

THIS MONTH IN EAST PHILLIPS & MIDTOWN...



THRIVING BUSINESSES FOR A FLOURISHING NEIGHBORHOOD

The East Phillips Improvement Coalition (EPIC) and the Midtown Phillips Neighborhood Association (MPNAI) recently applied for a Business District grant from the City of Minneapolis, with a vision for the future of Bloomington Avenue. Our proposal includes the creation of a Phillips Multicultural Business and Contractor Association, a marketing campaign to promote local businesses, and an Open Streets Festival to celebrate the vibrancy of the neighborhood.

At the heart of our vision is the **Phillips Multicultural Business and Contractor Association**. This initiative aims to connect local business owners and Phillips independent contractors in a collaborative network designed to share referrals, resources, and opportunities. By working together, we can foster mutual support and strengthen the local, walkable economy, all while promoting a sense of community ownership and pride. Over time, we envision these efforts creating a resilient ecosystem where wealth remains in the community, fostering sustainable economic growth.

The concept of a circular economy is central to our vision, emphasizing the continuous flow of resources and wealth within the local community. By keeping money circulating locally—through businesses sourcing materials, hiring talent, and reinvesting profits within Phillips—we aim to build a strong local economy. Phillips is already taking strides toward a circular economy, with local businesses and community organizations circulating resources, wealth, and community identity. However, there is still much work to be done to fully realize this potential.

In fact, research has shown that local businesses outperform chain stores in several key areas. They have deeper connections to their communities, which enables them to leverage local networks, foster customer loyalty, and reduce transportation impacts (which we love for the sake of clean air!). While big-box stores often use their bulk buying power to undercut local businesses, this may come at the cost of our long-term community wealth.

In addition to impacting the flow of capital in our local economy, a thriving business district also has an interdependent relationship with neighborhood safety and well-being. A run-down business corridor feels less safe and deters locals and visitors alike, causing lower foot traffic which in turn can make an area more vulnerable to crime. Well-managed businesses bring more than economic impact, they bring a positive presence (Welna Hardware is a particularly long-standing contributor to the neighborhood).

The businesses on Bloomington Avenue have proven their resilience and importance to the neighborhood. At Macca, Elmi sells whoopie pies and spices, while Super More Value offers gyros to the community. The Grease Pit not only fixes bikes but also teaches people the skills to do it themselves. Royal Cafe, a gathering place for pool players, offers a space where neighbors can connect and unwind and Duce Restaurant sells the best Sambusas and Shaah Caday (somali tea). These businesses are more than just shops—they are the heartbeat of our community, circulating money, resources, and cultural identity.

The Phillips Multicultural Business and Contractor Association is being designed to create a support system that will help businesses grow, improve their operations, and strengthen relationships within the community. Together, we can make Phillips a model of economic resilience, community connection, and sustainability.

What can you do? Continue to support our local businesses and ensure that the businesses of Bloomington Avenue remain an integral part of our community's future. And if you are a business owner or a resident interested in strengthening Bloomington Ave, reach out!

EPIC AND MPNAI - UPDATED PHASED MERGER PLAN

OUTREACH
Phase 3

FORMING
Phase 4

VIEW OUR PHASED PLAN



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