

## The Quotable District

*Thoughts and Comments from People in The University District and its Neighborhoods*

*These quotes were gathered during the Voices of the University District project and are intended for educational or promotional purposes related to the University District and its neighborhoods. Voices of the University District was funded by the University of Minnesota Stadium Good Neighbor Fund and Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Association. If you have any questions regarding these quotes and their use, please contact [info@capeccicom.com](mailto:info@capeccicom.com).*

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This neighborhood has attracted the most eclectic, interesting, passionate group of people you could ever imagine. Often I feel as I am living in a great novel.

Debra Frasier, author and illustrator, Prospect Park

Living [in Prospect Park] lets me walk to work at the U, even when it's 20 below.

David Levinson, Professor of Civil Engineering

I've lived here 32 years, and what I love about it is the liveliness." My neighborhood (Marcy-Holmes) is close to everything. I can walk to East Hennepin, Dinkytown, downtown. I live close to where I work, and my time is valuable! I don't want to spend it commuting.

Mick Ramolae, U of M staff member, Parking and Transportation Services, U of M

I think of myself as an urban pioneer and I love to see old things—buildings, furniture, landscaping—restored to their original grandeur. I take more pleasure in living in a gracious old building, especially one I've worked on, than in a new one. I first lived in the Southeast area when I was in school at the U of M and I always hoped that someday I would be able to move back here. I loved the amenities of this building—the winding stairway and the French doors—and I was drawn to the history of the neighborhood. In my mind's eye I could see how beautiful this building would be with a little paint (O.K., a lot) and some TLC. I'm charmed by the river, the historic sites, and the activist spirit of the people who choose to live here.

K.W., Marcy-Holmes

There are lots of reasons why my wife, children, and I love living near campus. One important reason is that we can be a one-car family. It saves us thousands of dollars a year, and we get the satisfaction of living in an environmentally sensible way. The transit service in this part of the city works really well for us.

Calder Hibbard, Minnesota Forest Resources Council and resident of Southeast Como

This is a beautiful neighborhood. I loved going to school here, and I love working here. I completed my entire senior thesis while sitting at a table at Mapps Coffee and Tea on the West Bank.

Ramla Bile, Communications and Fund Development Manager, African Development Center

This neighborhood is the best place to watch people. It's ridiculously vibrant, and immensely diverse—you can see it in the storefronts and in people's faces. It's great having all these people living here from all over the world, and the University, all in the same neighborhood. It's an intersection of so many different things. I'm so comfortable here—it's a neighborhood where I can see myself in the faces of people on the street.

Ramla Bile, Communications and Fund Development Manager, African Development Center

Our company has done new residential development at five sites in the University District, for people who want to live in a very dynamic part of the city. We've had terrific community response, with the neighborhood organizations welcoming new residents and leveraging our investment with community people-power. The neighborhoods know how to get things done. They supported our developments all the way.

Peggy Lucas, Brighton Development Corporation

The Alliance is the preeminent example of an effective, broad-scale effort by neighborhoods, universities, business groups and city government to work together to materially improve the community they share in common beyond what any one could have accomplished on their own. They have already achieved measureable results that a few years ago were only imagined in the group's visionary tagline: Smarter Together. And the best is yet to come."

R.T. Rybak, Mayor of Minneapolis

The landscape on campus makes me happy to be here. Favorite spots: under the bur oaks by Elliott Hall; the white ash trees on Church Street that turn maroon(!) in the Fall; shaggy river birches, marching up 4th Street SE; the elegant but armed hawthornes that bloom each spring at the entrance to Johnston Hall; the Geology Department's rock collection by beautiful old Pillsbury Hall. They're all interludes of sweet air in a very urban place.

Jan Morlock, University of Minnesota

The soil here: soft, black peat and no rocks. You should see our peonies.

B. F., Southeast Como

Those who live near me are great people, intelligent, diverse, welcoming, neighborly, concerned about each other, with good values and a sense of what's really important in life and in our neighborhood. The community of good people is the main reason I like being here.

Anonymous, Southeast Como

Location, history and ambiance...we are so lucky! I love proximity to the U of MN, downtown, Northeast, Mississippi River, Stone Arch Bridge. I love the big trees, gardens, historic homes, friendly neighbors, friendly dogs, variety of housing and truly interesting people. I especially like sitting on my front porch and watching the parade of people pass by. We raised our daughter here (a graduate of Marcy Open School) and this is the greatest place for families and kids...yet still relatively undiscovered with very few crowds.

Melissa Bean, 20-year resident, Marcy-Holmes

As a husband, father of two young sons, and a pastor of a church in downtown Minneapolis I have delighted to move into the Marcy-Holmes neighborhood last year and begin to experience the diversity of this part of the city. Our family has fun in its parks, delights in ice cream and meals in Dinkytown, celebrates the complexity of new relationships, and thrives on the energy of people coming together in a rich tapestry of community life together. It is our hope to be here for years to come!

Dan Collison, Marcy-Holmes

I loved being close enough to work that for many years I was able to walk to work. I started by going to MidWest Mountaineering and getting geared up for winter walking. One day when it was REALLY icy just for fun I strapped ice fishing cleats onto my boots and walked that way, which of course ruined them but it was fun. My walk took me all the way from 5th Street SE and 6th Ave across the river and on to 11th St and Third Avenue across from the convention center. So if I could walk all that distance, think how easy it would be to just walk into the heart of downtown. Great money saver and best of all the exercise and fun of meeting people along the route.

Jo Rockwell, Marcy-Holmes

I own a home in the Dinkytown area of Marcy-Holmes neighborhood and have lived here for 20 years. The location is great! I can walk to Dinkytown, which has a post office, book stores and restaurants, to and along the Mississippi River, through the campus to the clinics at University-Fairview Hospitals. Cross the Stone Arch Bridge to the Guthrie and the Mill City Museum, and to campus for concerts and lectures. Public transportation is just a block from my house which gets me to downtown Mpls in 10 minutes. I 94 and 35 W are just minutes away and give access to any place North, South, East and West. Best of all the energy and enthusiasm of young students fill the atmosphere in this area. A couple of years ago I visited a friend in Florida where I felt very old mingling with other older, retired people. When I returned home I was walking to campus on 15th Avenue S.E. by the University field house when I heard a skateboard behind me. I stepped aside to let the young man ride by. And, as he passed he turned, smiled and said "Do you want a ride?" and I thought: that is why I live here.

Ardes Johnson, Marcy-Holmes

It's all right here! Walking distance to the Weisman and all the events on campus, biking distance to work downtown, and just a few minutes by car to the great museums in S. Minneapolis. Three co-op groceries within 7-12 minutes by car and lots of summer market possibilities! And you can get out of Minneapolis in a few minutes from anywhere in the District. And to make it all perfect, we've got good neighbors and the river too!

Katie and Rick Fournier, Southeast Como

We love living in Prospect Park. My husband and I are both in grad school, so obviously the location is great. We can walk everywhere, whether it's to grab a bite to eat or to class. We are close to beautiful bike trails. The lakes of Uptown are a short 25-minute ride across the Greenway, and the downtown riverfront is just 15 minutes away. Plus, there will be Central Corridor Light Rail station right in front of our condo building within a few years! Our LOVE of the neighborhood comes from all the bright energetic characters we're proud to claim as neighbors. We have a very socially connected neighborhood and an active neighborhood association. We can't imagine ever leaving. We feel right at home here.

Lindsey Wollschlager, graduate student, Prospect Park

Marcy-Holmes is central to everything. We can bike or walk to downtown and the University. Great school for the kids. Restaurants galore. Music, theater, activities. It's a great place to live.

Anonymous, Marcy-Holmes

I came to Prospect Park from Fargo, ND when I was 9 years old. Living in such a hilly place was a new experience and I immediately fell in love with Tower Hill. I used to sit by myself in the tall grass for hours and work out any problems I had by talking to the trees and the animals. As a teen, I met my future husband, also a PP resident, at PPUMC -- neighborhood kids would gather there when his rock band practiced at the church -- and we would spend long hours walking all over the Park, but always coming back to Tower Hill to say goodnight. I moved out of the Park in 1971, but still considered it my home. We were married on the Hill in 1977. School, new jobs, and travel opportunities took us far away from Prospect Park and Minnesota for a number of years, but when the opportunity came for us to come back, we jumped at it. We actually bought our house in Prospect Park without looking at it ourselves! The realtor sent pictures. We knew most of the neighbors and the neighborhood. There was never any question that it wouldn't be the right thing to do, even though the job offer was only for a year. That was in 1983 and we're still here!

Jody Oradnick, Prospect Park

Few know about the corner anchor building at Cedar and Riverside but in 1983, when the Kwans opened Keefer Court Bakery, it became the epicenter of the Chinese Cantonese and Hong Kong community. They transformed the upstairs into a beautiful home and still today host regular parties for ladies and men. As a child, I would play upstairs every weekend and we would watch as the Towers transitioned from South Asian to East African. We were often bemused by the idea that Cedar Riverside was dangerous even in Minneapolis' high-crime days. Most Chinese had become suburban and mainstreamed and so often neighbors would be shocked we traveled there so often in order to get a slice of culture and a freshly made pineapple bun. People forget that loyalty to your people overwhelms the greatest odds. Those Norwegians at Mindelirken along Franklin Avenue haven't packed up yet. And neither have the Hong Kong ex-pats at the heart of Cedar Riverside who have stayed a proud beacon for 27 years on a street that will forever be a place of change and diversity.

Eric James, West Bank/Cedar-Riverside

People who live here, stay here for a really long time because it's a pretty relaxed part of town. I love raising my family in Como. I feel like my sons get a very rounded out picture of what a neighborhood is like. It's not homogenous. There's all kind of people who live here.

Marlaine Cox, Southeast Como

In this neighborhood, I live, work, go to school, swim, bike, run, rollerblade, go out to dinner, go to coffee shops, go to plays, concerts, shopping. I'd say about 90% of the things I do, living in Minneapolis, I do within my biking distance.

Catherine Simons, Southeast Como

I've always liked how central a location it is. I learned about that opening a business here and how easy it was to get to and being so close to so many things: downtown Minneapolis, downtown Saint Paul. It's very easy to get to by freeway or bike. This was the first neighborhood we looked at to open Restaurant Alma. [The university community] provides a great foundation of people who are here all the time and coming through this area—and that really helps us run a successful business.

Alex Roberts, Marcy-Holmes

We were attracted to the neighborhood first off by its physical geography. It's not flat and it's not rectilinear and it affords, in that way, a sense of mystery. Around each curve is a house or property that's different from the others around it. It seems to me that the physical landscape tends to mimic the intellectual landscape of the neighborhood, and we've become very closely tied to the neighborhood in part because of our appreciation of the independent thinking and the ordered chaos that the neighborhood represents. What a community is comes out of its relation to its setting and that's something that we've found in a small way in the community where we now live.

Chuck Holtman, Prospect Park

One of the big pluses of living in this neighborhood is getting to the river. I really like the space that water creates in an area. I like walking down to the river, crossing the Stone Arch Bridge. The Mississippi River is a great asset to the neighborhood.

Ardes Johnson, Marcy-Holmes

It's an urban village. We have the city surrounding us but right here, in the heart of Prospect Park, it's quiet and peaceful. There's actually a family of wild turkeys walking around this neighborhood.

Walt Jacobs, Prospect Park

This is not Mayberry, but I like to create a Mayberry in an urban setting.

Tom Sengupta, Prospect Park

This neighborhood is one of the most interesting neighborhoods in the Midwest, if not the country and the world. The way you can see all kinds of people walking down the street, talking to one another, interacting: people from East Africa, mainstream students from Augsburg and the U that have come from small rural communities in Minnesota, you see punks, you see musicians—it's just such a brilliant mix of characters and communities coming together.

Mary Laurel True, Augsburg College, West Bank/Cedar-Riverside

Back in the 60s, this was Bob Dylan's hangout, Bonnie Raitt, Spider John Koerner, Koerner, Ray and Glover. It was a very important starting point for some many of those musicians who later became very famous. The music history goes a long way back.

Lisa Hammer, West Bank/Cedar-Riverside

The thing I think about is the history of this neighborhood, going back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It's been an immigrant neighborhood so all these different immigrant populations come in and the experience is that everyone is just getting their footing, everyone is figuring out what they're doing. It's a new experience all the time. People are taking in what it means to be in Minneapolis, what it means to be in Minnesota, what it means to be American.

Ben Marcy, West Bank/Cedar-Riverside