

# A FUTURE PARK AT UPPER HARBOR TERMINAL

A Black centered Listening Session, led by Juxtaposition Arts

In July 2020, Juxtaposition Arts hosted a listening session with Black Northsiders including youth, adults and elders, as part of the engagement process for the future public park at Upper Harbor Terminal.

Prompted by conversations at the Community Advisory Committee and current events related to public parks, we were looking to find out more about what would make a park at Upper Harbor Terminal a Safe, Inviting and Relevant resource for Black Northsiders.

Here are the themes and ideas we heard.

## WE CAN USE DESIGN & AESTHETICS TO FOSTER BLACK CULTURE IN THE PARK

THE FEELING CREATED THROUGH THE DESIGN OF THE PARK CAN GREATLY AFFECT HOW THE PARK IS USED AND HOW PEOPLE FEEL WHEN IN IT. THIS IS A CHANCE FOR BLACK CREATIVES TO SHAPE OUR LANDSCAPE. AND AT THE SAME TIME, WHO COMES TO THE PARK WILL ALSO SHAPE HOW IT FEELS.

*“Why should we stop at Minnehaha-esque design when perhaps we could go further?”*

*“There’s an intention that we set to make this a space about healing and peace. And that also flows through the way that we do design, the way we design the aesthetic, and the way that we bring this forward and in the park is just one piece of it.”*

*“The people who are there are more important than the aesthetic for making it feel like a Black space.”*

*“It would look nice, and colorful like a nice green tropical rain forest and see lots of pretty black woman and men having pretty colors on them.”*

## WE HAVE DIVERSE AND CHANGING DEFINITIONS OF SAFETY

OUR FEELINGS OF SAFETY ARE OFTEN BASED ON OUR PAST EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTION OF THE WORLD. WE ALSO HAVE VARIED APPROACHES TO HOW WE DEAL WITH FEELING UNSAFE.

*“Safety is a freedom to imagine... and to try new things. I think the world is bigger when I’m safe. Safety to me also means clear and careful communication with other people.”*

*“We have been led to believe that fear is at the forefront as Black people.”*

*“For me, it’s like listening to my intuition and my ancestors that keep me safe. So not like a material thing, but more of like a spiritual thing.”*

*“A place where you know your kids can be safe and you don’t have to worry about them.”*

*“There’s a big difference between being a black man or a darker skinned woman and a light skinned woman. It’s not the same, there’s different levels.”*

*“A place where white people don’t have assumed authority to police you.”*

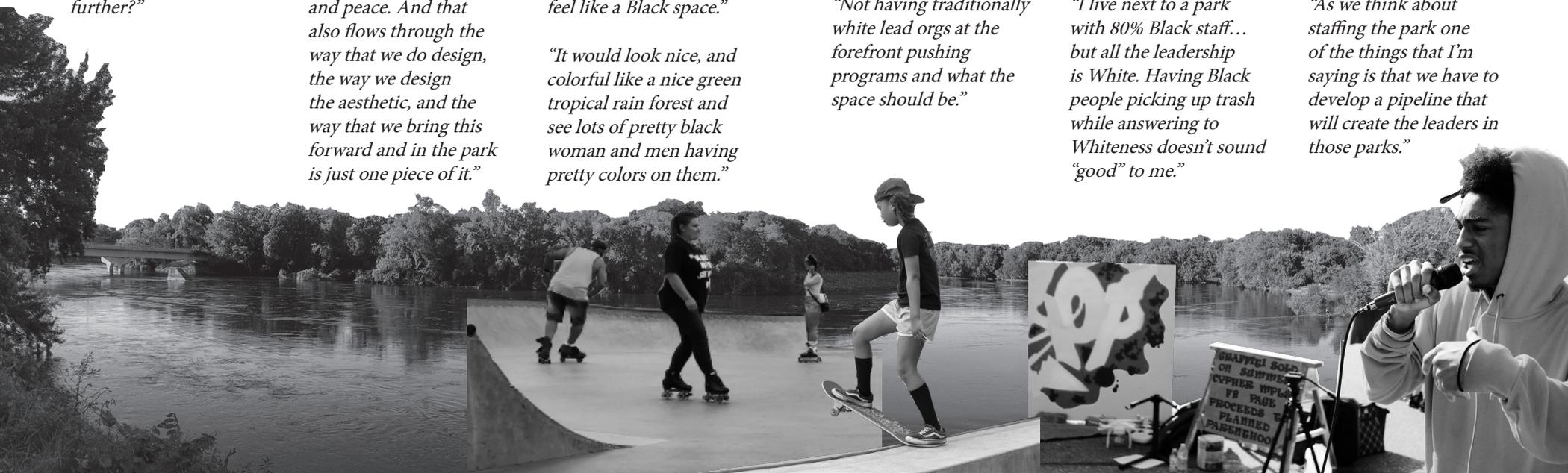
## WE WANT TO SEE BLACK PEOPLE IN LEADERSHIP ROLES

WE RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF DECISION MAKING POWER BEING IN BLACK HANDS. THE REOURCES OF THE PARK WOULD BE MORE ACCESSIBLE IF THEY WERE FACILITATED BY BLACK PEOPLE.

*“Not having traditionally white lead orgs at the forefront pushing programs and what the space should be.”*

*“I live next to a park with 80% Black staff... but all the leadership is White. Having Black people picking up trash while answering to Whiteness doesn’t sound “good” to me.”*

*“As we think about staffing the park one of the things that I’m saying is that we have to develop a pipeline that will create the leaders in those parks.”*



## IMAGINING A FUTURE PARK BY THE RIVER

*"We have to get there to be an investment in programming and connective work that is as committed as the infrastructure development."*

*"The purpose I thought was to get people, the community, the black community, or people of color to go over to Upper Harbor Terminal, to see the river--the river that runs literally through this whole country--which is totally different than going to a park with a playground in a little foot pool and, you know, a rec center."*

*"We got staffed for black. We've got cultural activities going on. We got music, we got dance. And we got social spaces that are cultural to the black community in North Minneapolis to get them across over 94, they can be a part of it."*

*"An Afro-Centric space has abundance and kinship. Resources can be shared."*

## THE PARK CAN'T SOLVE EVERYTHING. WHAT CAN IT SOLVE?

**THE GROUP RAISED THE POINT THAT PARKS CAN ONLY DO SO MUCH AND TALKED ABOUT THE QUESTION OF WHAT THE PARK CAN DO.**

*"We need to get back to getting that type of celebration again, being in public space, being able to use the space and support our own businesses and our own culture and dance and whatever, and not be pushed away."*

*"This is an opportunity to dream big, to heal, and reconnect with the natural world."*

*"The economic and the social things, the park isn't going to solve that. But I'd like If the park could be a way to get away from that so that we do feel safe. I can leave. I can look at beautiful flowers. I can learn about my environment. I can be with family and friends and really, truly enjoy myself in a cultural setting that is acceptable of me."*

*"Money invested into making pretty spaces right now seems a little frivolous to me."*

*"The idea that certain activities are white is because there are access issues and class issues that we need to address."*

**SOME KIND OF SCHOOL OR EDUCATION PROGRAM CREATED SPECIFICALLY FOR BIPOC YOUTH TO LEARN ABOUT NATURE AND THE RIVER**

**ROTATING SCULPTURE GARDEN**

**SUBSIDIZE ALL REGIONAL PARK AMENITIES FOR LOW WEALTH COMMUNITIES AND COMMUNITIES OF COLOR. THINK PADDLESHARE FOR ALL, FOOD ESTABLISHMENTS THAT DON'T CHARGE STADIUM PRICES FOR FOOD, AND PROGRAMMING**

**ROLLER SKATING WITH MUSIC**

**PAINTING IN NATURE**

**URBAN AGRICULTURE**

**INCLUSIVE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES**

**MONKEY BARS, PRETTY FLOWERS AND OTHER KIDS THAT I CAN CHAT WITH AND HAVE FUN WITH**

**BOATING**

**COMMUNITY BASED EVENTS**

**MINI SCIENCE MUSEUM**

