

The following document was presented to the NIEBNA Placemaking Committee in January 2021 by Scott Parkin - NIEBNA Board Member & Placemaking Committee Member.

The goal was to provide an historic overview of past names that have been used to describe the East Bank portion of NIEBNA, with editorial on the success of each name. The document was then shared with the design firm engaged to develop new name concepts for the Association.

Placemaking Committee:

Kyle Watkins - Chair

Mike Andrus Kathryn Hammond

Brad Kantrowitz Leslie LeMair

Carole Merrill Scott Parkin

Michael Rainville



HISTORY OF OFFICIAL NAMES

A brief history of the official names adopted by neighborhood leaders over the years.

Town of St. Anthony (1830s - 1872) When the area was a separate town prior to being annexed by Minneapolis in 1872, it was just called St. Anthony. Some old-timers still refer to the area as St. Anthony despite the name being taken by the 1st-ring suburban city just to the north of us and also the neighborhood in St. Paul “St. Anthony Park.” Note: this area was developed both commercially and residentially prior to the west side city of Minneapolis gaining prominence.

East Minneapolis or East Side (1872 - 1960s) After Minneapolis annexed St. Anthony, the notion of being on the East bank of the river served as a big identifier — residents here were often called “East Siders”. This lasted until the late 50’s when the streetcars were dismantled, flight to the suburbs began, and the neighborhood was overshadowed by blight and the massive modernization projects in Downtown (i.e. Gateway, Skyways, Nicollet Mall).

Old St. Anthony (1950s - early-1990s) Local businesses organized and established the Old St. Anthony Association and branded the area as such to re-establish a sense of place during the “urban blight” years of decline. This brand faded as the generation of businesses owners that created it retired, but the neighborhood STILL has street signs advertising the brand from this era. Some people still remember and refer to the neighborhood as this name.

Nicollet Island/East Bank (mid 1970s - present) The “neighborhood” movement prompted the city to create the NRP program and to provide direct monetary funds. To do so they formally identified and incorporated all the neighborhoods in the city with names. NIEBNA was likely a compromise with the business district and the Islanders who both had legitimate political needs to be identified in the name. Its intent was political positioning rather than marketing and acronyms were a common convention. Note: all the neighborhoods were also further clustered into larger “Communities,” but only the neighborhoods have a formal relationship with the city. (See attached map) NIEBNA is, technically, in the “University” community, despite being more associated with Northeast Minneapolis. This actually causes more confusion.

Northeast (1990's-2017) Riverfront revitalization and exodus of artists to Northeast from the warehouse district made Northeast Minneapolis and its 13 neighborhoods the place to be. The neighborhood was experiencing rapid gentrification and was flourishing. In about 1995 the Old St. Anthony Association was anxious to capitalize on this trend and hired the reputable local PR firm Padilla Speer Beardsley to help them re-brand. NEIBNA was, at the time, the most visible representation of this area with its iconic Grain Belt sign and local legends Nye's, Surdyk's, and Kramarczuk's. Padilla's recommendation was to re-name the business association and brand the neighborhood "Northeast". The Old St. Anthony Association became the Northeast Mpls Business Association (NEBA). As the rest of NE Mpls was still un-gentrified, the decision seemed acceptable at the time. Now the rest of Northeast has come into its own stride and, in some ways, eclipses our small, but important, neighborhood. Branding this small part of Minneapolis' as the same name as the city's largest community has now become confusing for obvious reasons. It's like re-branding Greenwich Village as just "Manhattan."

Northeast Riverfront District (2011 - 2017) This one was my idea when I was running NEBA. Confusion had already developed over this neighborhood referring to itself as the entire 13-neighborhood NE community, so we added to the "Riverfront District" identifier to differentiate us and also connect us to the riverfront.

Old Town Minneapolis (2018-present) You all know this is the brand I've been promoting for the last few years. It was the brainchild of a bartender at Whitey's and the bar has adopted the name with new ownership. It was an intentional digression from "Northeast" with the belief that the neighborhood had the prominence to have its own separate name highlighting its most unique aspect - its auspicious history. The brand was proposed to NEBA but they felt they had invested too much time in the "Northeast" brand to give it up. Old Town has an active presence on Facebook with a place-holder visual identity and lots of buy-in from local businesses and residents, but progress has been slow without more formal buy-in from the neighborhood associations. Promoting a complete re-brand of one of Mpls' most beloved neighborhoods is possible (and fun!), but takes more than just a Realtor and bartender. I have a full presentation on this brand that I can share at a more appropriate time in our process.

Heart of Northeast (2018 - present) This is the latest and current brand for the neighborhood by NEBA. Developed by Kazoo Branding to maintain the Northeast flavor, it's an amalgamation of a name and a tagline. The brand is pleasant but has failed to be adopted as a common place name. It also fails to resolve the geographic confusion it creates.

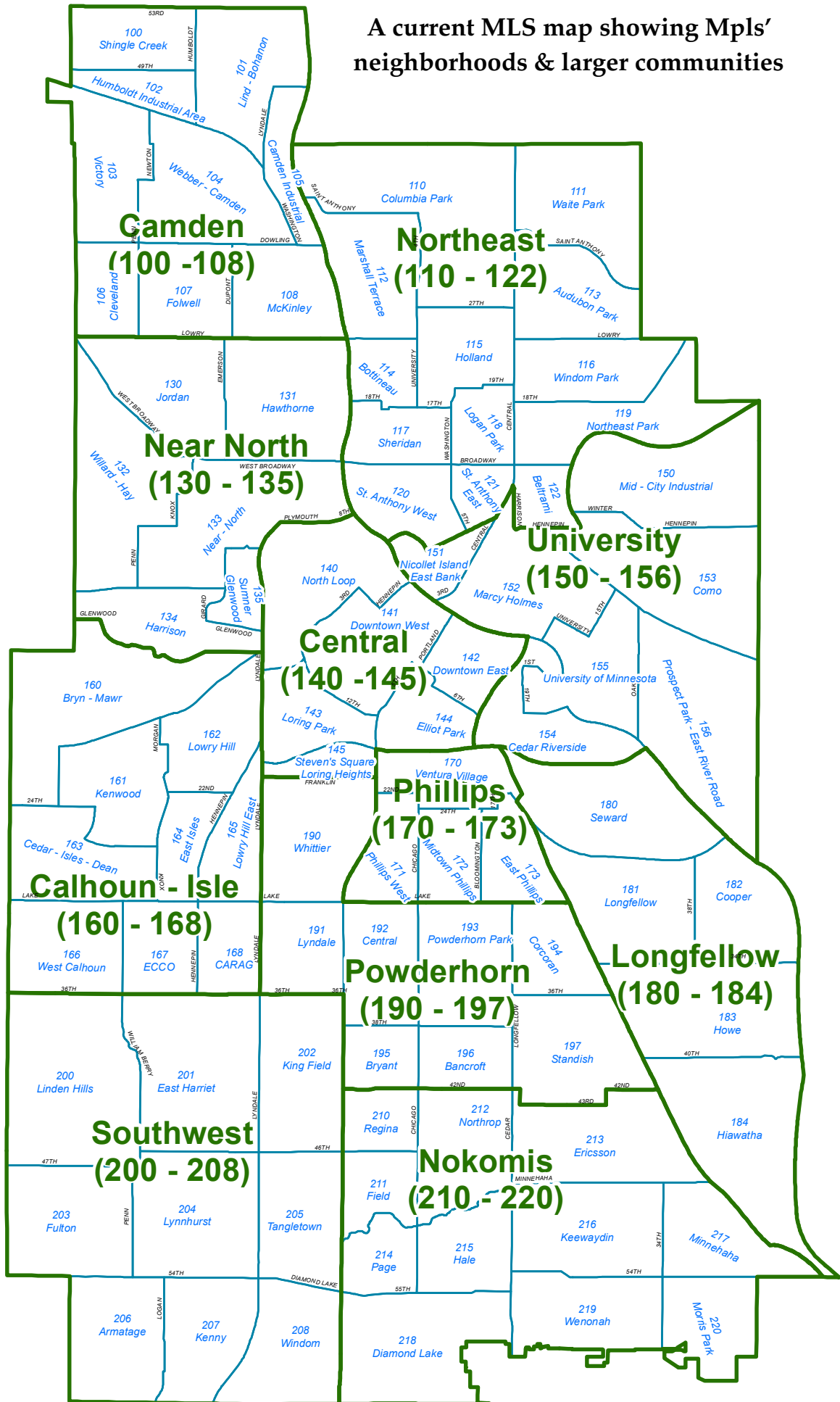
A 1872 Map of the Town of St. Anthony and the City of Minneapolis - just prior to annexation.



A vintage 1869 Map of St. Anthony and Minneapolis

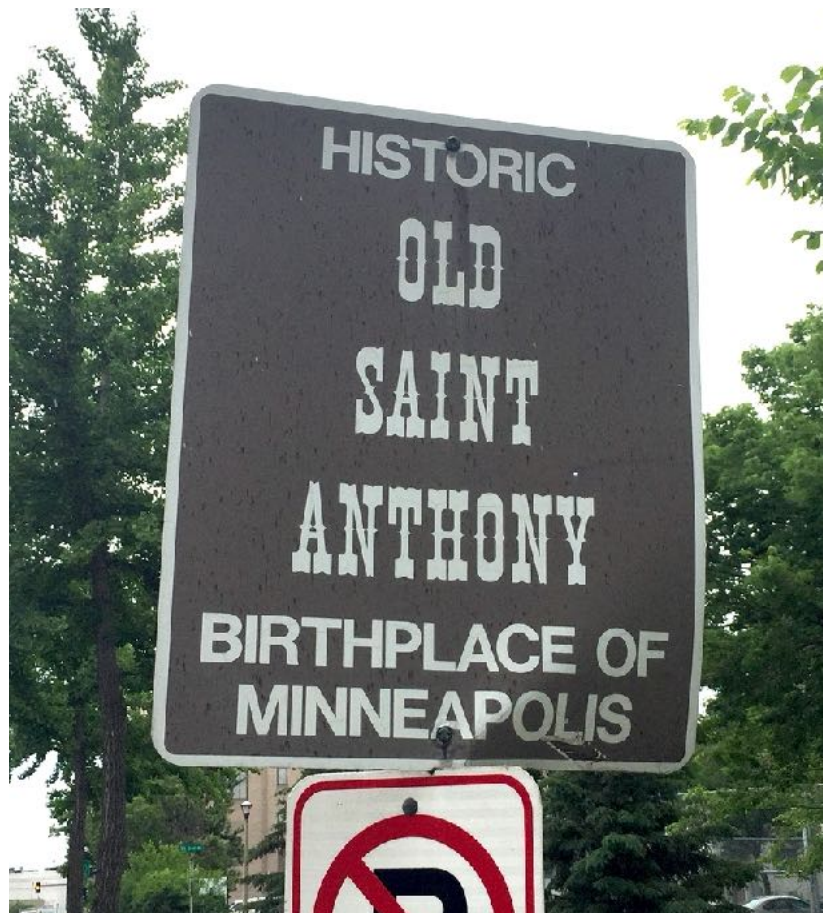


A current MLS map showing Mpls' neighborhoods & larger communities





Light pole banner & street sign from the 1980-1990's "Old St. Anthony" period. The last of these signs were removed in 2021.



Light pole banners from the 1990-2000's-era gentrification period. Some of these banners are still up.



The Old Town Minneapolis Brand and application to a local bar





WHAT ELSE DO THEY CALL US?

As we all know, this neighborhood is referred to by many additional (colloquial) names. The following is a list of the most common names given to refer to the neighborhood:

Location Names

- **East Hennepin**
- **East Hennepin Business District**
- **East Bank**
- **The Polish Riviera**
- **Northeast**
- **Lower Northeast**
- **Near Northeast**
- **Downtown Northeast**
- **Southwest Northeast**
- **Little Northeast**

Names Derived from Real Estate Developments or Businesses

In the absence of one name that has stuck, many residents (understandably) resort to referring to the major memorable landmarks in the area.

- **St. Anthony Main**
- **RiverPlace**
- **“Over by Surdyk’s”**
- **East Gate** (from the strip mall formerly on the site of Lunds)

Manhattan-Style Street Abbreviations

- **CenHenn** (Central & Hennepin)

This was proposed by Mayor Frey in 2017 when he moved to the neighborhood when we had all started the “name game” in earnest.

- **NEHE** (Northeast Hennepin)
- **UBETCHA** (University Between Central & Hennepin)

Proposed by lovable local resident George Carlson. It’s ridiculous, but you have to give the guy credit for his creative flourish.

ST. ANTHONY MAIN

*It's Always fun down at
St. Anthony Main!*





Informal 2015 Online Survey

Conducted by the owner of the Riddle Room to generate new ideas. He had just opened here and was frustrated by his inability to easily direct customers to his business. This survey also included some of the other names previously mentioned above - these were just others that were proposed by him and other survey takers.

- **Central Village**

The district is anchored around Central Ave, and is quite village-y.

- **Old Union**

A nod to the Union Bar that used to occupy 507 East Hennepin and 509 Central.

- **Northeast Crossing**

The district is central within the city and where East Hennepin crosses Central.

Doran Development 2018 Naming Exercise

Doran was developing their large Expo apartment project in Marcy Holmes and REALLY wanted to re-name this neighborhood. They hired a naming consultant and presented the following ideas to fellow developers and landowners in the area. From the presentation: *"The concern is that there's not a widely adopted way to define that area. NE is too broad, St. Anthony Main is too narrow, and it's definitely an area that deserves a strong identity. The goal is for it to take on a name like other areas have: North Loop, Uptown, West End, etc."*

- **River Walk**

- **River Front**

- **Mill River District**

- **Over East**

- **East Over**

- **Over Town**

- **Northeast & Main**

- **The Lock**

- **Old Town**

Other Names Discussed on Social Media or in Conversation

- **Left Bank**

- **East Anthony**

- **Uptown Lite**

- **Doucheville (people on Facebook are so nice!)**



NORTHEAST

RIVER DISTRICT

A stylized graphic of the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, rendered in blue and black. It is located in the bottom-right corner of the orange banner.