



# WEST 7TH STREET/ FORT ROAD FEDERATION

## Fort Road Federation Strategic Plan 2019 – 2024

<b>Our Vision</b>	A neighborhood that is vibrant, supportive, welcoming, and safe.
<b>Our Mission</b>	The Fort Road Federation coordinates participation in advocacy and planning and builds community connections for the residents, businesses, and nonprofit organizations of the West 7 <sup>th</sup> neighborhood so that it is a place where people want to live, work, and play.
<b>Who We Serve</b>	<p>The Fort Road Federation exists to serve the residents and businesses of the West End/West Seventh neighborhood of Saint Paul, Minnesota. We are also cognizant of future residents and the many people who visit the neighborhood for recreation, business, and entertainment.</p> <p>According to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS) there were 11,133 people who lived in Planning District 9, the West Seventh neighborhood. Like all of Saint Paul, our neighborhood is growing with a 4 percent increase in residents since 1990.</p> <p>While 75 percent of current residents identify as White, diversity is growing particularly among young people. Eight percent of residents are foreign-born and 14 percent speak a language other than English as their primary language.</p> <p>Just more than half of households rent (52 percent) and 48 percent own their homes. One-third of households pay more than 30 percent of their income toward housing costs, which is considered housing cost-burdened. Three-quarters of households moved to the area since 2000, and 45 percent moved to the area since 2010. Fourteen percent of residents have lived in the neighborhood for 40 or more years.</p> <p>The median household income is \$57,746, which is similar to the city as a whole. Eleven percent of people live below poverty. Ninety-two percent of adults 25 years or older are high school graduates or higher, with 38 percent having a bachelor's degree or higher.</p>
<b>Our Goals: 2019 - 2024</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Broad and inclusive representation on and involvement in the Fort Road Federation by residents, businesses, and nonprofit organizations.</li></ol>

- 2) Attain diversified income that it is stable and consistent for Federation operations.
- 3) Increase and maintain livability through access to affordable and safe housing, crime prevention, and multiple transportation options.
- 4) Support a diverse base of locally-owned businesses and non-profit organizations
- 5) Increase awareness of the Fort Road Federation and support events where people can have fun together.

## **Background and Context**

We envision an organization that:

- Supports and welcomes all residents where people are involved in the organization at different levels and capacities, depending on their needs, abilities, and desires. We envision standing room only events and meetings, engagement across the community, disagreements being hashed out respectfully, and clear on-ramps to board and other roles.
- Recognizes the need for varied funding sources, a well-compensated staff, and a predictable budget. All of these things would allow for freedom to take difficult positions and truly advocate for the West End.
- Is situated in a neighborhood where people are in the community, enjoying parks and recreation, where businesses are thriving, residents can safely walk or bike to destinations, and is seen as a destination – not just a place to pass through.
- Is a true partner to businesses and non-profit organizations so that there are few unoccupied buildings, residents can get what they need in the neighborhood, and the entire neighborhood is thriving.
- Supports neighborhood connections not only around resident needs, but for social activities that build community and natural support networks.

The FRF's core assets that will help us achieve our mission and goals are:

- An involved and committed board of directors that is interested in increasing diversity, representation, and inclusion;
- Momentum of increased transparency and communication;
- A long and solid history of implementing programs and services and advocating for the West End;
- Positive relationships with key city staff and elected officials; and
- Neighborhood culture of engagement on issues.

Some of the potential weaknesses or deficits that impede our ability to achieve our mission and goals are:

- Lack of diversity and broad involvement, as well as wariness on the part of some communities that they are welcome or feel safe being involved with FRF;
- Ability of current board and volunteers to commit to more work, including the capacity to sustain efforts;

- Current funding and philanthropic environment that could limit fundraising efforts; and
- Restrictions of current city plans, zoning, and business financing structures.

## **Goals and Strategies**

**Goal 1:** Broad and inclusive representation on and involvement in the Fort Road Federation by residents, businesses, and nonprofit organizations.

### **Strategies:**

- A) Revise the FRF bylaws so that organizational governance supports broad and inclusive engagement, many ways for residents to become involved in the organization, and transparency and accountability to the community.
- B) Attend board training workshops offered through the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits.
- C) Conduct outreach and increase communication through:
  - a. Identification and attendance at existing community events,
  - b. Focus outreach on renters and people under-represented in Federation activities, and
  - c. Obtain a volunteer or intern communications specialist to develop and implement a communications plan.
- D) Develop inclusive and welcoming decision-making structures that welcome community involvement and do not favor those with knowledge of organizational or government process, time to attend meetings, and financial and other resources.

**Goal 2:** Attain diversified income that it is stable and consistent for Federation operations.

### **Strategies:**

- A) Identify and engage five likely foundation and individual funder prospects.
- B) Consult with a financial planner.
- C) Survey other District Councils on their fundraising efforts to better understand and potentially other ways of increasing revenue.

**Goal 3:** Increase and maintain livability through access to affordable and safe housing, crime prevention, environmental stewardship, and multiple transportation options.

### **Strategies:**

- A) Research promising practices on housing affordability in other cities and advocate for implementing them in the West End and Saint Paul.
- B) Promote existing housing stability, rehabilitation and maintenance, and home-ownership programs available to Saint Paul residents.
- C) Explore opportunities to build connections between neighbors such as skill-sharing, ride-sharing, and tool lending.
- D) Advocate with the city for specific ways to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety along West 7<sup>th</sup> including temporary and permanent bump-outs, traffic calming and road diets, and CIB funding for physical/structural changes. Explore an Open Streets West 7<sup>th</sup> event.
- E) Identify ways the Federation can implement more sustainable re-use and recycling practices within the organization and at community events.

**Goal 4:** Support a diverse base of locally-owned and led businesses and nonprofit organizations.

**Strategies:**

- A) Highlight local businesses and non-profit organizations through social media and other communications and community events that draw attention to organizations and resources within the community.
- B) Research policies that support independent business-friendly leasing policies for new development projects.
- C) Partner with the West 7<sup>th</sup> Business Association through a joint retreat or other means such as task forces or committees.

**Goal 5:** Increase awareness of the Fort Road Federation and support events where people can have fun together.

**Strategies:**

- A) Develop an outreach plan that identifies specific communities to increase engagement.
- B) Increase intentional outreach to renters and new residents through developing a lease packet with Federation information for landlords to provide to residents, a welcome packet for new residents, and an annual mailing to identified communities.
- C) Install prominent street-facing signage at the new office location.
- D) Develop and implement a community event.