restroom
- Food truck area
Contributing Elements to the Activities, Uses and Experiences

Connections

As mentioned, the Historic Walker-Lake area needs increased and improved bike, pedestrian, and car connections within the district and to and from surrounding neighborhoods.

Strong Barriers Divide the Area

There are a number of destinations that are very close, but disconnected from the center. These include the Lake Street main street retail, Library Lane shops/warehouses, Community Center, and happenings on Wooddale Avenue. Recommended wayfinding and placemaking strategies should be deployed in all these areas to enhance the real and perceived connections between these places. Specifically:

- St. Louis Park High School is separated from the main commercial corridor due to the railroad tracks
- Further south, the fenced in playground on the east side of the stadium prevents access from the north to the business and community uses along Walker.
- The stadium itself, while being the “center” of the district, also acts as a sort of donut hole that separates activity on each side from fully complementing each other.
- Highway 7 and Louisiana Avenue create real and perceived barriers to accessing the Historic Walker-Lake area from thriving neighborhoods and shopping areas.

Walking

Sidewalks exist along almost every section of Historic Walker-Lake. That said, the experience of using these sidewalks is highly varied so pedestrian calming techniques should be explored. Areas that need improvement include:

- Wooddale: the car traffic moves very quickly along this street and there are few if any active uses along this street. It is uncomfortable to walk along the street, which is highly problematic given that this will be how people access the LRT station. However, the Wooddale Bridge is due to be re-constructed soon which will provide an opportunity for an improved pedestrian and bicyclists experience.
- Severed pathways: the railroad, Highways 7 and 100, and the playground next to the stadium all halt natural desire lines for pedestrians, bikes, and cars
- Lake Street retail strip: There is good sidewalk and boulevard on the North side of Lake Street along the retail. However, in front of the St. Louis Park stadium there is no sidewalk.

Walking should be viewed not only as a means to get from Point A to Point B, but as an important recreational activity in its own right; a reason for people to come and stay in Historic Walker-Lake. This is especially true for dog owners, given the propensity of pet stores in the district.

In order to create a loop around the entire area it would be convenient for walkers to have sidewalks or protected paths on the street on both sides. According to feedback and the survey, many residents walk to Historic Walker-Lake and walk their dogs. A convenient dog-walking loop around the stadium could create a healthy, safe, and fun connection for residents.
**Biking**

The Historic Walker-Lake area is 0.3 miles from the Cedar Lake Trail, which offers a great opportunity for attracting visitors and residents in the area to bike to this historic shopping district. However, the bikeway on Wooddale Avenue is hardly visible and not protected. Cars move very quickly along Wooddale and frequently drive within the “protected” bike lane. If it feels unsafe—and it is actually unsafe—bikers will not use it and will be less likely to visit the nearby businesses, the park, playground, and other places.

We recommend a truly protected bikeway, with bollards, be reconstructed from the Cedar Lake Trail to the Historic Walker-Lake area. This will create more visibility and safety and encourage bike riders to come to the district.

A short-term solution discussed for the Historic Walker-Lake event was repainting the bikeway to make it more visible and defined. This should be done as soon as possible, but only until a protected bikeway can be installed.

Design plans are now underway to modify the Wooddale Bridge over Highway 7, which will provide an opportunity to create a more safe and comfortable experience for bikers and pedestrians.

**Transit**

The area has a number of transit options, with bus (and future light rail facilities) serving mostly as means to commute to Uptown or Downtown. Those waiting for departing busses and LRT make up an important customer base, which the district can and should serve more effectively.

Transit lines include:

- 668 Express—Hopkins—St Louis Park—Mpls
- 615 Ridgedale—Co Rd 73—St Louis Park
- 604 Wayzata Blvd—Louisiana Ave—Excelsior Blvd
- Green line Extension (Southwest Light Rail Transit)—Wooddale and 36th (future)

**Driving and Parking**

Historic Walker-Lake has enough parking for daily on-street parking, and surface parking lots on and behind Walker and Lake Street. Surface lots next to the High School accommodate large events at the stadium. No additional parking facilities are needed. The current arrangement encourages visitors to walk past (and thus patronize!) businesses in order to get to and from their cars.

The area is difficult to find with only four streets providing access from the surrounding areas: Wooddale Avenue, Minnetonka Blvd, Dakota Avenue and Louisiana Avenue. This situation is aggravated by the lack of signage and lines-of-sight into the business district from these arterials.

However, most of the focus should be on enhancing the walking and biking access to and within the district. This will increase the number of captive customers that arrive on foot and bike, especially if there are techniques implemented to slow down vehicular traffic.
Landscaping

Large shade trees, well-maintained grounds, and bright flowers inarguably make an area better. Within this context, there are a few areas of Historic Walker-Lake that deserve targeted attention:

- Stadium perimeter: as the center of the district, every commercial corridor backs up to the stadium. Unfortunately, the perimeter of the stadium is inactive and often unattractive, dominated by chain link fence and an unusable strip of grass. Landscaping enhancements should be targeted at these perimeter areas to create more visual interest at a minimum, and ideally, active use. Improvements should include native, pollinator friendly grasses and plants.

- Boulevards and storefronts: the commercial streetscape along Lake Street is blessed with large frontage grassy areas and tree lined boulevards. Merchant utilization of these is highly varied. The boulevards and the privately owned setback areas should be enhanced with soft and hardscape improvements relevant to each business.

- Railway fencing and green space: The railroad company is open to green space near tracks for landscaping. The chain fence along the tracks would be greatly enhanced with vines, and native grasses and plantings along the green strip.

Seating

If visitors have to stand the entire time they are in the district, the duration of their stay will be shorter. This is especially true for senior citizens and parents with young children.

Currently Historic Walker-Lake has little in the way of street amenities, namely, places for people to sit. Public seating is especially needed along Lake Street, to provide a place for people to wait for services, appointments, and transit.

The wide boulevard is a great area for movable, colorful bistro tables and chairs for visitors to rest, people watch, sit with their dog, read a book, or wait for a barber shop or pet training appointment. Movable seating is more affordable and has a dramatically higher utilization rate than fixed benches and should be deployed throughout the district.

We have found that many merchants and community organizations are willing to maintain public seating adjacent to or on their property. If this arrangement is not possible, we've also found that movable seating that is colorful, branded, and not brought in every night is still:

- Used more than fixed seating
- Less expensive than fixed seating
- Does not typically get stolen or vandalized

Signage and Wayfinding

Sense of Arrival

As discussed in the pathway section, there are only a few ways that people access the Historic Walker-Lake district. The district is accessed by all modes: cars, bikes, walking, and eventually the light rail. While in some ways constraining, it provides good opportunities to communicate that people have really “arrived” in the district along these routes. Unfortunately one does not currently get this sense or message upon arrival.
Knowing and Getting Around the District Itself

Once a person is within the district, it is difficult to know all that exists there. The stadium disrupts the sight-lines between areas that are physically close, making them feel far away or completely unknown.

It would be beneficial to add signage, maps and/or information where visitors are acquainted with what is around and the best paths to get to their desired attractions.

Business Mix

A unique business mix has arisen within the district, including a mix of convenience and professional services and destination merchants, with a notable cluster of pet services. Each one of these clusters supports each other, drawing people to the district and giving them a number of things to do.

The professional and convenience services (real estate, barber, legal, etc.) should be nurtured. There is more to be gained by enhancing the already strong pet-service cluster and growing the health, wellness, and food merchant mix. Bringing in more food options will have a secondary benefit of supporting the professional services and retail businesses alike by providing them and their customers with an additional amenity.

Non-Commercial Activities, Amenities and Programs

Historic Walker-Lake has a number of destination experiences and activities that draw people to the area for non-commercial reasons on a regular basis. These uses provide a robust and reliable population upon which to base the resurgence of the district. These include:
- Sporting matches at the stadium
- Attending high school and community gatherings (students, parents, and faculty)
- Playing at the park and playground
- Volunteering at a number of local organizations, including the schools and STEP
- Visiting the library and historical society

The events and programs produced by these entities can and should be leveraged to create shared benefits for the community and commercial stakeholders.

Social Life

The social life of the district is characterized by distinct piques of activity within a base state of relatively little daily socializing. During large sporting events the area is humming as people come and go from the stadium. There is also the daily social churn of people arriving and departing from the schools. But this energy is isolated to the immediate environs of the school facilities and not captured and maintained throughout the district. Translating this existing activity into sustained social life throughout Historic Walker-Lake will provide tremendous benefits to businesses and users alike.

Maintenance, Stewardship, and Servicing District Improvements

Historic Walker-Lake is relatively well maintained, free of trash and crime. The areas closer to the railroad tracks are more disconnected, but in general, the maintenance of the district is not something that is hindering the growth of the area.

As more visitors frequent the area especially for community events, additional public trash and recycling cans will likely be needed.
Making it Happen: Methods of Implementation and Management

Ideas remain as such without people and resources to make them reality. We have identified three implementation strategies that translate the recommendations of this report into reality. They are organized in increasing benefit/budget levels: current situation, the formation of a new business association, and the creation of a special services district. A comparison of each is followed by a more detailed description.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 Ad-hoc Volunteers and City Action</th>
<th>2 Business Association</th>
<th>3 Special Services District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volunteer and partner recruitment</strong></td>
<td>On an as-needed basis responding to one-time events</td>
<td>Sustained and able to grow slowly over time</td>
<td>Sustained and able to grow over time; Volunteer and partner time is amplified by staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advocacy</strong></td>
<td>Only in response to large one-time events</td>
<td>Ability to have some ongoing advocacy and heightened ability to respond to important one-time opportunities or threats</td>
<td>Ongoing and sustained. Staff able to effectively mobilize businesses when needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pop-up Event Planning</strong></td>
<td>Little to no new events</td>
<td>Modest, but able to better leverage existing events to benefit businesses</td>
<td>Ability to have 1-2 larger events a year plus leverage existing events to benefit businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marketing and Promotion</strong></td>
<td>Limited</td>
<td>Modest: website, some social media, some coordinated signage</td>
<td>Extensive: updated website, active social media, coordinated signage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation by Businesses</strong></td>
<td>Only the most enthusiastic</td>
<td>Opt-in membership dues; Risk of free-riding businesses benefiting without paying in</td>
<td>Extensive: assessment assures everyone who benefits from the district pays into it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maintenance Capacity</strong></td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organizational Capacity</strong></td>
<td>Little to none</td>
<td>Sustained by volunteer board</td>
<td>Part-time staff able to execute upon decisions made by the board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sources of Resources</strong></td>
<td>Little to none, with infrequent ad-hoc contributions from businesses and the city</td>
<td>Limited, but able to mobilize in-kind contributions and some cash from members as well as apply for grants</td>
<td>Moderate, but very reliable. Part-time staff able to generate significant in-kind contributions, and apply for grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Benefit</strong></td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Budget</strong></td>
<td>$0 - $2,000</td>
<td>$2,000 - $10,000</td>
<td>$10,000 - $40,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Current Situation: Ad Hoc Volunteers and City Action

**Low cost/low benefit**

The current situation is characterized by interested, but only occasionally organized businesses, property owners, community organizations and actors, and staff from the City and Schools. The district improves—slowly—through largely uncoordinated actions of the aforementioned group. One-time bursts of activity benefit the district—such as the Walk and Talk and Holiday Train events—but there is no entity or network that can sustain or champion sustained or heightened improvements.

Under current conditions, the health of the district will likely hold steady or improve slowly, but it will not be able to (re)turn into the next great main street any time soon.

Creation of a New Business Association

**Low-moderate cost/moderate benefit**

The creation of a business association would create a platform for businesses, non-profits, civic, and public agencies to come together and coordinate activities. The formation of a new entity to sustain conversation and collaboration would:

- Allow for volunteer and partner recruitment
- Heighten the district’s ability to take advantage of new opportunities
- Enable the district to advocate around one-off efforts and occurrences
- Foster limited event planning capacity
- Eventually enable the capacity to orchestrate one-time and periodic improvements and events that require little to no ongoing maintenance

There are two primary drawbacks to the business association strategy. The first is that it is entirely opt-in, so non-participating businesses and organizations can, and in our experience would benefit from the work of the organization without paying in—though there are many strategies to have more of the benefits flow to member organizations. The second is consistency of output. Without at least some outside funding almost all of the work will have to be done by volunteers and thus would take more time and effort.

**Examples**

- Minnehaha Mile, Minneapolis: [www.facebook.com/MinnehahaMile/](http://www.facebook.com/MinnehahaMile/)
- West Market District, Minneapolis: [westmarketdistrict.com/](http://westmarketdistrict.com/)
- Downtown Shakopee: [www.downtownshakopee.org/](http://www.downtownshakopee.org/)

Minnehaha Mile and the West Market District are newly formed business associations in areas transitioning from industrial to retail. Shakopee is a newly formed Main Street designee with funding from the city and chamber of commerce. HBCA is a great example of an organization that brings together both business and civic/community groups for common cause and coordination.

Special Services District (SSD)/Business Improvement Districts (BIDs)

**Moderate cost/high benefit**

A special services district, also known as a business improvement district, is an organization authorized by property and business owners that adds a small property tax assessment onto each building and funnels those new funds into an independent non-profit that is governed by the property and business owners themselves. This vehicle offers consistent funding to support business activities and the district overall. It also solves the free-rider problem: once a certain percentage of property owners (as measured by square footage) consent to
the assessment within the defined district, all others are automatically enrolled. The SSD is then re-evaluated every 5 years, with the assessment rate, district boundaries and its existence in general needing re-approval by property owners.

SSDs and BIDs have been transformative to commercial centers around the country and are becoming more frequent here in Minnesota. Downtown Duluth and Rochester have had them for over a decade, and Downtown Minneapolis initiated one (the DID) just over 5 years ago. Most relevant to Historic Walker-Lake are two smaller examples: West Broadway in Minneapolis and Downtown Chaska. The latter in particular is similar in scale and has an annual budget of $40,000.

SSD/BIDs have the benefit of regular funding and a high degree of flexibility of those funds – the board can decide where it goes. Common activities include: marketing, promotion, events, streetscape improvements, business recruiting, advocacy, sanitation and landscaping.

The consistency of funding and part-time staffing allow:
- Heightened and ongoing coordination of volunteers, members and partners
- Consistent multi-channel marketing, promotion and PR exposure
- More robust partnership formation
- Ability to execute more and larger programming and events
- More effective advocacy and mobilization of members when needed
- Capacity to apply for and secure additional grant funding

To be successful though, the public entities—who would otherwise be exempt from property taxes—would have to make contributions in lieu of the assessment. There is much precedent for this, especially along West Broadway.

As mentioned, relevant examples of small Special Services Districts/Business Improvement Districts are:
- Downtown Chaska: www.downtownchaska.com/
- West Broadway, Minneapolis: westbroadway.org/wbid/
The Musicant Group conducted an online survey in the spring of 2017. The survey received 93 responses. 85 of these responses were adults, mostly area residents. The results thus reflect the wants and needs of this population, and do not capture those of students, though many attempts were made to engage this group through the administration.

In general, responders were:
- Between the ages of 25-64 (69%)
- Residents (65%), Business owners (21%), Students (9%), Faculty (3%)

**Question:** Please rate how much you want to feel/do/have these items in the Historic Walker-Lake business area? (5-point scale)

**Biggest desires:**
- Feeling safe (4.63)
- Socializing (4.02)
- Activities and events (3.96)
- Buying food, goods, services (4.01)
- Places to rest (3.58)

**Not a strong opinion:**
- Getting information (3.29)
- Networking and educational opportunities (3.36)
- Place to do work or study (3.58)

**Analysis**
Similar to our assessment, people want to have more things to see and do, both on the commercial and community fronts.

“Feeling safe” was the highest rated priority. This sense of safety should be seen as not just “crime”, but the more prevalent threat of cars interacting with walkers and bikers, especially along Wooddale.

**Question:** Please rate how much you want these types of businesses in the area? (5-point scale)

*The biggest desires for new businesses were:*
- Coffee shop (4.54)
- Restaurant (4.50)

*Moderate desires for new businesses were:*
- Retail services: clothes, gifts, flowers (3.90)
- Community spaces (3.90)

*Less interest was expressed in having more:*
- Art supplies (3.57)
- Sports supply (3.49)
- Repair services (3.42)
- Salons (3.40)

As identified, increasing the amount of restaurants in the space is a high priority for existing visitors to the district. Further, many of the requests for food options were couched in requests for places to be, congregate, and hang out. In other words: community spaces. These businesses should be pursued to create more community attractions in the area.
**How do visitors usually arrive at Historic Walker-Lake?**

Over half of respondents said they arrive by foot, bike, or transit—a very high number! These are the best types of customers as they are very captive and want to do as many things as possible in close proximity.

This points to it being ever more critical that safety issues are resolved on Wooddale and that the bike and pedestrian experiences are improved.

**Question: How often do you visit the Historic Walker-Lake area?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Drivers</th>
<th>Walk, Bike, Bus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A couple times a week</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A couple times a month</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A couple times a year</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Almost never</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A few takeaways:

- The high (53%) percentage of daily visits by drivers indicates that they work at the school or at an area business and commute in. 84% of business owners or employees drive to the district, with the other 16% arriving by transit.
- The large cluster (32%) of those that walk, bike, or bus to the area every day are likely doing so because they are commuting to/from the area for work. This is a group of people that could support coffee shop, cafe and after-work convenience retail.
- There is a large cluster—49%—who already walk, bike, and take transit to the area several times a month. This is a very ripe customer base!

**Question: What are your primary reasons for visiting the Historic Walker-Lake area?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>% Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending a community center</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts and music</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dining</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services: Health and Wellness</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Services: Professional</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport games</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People watching</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special events</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What stands out most in these data is the wide variety of reasons that people say they visit the district. There is no dominant reason, but an array of activities that bring people there. The percentage saying they dine in the area is surprising, and may be accounted for by the McDonalds or people lumping the Park Tavern into the district. Still, as seen above, more food options should be pursued.

For complete survey responses, please refer to Appendix 1 at the end of this report.
The continued revitalization of Historic Walker-Lake as a valuable place for businesses, area residents and visitors requires a systemic approach that takes into account all of the inputs discussed in the analysis section. Our recommendations on how to accomplish this focus on improving the user experience by providing things to do, see and experience in this area. These experiences are shaped through physical elements, its stewardship, and the activities that happen there.

We acknowledge that the all of the resources needed to realize the full vision of Historic Walker-Lake may not be immediately available. With this in mind, we have prioritized our recommendations into three categories: High, Moderate, and Low. These were determined by the relative benefit given the costs of each investment. For example a low cost investment that generates large returns is given high priority, while a higher cost investment that similarly generates large returns is likely be classified as a moderate priority. These designations should be helpful in guiding decision makers about how best to deploy resources to maximize impact.

A prioritization synopsis can be found at the end of each section. The prioritization is based on three factors:

- **Priority** (high, moderate, low)
- **Budget** (most affordable)
- **Ease of implementation** (easiest)

The full description of these recommendations can be found in an accompanying spreadsheet file.

Some of the items described below overlap each other, which is a consequence of holistic placemaking, rather than manifestations of redundancy.

**Creating and Enhancing Connections (increasing visitations)**

Better connections to and within the district will increase visitation to the area and lengthen the stay of those who have already arrived. A visitor who can arrive via walking or biking is a more captive customer than one who arrives by car. Therefore much should be done to enhance the means and safety of those who travel to and within Historic Walker-Lake by bike.

Tactics include:

**Lawn signs (High priority)**

Ever-changing temporary lawn signs along the regional bike trail will build awareness of easy biking to Historic Walker-Lake, indeed making it a bike-trip destination. We suggest lawn signs because they are relatively inexpensive, movable, and adaptable.

**Locations:** along regional bike trail, boulevards

**More (unique) bike parking (High Priority)**

Just as drivers like being able to park in front of their final destination, bicyclists want convenient secure parking. Fortunately, bicycles can be more easily accommodated than cars. More bike parking should be added. These new bike racks can and should be unique and branded with Historic Walker-Lake’s new logo and/or name.

**Locations:** along Lake Street and Library Lane Triangle, near shops and the stadium entrance

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**Bike racks in use on 1st and Lewis Move and Make on Main event, Shakopee**
**Strengthening Wooddale Avenue (High Priority)**
The painted decals on Wooddale Avenue are a good start, but to make it feel (and be) truly safe for bikers, a painted bike lane—ideally with bollards—should be installed. Research has shown that women and families will only utilize spaces in which they feel safe. Without more protection from cars, the Wooddale Avenue bike lane will likely be underutilized. This should be a priority with the Southwest Light Rail Transit (LRT) stop improvements to Wooddale Avenue. Riders will be able to access Historic Walker-Lake business district better if there is a strong connection for the LRT stop with safe bikeways and sidewalks down Wooddale Avenue.

The redesign of the Wooddale Avenue Bridge will provide a great opportunity to strengthen the corridor for pedestrians and bikers.

*Locations: along Wooddale Avenue*

**Nice Ride/Bike Share Stations (Moderate Priority)**
Expanding the Nice Ride bike share system to St. Louis Park, with locations at Historic Walker-Lake would greatly enhance the connectivity and access to Historic Walker-Lake to a large population of existing and potential customers.

*Locations: future Wooddale Light Rail stop, Wooddale and Lake Street*

**Enhancing the Social Atmosphere (lengthening the stay of visitors)**

**Moveable tables and chairs (High Priority)**
Movable tables and chairs are a critical feature in most every space that The Musicant Group works in. More useful and usable than benches, people can put them where they want in a way to accommodate any group or sun/shade/view preference. The tables offer a much more comfortable option for eating, studying, and working. With minimal management, these movable features generate high usage with little to no theft or vandalism.

The tables and chairs could and should be branded around the new Historic Walker-Lake identity.

*Locations: plaza in front of stadium, bus stops, in front of stores on Lake Street and Walker, outside of school entrances, in the playgrounds and parks*

**Wayfinding and signage (High Priority)**
Wayfinding should be in place to show what activities and businesses are in the area along with a map, directory, and list of upcoming programs, high school sports games, and activities. Wayfinding could also show a dog-walking loop around the stadium.

Along with wayfinding, a variety of traffic calming techniques should be used such as a crosswalk, parklet, bike lanes, stop signs, road narrowing, and/or increasing human activity along the street, especially on Library Lane and Lake Street.

*Locations: near entrances to schools, the stadium, and community centers, on city-owned parcel at Wooddale and Lake Street*

**Parklets (Low Priority)**
As was tested during the Walk and Talk event, converting 1-2 parking spaces into an attractive and protected seating area is a popular and cost effective way to allow people to sit, linger, and socialize. Parklets offer the benefits of free outdoor patio seating for take-out restaurants, communicate to passersby that there are people patronizing nearby businesses, and allow people to stay downtown long after their initial desire has been met.
St. Louis Park should start a parklet program that allows businesses to create them in front of their stores. Learning from Minneapolis’s program, it needs to be a simple and easy process – which Minneapolis’s is not. Parklets would be allowed from April-November and should require little to no fee.

**Locations:** along Lake Street

**Creating a One-of-a-kind Experience**

**More dynamic on-street merchandising (High Priority)**

Enhancing the experience of wandering through Lake Street and Library Lane businesses is a critical input for success. Visitors need to be enticed with desires that they didn’t know they had prior to arriving. One of the most effective ways of doing this is through on-street merchandising, which meets customers where they are. Few businesses are doing enough in this regard, which diminishes the pedestrian experience. Businesses should all bring their energy, wares, and merchandise out to the sidewalk.

Examples include:
- Clothing racks
- Rolling carts with books, merchandise, etc.
- A lawn game like bag toss with a business logo on it
- Potted plants
- Attractive, but out of date or broken equipment, to display outside

**Locations:** along Lake and Walker Streets

**Activate the alleys (High Priority)**

The alleys behind the St. Louis Park high school and by the warehouses offer a special opportunity to create a truly unique experience in Historic Walker-Lake. The alleys are pedestrian in scale, offer many quirky nooks and crannies, and are already home to several murals and works of art. They are also the visual gateway into the district from the high school.

Creating murals on the back of the Lake Street retail alley and a pedestrian crossing over the rail will enhance the visibility and attraction of coming into the Historic Walker-Lake business district. High school students could be the volunteers for the murals and it would be a great way to get them engaged, and to build community.

Another alley that is ripe for enhancement is the one between the buildings on Walker Lake and Library Lane as it could serve as a venue for small programming.

The alleys have a potential to be a centerpiece of the Historic Walker-Lake experience, transforming into an art-focused destination with:
- More murals and installations by local artists and high school student artists
- Transforming some of the nooks into seating areas, gardens, patios, work shops through partnering with adjacent businesses. Just the placement of existing elements that businesses have in storage is a great first step.
- Installing simple string lights between the buildings to create a festive atmosphere and enhance nighttime visibility
- Using the alley as a location for programming, such as: movies, performances, food carts, and more
- Encouraging art and artisan focused businesses to locate and open up onto the alleys
Examples of murals and art installations that interact with the alley:

Locations: alleys behind Lake and Walker Streets

Embrace the railroad (Low Priority)
While often viewed as a nuisance, and identified as a barrier, the railroad is a unique feature that should be embraced and enhanced. Seeing the trains go by associated activities can and should become a destination experience that people “must” have when visiting Historic Walker-Lake. Ways to leverage the presence of the tracks and trains, include:

- Better pedestrian crossing from the high school to Lake Street
- Create train-themed parklets and enhance the small plazas that already exist to view, embrace, and play with the train idea. These intersections and plazas should offer a full train-themed experience for visitors and residents alike.
- Continue to partner for the potential holiday train event
- Landscaping in rail row

Locations: along railroad tracks behind Lake Street and at Library/Walker Streets
Furniture and Fixtures
The addition of furniture and fixtures is a key strategy for the activation of the area. Furniture and fixture changes offer a more affordable alternative to wholesale redesign of the space, are relatively easy to install, and often provide interactive and community building features that users love.

Bike racks and pump station (High Priority)
Along with bike racks, the bike pump station can and should be complemented by an attractive and useful bike pump station, bolted to the ground. A pump station would:
- Increase destination bike traffic to the Historic Walker-Lake area
- Ease and enhance the use of the area for bikers
- Brand St. Louis Park as bike friendly

Locations: corner of Wooddale and Lake Street

Dog waste station (Moderate Priority)
Historic Walker-Lake is a huge pet destination and dog walking area. The addition of a dog waste station to the area will:
- Make the area overall a destination for dog owners
- Generate more trips to the area by dog owners, resulting in more potential customers for nearby businesses
- Reduce instances of dog waste throughout the area

This would be a natural amenity to be cared for and/or sponsored by one of the pet care businesses in the district.

Locations: outside of pet store along Lake and near the playground, corner of Wooddale Avenue and Lake Street

Little Free Library (Moderate Priority)
A little free library can add a tremendous amount to a space with a small footprint. These facilities can also be used to store games, tools, non-perishable food, and other free amenities. When the broader community feels ownership over the library and keeps it well stocked, the benefits are numerous:
- Generates destination trips to see the ever changing selection
- Serves as a destination for book drop offs
- Promotes reading and literacy
- Brands the space and its ownership as an entity that cares
- Creates broad senses of ownership over the library and its surrounding spaces by a large constituency

The participatory nature and intergenerational appeal of the library—and reading itself—fosters relationships between people and space that throws off benefits to all adjacent uses. The involvement by the community in the design, decoration, and stewardship of the library only furthers these effects. This could also be a potential partnership with the St. Louis Park Library.

Locations: Along Lake, Walker, and/or Library Lane
Cafe lighting (Moderate Priority)
String lights are a low cost way to add a festive energy and enhance safety of any space.

Locations: between buildings over parking lots within trees along Lake Street, and around the perimeter of the stadium

Information Center (Moderate Priority)
There needs to be a place in a high visibility and trafficked area to promote all that is happening in the district. The place should house:

- A map of the district with a list of businesses and organizations, amenities, events, and parking/pathway information
- A place for area organizations and businesses to easily promote events and happenings—ideally just by stapling posters and fliers to a board
- Brand the district as a place with a lot of great things happening

Locations: Wooddale and Lake, along Lake Street in boulevard, stadium plaza

Gateway element (High Priority)
It is important to have a gateway element in place when you arrive from Wooddale Avenue to Lake Street. This seems like a natural place for an archway, banner, or boulevard elements to provide a welcoming environment into the district. That said, we do not recommend flagpole banners, as we have found them to not be a good investment relative to their cost.

Locations: along Wooddale between (or at corner of) Lake Street and/or Highway 7

Historical plaques and markers (Moderate Priority)
As one of the oldest parts of St. Louis Park and the proximity to the historical society, there is a unique opportunity to highlight the history of the community within Historic Walker-Lake. This could be done via:

- Partnering with the St. Louis Park Historical society
- Creating opportunities for dedications of furniture and fixtures
- Providing relevant historical information on buildings and signage

Locations: adjacent to any historical site, Lake Street Boulevards, Walker Avenue sidewalks

Site Improvements
While investments in furniture and fixtures often deliver the highest rewards relative to cost, there are a few permanent site improvements that would significantly improve the Historic Walker-Lake area.

Open up fencing by Community Center (High Priority)
Enhancing access within the district is a high priority. One of the biggest obstacles is the gate that blocks pedestrian or bike access along the south side of the stadium, between Lake Street and the Community Center playground. By opening this gate, people will be able to walk a loop of the district and not be stifled in their desires.

Location: playground next to the stadium
Local public and interactive art (High Priority)
St. Louis Park has done a wonderful job integrating public art into many of its new developments and facilities. That thread should be brought into the Historic Walker-Lake district. By working with people from the community to create the art, you can create a strong emotional attachment to the area and reasons for people to bring their friends and families to visit.

To these ends, there are ways to add public art that don’t have to be expensive or as permanent as much of what has been done elsewhere. Examples include:
- Murals in the alleys (as described above)
- Partnering with local schools, artists, organizations, community groups, and the library, such as Rock Camp for Dads, STEP, Boy Scouts, Lions Club, etc.
- Having large events, where part of the festivities is to create a lasting piece of public art
- Paint-on hopscotch or other games onto sidewalks and parking lots
- Making small but high impact enhancements to everyday objects like utility boxes, blank walls, sidewalks, etc.
- Community piano and partnerships with local music organizations
- Art pads for installing art

Examples from across the world that demonstrate these concepts include:

Location: anywhere! The stadium plaza, Wooddale and Lake, blank walls, sidewalks, along the railroad, alleys, etc.

Wooddale and Lake corner parking lot (Moderate Priority)
We’ve named the parking lot on the corner of Wooddale and Lake a number of times as a good location for enhancements because it is:
- The highest visibility location in the district
- Owned by the City
- In a condition that takes away from the district overall

This site in particular should be a focus of placemaking enhancements like parklets, lawn games, landscaping, and programming (discussed below).
**Dog walking loop (Moderate Priority)**
The district has emerged as a destination cluster for pet services. With a large residential population surrounding the area, better accommodating dogs would be a win-win for all involved. In addition to providing more facilities for the animals, creating and communicating a dog walk loop or off-leash run, would add daily activity to the district. Options include:

- Off-leash days in the stadium
- Off-leash dog runs
- Creating a map of dog walking routes, identifying waste pick up sites along the way

*Locations: within the stadium, adjacent to playground next to stadium, the community center, or rail road tracks, the loop of Lake, Walker, and through the playground if the gate is opened (around the stadium)*

**Bus stop shelter (Moderate Priority)**
A significant percentage of visitors to the district ride transit to and from the area every day. There is a great opportunity to enhance transit riders' experiences and enhance the sense of place through formal or informal shelters for bus riders.

Additions could include: adjacent little free library, a community message board, and better seating.

**Light poles (Low Priority)**
Attractive and historical 10-foot, down-lit poles should be placed along Lake Street, Library Lane, and Wooddale Avenue to create a connection loop and district. The white light they emit is ideal for urban spaces – providing a more clear light with less severe shadows than yellow light. These provide adequate light for the use of the plaza.

Light poles can also have branded banners on them with the district’s new name and logo to create a sense of place and identity.

*Locations: along Lake Street, down Library Lane, and down Walker Street in the triangle*
Programs, Activities, Amenities, and Management Systems

The physical elements of a given space create the foundation for use. A system of programming, management, and events can and should be layered for a place to reach its full potential. However when many people are doing an activity, it attracts 2-5x as many others to the space to watch and take part.

Lock/unlock tables and chairs (High Priority)
Part in parcel with the addition of the tables and chairs is their management. We have found that partnering with adjacent businesses that benefit from these seating areas in the care of them creates a low-cost, win-win scenario. Experience shows securing the furniture late at night is sufficient to eliminate theft issues.

**Locations:** adjacent to businesses with seating

Board games for use on patio and parklets (High Priority)
With the addition of tables, users can do more than just eat a snack at them such as playing games. By providing board games for free rental at area businesses patios and parklets will:
- Get more use
- Facilitate more interaction
- Drive traffic to participating businesses

Similar to the movable chairs, partnering with an adjacent business is a great way to secure these elements each night. If that is not possible, we have found that there is FAR less theft of these items than what is often expected, and leaving them out unsecured at all times and replenishing supplies when needed is an effective, low-cost backup strategy.

**Locations:** within little free libraries, outside businesses with outdoor storage, within parklets

Lawn games (High Priority)
In addition to the more sedentary board games, lawn games such as bag toss offer a fun, active, and intergenerational activity that can be played within tight space constraints.

**Locations:** Stadium plaza, boulevards of storefronts, playgrounds, within the stadium, city lot on Wooddale

Food trucks/stands (High Priority)
On the survey the main addition respondents wanted was a cafe and restaurants. Until these can be added, nothing draws crowds to a space like a good food vendor. We recommend changing regulations to allow food trucks to come to the area as-of-right (following any upfront permitting). This would be especially welcome during events at the stadium such as Homecoming and other football games.

**Locations:** next to the stadium plaza
Small-scale programming and events (Moderate Priority)

Regularly occurring small-scale events and programs that bring people together have a number of benefits:

• Bring people to an area for the first time
• Create new routines of use
• Create a sense of momentum
• Generate visitors who don’t come for the program, but just because other people are present
• Enhancing the visitor experience for those not there specifically for the program
• Examples of programs are: concerts, fitness classes, art making classes, community booths and activities, performances, interactive activations, volunteer actions, games, etc.

On busier nights and weekends especially during St. Louis Park high school games, small concerts by musicians in the area can turn a regular night into an unforgettable experience for visitors. These can be produced along a spectrum: from unorganized buskers to paid professional musicians. If an event attracts X number of formal participants, it is likely that 3-5 times as many people show up just to be around the activity.

Locations: stadium plaza, in front of Lake Street storefronts, side parking lots along Lake Street

St. Louis Park High School game day activities and programming (Moderate Priority)

Special attention should be paid to game days at the stadium. Hundreds of people descend on the area during these events. More would come, stay and patronize businesses if the experience was more dynamic. Tactics include:

• Close parts of Lake Street for block parties
• Live music
• Food trucks
• Fire pits
• Lawn games
• Moveable seating

Volunteer opportunities (Moderate Priority)

The district is also home to a cluster of organizations that host many opportunities to volunteer, including STEP, Perspectives, the schools, and more. If people enjoy coming to the district as part of their volunteer experience, all the better!

These organizations should be engaged around:

• Enhancement projects within the district
• Promote volunteer opportunities for the organizations
• Deals at area businesses for those that volunteer
St. Louis Park Library events (Moderate Priority)
With the library so close by, there are a number of ways to invite the energy of this center of community and information to the district. Possibilities include:

- Pop up and/or little-free library
- Signage indicating its proximity
- Reading and learning events in the district

St. Louis Park Historical Society (Moderate Priority)
As one of the oldest parts of St. Louis Park, Historic Walker-Lake is a perfect spot for the historical society to host programs highlighting the city’s past and heritage. These could include:

- Guided tours of the areas
- Educational events
- Signage, photos and plaques that create a non-guided walking tour
- QR audio walking tour to learn about the past

Placemaking Business Improvement Grants (Moderate Priority)
Like a facade improvement grant, but more flexible and affordable, this program would help area organizations and businesses generate value by more effectively engaging with their environment and customer base through placemaking enhancements to their storefronts. These grants would create a district-wide enhancement to the community and commercial environments with seating, outdoor merchandising, activities, and landscaping enhancements. The district-wide effort would create a more dynamic place for visitors to explore, stay, and patronize.

Open up St. Louis Park High School stadium for all seasons (Moderate Priority)
In the middle of the entire district, the stadium is too often a donut hole rather than the real center of activity. The stadium should be utilized on a more regular basis when games and practices are not occurring. This would provide a new steady stream of people coming to the district to utilize this unique amenity. Uses could include:

- Run clubs and fitness groups
- Rental by 3rd party sports leagues like CSC
- Visits by summer day camps
- Utilization by the community center
- Winter programming, such as an ice rink(s) for open use and/or broomball, etc.

If and when the stadium was opened, it would have to be:

- Promoted
- Have an easy rental process
- Have someone charged with recruiting activities and uses to it (ideally)

Weeknight Farmer’s Market (Low Priority)
A weeknight market is more feasible than one on a weekend to start, as farmers are more willing to try a new location during an off-peak time. If a farmers market was attempted, we would recommend combining it with other activities, such as a small concert, food vending, etc. The more activities there are, the more the space and the event turn into a destination experience.

Add in Saturdays 9am-12pm Farmer’s Market as an option too.

Location: stadium plaza, city-owned lot on Wooddale and Lake St.
Branding and Marketing

Half the battle is creating something dynamic that people want and need. The other half is letting your audience know about it. Historic Walker-Lake would be well served by amplifying all that is good about the district through enhanced marketing and branding efforts.

Design and print stickers for tables and chairs (High Priority)
New furniture provides an excellent opportunity to welcome users to Historic Walker-Lake. Vinyl stickers are an affordable and attractive way to spread the message about Historic Walker-Lake and participating businesses. These can be easily affixed to the backs of chairs and tabletops.

Name the business district (High Priority)
Through the Walk and Talk event and community engagement, it was discerned that Historic Walker-Lake was the best name for the district.

Pathway(s) painted on the pavement (logo stencils) (High Priority)
At the Walk and Talk event, we spray painted the event logo on the sidewalks to attract people to the event, create awareness, and act as wayfinding. This is an easy and affordable start to wayfinding. As the branding is developed along with the name and logo, doing a spray chalk logo outside will increase the awareness and trips.

Locations: on Wooddale, Lake, Walker, Library Lane – within and leading into the district

Social media presence (Moderate Priority)
It’s important to meet people where they are. More and more, people are spending time on social media. Creating and actively managing 1-3 social media platforms will:
- Create a narrative for the district
- Allow for the memorialization of success through photo sharing
- Amplify those within the district through sharing of their own posts and events
- Generate a wider audience of visitors’ peers

Historic remembrance (Moderate Priority)
As one of the oldest parts of St. Louis Park, there are important and unique opportunities to celebrate the history of Historic Walker-Lake and the broader community. By highlighting the history of the district, people begin to feel more attached to what is there today. These highlights could include:
- Branding the area as a historic main street
- Markers on historical buildings
- Display of old historical photos and info
- Partnering with SLP Historical Society on programs and installations
### APPENDIX:
**Placemaking Recommendations Matrix**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT</th>
<th>PRIORITY</th>
<th>BUDGET</th>
<th>IMPLEMENTATION</th>
<th>RATING TOTAL</th>
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<td>Creating and Enhancing Connections (increasing visitations)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Lawn signs</td>
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<td>Embrace the railroad</td>
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<td>Lock/unlock tables and chairs</td>
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