In terms of assumptions, beliefs, values, ideas, structures, and procedures…What trends are shaping Grand Avenue?

**The Future is Grand Task Force**

**Method and documentation by Sherry P. Johnson of Cultivate Strategy**

**Trends Along Grand Documentation**

**May 8, 2019**

**Birth**
- Within a New Paradigm
- Disruptive Practices
- Office Buffering to the System
- Require More Energy Than They Emit...In Bursts

- Smaller, intimate restaurants
- Resuming SHA—collective action with focus on Grand
- Traction for taller structures
- Density and use changes
- Business concepts that don’t fit traditional zoning structures
- Scooters
- Gaming stores, new gatherings, popups
- Opportunities for active experiences like Can-Can Wonderland
- New, creative experiences
- Experimental retail and restaurants
- New mayor, administration
- Economic and cultural diversity
- Population ages, leaves Grooss and MacGriv, housing prices drop, loss of history?
- Vaping, Logs, CBD

**Death**
- Property taxes and vacancies (full storefronts)
- These are—chance to “star” on Grand
- Traditional retail experience
- Traditional homeownership
- District councils’ authority
- Construction processes

- Have Lost Their Value
- “The Way We Used to Do It”
- Healthiest When Fully Greewed
- Give-Up Their Energy for New Ideas

**Stasis**
- Grand Old Day
- Zoning
- Historic preservation
- Preserving character of Grand Ave.
- Brick exterior as “historic look”
- Green space, sunshine
- Staple businesses
- Overlay district
- Charm
- Accessible/affordable retail real estate
- Quaint feeling, independent businesses

**Growth**
- Shared offices like “WeWork”
- Development pressures, population growth, need for housing, institutional $ mixed use commercial, density impacts
- Mixed-use buildings
- Affordable housing
- Growth in rental housing
- New retail housing
- Adequate parking, potentially more to accommodate, families
- Walkability, bump-outs
- Pedestrian awareness
- Multi-modal transportation
- Growth in student population
- Popups
- Specialized smaller food-and-experiences
- Mission-driven spending (living)
- Central urban core population

**Decline**
- Up for Replacement
- “Red Tape”
- Starting to Lose Their Value
- Require More Energy Than They Provide

- Tower
- Downtown renewal
- Destination needs
- Destination professionals
- Destination real estate
- Smalltown
- Local missing
- Reclaiming the “centerpiece” of St.
- New public spaces, green space
- New restaurants, new gathering places
- New residential
- New public art
- New parking
- New access, air quality, safety

- Giving off lots of energy
- Taking up a lot of energy

**Vitality**
- Mainstream
- Standards & Practices, Valuable
- “Tried and True”
- Lasts a Short Time
- Energy-neutral: Emit as Much Energy as They Require

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^3^ = Giving off lots of energy
vvv = Taking up a lot of energy
Opportunities to Dive Deeper

- How might we preserve resident needs while recognizing the need to pull in outside visitors?
- Is Grand Old Day worth the effort it takes to keep it in stasis? Does it need to be reborn—or die completely?
- When researching other urban commercial corridors, we must keep in mind our unique situation: We’re very long, but only a ½-block deep. This presents many challenges to density and height consideration for new construction.
- Is brick façade worth its cost, in terms of presenting an historic character—particularly if developers could build fewer stories if they didn’t need to invest in brick?
- Vacancies and disagreements are sapping the community’s formidable energy. What are the implications?
- Emerging trends are met with loud voices. What can we know about these conflicts?
- Is there hidden opportunity in increased telecommuting by neighborhood residents? Could shared workspaces play a role in filling vacancies? And what role has telecommuting played in the high-square-footage, single-family housing characteristic of Summit Hill?
- Concerns arose about Grand Avenue’s role in the City of St. Paul’s tax base. Have we been the City’s “golden goose”? Are we now? What are the factors in city taxation of businesses?
- What role are other, rising commercial corridors playing in funding city services—and do they have any unfair advantages in current city policy and planning, in terms of business affordability?
- Community discussions focus on residents’ needs, but we don’t always emphasize business owners’ needs—especially when it comes to 1) density and 2) Grand as a destination experience.

Interdependent Pairs

These central tensions play a major role in our Grand Avenue business climate and community. Where does our community see a healthy balance within each area?

- Destination Shopping for Everyone
- Quality & Cost of Building Materials
- Accommodating Population Density
- Design scale = w x d x h
- Safety, Convenience, Green Space