

## **Brian McMahon, University United; historian & author**

Interviewed by Peter Myers at Central Presbyterian Church, St. Paul

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A I'm Brian McMahon. I am Executive Director of University United, which is a nonprofit community organization that's been around for about 30 years promoting development and dealing with important community issues along University Ave, primarily in St. Paul but in the last 10,12 years also crossing the city boundary into Minneapolis. We were created by business groups who were hoping to get a better, closer working relationship with the residential community and the neighborhoods because a lot of the important issues along University Ave do relate to a large scale that crosses boundary lines, neighborhood boundary lines, a great lot to do with the mix of commercial and residential. And up until our organization was created there was really not a forum where residents and businesses could get together and talk about some of these important issues. We've done a lot over the years. We actually were doing a lot of community outreach along University and Dale even back in those days when it was not a very attractive neighborhood. So crime prevention was an important part of our early work, but over the last ten years we've really been focusing on getting the community ready for development, thinking about light rail and the impact it will have and wanting to make sure the community is prepared to actually take advantage, full advantage of the opportunities that this once in a century project will present.

Q Talk about how your organization tries to bring in all the different viewpoints from people and organizations with an interest in this particular area.

A Up until about ten years ago we had been doing a lot of community organizing around important issues such as crime prevention, such as promoting job growth, job training, connecting with the local businesses. But with the anticipation of the light rail project we really started to gear up on trying to get the community ahead of the development which we knew would be coming and we knew would be transforming our community and our neighborhoods. So we were getting very proactive about policy issues that would be important to implement such as new zoning that would protect the neighborhoods and help implement the vision, making sure that the community would be part of the visioning process, the planning process. So for the last 8, 9 years we've been really focused on that kind of organizing and outreach and we were very instrumental in bringing the community to the planning process. We created a resource that could help the community actually envision things. It was called U-Plan, which is a storefront that had technical expertise in architectural graphics, in GIS mapping and that sort of thing. So we really wanted to empower the neighborhood to do their own planning and this would be not just the residents but also the small businesses, developers, other stakeholders. We worked closely with the city. After 7, 8 years we felt that the vision had been created with the city bringing in some excellent consultants from out of town – urban planners – and we were very instrumental in bringing forth some ideas on zoning, some model zoning that would implement this vision. So about a year ago we decided it was time to really switch gears a bit and focus more on implementation. The plans are done. The zoning is essentially done. The community has widely accepted this. The city – all sectors – have embraced this and now lets get it built. We don't want these plans to be sitting up on a shelf. We want to actually implement them as quickly as possible. And to that end we really stepped up our resources to bring parties together, to try to convene adjoining property owners to create larger development sites, to get the

existing property owners willing to think about working together, to cooperate on development. Most of the vision and the plans that the city has now adopted are very ambitious. We're not talking about one or two parcels at a time. We're really talking about square blocks. And you cannot get to that level of redevelopment without real broad, strong support from the existing property owners. So in one section for instance we're working on different station areas. At Fairview and University, where there will be a station, we have convened 30, 40 property owners there and talked about what redevelopment could look like, talked about how they would be much better off by working as part of a cooperative effort, collectively, rather than individually trying to solve problems such as parking, such as circulation access, storm water, other infrastructure. The city plans actually call for four new streets to break up the.....

A So today University United is really functioning as a community developer. We are trying to create pre-development opportunities, scenarios, working with current property owners. The plans from the city for this transit-oriented development are typically on a larger scale – we're not talking about one parcel, two parcels. We're talking about a whole square block. Sometimes two or three blocks. We are concentrating for the moment on Fairview station area, the future Fairview station area, and that plan is very ambitious. It calls for four new streets, new parks, new infrastructure, storm water and that sort of thing. These plans cannot be implemented as envisioned working with one parcel at a time. It really has to be on a larger scale. So our role today is to convene all the property owners within a block and get them thinking about ways they can be working together cooperatively to create a development plan that they can all participate in, in whatever way works for them. This is strictly a service we are bringing to them to show them the opportunities and we can make the case that they will be so much better off by working together than if they had to solve their parking problems and their circulation problems one parcel at a time. So we have architectural capability, we've got mapping capability, we've got development experience, we've got a very sophisticated board. We bring all of that to the table. We are working with 30, 40 property owners at a time. We are also talking with potential end-users, developers, who can be part of this vision, and we are trying to create some financing opportunities - all the information that we need to get the type of development that everybody wants to see. So that's the role that University United is playing right now. We're very hopeful that we're going to see some development announcements coming out of this Fairview station area over the next couple of months.

Q How will the presence of a LRT station affect that immediate vicinity in terms of real estate value, desirability, etc.?

A LRT is not necessarily the sole cause for a lot of development interest along University Ave. University Ave has been a successful commercial corridor for 100 years but it clearly will add a whole new dimension and proximity to the station is very, very important. Several years back when we were discussing with Target opportunities for redevelopment around their planned superstore down by Hamline, I was of course making the case that they should be thinking about transit oriented development, higher density, mix of uses and that sort of thing, and making the point that LRT would be coming here in a couple of years. And their response was, well there is no station right here at our location. They were exactly midpoint between Snelling and Lexington, Lexington and Dale rather, and....

A So when I was speaking with Target about promoting the idea of more density at that intersection where their superstore was going to be located on the front lots once they had moved to the back, and I'm mentioning that LRT would be here and this would be a great opportunity and it's important to kind of build up to this level of infrastructure investment, and their response was, well there is no station right here. The nearest station is a half-mile away. They were right midway between Snelling and Lexington. And I asked them, well if the station was right there at their store, would they have thought differently about development at that location. And essentially they said yes. So the point is that even though LRT is not the sole cause for development and never has been in the last many years, I think it is bringing some new opportunities for a much higher level of density and investment than would otherwise be the case under the normal market scenario. So that was kind of an example of that.

Q What is your vision for the University Ave. corridor?

A So University United today is really thinking about the future. We've focused on where we want to be 5, 10, 20, 30 years – there's no question that that's where our organization is going. We are supporting this vision and in the minds of a lot of people it seems almost impossible to imagine a corridor as its being drawn by the planners and the city plan. But lets keep in mind that in the last 5 years alone, about 1,000 new units of housing have been built. And prior to that – the prior 75 years – virtually no housing had been built on University Ave. So the level of redevelopment that has happened in the last 5 years is pretty staggering in context. So we think that we will be achieving the vision. And a recent report just put out is now saying that we should expect upwards of \$6 billion of redevelopment along University Ave in the next 20 or 30 years. So it is happening and we want to make sure that it's done to the highest standards and in a way that will promote the highest social and economic equity for the communities that are living along the corridor. While we're thinking and in some ways living in the future as we talk to our colleagues today and our property owners and trying to convince them that this vision is real, it's just some years off, we are also keeping one foot in the past and it's very, very interesting how we can bring the history of the corridor into our present conversation. I learned early on that when you're talking about redevelopment and large-scale projects that one of the very important characteristics that you have to keep in mind is the history. History is imbued in a sense of place, in ways that somebody coming in without an awareness of that history would just find themselves in a difficult spot.

So University United is very interested in making sure that the community is able to participate in the implementation of these wonderful plans that have been drawn up by the urban planning consultants and now being adopted by the city with the zoning. We want to empower the local property owners, the neighborhood, the small businesses and the like. And that's pretty much our mission for the last couple of years. We have brought together some resources and staff that can provide architectural services, planning services, GIS mapping, development finance and that sort of thing. And we are working right now on one particular station area – it's Fairview station area, between Prior and Fairview Avenues, a very interesting and historic part of town. And we're working with 30,40 property owners in the neighborhood and showing them a variety of development scenarios, trying to get them to think about ways to work together. As we're doing that and we're kind of thinking 5, 10, 15 even 20 years ahead, 30 years ahead, but we're very mindful of the history of the neighborhood and how that actually impacts things we're doing today.

Q How are the historic real estate developments impacting development today?

And I'll give you an example: on the north side of University, it's very close to what was, is the Midway transfer rail yard, and there were a whole variety of rail spurs that would go from the central terminal to the businesses that kind of grew up around there. These would be private rail spurs, if you will, that would go to the back of the businesses. Well, one of the streets that was city-owned and city-platted is called Cottonwood and this is about two blocks north of University and it went to the rear of the Griggs Midway building and there's now some other chemical businesses there and the like. But as we were looking at implementing the vision for the area, it called for converting that rail spur to a new street. It's a pretty wide street. It's 80 feet wide. So we did some research – who actually owns that parcel? And we learned that the city had platted it and owned it prior to it being used as a rail spur. So we got an opinion from the city attorney that it indeed is city property and at any point if we wanted to we could sit down and talk to the rail spur company about relocating that or making other plans. Then we subsequently learned from the rail attorneys that there were some federal regulations and maybe lawsuits that superseded the city's claim that it was city-owned. The point is that the history informs what we're doing in a practical way, but more often than not it informs it in a broader, cultural way that it's important to respect the sense of place that history has brought to that neighborhood. So all of our work we're very, very mindful of that.

Q What makes University Ave. so important?

University Ave is such a fascinating street. It's the commercial corridor connecting the two downtowns, the Twin Cities, about 10, 11 miles long. Even its origins are quite fascinating. The two cities, of course, have been bitter rivals for 50, 75 years, prior to even thinking about something like University Ave. But in 1873 leaders of the business associations in both Mpls and St. Paul came up with the idea that what the two cities needed was something to help unify, help bring the two cities together. And they proposed a wonderful broad boulevard that would link the two downtowns and they called it Broad Avenue. And their vision was a street that 660 feet right of way, with a commuter steam rail line going right down the middle, connecting the two downtowns, in fact it would be about a 25 minute train ride between the two downtowns. And flanking the rail line would be linear parks of some hundred feet wide on both sides – just an enormous boulevard. And of course, this is around the time when cities were dreaming very big all around the country. This is city beautiful time and everybody was planning to be the next great metropolis. And the city fathers thought, well why not increase the likelihood by working together? So that vision did not happen. Within a short period of time, things were moving pretty quickly, they needed to make the connection between the two cities and a much smaller, scaled down version was introduced. Still fairly significant in size – 120 feet wide, which is very, very wide right of way – and it is now named University Ave., which was not even its original name. At one point it was called Melrose Ave but it was the University Ave a few blocks north that had to be interrupted when the MN Rail Transfer Yard came in because that cut what was University Ave – which was the original connector between the U of M and Hamline. So in about the 1870's, I think, they opened up University Ave. It's always been a major, major corridor. Early on it was a horse-drawn rail service connecting them. In the late 1880's and 90's it became an electrified rail system. Just an amazing variety – very diverse collection of activities along University Ave. Of course later on the State Capitol, the large industrial area in the Midway, and over time we see neighborhoods springing up along University

Ave - St. Anthony Park, Prospect Park, all along Midway, Hamline Midway. A major retail shopping area of the two cities – in fact the only regional shopping center in Minneapolis and St. Paul is in the Midway, along University Ave. A state University. So a major, major circulation transportation corridor, commercial corridor, a number of large national businesses located there early on – Sears for instance, and a number of very important local and regional companies located there. It has really been the lifeline of the Twin Cities commercially.

History is really something that is with us today as we think about planning for the future. I'm thinking of William Faulkner's wonderful quote about, the past is not dead. In fact, the past is not even past. We are dealing with this all the time and we do this on a variety of levels, in different ways, and it's something we're constantly aware of. Whether it's a particular project such as Cottonwood Ave where we're looking at the history of how the rail spur came in there after the city ownership or whether it's just really understanding the broader development patterns. You know today we're working on a plan for redeveloping the Midway industrial area. And one of the ways we think about economic development is clustering and bringing together a concentration of industries. And that's a economics theory that's been around a while – Michael Porter, professor at Harvard, popularized it about 10, 15 years ago in his book talking about cluster theories – and basically it shows that development can take place and be much more effective, much more efficient, productive if it's a concentration of similar kinds of activities and interests. And we see this in historical terms along University Ave.

Q Talk about the Minnesota Transfer Railway and its impact on the history of this area.

A So when we work with history it's not just site-specific about a particular street or particular building, it really is in sometimes understanding the larger historical conceptual concepts – the way development organically occurred. Today there's an economics theory about the value of clustering businesses, similar kinds of businesses that create a certain synergy by sharing certain resources, supply chain activities, banking, legal analysis and that sort of thing. And that's not new. That is actually the way University Ave developed and we can see it at various stages throughout its history. So the rail yards at the MN Transfer – thanks to James J. Hill – actually consolidated. There were nine separately owned, privately owned railroads that were each gaining access to the two cities, coming in from all directions around the country and did not really have an opportunity to efficiently transfer freight from one rail company to another. James J. Hill had the idea of actually consolidating all of the transferring activities in one place, and he selected Prior and University. And that was an enormously effective tool for creating efficiency and economic development. So nine railroad yards formed a cooperative venture – they each owned a share – and designed a large complex there where they could actually very efficiently and effectively transfer rail from one...freight from one company to another and then it would go on its way around the country. And of course, with that concentration of rail activity, a variety of other businesses could then start to cluster around there. And one of the big ones – very early on – was lumber industry that was in the process of mills from all around the state of MN started to need places to transport their timber and their logs to industries close by to be able to use it for, certainly for construction activities and lumber, but for also paper and things of that sort. So we start to see a whole new clustering of industries now taking advantage of that. And Brooks Brothers Lumber was a very important early regional lumberyard that was right there, that actually went out and did all the logging and brought them back. And as

time went on and they were needing more and more lumber – they needed to actually expand nationally – the demand was so strong and they were looking for other ways to find more logs. James J. Hill, of course, not only was an important local character in bringing about the Midway Transfer, but he was also in the process of expanding his Great Northern Railway to points west – Oregon and California and all out there – and a great synergy existed between expanding rail lines and the lumber industry because they needed to clear the land, they needed a place to bring the logs that would be produced from this land clearance. So there a wonderful clustering was taking place, that as – literally – conversations here, as James J. Hill was expanding out in Oregon he encouraged the Brooks family to come out there and follow him and actually set up some sawmills out there. And that's the way clusters work, which are these kind of more spontaneous interactions. So in some ways we look at history on two levels. One is it's just a wonderful variety of individual stories and you meet colorful characters like Moses Zimmerman, you meet larger than life characters like James J. Hill. But really you can look at this collection of individual stories in a broader context, more comprehensively and see that there's a pattern here. And clustering is part of that pattern. And these are the kinds of lessons that will be learned, with this kind of an analysis that we are using, to think about the future and how we can organize our economy going forward.

Q Talk about the importance of University Avenue not only as a transportation corridor, but as a place where all sorts of transportation devices were made and sold.

A So when we look at history, there's different scales in which you can look at this. You can see it as a collection of fascinating stories, individual stories about people – colorful characters like Moses Zimmerman, larger than life characters like James J. Hill. You can see it about businesses and neighborhoods. But you can also kind of step back and see patterns evolving as to why things happened the way they did. So in some ways the history that we are, the way we're approaching it is almost as a genealogy story. We're looking at how dots are connected over time and we're looking at the kind of DNA connections that can be made. And patterns will evolve and these are the kinds of lessons learned that we think are so valuable as we go forward. And we're applying them as we're going forward. So just as James J. Hill was an individual with his private business, he had the foresight to bring together eight other rail tycoons and for the benefit of all of them they said, let's work together. And as that industry is starting to flourish here – St. Paul was the chief, primary transportation hub really of the region, the head of navigation for the Mississippi River – other industries would cluster around the rail yards. Lumber was one of the major ones. Clearly the region was also blessed with agriculture. Agricultural implements are something that came out of that early industrial pattern of clustering. The railroad would require a lot of very skilled and talented mechanics. And the mills, for instance in Minneapolis, was likewise industrial sector that did need a lot of skilled mechanics. So there was an infrastructure here of technology, of mechanics and the next evolution of that was agricultural implements and tractors, getting away from horsepower – horse and plow – getting into mechanical tractors. MN actually at one time had more – and probably in history has had more – separate tractor manufacturers than any other state in the union. And again, you'll see how these kinds of evolutions occur organically building upon the base that we have and the cluster that we have. So once you've got the whole tractor manufacturing sector in the 1880's, early 1900's, that same infrastructure and capability, those technical support services, everything from the inventors, from the manufacturers, from the suppliers, from the financiers, from the end users – all of that infrastructure can very readily be mobilized for the next new thing that's coming along. And that, of course, would be cars, bicycles,

trucks and all those kinds of things. So its just a wonderful way – as you look at the corridor up and down – there’s a dozen places that have very important historical connections to the tractor industry. And by the early 1900’s in turn we’re now seeing the automobile being introduced – actually on a manufactured level. This is not something people are so strongly aware of. We of course identify University Ave as a showroom kind of sales corridor – one of the major ones in the region. But in 1913 Ford Motor Co actually opened up a manufacturing plant at 117 University Ave to manufacture Model T cars. And ten years later we’ve got Willys Overland opening up another manufacturing facility on what is now down at 280 and University. And both of these buildings are still standing(?) and we’re going to see them and continue to use for many years – adaptively reuse. So the whole evolution of this clustering continues. And with the automobile we have dozens of related activities and accessories. In fact there’s a nice cross-convergence because when the Model T first came out, one of the first things that was very popular was to use the Model T as a source of power. So a lot of people decided to try to use the T and put a plow, kind of modified plow, that would literally be hauled by the Model T. And a number of very major manufacturers were located on University Ave who did nothing but design and manufacture accessory attachments for the Ford. We’re talking about a huge industry using the Model T as kind of a platform upon which they could add all kinds of things. I’m thinking that in 19-teens and 20’s there may have been 20 or 30 separate businesses on University Ave that did nothing but manufacture, design, wholesale, retail accessories for the automobile industry. So about the same time aviation – actually it was 1903, the same time Henry Ford started his automobile industry – you’ve got the first airplane flight. University Ave played a significant role in that. During the first WW, the Willys Overland building – built for cars – was actually converted to manufacturing airplanes for the military, US participation in WWI. So we actually manufactured airplanes in the Overland building. Further west there was a large industrial building still standing that was used to manufacture planes a few years later. So you can say that...without hesitation, without a doubt University Ave in my mind is probably richer in transportation history – the collection of all modes of transportation and all facets of transportation – than any other corridor in the country. So on the aviation thing we actually see that updated a number of years later – Northwest Airlines which grew out of personal connections related to Ford Motor Company, going directly back to Detroit was the link to bringing in the financing that literally set up NW Airlines. They had their corporate headquarters on University.

So the connections between these various modes take place in really fascinating ways. NW Airlines came in as a direct result of a connection to Ford Motor Co. Louis Britten was instrumental in getting Ford to locate to St. Paul in the first place and later on he had an interest in promoting aviation. He worked closely with another St. Paulite named William Stout and they had very close connections to Henry Ford, capital in Detroit, convinced them that they should invest in a new commercial airline activity in St. Paul known as NW Airlines. And wouldn’t you know it, a number of years later the corporate headquarters for NWA were located on University Ave. So we go from the tractors to the cars to the planes to the trucks – every facet of transportation – certainly streetcars, trolleys. The Twin Cities developed really in the 19-teens as a streetcar type of development. University Ave was the major connector – probably the strongest streetcar line in the region – and not only was it a mode of transportation, I believe the Twin Cities is unique in that we actually manufactured, designed and manufactured the entire streetcar system, the electric streetcar system here locally. So that was really quite unusual that it was all self-contained. And right in the middle of the area between downtown Mpls and St. Paul, Snelling Ave, the TC Streetcar Line set up their

manufacturing facility there, their maintenance sheds, had three or four square blocks – this was a huge operation where they literally manufactured the trains. So you talk about full circle, you talk about relating it to history of course – the streetcar had its 50-year, 60 year glorious run. It was so instrumental in the way the Twin Cities developed. Then the new mode of transportation, of course, the car, now highways and freeways evolved and just a few blocks to the south of University Ave we now have I-94 coming in the 1950s and 60s. And that, in some ways, superceded the commercial route of University Ave. So the streetcar lines had such an important impact on the way University Ave developed, the major intersections where streetcar lines would cross – approximately a mile apart – Dale, Lexington, Snelling, Fairview, Raymond and the like. That's really where the cluster of development took place. So the streetcars were very, very important in terms of the way it shaped the land use patterns along University Ave. Now as street cars kind of came to the end of their economic utility if you will, the automobile was making great strides in terms of acceptance and popular use and that brought about the need for new types of roads and the interstate. A national system was created – I-94 would now be the connector between downtown St. Paul and Minneapolis in effect bypassing, if you will, the commercial corridor that had been there for many, many years whereas prior to that University Ave was the most trafficked road in the state. It took a pretty serious decline after the opening of I-94. So that resulted in a loss of commercial activity, the streetcar lines were subsequently taken out, and I would say that University Ave went into a tailspin for decades that we're now really just recovering from. But again it comes to the point of this history. We are now on the verge of bringing back a streetcar line to replace the one that really created University Ave in its heyday. So it's nice to see things come full circle.

Q Talk about the horse brokerages that grew up at University and Prior.

A As we talk about clustering another phenomena was this linkage between the MN Transfer Rail yards and this new, evolving commercial activity of horse brokerage, which actually ended up being concentrated right at Prior and University. So at the turn of the last century there were three or four major horse brokers that were located there. Why did they locate there? Well they needed to be near rail service because their horses, their products actually were coming from the west and needed to be put on railroads and brought into the city. And there was a Humane Society regulation that was passed that required that horses could not stay on rail cars for an extended period and they needed a break, a resting point to be let out, and it turned out that St. Paul was pretty much mid-way between the huge market in Chicago and where the horses were coming from out in Montana and points west. So this presented the opportunity for some industrious horse brokers to realize that this would be a great spot to concentrate the horse activity and of course the railroads were right here. So we had the transportation service, which could bring the horses right into the St. Paul area and the horse brokerages took advantage of that. And one of the most colorful characters was Moses Zimmerman, who took over his father's horse brokerage – with a partner – and turned it into one of the largest horse brokerages not only in the region, but really in the world; clearly one of the largest in the country. We're talking sales on a massive scale – tens of thousands of horses a month – and this is overlapping with the period when the car is being introduced. But it was a very slow transitional process. The horse was thought to be dead many times as a mode of transportation, but actually at the time of the first World War actually had a real demand and need for horses and Moses Zimmerman turned out to be one of the brokers who could supply the forces in Europe and actually was selling millions of dollars worth of horses a month during the first world

war. So at some point, clearly, even Moses Zimmerman could not stem the tide of this new changing technology of the automobile and the trucks and the like and that was the end of the line.

So the horse brokerage cluster – right next to the rail yard, the MN Transfer Yard – flourished. It was a place where the horses could be brought in from the west, could be shipped out to Chicago and other points east, and it was a major, thriving business at the intersection of Prior and University. One of the most successful was a very colorful early horse broker by the name of Moses Zimmerman and he built up a small business that he would be buying and selling one horse at a time, into a very successful operation and would now be servicing....

Moses Zimmerman and the other horse brokers at Prior and University Ave flourished. They were the concentrated activity and all over the region this would be the place where people would come for horses. Not just individual farmers but we're talking about commercial fleets that would need horses for their trucking business; we're talking about fire departments, police departments, a lot of larger commercial users. So they did very well. The car came along and would start to see an evolution in the way transportation was taking place. Trucks were now being used more and more by commercial activities. Even so, Moses Zimmerman was still hanging in there. But the writing was on the wall. He could not stem the tide. Clearly, Old Nellie's days were numbered. So even as the horse businesses were winding down, they had a little last spurt, just on the eve of the automobile achieving complete dominance. During WWI, the war in Europe required a huge number of horses. And the military forces did not feel comfortable enough with the mechanical trucks and tanks and what have you so great demand. And as it turns out, Moses Zimmerman probably had one of the largest supply sources in the world and during the first world war was able to transport millions of dollars of horses a month to Europe for military activities. So that kept him going for a little while, but the writing was on the wall and even Moses Zimmerman knew that this industry if you will – the horse brokerage industry – would be coming to an end. And he even, at one point, started to think about converting his interest to the automobile industry and may have partnered on a Moon automobile company dealership along University Ave in Minneapolis that was built on his property. The interesting thing, again, about the history is that the Zimmerman family has continued its business activities on University Ave at that same corner where horses were coming in from the 1890s on, and the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> generation of that family is still doing business at Prior and University in a building that is still called the Zimmerman Building. So history is with us; it's just that it will be adapting and changing to new ways of doing business, and building upon the past and seeing how these clusters can continue to spawn new activities that can build upon some of the efficiencies that are already here in place.

Q      Talk about how business clusters become developed.

A      There's probably no better way to tell this example of the value of clusters and how concentrated economic activity spawns other and creates other new kinds of related businesses. So we've got the Willys Overland Building still standing at University at 280 – originally built for manufacturing Willys Overland cars, which were very popular, very successful, probably number two to the Model T. During the First World War as the Willys Overland business was declining, a large part of that building was taken over by people interested in building airplanes for military use during the First World War. So just a few blocks away we are selling horses. Moses Zimmerman is doing a million

dollars of horses a month selling to parties in Europe at war and here we are at the Willys Overland Building we are now actually making airplanes for potential military use by the Americans in the First World War. So that went on for a number of years and after the war there was no longer a need for it as a manufacturing facility for automobiles but again part of this clustering we see that there's an increased need for.... After the First World War there was no longer a need for the Willys Overland Building for continued manufacturing of cars, but the tractor market was very, very strong building upon these hundreds of tractor manufacturing entities in Minneapolis and St. Paul and around the region. The building was then taken over by International Harvester – one of the largest manufacturers in the country and it continued in their hands for many, many years until it was literally recently converted, relatively recently converted as an office building. So it's a very handsome structure and the building itself is probably really the epitome of how we see this historical evolution going from cars to airplanes to tractors and, of course, in its new incarnation as an excellent class A office space. The other thing to say about the Willys Overland Building also needed to take advantage of the railroad and literally had a railroad spur coming right into the building. So we see these continued connections being made between the railroad and the car manufacturers and even the aviation industry.

In the one building – the Willys Overland Building – from the late 1920s we basically see all of the various modes of transportation kind of encapsulated and the benefits of this clustering phenomena. Built for an automobile manufacturer, converted during the First World War for manufacturing airplanes, after the war converted by International Harvester for manufacturing as a showroom for tractors. All of these activities were reliant upon a rail line that came right into the building, right next to the building there. So we have this convergence of virtually all of the technologies right there. More recent times this building has been adapted. It's a very handsome structure for a class A office space and will be with us for many, many years to come.

Q       What kinds of manufacturing businesses were established along University Ave.?

A       So tractor manufacturing was a very important early cluster and some of these have continued to prosper. Toro Manufacturing actually started on a site on Prior and University and is now a \$300 million business. We have Caterpillar tractor actually started, has a MN connection along University Ave as well. So these are things that, in some cases, continue to go on and evolve – such as Toro, more into a lawn mowing and golf course kind of maintenance manufactured materials – but similar to other manufacturers along University Ave. There was another business that had a very interesting.... There was another business that evolved after the second world war that is a wonderful example to show how clustering has spawned so many other kinds of related businesses. There was a factor complex built just north of University on Prior for the American Radiator Company and during the second world war it was converted for military use and manufacturing military products. After the war the military still had some contracts on the building but the building was made available and several MN people came back with high technology skills – they were cryptographers – and they had some ideas for a possible business that they set up right in that building and it was called the Engineering Research Associates. They actually manufactured, designed and manufactured some very early technology equipment. That one business alone has spawned dozens if not hundreds of high technology companies today, including such recognizable names as Sperry Rand, Control Data. So in talking about tracing history, we can actually look at things like ERA – Engineering Research Associates – and

actually trace it's DNA, it's evolution over time. Virtually every high tech, computer related business in MN today can be traced back to somebody or something related to that one business that occurred there right after the war. So the history is not just an academic curiosity. It really is a continuing reminder that we want to be able to look at ways to build upon businesses that we have, the infrastructure that we have, the technology that we have, the human capital that we have as we go forward. Because that is the way we will prosper and thrive as we've done over the last hundred years, as we've demonstrated by looking at the great success stories that we've seen throughout history.

Q What are some other examples of transportation businesses that located on University Ave.?

A With the MN Transfer Yard now becoming the hub, bringing in freight and a place where freight could be exported from the region, clearly an important industry that would have value to locate right there would be trucking. We need a way to get transfer that's broken down in the yard to be distributed locally. Murphy Trucking Co is a family company that's been around, just celebrated their centennial a couple of years back, started out in downtown St. Paul with horse drawn wagons and was picking up freight from the barges that would be coming up the Mississippi River. Over time expanded greatly and were very successful and decided to locate right on University Ave to be near the MN Transfer Yard. So they were and still are in business as a freight forwarding company with warehousing capabilities and their own fleet of trucks and again, a part of the very rich transportation history of University Ave.

Q Talk about the important role transportation has played in the history of University Ave.

A So we have all these various modes of transit on University Ave. We've got the horses, the horse carriages, we've got the streetcars, the horse drawn street wagons, we've got the electric trolleys, we've got the trucks, we've got the cars. It was quite an exciting place to be on University Ave with all these various things happening. One of the key things that had to be created over time is a way to manage all these various modes and traffic on University Ave, especially when you're dealing with the quantity of rail companies that are coming in and out of St. Paul. Anybody who's got stuck at a red light waiting for a long freight train to pass knows the problem that you would experience in an urban area. So it became very critical to figure out a way to separate the modes, to separate the levels, if you will. And University Ave is an interesting example of that. Early on the rail companies in the city created a viaduct to allow the car traffic, the horse traffic, to pass over the rail lines at University and Prior and it was a very, very long viaduct. But it really had the way of, the effect of separating activities on the north to the south and was quite unattractive and very quickly they wanted to replace that and rather than have the cars go over the rail lines, they grade separated with a smaller bridge for the rail lines going atop the traffic underneath on University Ave. So it is the only example of a bridge along University Ave, but it makes the important point that separating all these modes of transportation was a very, very important thing to be done. University Ave, before 194, was a major state highway – Highway 12. It was the principal way to get from points east – Wisconsin – all the way to points west. So a lot of traffic – commercial, local traffic – would end up coming right along University Ave and contributed greatly to it's being so commercially successful. And when Highway 12 was replaced with I-94, clearly a lot of the vitality, a lot of the commercial success of the

corridor was taken away and it went into a great decline that took many, many years to kind of rebound from.

Q How would you describe the neighborhoods adjacent to University?

University Ave is a very long street connecting the two downtowns, connecting the major regional retail center, the industrial area, the State Capital, the state University; let's not forget the very important, historical residential neighborhoods. So we have communities like St. Anthony Park, Merriam Park, Union Park. At an intersection like Prior and University you see that these were originally built as suburbs. This was virtually rural territory in the late 1880s and it was not even officially part of either city. So an early suburban development called Union Park was created in 1880s and this would have been a 40, 50 acre neighborhood planned on a larger scale, curvilinear streets, very, very attractively designed around a pond or fountain.

So University Ave became the gateway to a lot of these new residential neighborhoods, which would be developed around University Ave. University Ave coming in the late 1870s, kind of opening up some opportunities for development and what had been, really, fairly rural farmland and undeveloped. So in the early 1880s, for instance, it was kind of an outpost and a developer had the idea of putting in an amusement park around Prior and operated that fairly successfully for two or three years. The point was that the horse drawn streetcars could bring folks who wanted a day out from the city – from both Minneapolis and St. Paul – to come to the amusement park. It had all kinds of rides and taller attractions and things of that sort. But he, after three or four years as an amusement park decided a higher and better use would be a new planned residential neighborhood. And he did that on the 40, 50 acres he created what was known as Union Park – beautiful early suburban style development, curvilinear streets, surrounding a beautiful pond. These were kind of high-end residential lots that were sold and marketed quite successfully. It had the benefit of also being on a train line, which was just a few blocks or a block south of University Ave at that point, a steam car line that would connect the two downtowns. And he was marketing this neighborhood to executives who he suggested should not put up with the dust and the dirt and the aggravation of the horse drawn streetcar line on University. Take the new, exclusive, very attractive steam car line and could get to work in either downtowns in 13 minutes. Come home for lunch. Have cold water on the commuter line. So this was kind of a commuter residential development and clearly St. Anthony Park, Prospect Park, and all these other neighborhoods evolving about the same time. So very important historic residential neighborhoods built up around University Ave.