

Elliot Park Neighborhood Archaeology

What's going on here, anyway?

This is a volunteer project, put together to let the residents of the Elliot Park neighborhood and the central city learn about their history the best way -- first hand. Here are answers to a few questions you might have. If you have other questions, please ask! We hope you'll enjoy your visit to the site.

How long will you be working here?

Five days: a day to set up and prepare the site, three days of full scale excavation, and one day to finish up unfinished work, clean up, return equipment, etc.

How deep will you dig?

In most places, probably 75 to 100 centimeters (about two to three feet). In some areas, we might dig deeper – inside the cellar, for example, or if we find features like trash pits.

What will you do with the things you find?

They will be cleaned, cataloged, analyzed and eventually curated (carefully stored), with all the records created during the excavation, at an institution where they will be available for future research.

Are there other sites like this around?

Yes. Many parking lots and vacant lots you see in downtown (and other parts of the city) probably contain archaeological deposits like this. Some of these could date back to the 1850s. There could also be earlier Native American sites, although these would probably be very hard to find.

What kind of historic documents have you found relating to this site?

We were lucky here. We found city permits, historic maps, old aerial photos, even biographies of the residents. Many residential sites might not have as many written records.

Will there be a report? Yes. We will prepare a standard archaeological report, and hope to publish it in the an annual journal called *The Minnesota Archaeologist* (published by project partner the Minnesota Archaeological Society; samples of the journal can be seen at the sign-in desk).

What will happen to this site? This land is owned by the Minnesota AIDS Project. Currently there are no plans to develop or alter this lot, so the sites will stay much as they are now.

Who's paying for this? This is a strictly volunteer effort, supported by many people and organizations who have donated time, expertise, services and supplies, plus a modest amount of cash for a few important things -- like coffee.