

**AUDUBON PARK NEIGHBORHOOD  
SMALL AREA PLAN**





Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Approved by the Audubon Park Neighborhood  
February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2008

Prepared for:  
Audubon Park Neighborhood

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Cover photo by ANA



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Photos by ANA



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## 1. Executive Summary

The Audubon Park Neighborhood is nestled in northeast Minneapolis and is home to a diverse and growing population. In order to make sure the neighborhood grows in a thoughtful and successful manner, Audubon Park is creating a Small Area Plan that will generate consensus among stakeholders throughout the neighborhood regarding the built environment, create a framework for future development, and communicate a clear vision for the neighborhood's future. Audubon Park is also undertaking the creation of a small area plan to do the following:

- Ensure that future development occurs in accordance with The Minneapolis Plan, market conditions, and the needs and desires of the neighborhood residents.
- Preserve the integrity of the neighborhood's stable residential areas.
- Encourage the revitalization of distressed residential areas.
- Maintain viable commercial resources along both Johnson Street and Central Avenue.
- Ensure that Audubon Park continues to serve the neighborhood's needs.
- Ensure that pedestrian and bicycle facilities adequately serve the neighborhood, including connections to the [Grand Rounds](#) and other regional facilities.

The goal of the Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan is to encourage interaction and involvement amongst the people in our community and its organizations; to foster the continuing improvement of property and businesses within its boundaries; to increase security and safety within the neighborhood; and to continue to grow and develop in a thoughtful and sustainable manner.



Photo by ANA



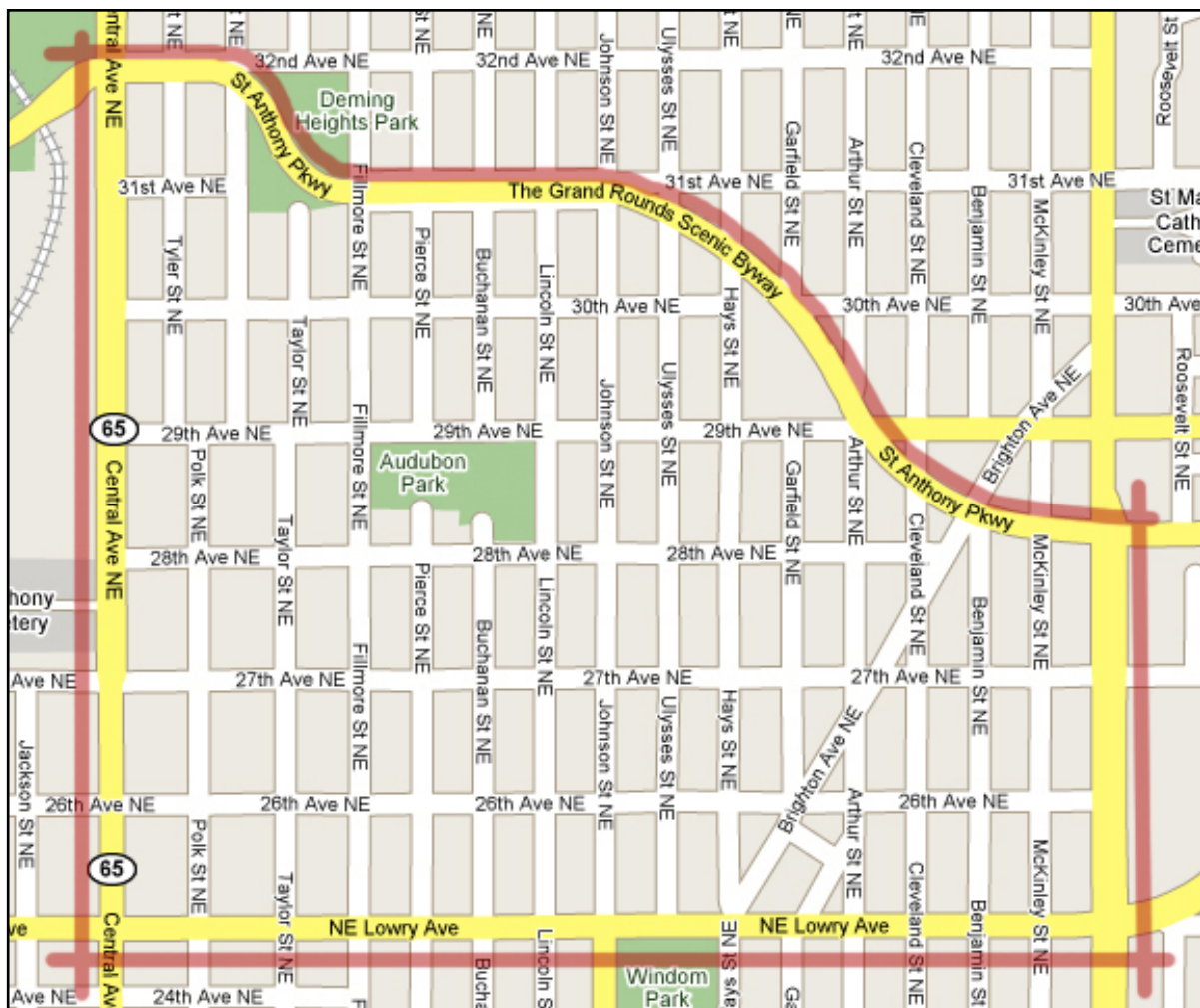
## 2. Physical Analysis

- 2.1 Definition of Geographic Area
- 2.2 Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan
- 2.3 Existing Conditions - Demographics
- 2.4 Current Land Use & Zoning

### 2.1 Definition of Geographic Area

The Audubon Park Neighborhood is located in Northeast Minneapolis. It is bordered on the west by Central Avenue NE, on the south by Lowry Avenue NE, on the east by Stinson Boulevard, and to the north by St. Anthony Parkway. The Audubon neighborhood and

its park are named in honor of John James Audubon, a great American naturalist and ornithologist. Audubon has a diverse housing stock, much of which was built during the 1940s.



Map of Audubon Neighborhood

Google Maps



## 2.2 Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan

In 2008, the City of Minneapolis will put forth their new Comprehensive Plan known as The Minneapolis Plan for conditional approval and eventual adoption by the Met Council. The Minneapolis Plan is a statement of community goals and policies that direct the logical and coordinated physical development of the city into the future. The Minneapolis Plan provides a readable framework for the future growth of Minneapolis including housing, transportation, regional parks, and open space. In conjunction with the Minneapolis Plan, neighborhoods are encouraged to develop Small Area Plans for adoption into the comprehensive plan.

Within the Audubon Park neighborhood, The Minneapolis Plan has identified some land use features. Along with each land use feature, there are certain designation criteria, as well as policy guidance. The land use features, their designation, and policies are described below.

### 2.2.1 Activity Center

#### Lowry Avenue NE and Central Ave NE

According to The Minneapolis Plan, Activity Centers have a diversity of uses with a citywide and regional draw and do not typically support automobile uses. They are complemented by medium and high density residential uses while accommodating retail and commercial services, entertainment uses, educational campuses, or other large-scale cultural or public facilities. An Activity Center has building siting and massing in the traditional urban form with significant pedestrian and transit orientation. The mix of uses occur within and among the structures and are active all day long and into the evening. The unique urban character of the Activity Center distinguishes itself from other commercial areas because of the mix and complementary type of uses as well as the traffic generated.



Central Av. & Lowry Av.

Photo by DJR

The Minneapolis Plan lays out the following policy for Activity Centers:

- Encourage a variety of commercial and residential uses that generate activity all day long and into the evening.
- Encourage mixed-use buildings, with commercial uses located on the ground floor and secure entrances for residential users.
- Encourage active uses on the ground floor of buildings in Activity Centers.
- Discourage uses that diminish the transit and pedestrian character of Activity Centers, such as automobile services and drive-through facilities.
- Encourage a height of at least two stories for new buildings in Activity Centers, in keeping with neighborhood character.
- Encourage the development of high to very high density housing within the boundaries of Activity Centers.
- Encourage the development of medium to high density housing immediately adjacent to Activity Centers to serve as a transition to surrounding residential areas.
- Support district parking strategies in Activity Centers, including shared parking facilities, uniform signage for parking facilities, and other strategies.
- Encourage architectural design, building massing and site plans to create or improve public and semi-public spaces in Activity Centers.

For more information on Activity Centers, please refer to the Activity Centers section in Chapter 1 of The Minneapolis Plan.



## 2.2.2 Neighborhood Commercial Node

### 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and Johnson Street NE

Neighborhood Commercial Nodes provide retail or service uses on at least three corners of an intersection and are oriented to pedestrian traffic with few automobile oriented uses. They serve the needs of the surrounding neighborhood with few of the businesses serving a larger area. Neighborhood Commercial Nodes generally occur where two community corridors intersect, though that is not the case in this instance. The commercial uses can be dispersed throughout the block, but are more typically focused at the intersection. Neighborhood Commercial Nodes have a mix of uses within and among their structures and have an historical commercial form and function.



Johnson Street Commercial Node

Photo by DJR

The Minneapolis Plan has created the following policy for Neighborhood Commercial Nodes:

- Discourage the commercial territorial expansion of Neighborhood Commercial Nodes, except to adjacent corners of the node's main intersection.
- Support the continued presence of small-scale, neighborhood serving retail and commercial services in Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.
- Discourage new or expanded uses that diminish the transit and pedestrian character of Neighborhood Commercial Nodes, such as some automobile services and drive-through facilities.

- Encourage a height of at least two stories for new buildings in Neighborhood Commercial Nodes, in keeping with neighborhood character.
- Encourage the development of medium to high density housing within the boundaries of Neighborhood Commercial Nodes, preferably in mixed-use buildings with commercial uses on the ground floor.
- Encourage the development of medium density housing immediately adjacent to Neighborhood Commercial Nodes to serve as a transition to surrounding low-density residential areas.

For more information on Neighborhood Commercial Nodes, please refer to the Neighborhood Commercial Nodes section in Chapter 1 of The Minneapolis Plan.

## 2.2.3 Commercial Corridor

### Central Avenue NE between Lowry Avenue NE and 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE

Commercial Corridors have high traffic volumes and have been historically prominent destinations in the city. While having a variety of uses, commercial uses are dominant, and residential tends to be either medium or high density.



Central Av. NE - Holy Land

Photo by DJR

The Minneapolis Plan has created the following policy for Commercial Corridors:

- Support a mix of uses – such as retail sales, office, institutional, high density residential and clean low-impact industrial





- where compatible with the existing and desired character.
- Encourage commercial development, including active uses on the ground floor, where Commercial Corridors intersect with other designated corridors.
- Discourage uses that diminish the transit and pedestrian character of Commercial Corridors, such as some automobile services and drive-through facilities, where Commercial Corridors intersect other designated corridors.
- Encourage a height of at least two stories for new buildings along Commercial Corridors, in keeping with neighborhood character.
- Encourage the development of high density housing on properties adjacent to properties on Commercial Corridors.

For more information on Commercial Corridors, please refer to the Commercial Corridor section in Chapter 1 of The Minneapolis Plan.

#### 2.2.4 Community Corridor

Johnson Street NE from Lowry Avenue NE to 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE

Lowry Avenue NE from Central Avenue NE to Stinson Parkway

Community Corridors connect two or more neighborhoods and with some exceptions, are usually minor arterials. They have moderate traffic volumes, are typically part of the city's planned Primary Transit Network, and may be a principal travel route for a part of the city. Community Corridors have commercial uses clustered at intersections, with the majority of the corridor being residential, and have traditional form and massing. The commercial uses are generally small in scale with retail sales and services for the immediate neighborhood.



Johnson Street NE

Photo by DJR

The Minneapolis Plan has created the following policy for Community Corridors:

- Support the continued presence of existing small-scale retail sales and commercial services along Community Corridors.
- Support new small-scale retail sales and services, commercial services, and mixed uses where Community Corridors intersect with Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.
- Discourage uses that diminish the transit and pedestrian oriented character of Community Corridors, such as automobile services and drive-through facilities.
- Discourage the conversion of existing residential uses to commercial uses outside of Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.
- Encourage the development of low to medium density housing on Community Corridors to serve as a transition to surrounding low density residential areas.
- Promote more intensive residential development along Community Corridors near intersections with Neighborhood Commercial Nodes and other locations where it is compatible with existing character.

For more information on Community Corridors, please refer to the Community Corridors section in Chapter 1 of The Minneapolis Plan.



## 2.2.5 Industrial Employment District

### Shoreham Yards

Though Shoreham Yards is not in the Audubon Park Neighborhood, its close proximity and rather large size have a significant impact on the neighborhood. Once the site is redeveloped, it is expected to increase traffic along 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and Central Avenue NE, while also raising the demand for housing and commercial services in the area. The Industrial Employment District is designated in the Industrial Land Use and Employment Policy Plan by the City of Minneapolis. They are protected areas intended for industrial growth and expansion without residential uses in their boundaries.

The Minneapolis Plan has created the following policy for Industrial Employment Districts:

- Develop regulations for the Industrial Employment Districts that promote compatible industrial development and the efficient use of land.
- Allow industrial uses outside the Employment Districts to transition over time to other uses.
- Limit the development and expansion of non-industrial uses within designated Industrial Employment Districts.
- Strongly discourage new residential uses in Industrial Employment Districts.
- Encourage and implement buffering through the site plan review process to mitigate potential conflicts between industrial uses and other uses.

For more information on Industrial Employment Districts, please refer to the Industrial Employment Districts section in Chapter 1 of the Minneapolis Plan.

## 2.3 Existing Conditions Demographic Information

*Demographic Information Source: Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development with data from the U.S. Census of Population and Housing.*

*For all associated graphics, see Appendix A.*

### 2.3.1 Population

While the population of Minneapolis has increased in the last 10 years, Audubon has seen a slight decrease dropping to 5,256 residents in 2000 from 5,924 in 1980. That represents a 7.3% decrease.

### 2.3.2 Age Distribution

The greatest decrease in population is among the seniors aged 65-74(65+) that saw a 43.5% drop. Children under the age of 5 experienced a drop of 24.6% while teenagers aged 15-19 and adults aged 45-54 saw their populations increase by 27.5% and 45.9% respectively.

### 2.3.3 Ethnic Distribution

The ethnic makeup of the neighborhood has changed significantly since 1990. Blacks, or African Americans, experienced a population increase of 390%, and Hispanic or Latino by 503.2%. During this time, the population of whites decreased by 18% while American Indian or Alaskan Natives dropped 52.6%.

### 2.3.4 Average Household Size

A household includes all of the people who occupy a housing unit. The average household size for Audubon Park has remain unchanged since 1990 at 2.33 people per household. This is slightly above the household size for Minneapolis, which has increased from 2.19 to 2.25 people per household.

### 2.3.5 Household Composition

Family Households made up 59% of all households in Audubon Park in 1990. As of 2000, that figure has dropped to 52%, while nonfamily households have seen a 7% increase. Those that are 65+ and living alone have seen a decrease in households by 29%.



**2.3.6 Housing Availability**

Vacant housing units in the Audubon Park neighborhood have decreased to 3% of all housing units in 2000 from 4% in 1990. The number of available housing units decreased in that time from 2,505 to 2,321 housing units.

**2.3.7 Occupied Housing Units**

Audubon saw its highest level ever of owner-occupied housing units in 2000 at 76%, up 6% from 1990. Rental units experienced a decrease of 6% over the same time period.

**2.3.8 Homeowner and Rental Vacancy Rate**

The Audubon Park homeowner vacancy rate decreased by .2% from 1990 to 2000, but is .2% higher than the rate for the City of Minneapolis. The rental vacancy rate was at an historical high in 1990 for both the City of Minneapolis and Audubon Park at 8.1% and 4.8% respectively. Those rates dropped significantly to 2.8% for Minneapolis and 2% for Audubon Park in 2000.

**2.3.9 Median House Values**

The median house value for Audubon Park has increased 19% since 1990 (measured in 2000 dollars), while citywide the value has increased 21%. Minneapolis has a median house value 8% greater than that of Audubon Park.

**2.3.10 Median Housing Costs as a % of Median Household Income**

Median housing costs as a percentage of income has decreased for both Audubon (4%) and Minneapolis (3%) between 1990 and 2000. Both percentages were at their highest levels in 1990.

**2.3.11 Median Gross Rent**

Median gross rent is higher in Audubon Park than citywide. Audubon Park had a 16% increase in rent from 1990 to 2000, while citywide it was only 3%.

**2.3.12 Median Gross Rent as a % of Median Household Income**

The median gross rent as a percentage of median household income remains unchanged at 18% for the Audubon Park neighborhood. Citywide the percentage has decreased to 18% from 20%.

**2.3.13 Labor Force**

The labor force in Audubon Park has increased 8% to 77% since 1990. While it was the same as Minneapolis in 1990 at 69%, Minneapolis has only increased 3% to 72%.

**2.3.14 Unemployment Trends**

Unemployment in Audubon Park is lower than that for the City of Minneapolis, and the unemployment rate for both has seen a decrease since 1990.

	1990	2000
Audubon	3.6%	3.4%
Minneapolis	6.7%	5.8%

**2.3.15 Income**

The median household income for Audubon Park has been consistently higher than the City of Minneapolis from 1990 to 2000. Audubon Park has seen an increase of 15% in median household income, while Minneapolis has seen a 12% increase.

**2.3.16 Poverty Status of Families**

The percentage of families with poverty status has decreased from 7% in 1990 to 6% in 2000, which is half the rate of Minneapolis at 12% in 2000. The poverty status of families with children under 18 remains unchanged at 11%, while citywide is has decreased from 24% to 19%.

**2.3.17 Poverty Status of all Individuals**

Audubon Park has maintained a lower percentage of all people with poverty status than Minneapolis citywide from 1990 to 2000. Those with poverty status that are 65 years and older has become equal with Minneapolis as of the year 2000.



## 2.4 Current Land Use and Zoning

Land use and zoning have an impact on the function, form and appearance of streetscapes and neighborhoods as a whole. By examining the intensity and form of development allowed under a given zone, one can predict with some certainty what a redeveloped parcel might look like in the future and propose appropriate design solutions. Zoning also regulates building form and lot coverage, which has an impact on enclosure and future parking needs along corridors and within the neighborhood.



Photo by ANA

### 2.4.1 Land Use

As indicated by the commercial node, community corridors, and commercial corridor, most of the commercial and office uses are clustered along Central Avenue with a small portion along Johnson Street. At the intersection of 29<sup>th</sup> and Central, there is currently an auto body shop with a parking lot facing the street. Other auto-related uses line Central to the north and south, forming an irregular pattern of small historic storefronts and parking lots. Recently, ornamental fencing, shrubs, and trees were installed at the intersection, serving to partially mask the expanse of asphalt. While a parking lot is not a favorable use of the land at such a prominent gateway into the neighborhood, the open space

forms a plaza-like space that serves as an excellent design precedent.

To the east of Central Avenue are a handful of multi-family structures. These include duplexes, four-plexes, and three story apartment buildings with single family homes mixed in. Housing quality is generally poor and a few of the properties have recently foreclosed.



Photo by DJR

Johnson Street is a much more vibrant community corridor with a commercial node. The commercial node has a variety and healthy mix of clinics, coffee shops, boutiques, etc. However, two parking lots – a free parking lot provided for customers and a clinic parking lot – encourage pedestrian crossing mid-block. There is also a vacant city-owned lot at 28<sup>th</sup> & Johnson Street that provides an excellent opportunity for redevelopment.

Much of the remaining land uses are devoted to single family detached residential. Housing quality generally improves east of Central Avenue approaching the park and eventually Stinson Parkway.



At the heart of the Audubon Park Neighborhood is its namesake park. This park, along with the St. Anthony Parkway as the northern border and Grand Rounds Scenic Byway, provide a large opportunity for the community to enjoy nature and socialize with their neighbors. There is also an opportunity to bring public art to the neighborhood in terms of a [public art overlay](#) that will work in conjunction with the proposed land use plan.



Audubon Park

Photo by DJR

Another infill opportunity is around the Commercial Node of Johnson Street NE and 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. By surrounding the Commercial Node with R3 and R2 zoning (low to medium density housing), the development opportunities of appropriate 2-3 story row houses and apartments would increase density and therefore the support for the Commercial Node.

At the intersection of Johnson Street NE and 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, commercial zoning is proposed. Together with the existing church and fire station, this intersection could be redeveloped into a gateway into the Johnson Street Commercial Node.

To see the [existing zoning map](#), please consult the appendix.

To see the existing [land use map](#), please consult the appendix.

### 2.4.2 City Zoning

Existing zoning for the Audubon Park Neighborhood envisions a relatively similar pattern of land use with infill and increased density at select locations. These locations include the Johnson Street Commercial Node and the Central Avenue Commercial Corridor. If the area to the east of Central Avenue is redeveloped to allow for zoning from R4 and R3 along Polk and moving down to R1A and R1 east of that, this stretch along Central could form a gradient from commercial, to medium density residential to single family detached homes just three blocks to the east.



### 3. History & Background

#### 3.1 History of Audubon Park

#### 3.2 Background: Related Planning Efforts

#### 3.1 History of Audubon Park

James J. Audubon is the namesake of the Audubon Park Neighborhood. Born in 1785, he spent his life studying and cataloging the birds of North America. He aspired to create a book of life-size paintings of every bird species in America and in 1838 completed and published *The Birds of America*. This book contained 435 engravings of 1,065 birds, representing 489 species.

Audubon Park, while becoming part of the City of Minneapolis in the late 1800s, saw its largest population growth during the first half of the 20th century. This growth was due in part to the expansion of the streetcar line up Central Avenue NE, the thriving job market from local industry, and many new modern housing developments spreading northeast towards St. Anthony Parkway and east to Stinson Boulevard.



Photo by ANA



Hollywood Theater

Photo by DJR

At the center of this new neighborhood is the Hollywood Theater on Johnson Street. The Hollywood Theater opened for business in 1935 and features one of the first examples of stadium seating. Finished in the “Zigzag” art deco style, the theater has been designated as architecturally significant by the City of Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission, as well as the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office. The theater is currently vacant, but remains a great development opportunity for the neighborhood.

The Audubon Park neighborhood reached its population peak in the 1950s. While the population declined during the second half of the 20th century, it has been steadily increasing in recent years. This, combined with many areas of opportunity like the Hollywood Theater, the Johnson Street Commercial Node, the Central Avenue Commercial Corridor, and the possible development of the adjacent Shoreham Yards, ensure that Audubon Park has a very bright future.



### 3.2 Background: Past & Related Planning Efforts

This small area plan builds on previous and relatively recent small area and corridor plans.

#### 3.2.1 Lowry Avenue Corridor Plan

The Lowry Avenue Corridor Plan was adopted by the City of Minneapolis in 2002. Phase 5 of the plan covers the section of Lowry Avenue that runs between Central Avenue NE and Stinson Boulevard NE – the southern boundary of Audubon Park. The Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan works in tandem with the Lowry Avenue Corridor Plan on the following initiatives:

- Narrow Lowry Avenue to two lanes (one lane each direction) from Central Avenue to Stinson Boulevard, and add bike lanes and sidewalks.
- On-street parking in bumpouts with landscaped nodes along the entire corridor.
- Redevelopment at the Lowry/Central node, with added retail and residential uses, and accommodations for transit, taking advantage of Central's strong commercial base.
- Concentration of commercial uses at key intersections, reintroduction of residential uses between these key nodes.

#### 3.2.2 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE Streetscape Plan

The 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE Streetscape was completed in 2007 by the Audubon Park Neighborhood Association and funded by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. This plan has been adopted by the neighborhood and is supported by this plan. Please refer to the Audubon Neighborhood Association website for a complete copy of the Streetscape Plan.

In addition to the previously mentioned initiatives, there are a few overlapping plans being developed that will have a significant influence on the Audubon Park Neighborhood. They are:

#### 3.2.3 Central Avenue Corridor Plan

Prepared by The Cuningham Group for adoption into the Minneapolis Plan - 2008.

#### 3.2.4 Audubon Park Plan

Prepared by the Audubon Park Neighborhood Association for adoption into the Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan - 2008. This is a plan dedicated to the namesake park at the center of the Audubon Park Neighborhood.



## 4. Vision and Goals

- 4.1 Community Input
- 4.2 Small Area Plan Goals

### 4.1 Community Input

In the fall of 2007, local residents attended neighborhood meetings to give their comments and suggestions for the future of the Audubon Park Neighborhood. These comments and suggestions were further reinforced by a thorough block by block survey performed by the Northeast CDC. Below is a summary of the residents comments and suggestions.

#### 4.1.1 Areas of Opportunity

- Housing stock between Central Avenue NE and Fillmore Street NE
- Johnson Street Commercial Node
- Central Avenue NE & Lowry Avenue NE Activity Center
- Renovation of the Hollywood Theater

#### 4.1.2 Retail/Commercial

- Most residents occasionally patronize local businesses.
- Those who don't feel that local retail does not meet their needs.
- Residents would like to see a movie theater, sit-down restaurants, bicycle shop, and many other amenities come into the neighborhood. They would not like to see big box retail, or more gas stations.

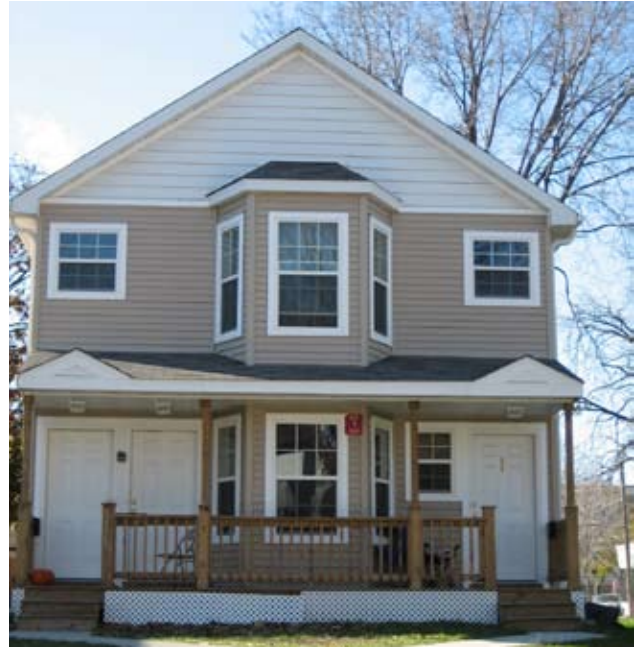


Johnson Street Bookstore

Photo by DJR

#### 4.1.3 Housing Types:

- Residents support housing over retail space (mixed-use) along Central Avenue NE.
- Need more mixed-use housing, single family homes, and senior housing. Not more duplexes.



Neighborhood Triplex

Photo by DJR

#### 4.1.4 Housing Conditions:

- Deteriorated and abandoned houses are a significant problem.
- The neighborhood should develop design standards for new single and multi-family housing to improve overall quality and appearance.

#### 4.1.5 Transportation:

- Add bicycle facilities to main corridors and the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway.
- Support possible streetcar line on Central Avenue NE.
- Bus stops along Central Avenue NE are unwelcoming.
- Slow down traffic along Johnson Street NE and other residential streets.





#### 4.1.6 Public Spaces:

- Need more pedestrian lighting for safety and visibility.
- Need additional pedestrian crosswalks, streetscape enhancements and street furniture.

#### 4.2 Small Area Plan Goals

The Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan seeks to address the residents comments and suggestions by creating the following design goals.

##### 4.2.1 Improve Residential Housing Stock

The quality of a neighborhood's housing stock is key to maintaining and even improving the stability of the neighborhood. Well maintained properties bring a sense of pride to local residents while creating a welcoming environment to engage in on multiple levels.

- Encourage adaptive reuse, retrofit and renovation projects that make the neighborhood's housing stock competitive in the city market.
- Ensure attractive, livable neighborhoods by education and enforcement of the housing and property maintenance codes.
- Be well designed and executed with high quality materials and finishes.

##### 4.2.2 Reinforce Mixed-use And Commercial Development Along Appropriate Corridors

The western edge of the Audubon Park Neighborhood is strongly defined by a Commercial Corridor on Central Avenue. Another Commercial Node exists at the intersection of Johnson Street NE and 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE. These two commercial areas provide great opportunities to bring in additional residential density and new commercial/retail businesses through mixed-use developments. These mixed-use projects will have 1-2 stories of commercial/retail at street level, with 1-3 stories of residential above.

- Focus increase in residential density

adjacent to commercial corridors – Central and Johnson, via mixed-use developments.

- Create transitions between Central Avenue and the neighborhood by encouraging medium-density housing.
- Establish gradual transitions between residential and commercial areas.

##### 4.2.3 Improve Streets For Pedestrian/Bicycle/Transit

Increasing transit opportunities for residents and visitors will become more and more important as the cost of gas increases and people search for alternative modes of transportation. Audubon Park is fortunate enough to be located on the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway and Central Avenue, a major public transit route. Taking advantage of these resources, as well as improving the pedestrian environment, will help Audubon Park support its residents alternative transportation needs well into the future.

- Provide streetscape elements, including street furniture and trees, that buffer pedestrians from auto traffic and parking areas.
- Ensure that new developments (residential and commercial) provide an adequate number of bicycle parking stalls.
- Encourage new developments to provide transit facilities (shelters and boarding areas).

##### 4.2.4 Improve Public Open Spaces

The Grand Rounds Scenic Byway borders the neighborhood while Audubon Park is at its heart. However, these spaces are not well connected and difficult to locate and identify for residents and visitors. Better signage and way finding, as well as the continued improvement and beautification of these elements, will increase their visibility and use among residents and visitors, while creating a public asset for the greater community.

- Encourage pedestrian scale lighting throughout the park.



- Invest in the greening of streets, particularly those that connect into and supplement the parks and open spaces.
- Encourage private landowners and developers to create and maintain publicly accessible open spaces or green infrastructure, i.e. churches, schools, parks, businesses, etc.

#### 4.2.5 Establish Neighborhood Identity

Audubon Park sits in the middle of northeast Minneapolis but is currently indistinguishable from its surrounding neighbors. By creating a clear identity for the neighborhood, through the use of neighborhood gateways, a public art plan, and a consistent signage program, the Audubon Park neighborhood will stand out among its peers and become a citywide destination.

- Create an identity for the neighborhood via gateway signs at strategic locations.
- Create a clear and consistent signage program for way finding and neighborhood identification throughout Audubon Park.
- Explore opportunities for public art, especially at Audubon Park and along the school fence on 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

#### 4.2.6 Hollywood Theater

The Hollywood Theater is an art deco jewel, built in 1935 in the heart of Audubon Park. The theater has been designated as architecturally significant by the City of Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) as well as the Minnesota State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). While many proposals have been vetted to either revive or remove the theater, there are currently no plans for it.

- The neighborhood would like to see that the theater be retained as a multi-use entertainment venue, and that maybe an interim use may be found until the building is able to be fully restored.



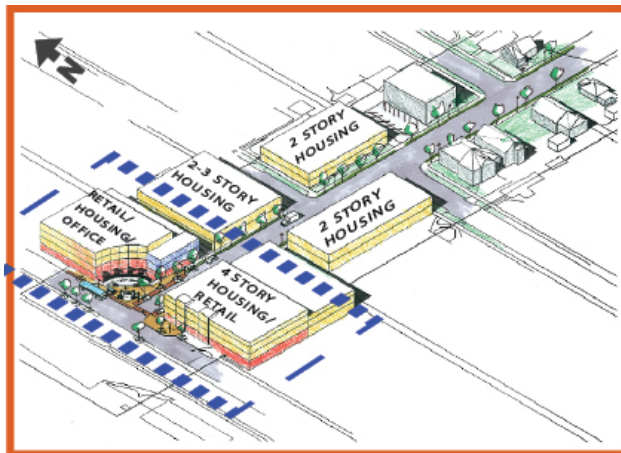
## 5. The Plan

- 5.1 Housing
- 5.2 Economic Development
- 5.3 Urban Character & Design
- 5.4 Land Use
- 5.5 Public Realm
- 5.6 Transportation

This section contains policies and action items addressing future development decisions and public improvements in the neighborhood.

### 5.1 Housing

- Increase residential density adjacent to the Central Avenue Commercial Corridor via mixed-use developments.
- Create transitions between Central Avenue and the neighborhood by encouraging medium-density housing.



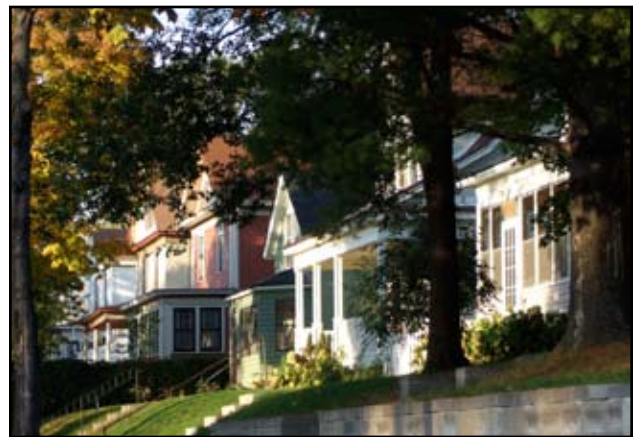
Transition Illustration

Graphic by Adam M./CURA

This graphic shows the west to east transition from the higher density mixed-use developments along Central Av. NE to medium-density housing along the next block. The neighborhood then transitions to low density housing over the next couple of blocks.

- Encourage medium density housing and neighborhood retail along the Johnson Commercial Node.
- Encourage conversion of non-conforming duplexes back into single family homes.
- Rowhouses and townhomes are encouraged in addition to duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes.

- Establish gradual transitions between residential and commercial areas.
- Ensure attractive, livable neighborhoods by education and enforcement of the housing and property maintenance codes.
- Continue regular inspections of rental housing to preserve its functionality and safety.
- Low-density residential development proposals should be evaluated and compared to the form and density of the neighborhood.



Neighborhood form

Photo by ANA

This photo shows traditional neighborhood form in terms of setbacks, rhythm, materials, details, etc.

- Encourage adaptive reuse, retrofit and renovation projects that make the neighborhood's housing stock competitive in the city market.
- Rehabilitation of older and historic housing should be encouraged over demolition as quality of housing allows.
- Garages, either attached or detached, should be located on the rear/alley-side of the house, as existing grade allows, and should be accessory in size and use to the primary residential structure.
- New driveways should be prohibited on blocks that have alley access and no existing driveways.



## 5.2 Economic Development

- Encourage retail/commercial development in specific areas – Central Avenue Commercial Corridor, Johnson Street Commercial Node, and the Lowry & Central Activity Center.
- Contain high intensity uses at the Lowry & Central Activity Center.
- Promote low-impact neighborhood services on residential streets per the definition of Urban Neighborhood (UN).
- Support retail/commercial by increasing residential density in adjacent areas.



Central Av. NE & Lowry Av. NE

Graphic by DJR

The greatest increase in retail/commercial and mixed-use development should be at this Activity Center of Central Av. NE and Lowry Av. NE. Development at this intersection shall be coordinated with the goals of the Central Avenue Plan.



Neighborhood Residence

Photo by ANA

Neighborhood residence with traditional form and constructed of high quality materials.

- Building features of infill development, such as windows and doors, height of floors, and exposed basements, shall reflect the scale and materials of surrounding dwellings.
- Traditional setbacks, orientations, pattern, height, and scale of dwellings should be used in areas where no clear pattern exists.
- Suggest the creation of a design review board.
- Encourage well maintained residential exteriors.

## 5.3 Urban Character & Design

### 5.3.1 Residential

- The neighborhood should be inviting and comfortable to pedestrians and passersby.
- All residences should be well designed and executed with high quality materials and finishes.
- Renovation and infill development shall reflect the setbacks, orientation, height and scale of surrounding dwellings, open space in the back yard, and garage along the alley or at back of lot.
- Preserve the character of existing residential low-density housing.
- Promote the use of high-quality, 50-year materials, in new housing construction and renovation to minimize long-term deterioration of the housing stock.

### 5.3.2 Retail/Commercial

- All retail/commercial structures should be well designed and executed with high quality materials and finishes.
- Encourage renovation of existing commercial properties to their original appearance.
- Buildings should reflect the uses at ground level.
- Buildings should be punctuated with frequent windows and entrances that lend interest and activate sidewalk.
- Provide the opportunity for personalization (by shopkeeper).
- Building facades should contain signage that is appropriately scaled and designed.



- Encourage local retailers to follow the Minneapolis sign code standards.



Johnson Av. Commercial Node

Photo by DJR

Increase views to street from retail spaces by following sign code standards.

## 5.4 Land Use

Land use is key to the success of the Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan. The proposed [land use map](#) creates a framework for development and indicates the direction that the neighborhood would like to go in. That direction is to increase residential density via mixed-use developments and medium density housing along the Central Avenue Commercial Corridor. The Johnson Commercial Node can increase support for its commercial/retail tenants by increasing the residential density around the node via townhomes, rowhouses, and senior living.

### 5.4.1 Land Use Definitions

#### Urban Neighborhood (UN)

Predominantly residential area with a range of densities, with highest densities generally to be concentrated around identified nodes and corridors. May include some other small-scale uses, including neighborhood serving commercial and institutional and semi-public uses (for example, schools, community centers, religious institutions, public safety facilities, etc.) scattered throughout.

#### Medium Density Residential (UN)

This is a subset within the Urban Neighborhood

category. Medium density residential should be concentrated around the identified Commercial Corridors and Nodes.

- Townhomes, stacked townhomes, apartments, condominiums, and senior housing.
- 20-50 units/acre.
- 2-4 story buildings.
- Surface, underground, and garage parking.

#### Low Density Residential (UN)

This is a subset within the Urban Neighborhood category. Low density residential should constitute the bulk of the neighborhood, with the slightly higher density residences around Community Corridors and Commercial Nodes.

- Single family detached, single family attached, townhomes, and rowhouses.
- 10-19 units/acre.
- 1-3 story buildings.
- Garage parking.

#### General Commercial (CO)

Includes a broad range of commercial uses. This designation is reserved for areas that are less suited for mixed-use development that includes residential.

#### Mixed Use (MU)

Allows for mixed use development, including mixed use with residential. Mixed use may include either a mix of uses within a building or within a district, so there is no requirement that every building be mixed use.

#### Public and Institutional (PI)

Accommodates public and semi-public uses, including museums, hospitals, civic uses, stadiums, and college campuses. Note that some smaller uses (including schools, libraries, and emergency services) may be incorporated into Urban Neighborhood (UN), where they are generally allowed.



## Parks and Open Space (OP)

Applies to land or water areas generally free from development. Primarily used for park and recreation purposes, natural resource conservation, or historic scenic purposes.

### 5.5 Public Realm

- Complete the Audubon Park plan for incorporation into the Small Area Plan.
- Encourage the transfer of the school board property adjacent to Audubon Park to become part of Audubon Park.
- Create a year round indoor/outdoor space in Audubon Park.
- Encourage pedestrian scale lighting throughout the park.



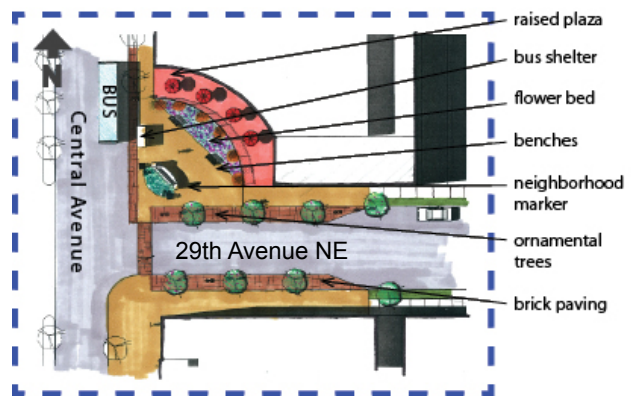
Taylor Street

Graphic by Adam M./CURA

Increased street plantings and buried power lines make for a nicer experience.

- Explore opportunities for public art, especially at Audubon Park and along the school fence on 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue. See the Neighborhood [Public Art Overlay Plan](#).
- Invest in the greening of streets, particularly those that connect into and supplement the parks and open spaces.
- Provide private landowners and developers incentives to create and maintain publicly accessible open spaces or green infrastructure, i.e. churches, schools, parks, businesses, etc.

- Where open spaces and the building environment interface, seek greater design integration between them to create active and interesting spaces.
- Pursue public/private funding to develop additional public spaces.
- Bury power lines and utilities along 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue and elsewhere.
- Create a clear and consistent signage program for way finding and neighborhood identification throughout Audubon Park.



Central Av. Gateway

Graphic by Adam M./CURA

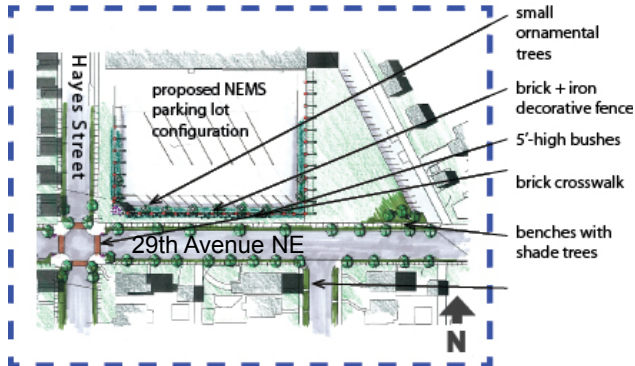
Pavers, signage, plantings, and pedestrian amenities create a gateway into the Audubon Park Neighborhood.

- Create an identity for the neighborhood via gateway signs at strategic locations.
- Improve signage directing people to and around Audubon Park.
- Improve maintenance of public spaces.

### 5.6 Transportation

#### Pedestrian

- Improve access management and way finding to and from all streets, sidewalks, and other pedestrian connections.
- Encourage wider sidewalks in commercial nodes, activity centers, and along community and commercial corridors.
- Provide streetscape elements, including street furniture and trees, that buffer pedestrians from auto traffic and parking areas.



Corner of Hayes St. at School Graphic by Adam M./CURA

Pavers, decorative fencing, plantings, and pedestrian amenities create an inviting entrance to the school property.



Northeast Middle School Graphic by Adam M./CURA

Rendering of revised corner at Hayes Street and the Northeast Middle School.

- Integrate placement of street furniture and fixtures, including landscaping and lighting, to serve a function and not obstruct pedestrian pathways.

## Bicycle

- Ensure that new development (residential and commercial) provides an adequate number of bicycle parking stalls.
- Encourage bicycle parking at convenient locations throughout the neighborhood for bicyclists to park their bikes and walk to several places.
- Improve bicycle connection to Grand Rounds Scenic Byway and Audubon Park.



Bicyclists across from Audubon Park Photo by DJR

Need connection to park and dedicated bike lanes.

- Explore design options for bike lanes along streets parallel to Central Avenue NE, Johnson Street NE, 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE, and Lowry Avenue NE.

## Transit

- Encourage new developments to provide transit facilities (shelters and boarding areas) as part of their building or site design.
- Support the possible development of streetcars on Central Avenue.
- Support transit by promoting land uses and development densities that create and support strong transit markets, such as medium-density housing, employment, and retail.



Johnson Av. Commercial Node Photo by DJR

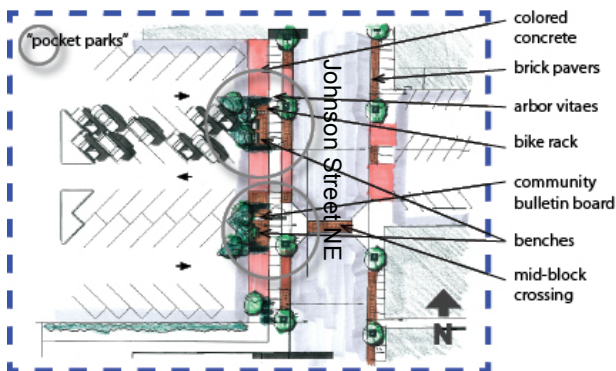
Development opportunity at Johnson Commercial Node to create a more inviting transit stop.



- Encourage employers to increase transit use by participating in existing programs that allow them to treat the cost of employee bus passes as a business expense.

## Parking

- Encourage property owners on Central Avenue to combine parking lots in the rear of their buildings and to connect them to side streets allowing the reduction of curb cuts, the addition of on-street parking, and the reduction of mid-block left turns.
- Encourage shared parking practices between complementary uses such as entertainment and offices.



Johnson Street NE

Graphic by Adam M./CURA



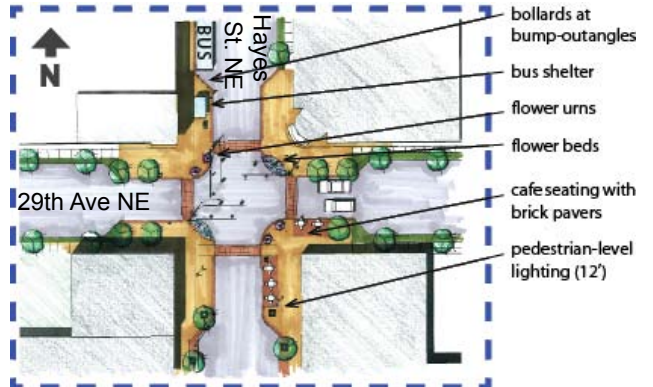
Johnson Street NE

Graphic by Adam M./CURA

Pavers, decorative fencing, plantings, and pedestrian amenities create an inviting entrance to the school property.

## Traffic & Streets

- Reduce street widths for safe and convenient pedestrian crossing by adding medians, boulevards, and/or bump outs.
- Identify crosswalks through the installation of pavers or annual striping.
- Add boulevard trees.



Corner of Hayes St. at School Graphic by Adam M./CURA

Bumpouts help slow traffic, pavers identify crosswalks to create a safe environment for pedestrians, and plantings and street furniture create a pleasant environment.





## **6. Implementation**

The Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan establishes a framework for development and a future vision for the area. Achieving this vision will require an ongoing discussion of collaboration between many different groups of people. This implementation section starts to identify the relationships, roles, and responsibilities of the many groups that are a part of this process.

### **Implementation Working Group**

In order to carry out and support this plan, a group shall be created to coordinate the necessary work and resources. The group should be comprised of a diverse group of people, in expertise and perspective. While the small area plan cannot resolve all issues that may arise, the Implementation Working Group will work together in the best interests of the neighborhood and the intent of the small area plan.

### **Neighborhood Representatives and Elected Officials**

Neighborhood and community organizations are the main avenue for residents and local businesses to participate in their communities. The Audubon Park Neighborhood Association, in conjunction with the City's Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) and other community groups, will work together on redevelopment projects and planning for public infrastructure.

Audubon Park is in Ward 1 of the City Council. The City Council is responsible for the major decisions that will affect the implementation of the Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan. The Zoning & Planning Committee, Transportation & Public Works Committee and the Community Development Committee are the three main committees that will affect the implementation of the small area plan.

### **Comprehensive Plan Amendment**

The primary policy document regarding the growth and development of the city is The Minneapolis Plan. The plan includes policy language and maps that indicate locations for redevelopment as well as future development. Small area plans, such as the Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan, work in conjunction with The Minneapolis Plan by providing greater detail regarding appropriate locations for redevelopment/future development, as well as the character of the neighborhood and the necessary infrastructure modifications.

The Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan will serve as an amendment to The Minneapolis Plan. The Metropolitan Council is required to review and approve the amendment for its consistency with The Minneapolis Plan. CPED-Planning staff will undertake the review of the Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan.

### **Land Use Regulation & Development Review**

The Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan will be used by city staff for future review of zoning regulations, so that the city develops a consistency between its comprehensive plan and land use regulations. When applications for development require rezoning or other approvals that must be consistent with The Minneapolis Plan, CPED staff will turn to this document.

### **Roadway and Streetscape Planning**

In order to realize the vision of the Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan, the roadways, sidewalks, streetscapes and other passageways need to be appropriately designed. Since there is a significant increase in density envisioned for certain sections of the neighborhood, this density via development needs to be mediated with public spaces that are attractive and inviting for all forms of transit. The Department of Public Works, in conjunction



with CPED, will work together to design, fund, and implement changes to the public infrastructure. Following are key locations for roadway and streetscape planning improvements:

- Along 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE from Central Avenue to Stinson Boulevard.
- Along Johnson Street NE from Lowry Avenue NE to 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE.
- Along Central Avenue NE from Lowry Avenue NE to 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE.
- Within and throughout the neighborhood, particularly around Audubon Park, to slow traffic and provide an inviting multi-modal transportation experience.

### Market Advocacy

Redevelopment, often involving different parties, will be a key force in implementing this plan. There is a possibility that property owners and residents may be unaware of this plan and the vision and framework for development that it has established. Careful marketing of this plan by the neighborhood association in conjunction with the Planning Division of CPED, will strive to inform property owners and residents and garner support of redevelopment projects. The neighborhood is organic, allowing for constraints and opportunities to change over time. Areas of opportunity that are the focus of early implementation are:

- The housing stock between Fillmore Street NE and Central Avenue NE.
- The Central Avenue Commercial Corridor and the Johnson & 29<sup>th</sup> Commercial node.
- The streetscape along 29<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and Central Avenue NE.
- Audubon Park.
- The Hollywood Theater.
- The area across Central Avenue from the Shoreham Yards property.
- The entire neighborhood in terms of signage and public art.

### Inspections

There are currently some areas of blight between Central Avenue NE and Fillmore Street NE. Violations have been seen of the building code, zoning, and businesses licenses. This area needs to be addressed to improve the living conditions of the surrounding area and to increase the overall value of the housing stock within the neighborhood. Communication with property and business owners is key in order to make sure that the upkeep and code compliance of properties occurs and that redevelopment opportunities remain possibilities. Staff of the Audubon Park Neighborhood Association, in conjunction with the Staff of the Department of Regulatory Services should work closely with CPED to create and implement short- and long-term enforcement strategies.

### 29th Street NE Streetscape

The Audubon Neighborhood Association has already completed a streetscape plan for the 29th Street NE corridor and the Johnson Commercial Node. This was done in anticipation of increased traffic when the Shoreham Yards project moves forward. The streetscape plan seeks to calm traffic and create a pleasing and engaging environment for residents and all forms of transportation.

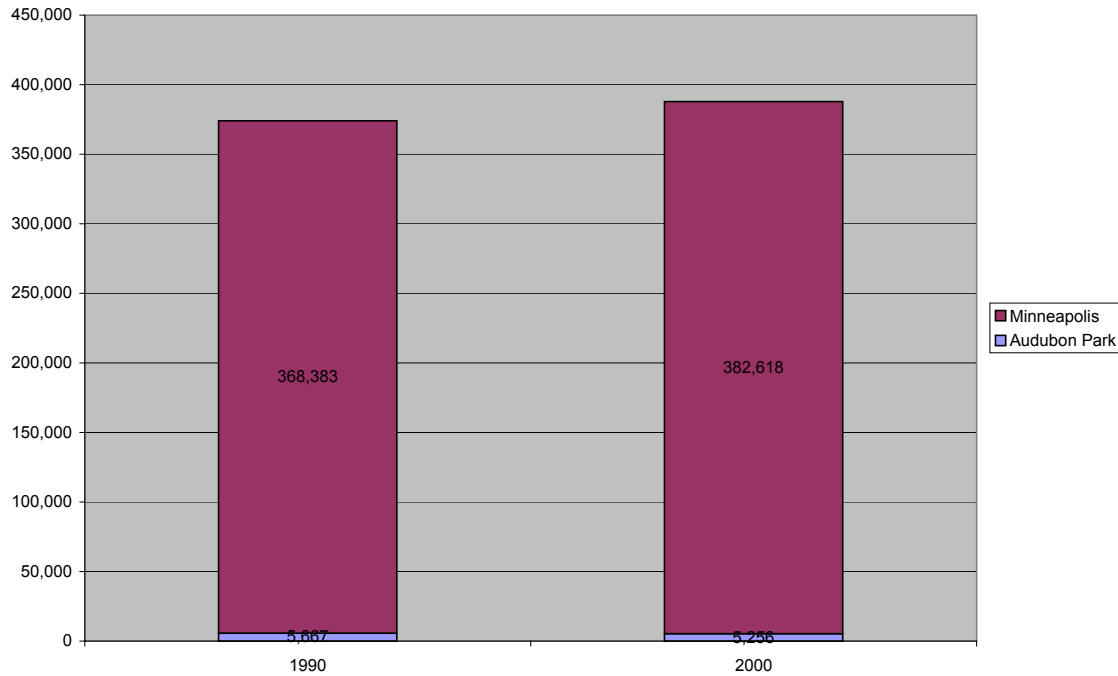
### Public Art Overlay

In an effort to create an identity for the neighborhood and improve public space, the Audubon Neighborhood Association created a public art overlay for the entire neighborhood. This overlay indicates locations where public art, either permanent or temporary, sculpture or gateway, may be located.



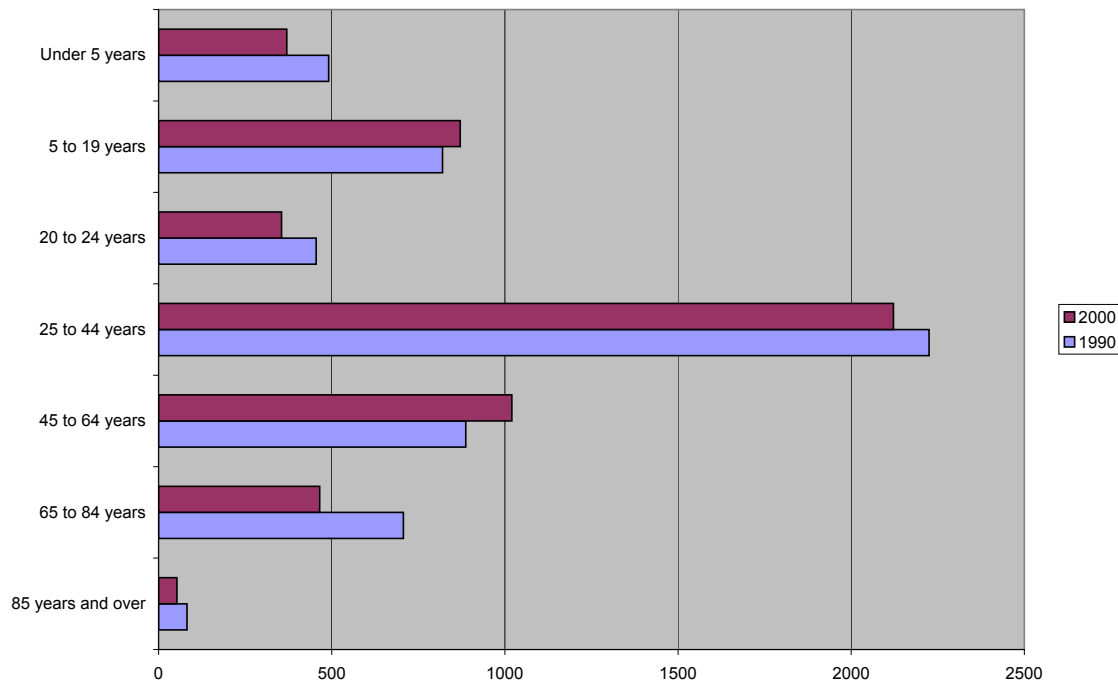
Appendix A - Demographic Data

Population Count



2.3.1 Population Count

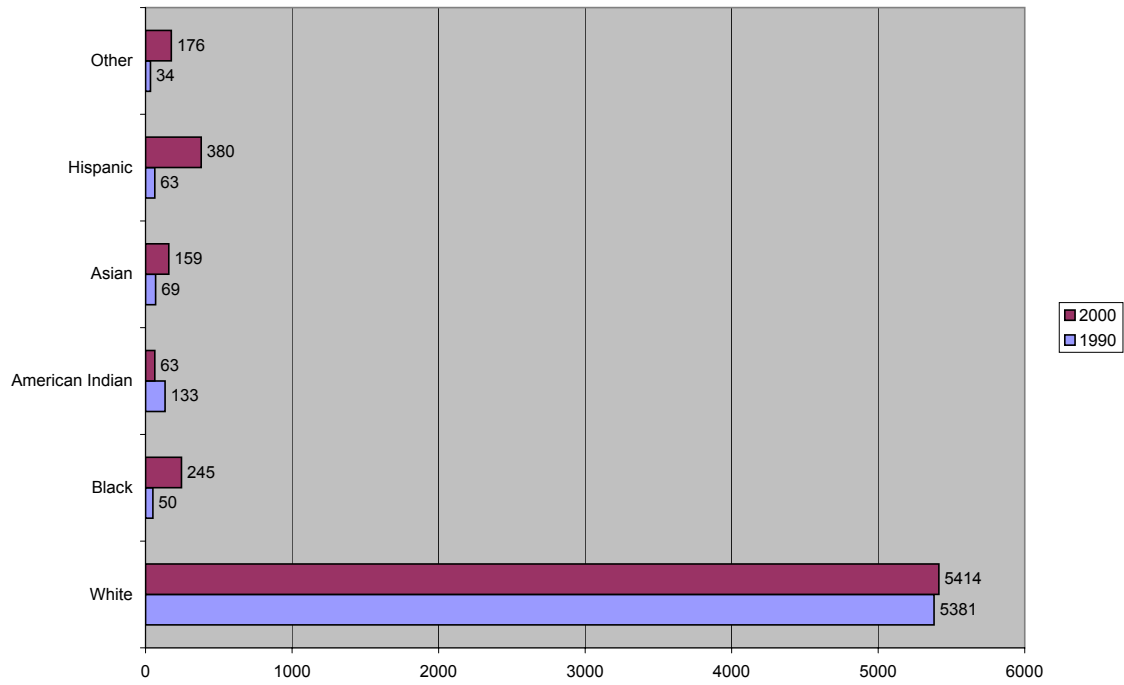
Age Distribution



2.3.2 Age Distribution

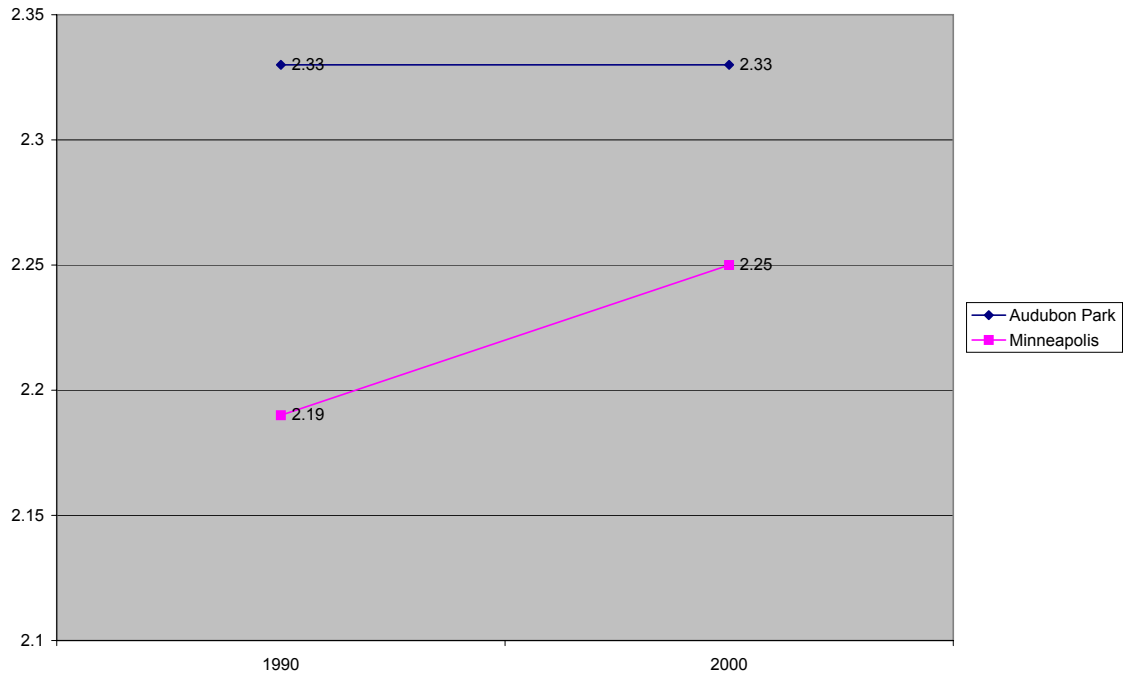


**Ethnic Distribution**



**2.3.3 Ethnic Distribution**

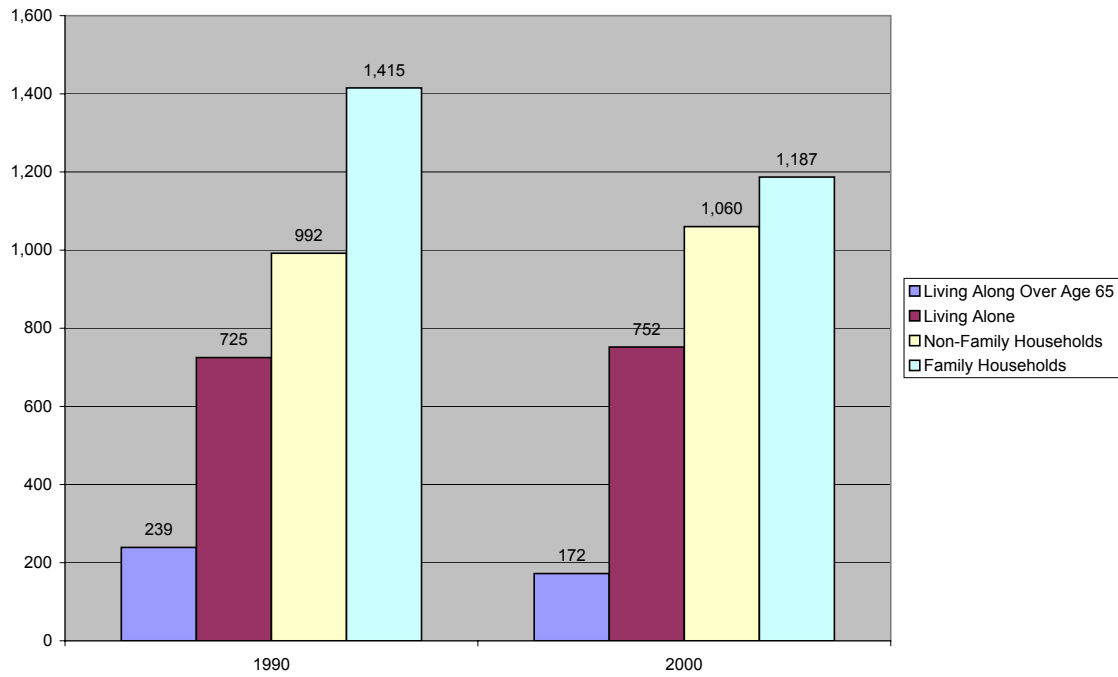
**Average Household Size**



**2.3.4 Average Household Size**

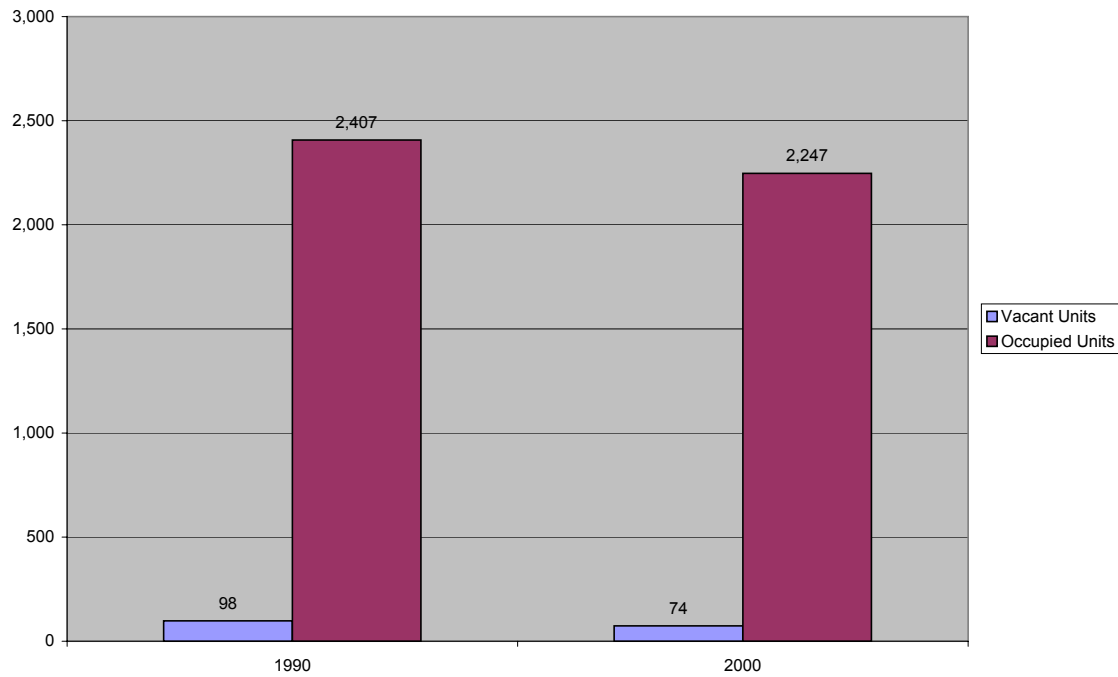


Household Composition



2.3.5 Household Composition

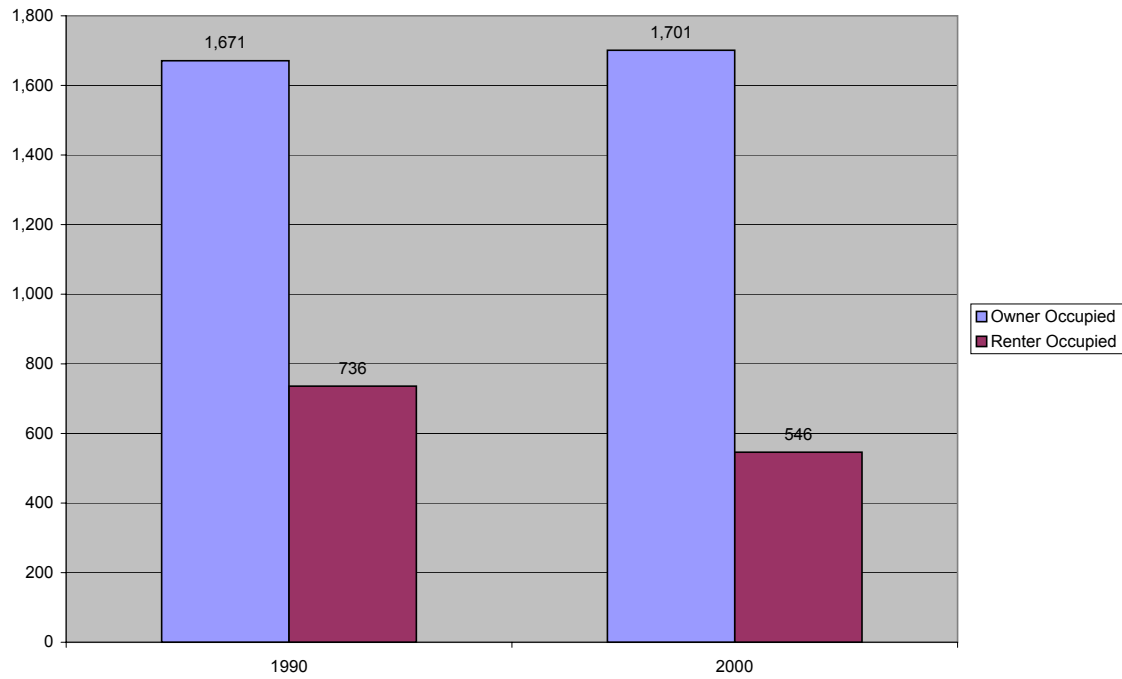
Housing Availability



2.3.6 Housing Availability

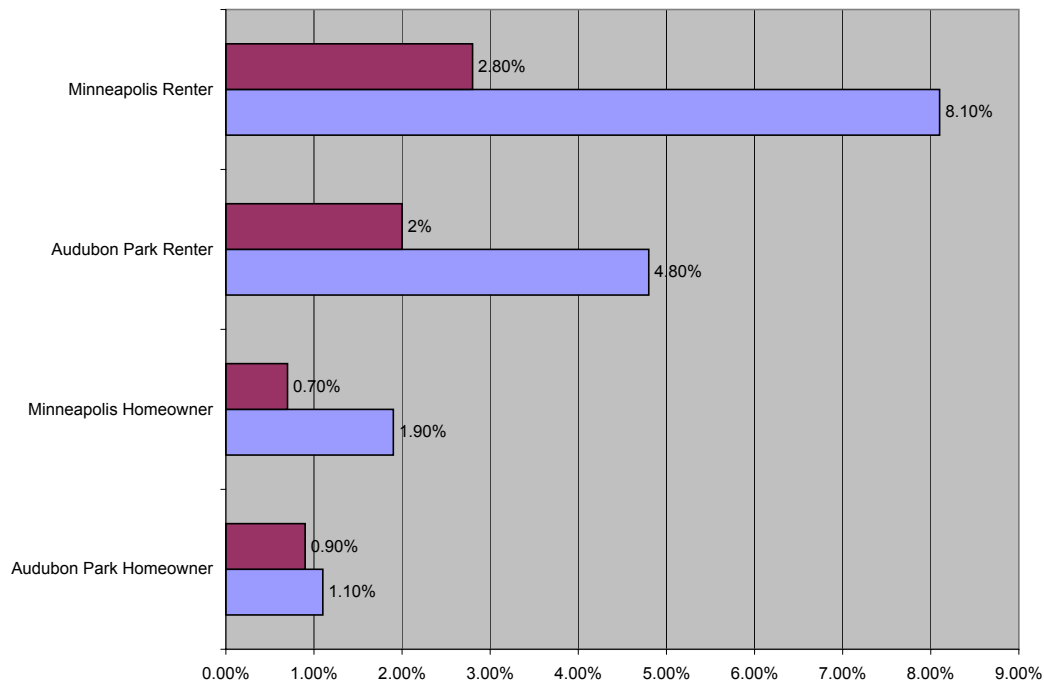


Occupied Housing Units



2.3.7 Occupied Housing Units

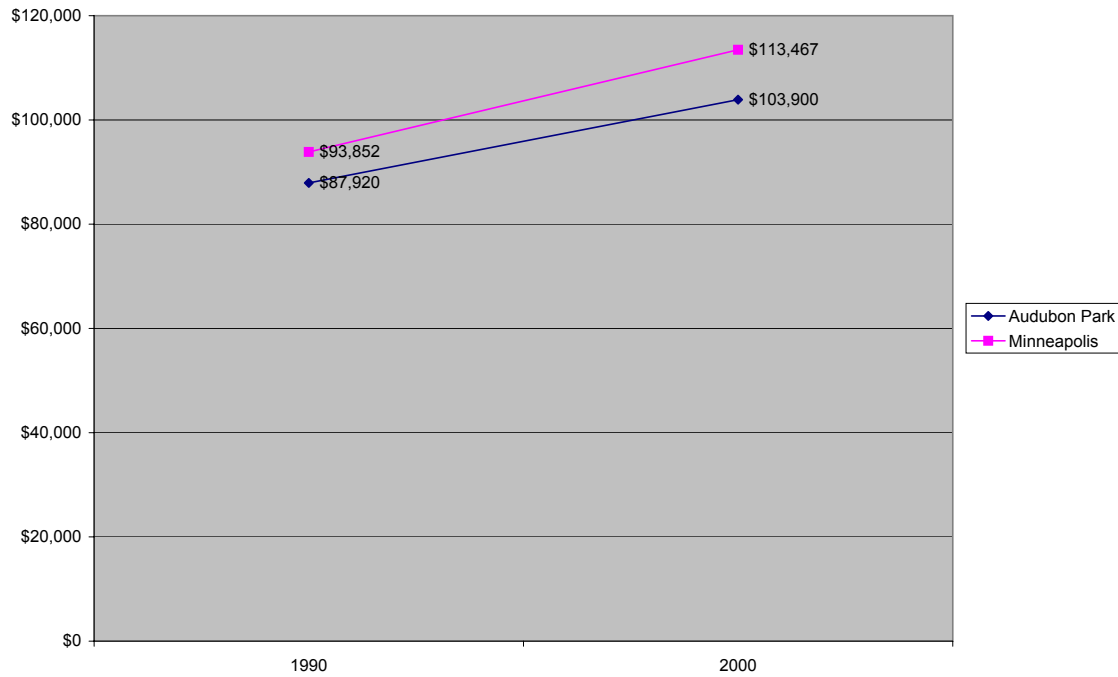
Homeowner and Rental Vacancy Rate



2.3.8 Homeowner & Rental Vacancy Rates

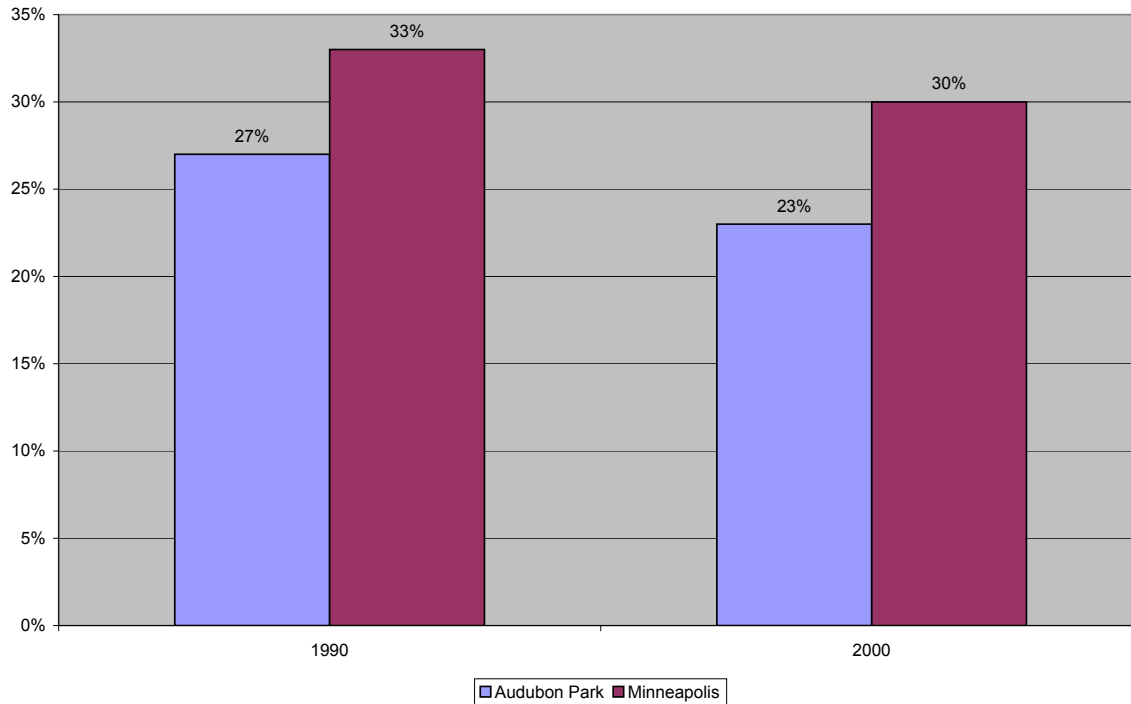


Median House Values



2.3.9 Median House Values

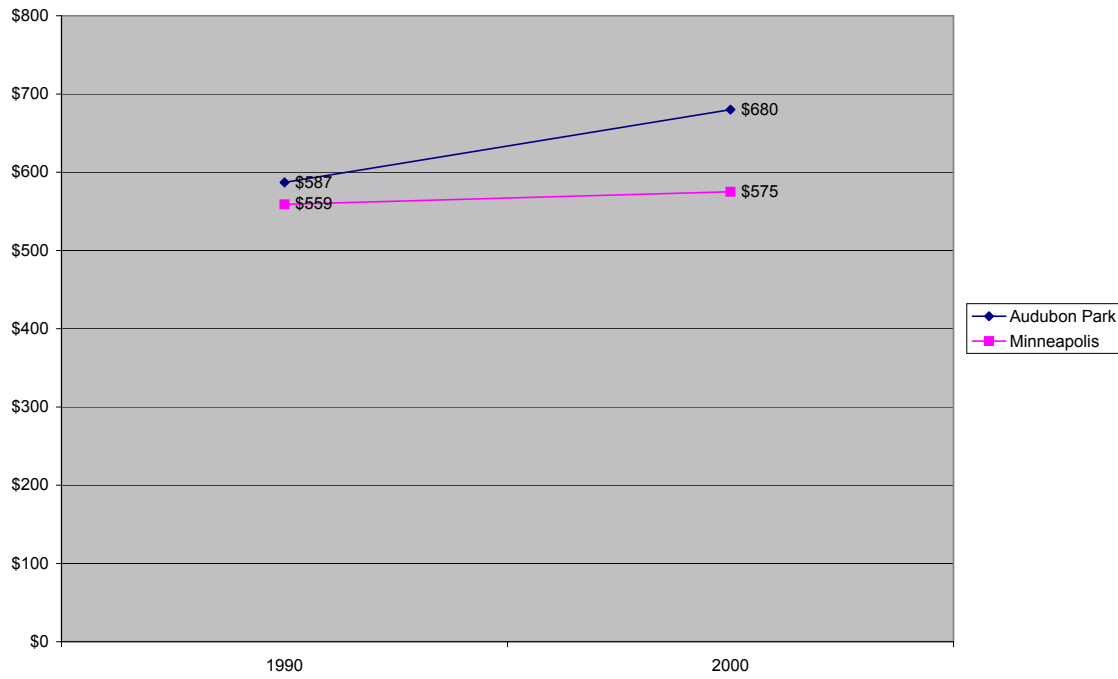
Median House Value as a % of Income



2.3.10 Median Housing Value as a % of Median Household Income

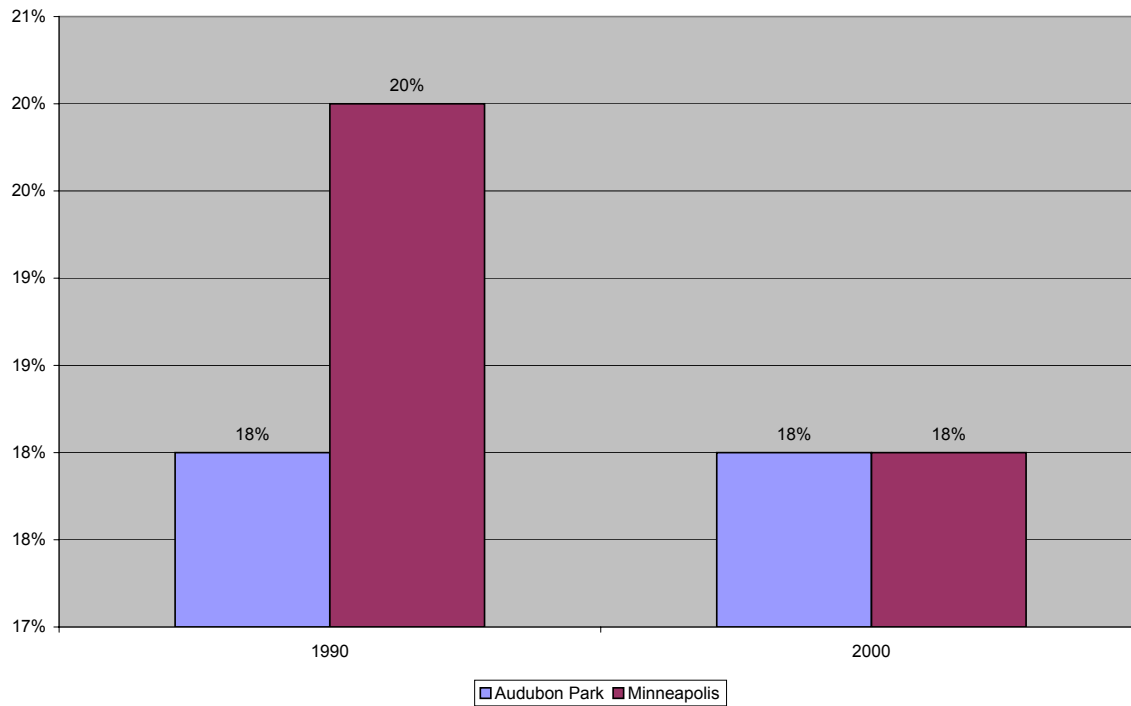


Median Gross Rent



2.3.11 Median Gross Rent

Median Gross Rent as a % of Income

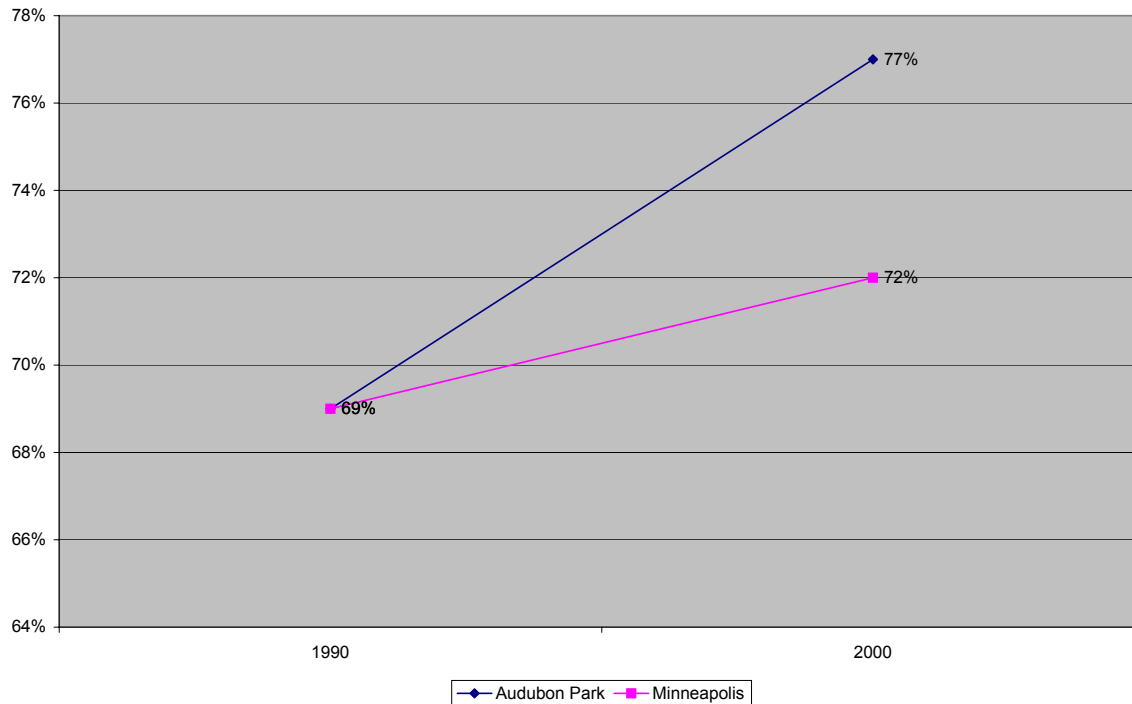


2.3.12 Median Gross Rent as a % of Median Household Income



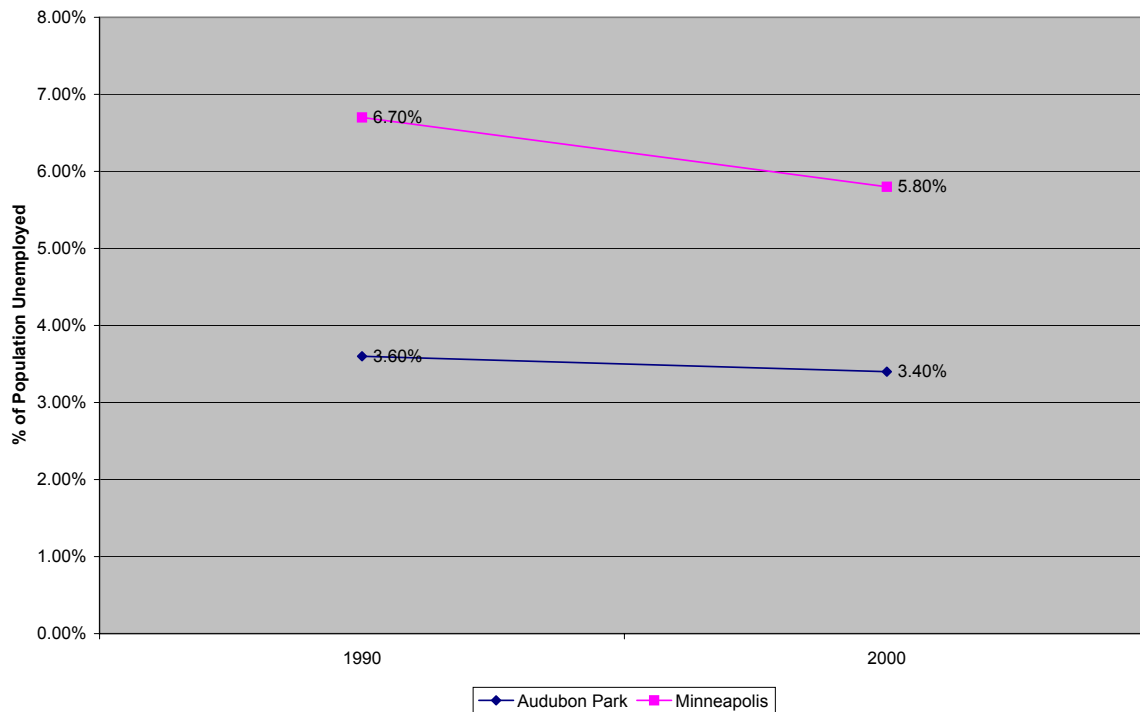


Labor Force Participation



2.3.13 Labor Force

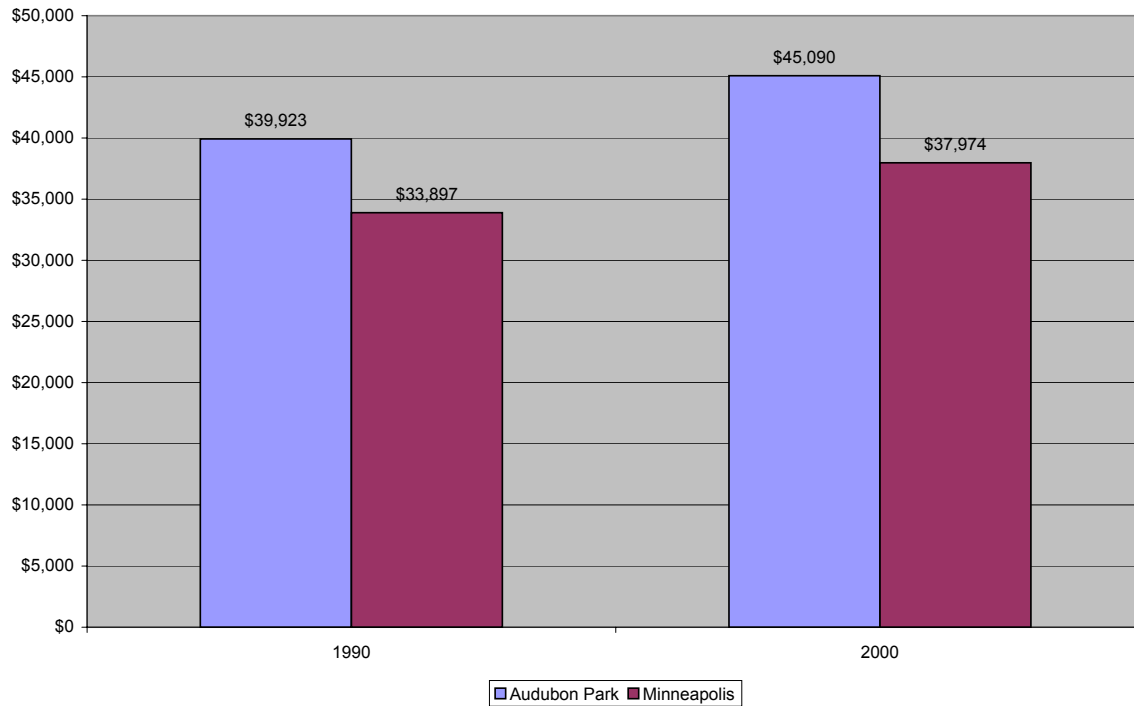
Unemployment Trends



2.3.14 Unemployment Trends

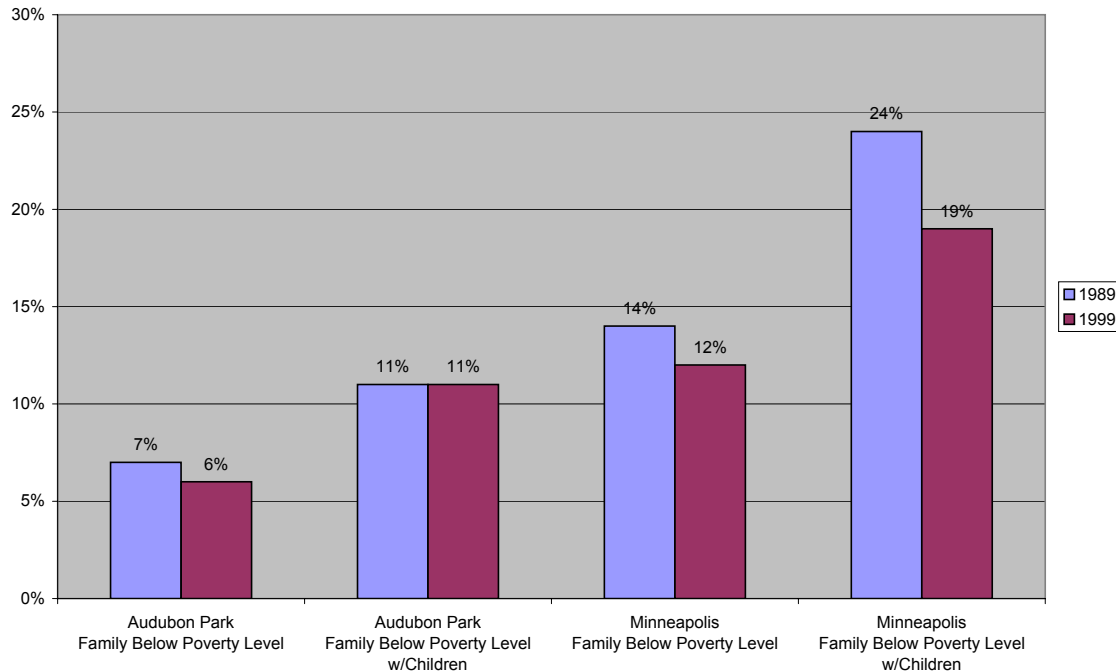


Median Household Income



2.3.15 Income

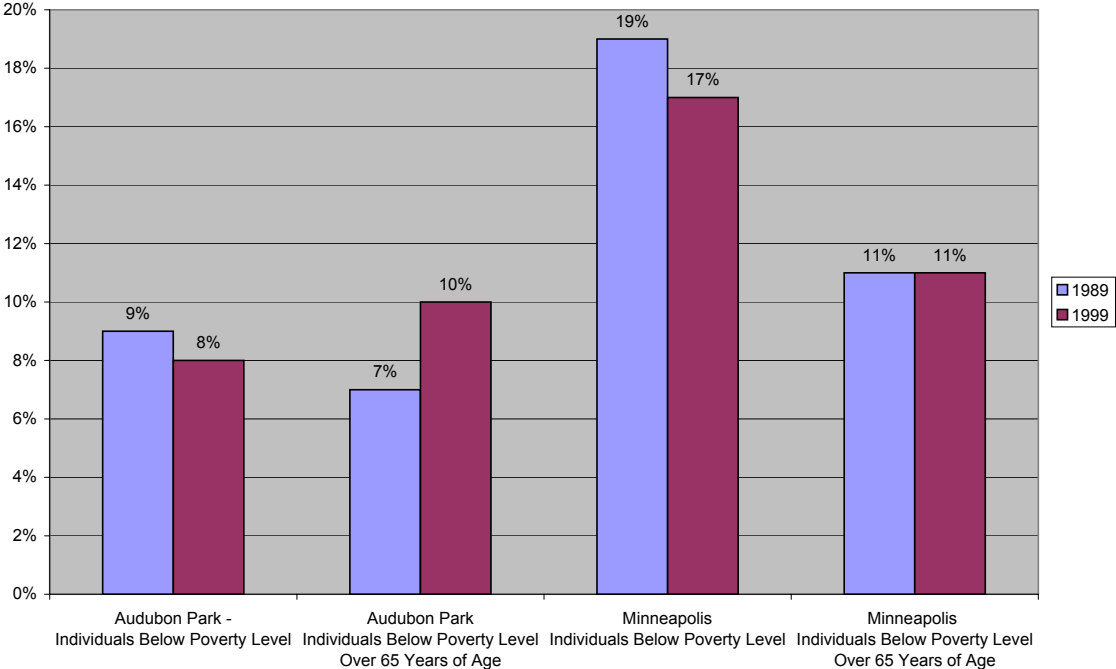
Poverty Status of Families



2.3.16 Poverty Status of Families



Poverty Status of Individuals



2.3.17 Poverty Status of Individuals

# Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan



## Appendix B - Current Zoning Map





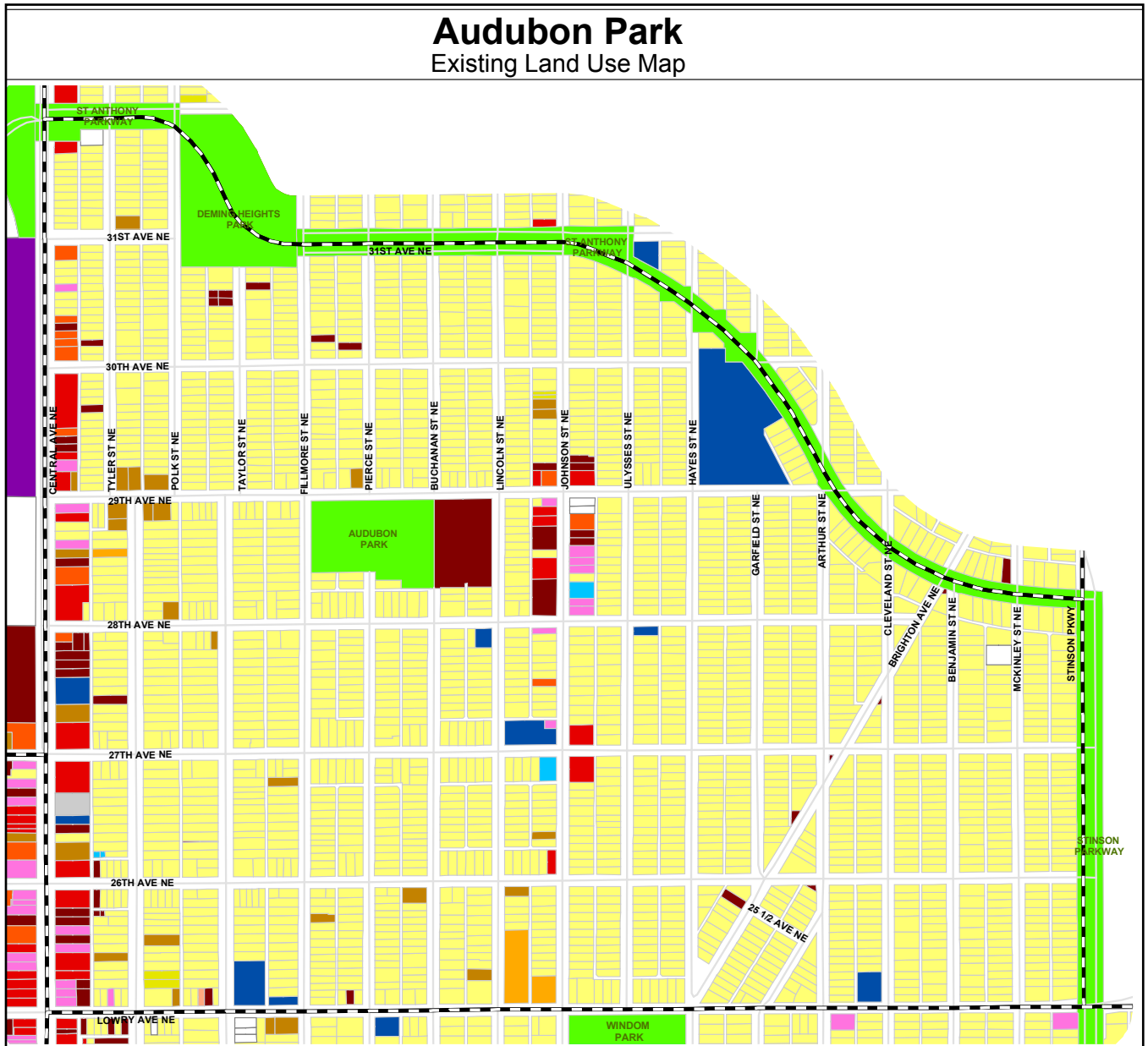
Appendix C - Proposed Zoning Map



# Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan



## Appendix D - Existing Land Use Map

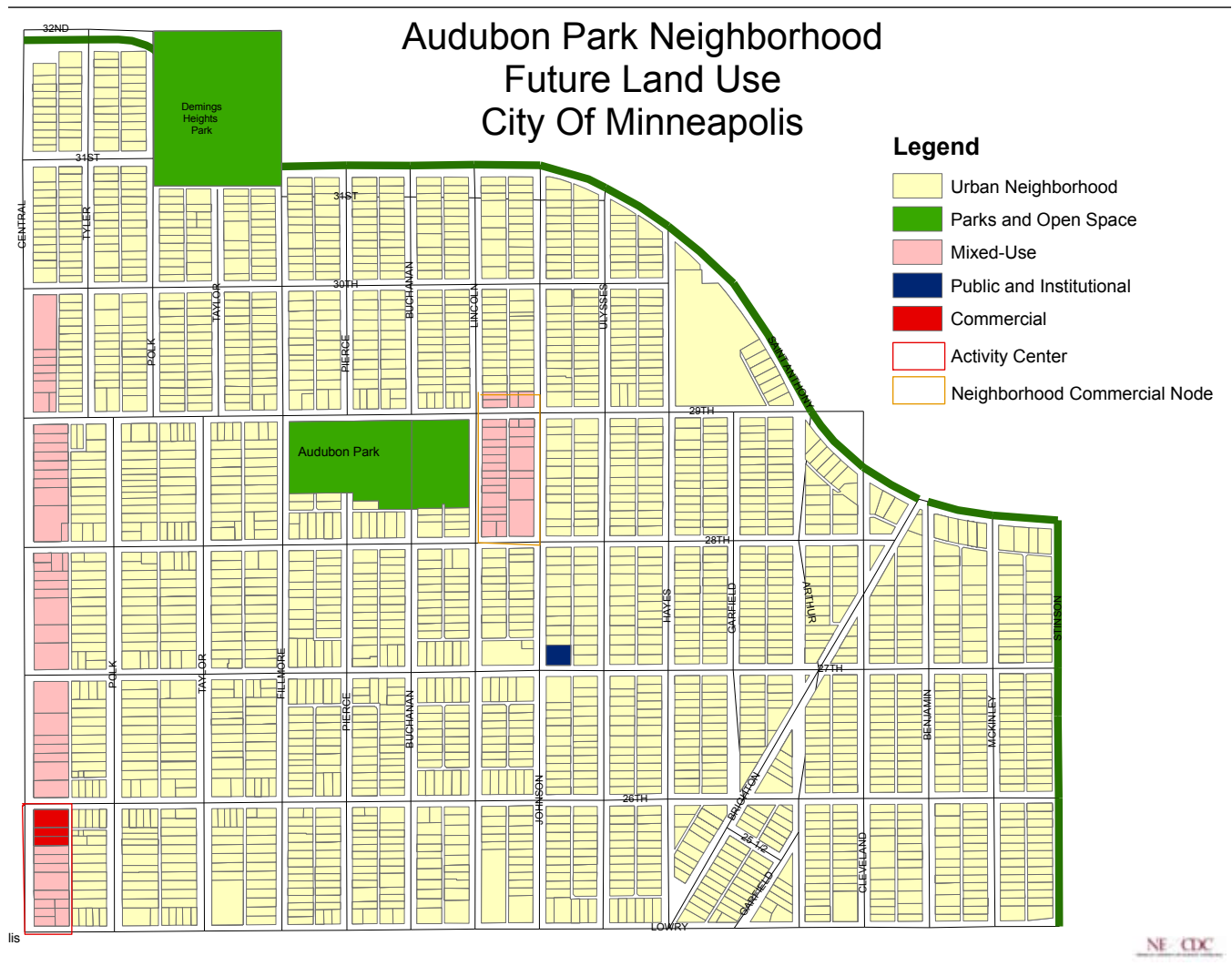


Legend ( <a href="#">See Glossary Click Here</a> )			
Single Family, Duplex and Triplex	Commercial	Industrial, Warehouse, Factory	Sport & Recreation Facilities
Condo and Townhouse	Office	Utilities	Parks & Open Space
Apartment	Residential Common Area	Institutional	Vacant Land
Group Residence	Garage or Misc. Residential	Mixed Use	No Data

Source: City Assessor  
Data as of July 2006  
Scale: 1:9,000



## Appendix E - Proposed Land Use Plan









Appendix G - Public Art Overlay



This Public Art Overlay map indicates possible locations for art installations. These installations may be temporary or permanent, and this list is by no means exhaustive. Art, especially with an avian theme, creates an identity for the Audubon Park Neighborhood and is encouraged throughout.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>A Neighborhood sign with bird sculpture at new garden by Park Board.</p> <p>B Replace railing &amp; create archway across stairs with decorative birds.</p> <p>C Neighborhood gateway sign.</p> <p>D Gateway-major installation across 29th</p> <p>E Bird sculptures/houses throughout the park. New park building with a bird house vernacular.</p> | <p>F Temporary woven art in chain link fence until fence is removed.</p> <p>G Temporary artist designed banners along chain link fence until fence is replaced. Bird sculptures as seating in schoolyard.</p> <p>H Neighborhood gateway sign.</p> <p>J Signs and/or paintings on temporarily boarded up windows.</p> <p>K Neighborhood gateway sign.</p> <p>L Public art at front of parking lot.</p> <p>M Art project on Qwest switching station.</p> <p>N Public art at front of parking lot.</p> <p>P Neighborhood gateway sign.</p> <p>Q Neighborhood gateway sign.</p> <p>R Neighborhood gateway sign.</p> |
|---|---|