

Project Launch Meeting Notes
Meeting of Thursday, Jan 24th, 2019

Questions

Question): In reference to the makeup of affordable housing within Opus, how does the affordability percentage in Opus compare to the rest of the City?

1/5 of the housing in Minnetonka is classified as affordable. Within Opus, 47% of the housing is affordable to someone making 80% Area Median Income.

Question): What are some challenges you see in why retailers do not want to be inside of the park?

Navigation within the park is a challenge. However, according to Kriss Novak of Minnetonka Crossings, retailers located on the periphery of the park experience ample business during the workweek.

Question): What are people looking for in the park?

Amenities within the park, trails a huge draw. Wayfinding is important, difficulties in navigating Opus.

UHG Responded, transit connections: In an annual survey, less than 25 people out of 5000 employees use transit to get to the office.

Question): What is the total number of school age children living within the area currently?

*523 children under the age of 18, or about 12% of the population of Opus' census tract
Source: US Census Bureau: Census Tract 261.04*

How many students are educated in Opus?

- *Eagle Ridge Academy: 1,381, K-12*
- *ISLA: 321, K-6 Spanish Immersion*
- *Sunrise International Montessori School: 30, Ages 3-6*
- *Lionsgate Academy: 190, Grades 7-12*
- *Adler Graduate School: 311, College*

Question): How to market Opus locally, and to an international market?

Focus on the uniqueness of Opus, focus retail on the periphery. Start thinking of an iconic or major development as a landmark or draw for Opus.

Bring Opus and Minnetonka into one community, start making sure that people know of the areas as one in the same.

Question): When deciding to locate your business, what attracted you to the Opus area?

United HealthGroup – *Wanted to be located in a first ring suburb at the time [sic] within the 494 freeway loop*

MTKA Crossings – *Wanted to be in a first ring suburb location, great demographics, and was a major employment hub [sic] within the 494 freeway loop*

Dominium- *LRT, Lack of affordable housing in the area, school district*
Note: Opus Park is located within the Hopkins School District. Schools serving this neighborhood are Gatewood Elementary, West Junior High, and Hopkins High School.

Marriott Southwest – *1st major building, locates these hotels in upscale business parks.*

Opus – *We have roots in the park, and saw the trail system as a huge amenity*

Question): What do you see as the future of Opus?

- *Look to attract another major corporate user.*
- *Continue to focus on preserving or creating natural space.*
- *Keep enhancing the trail system, provide wayfinding.*
- *A place where people will want to live.*

Themes and Comments Heard:

Transportation Challenges and Opportunities

- How to address traffic flow through the park?
- People unfamiliar with the park, driving wrong direction, causing accidents.
- Implementation of a land bridge, encouraging walkability and green space within the business park.
- Look to leverage what the skyway system has done downtown, even though skyway system can be confusing, people have embraced it, and created destination areas within it. Opus can replicate that.
- Increasing walkability, trail access

General Comments

- More demand for retail or restaurant space
- One way trips are not enough to support retail within the park
- Park needs to become more of a destination. Hotel is busy three days per week, and 95% of business comes from within the park.
- Find ways to connect Opus trail system, trail maintenance an issue.
- Placemaking is important
- Start thinking about what the future residents will want.
- Encourage more corporate investment.