



North Loop Small Area Plan

Update to the Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan



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1. Executive Summary

Introduction

The North Loop Small Area Plan is a policy document produced by the City of Minneapolis to guide land use and development in the North Loop neighborhood for the next 20 years. It is officially an update to the *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan*, adopted by the City in 2003, and builds upon the policy direction of *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*, the City's comprehensive plan. It is meant to articulate a vision for the neighborhood based on existing City policy and input from community stakeholders – both public and private - throughout the planning process. The City, public partners, and community organizations will use the plan to guide their own decision-making processes with incremental changes to realize the full vision.

The plan examines the current conditions of the area, develops a future vision of what community members want the neighborhood to become and then formulates specific goals, objectives, and policies that will help implement that vision. The plan itself builds on past planning efforts and public involvement processes, particularly with respect to adherence to the original plan.

The purpose of the North Loop Small Area Plan is to be a complementary piece to the *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan*. The update is meant to encapsulate the remainder of the North Loop neighborhood that has not had small area planning. The original plan continues to be relevant and this update will transfer its recommendations to the rest of the North Loop while providing more detail.

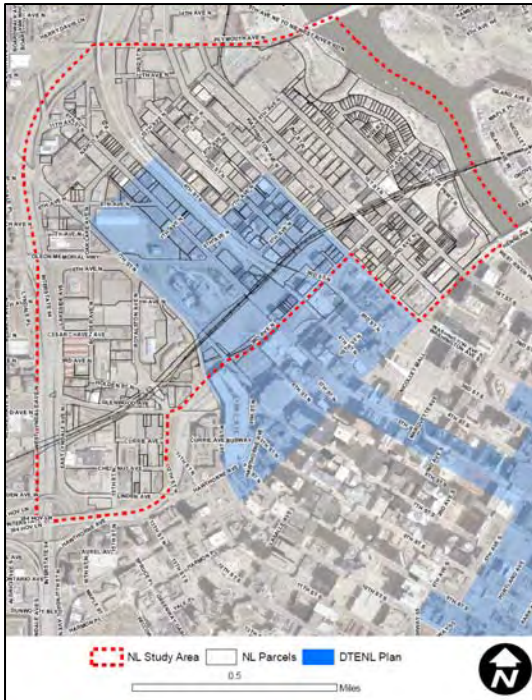


Figure 1.1 North Loop neighborhood boundary

Principles of Development

As part of the community process, fourteen principles were established to guide the planning process and direction of the plan:

1. Pedestrian and Bicycle accessibility and connections are important aspects of livability for the residents, employees, and visitors of the North Loop.
2. Integration of transportation and land use planning that encourages and supports movement by public transit, bicycle, and walking as viable alternatives to the private automobile make the North Loop a desirable place to be.
3. Enhanced pedestrian safety, function, and aesthetic character in public rights-of-way encourage walking, particularly on roads connecting to major destinations.
4. The North Loop Neighborhood is and will be host to transit lines coming from all parts of the region which provides tremendous opportunity to place new emphasis on the movement of all modes of travel to and through the neighborhood.

5. Neighborhoods of choice such as the North Loop enjoy a high level of neighborliness through mixed-use development and design standards that acknowledge the interconnectedness of land uses.
6. The North Loop benefits from a wide range of public and private sector stakeholders that work toward the common goal of creating a unique urban identity for the neighborhood.
7. Historic character of the private and public realm is highly valued by residents, employees, and visitors of the North Loop Neighborhood.
8. Improving safety conditions makes the North Loop a place that people want to live in and visitors want to revisit to experience all that the neighborhood has to offer.
9. The North Loop Neighborhood is a community of choice that provides a harmonious mix of housing options for a variety of incomes.
10. The unique uses and built form of Downtown neighborhoods require a specialized regulatory environment that supports the historic character of the area while acknowledging the need for adaptive reuse and context sensitive design in redevelopment.
11. Environmental sustainability is a key feature in the future of the North Loop Neighborhood.
12. Preservation and enhancement of parks and open space is a priority throughout the North Loop Neighborhood.
13. Community gathering spaces within the North Loop Neighborhood connect residents, employees, and visitors in a convenient and publicly-accessible manner.
14. Seamlessly integrated living wage employment and work force housing opportunities are a priority for the North Loop Neighborhood.

Plan Overview

The plan is broken up in several main sections:

The Summary of Research, Existing Conditions, and Public Participation Process chapters provide a summary of information that sets the stage for the plan's analysis and recommendations.

The Recommendations chapter provides analysis of the issues facing the neighborhood, describes options, and outlines recommendations within the context of Transportation and Infrastructure, Land Use, and Development Guidelines.

The Implementation Plan chapter describes the steps needed for implementing the recommendations in the previous chapter. This outlines potential options for the implementation process; a more in-depth implementation strategy will need to be formulated once the plan is adopted.

Recommendations

The North Loop neighborhood is unique in a variety of ways that influence the possible future of transportation and land use within its boundaries. Most notably however, while market conditions and expectations are clear in some portions of the neighborhood, catalytic change may be necessary to bring about growth in the private markets. Acknowledging this reality, the following framework was developed to prepare for a variety of possibilities ranging from minimal change in development patterns to complete overhaul of the landscape.

Functional Improvements – These recommendations can and should happen regardless of whether or not major private reinvestment occurs in the neighborhood. Current industrial, residential, and commercial users in the neighborhood will benefit immediately from these strategic improvements.

Managing Growth – Recommendations in this category should happen in conjunction with possible change in the neighborhood. Examples of such change include new transit facilities, infrastructure maintenance, and private sector redevelopment.

Visionary Change – These recommendations are meant to serve as an anchor point for the long term vision of the community. Functional and Managing Growth changes should not impede the possibility of visionary recommendations taking place.

Transportation and Infrastructure

Reconnecting the neighborhood both internally and to surrounding communities is the overarching goal of transportation recommendations found in this section. This plan recommends reestablishing or creating a variety of connections throughout the neighborhood in a manner that serves pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and transit users.



Figure 1.2 HKGi: An illustration of a possible street connection at 8th Ave N underneath the viaduct

There is considerable opportunity to realize some of these changes in the near term. Major reinvestment has occurred in recent years in the portions of the neighborhood along the river and the Hennepin Avenue corridor. This reinvestment is continuing with the infusion of public dollars that are being spent on the new home of the Minnesota Twins, Northstar Commuter Rail, Hiawatha Light Rail Transit extension, and the possible introduction of three new light rail transit lines entering the neighborhood over the next 5-10 years.

As this private and public investment continues, the City of Minneapolis and its partners in Metro Transit, Hennepin County, MnDOT, and the North Loop neighborhood should work together to accomplish the goals and recommendations found on the following pages.

Recommendation highlights:

- **Create “Loop” Route.** Create a connection through the neighborhood along 10th Ave N and Border Ave, including more pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, a two-way Border Ave, and a new street connection from Border Ave to Glenwood Ave.
- **Light Rail Transit.** In the case of any new transit line, the street grid should be expanded and healed in areas that improve access to the line and any potential station. For example, provide clear and direct pedestrian connections from the proposed Southwest LRT Royalston Station to the Farmers Market, the Upper North Loop, and the Downtown office core.
- **Connections and Pedestrian Safety.** Create new connections and access points that improve circulation and pedestrian safety between the Mississippi River, the Downtown office core, neighboring communities, and destinations within the neighborhood.
- **Repair, Reconstruction, and Reclassification.** Prioritize the “Loop” route for repair and construction as well as streets defined in the plan as “Heritage Streets” where design needs to be balanced between function and preservation of historic character.

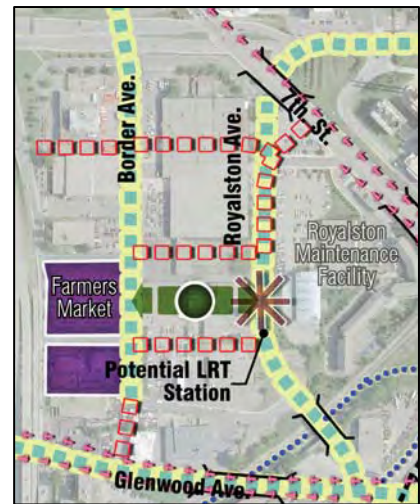


Figure 1.3 Farmers Market area

Land Use

A major component of any small area plan is a Future Land Use Plan. Since this is an update to an existing plan, future land use direction should be taken from the *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan* within its study boundaries and from this document for the remaining parts of the North Loop neighborhood.

The future land uses proposed here build upon the City’s comprehensive plan and will provide better specificity. The Future Land Use Plan will be used by the various public and private stakeholders as a tool for encouraging and regulating long-term land use decisions. If redevelopment occurs within the neighborhood, it will be required to adhere to the future land use plan.

Recommendation highlights:

- **Land use by parcel.** Each parcel within the North Loop is assigned a future land use designation. To make sure that regulation matches the policy in the neighborhood, a rezoning study should be performed as an implementation step to the North Loop Small Area Plan.
- **Designated land use features.** Designate Glenwood Ave as a Commercial Corridor to recognize its commercial potential and connect to the designated Commercial Corridor to the west of I-94.
- **Land Use Districts.** Within districts carried over from the original plan with the addition of some new districts, emphasize destination ground-floor commercial uses on Washington, Hennepin, and Glenwood. Mixed use buildings are appropriate generally throughout the neighborhood but ground-floor commercial should be more service oriented. Infill development should be geared

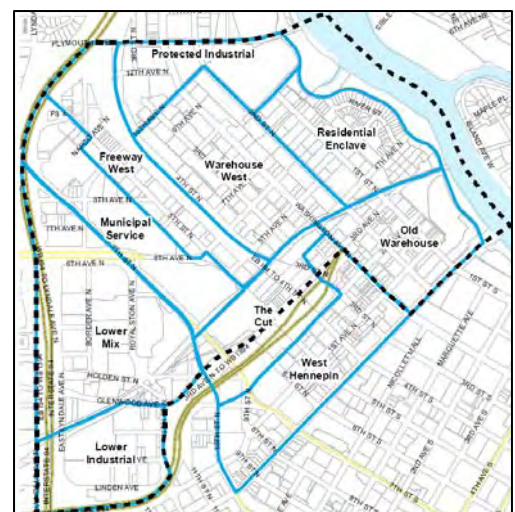


Figure 1.4 Land Use Districts

toward the removal of surface parking lots and other under-developed sites that are replaced with both housing and job density.

Development Guidelines

These guidelines are meant to complement recommendations related to land use and infrastructure and lay out fundamental urban design principals for both the public realm and development. Urban design tools can be used to mitigate the negative effects of bulk, height, and use to create a more human-scale, pedestrian-friendly environment. It can also identify the community’s ideal vision for how to create seamless connections within the public realm, increase the amount of green space, and context-appropriate design of development and rehabilitation of existing buildings.

The fundamental urban design principles include: the establishment of a connected network of streets that provide circulation for automobiles, pedestrians, bicyclists and transit; and development standards that clearly define street frontages at the pedestrian level and that guide the overall massing, height and form of buildings.

Recommendation highlights:

- **Development Intensity.** Categorize sites into three districts in order to reflect a variation in increased development intensity consistent with the character of a Downtown neighborhood.
- **General and Private Development.** All new buildings should be at least two stories and adhere to pedestrian-oriented design principles for frontage, parking, landscaping/fencing, and building façade.
- **Primary Public Realm Features.** Achieve a higher aesthetic and livability standard in the neighborhood for streets, greening, gateways, and view corridors.

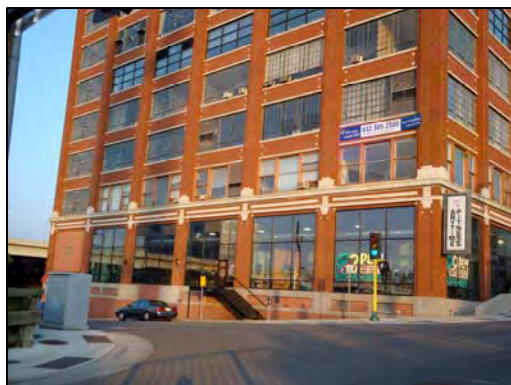


Figure 1.5 Example of good pedestrian-oriented facade

Implementation

The Implementation chapter outlines an implementation methodology for the North Loop Plan and offers tools to assist the public and private sectors in the realization of the community vision for the neighborhood. After adoption by the City Council, the Plan will become a part of the City’s comprehensive plan. While many implementation strategies will be the responsibility of the public sector, most of the directives will take a concerted and cooperative effort from community organizations, business owners, and private developers and property owners to realize over time.

Tables in the chapter outline initial ideas for how the recommendations in this plan can begin to be realized. The table defines responsible parties and timeframe for implementation (Near Term: 0-5 years; Mid Term: 5-10 years; Long Term: 10-20 years).

Transportation and Infrastructure

Many public entities have authority over transportation elements in the North Loop. Roads are either owned by Hennepin County or the City of Minneapolis and the Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit are responsible

for transit and their own facilities. Because of this complicated system of ownership and management, all parties will need to work in partnership to implement the transportation recommendations. From the public side, the primary implementation tool for infrastructure improvements are capital improvement plans. Federal, state, and local grants may also be a possibility should an opportunity for funding become available.

As with any transportation improvement projects citywide, a main goal is not only to improve connectivity within the neighborhood but to improve connections to other parts of the city. This will be a primary consideration as transportation infrastructure projects are designed and implemented throughout the life of this plan.

While recommendations are listed individually, this does not imply that they must be implemented that way. As discussed in the Transportation and Infrastructure section of the Recommendations chapter, several of these could be grouped together as part of larger projects. A prime example of this is “The Loop” road that has its own smaller improvements that lead to implementation of the whole concept. This will not only result in greater benefits for the area, but has the potential to reduce long-term costs and minimize disruption from construction.

Implementation of this plan will include identifying these projects and seeking appropriate funding, either through the capital improvements process, public/private partnerships, general City funds, grant programs, or other sources.

Land Use

The recommendations for land use improvements will be implemented first with a rezoning study and then over the long-term in the development review process as sites redevelop or property owners make improvements to structures and their surroundings. Once the zoning matches the policies set for in this plan, the City’s main tool for implementation will be the development review process which provides community members and policymakers the opportunity to weigh in on specific land use and development changes. This plan will be the main policy tool used by city staff and policymakers in that decision-making process.

Development Guidelines

The Development Guidelines should be used as a complement to the Land Use recommendations in order to achieve the best possible outcome with not only the prescribed use(s) but also how the public and private realm interact with each other. The guidelines related to general and private development mainly articulate already-existing regulations found in the Site Plan Review chapter of the zoning code and are important to retroactively apply to existing buildings and sites as improvements are made.



Figure 1.6 Sample from Map A.2 Future Land Use

2. Introduction

Background

The North Loop neighborhood has experienced, and will continue to experience, dramatic changes. The last ten years produced a tight-knit residential community that changed the way this former rail and warehousing area is experienced. In the future, the neighborhood will likely see large-scale transit infrastructure improvements that will continue to exemplify the need for coordinated planning.

At the time this planning process was conducted, there were numerous other planning studies occurring:

- Hennepin County is evaluating if and how the Southwest Corridor LRT and Bottineau Boulevard LRT or BRT will travel through the neighborhood to an Intermodal facility;
- The City is expanding the local Warehouse Historic District to match the boundaries of the national district along with updating the associated historic guidelines;
- Public improvements are being planned for both the Hennepin Energy Recovery Center (HERC) and Metro Transit facilities;
- The Downtown 2010 Partners public-private organization is advocating and planning for an improved pedestrian experience near Target Field and the Intermodal Station.

While it is a benefit that both public and private entities are planning for the potential of the North Loop, a large component of this planning process has been to better understand and recognize the thoughtful work of others, advocate for existing City policy, and plan accordingly.

Purpose of Plan

The North Loop Small Area Plan is a policy document produced by the City of Minneapolis to guide land use and development in the North Loop neighborhood for the next 20 years. It is officially an update to the *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan*, adopted by the City in 2003, and builds upon the policy direction of *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*, the City's Comprehensive Plan. It is meant to articulate a vision for the neighborhood based on existing City policy and input from community stakeholders – both public and private - throughout the planning process. The City, public partners, and community organizations will use the plan to guide their own decision-making processes, implementing incremental changes to realize the full vision.

The plan examines the current conditions of the area, develops a future vision of what community members want the neighborhood to become and then formulates specific goals, objectives, and policies that will help implement that vision. The plan itself builds on past planning efforts and public involvement processes, particularly with respect to adherence to the original plan.

Following successful completion and public review of the North Loop Small Area Plan, it is presented to the Minneapolis Planning Commission and City Council for approval as official policy direction within the study area. The Plan is to be used by city planners, Planning Commissioners, policymakers, developers, community organizations, public agencies and other stakeholders to guide future land uses and development in the North Loop. Additionally, it will be used to help guide future public investments – including transportation and other infrastructure improvements – which would impact the neighborhood.

The purpose of the North Loop Small Area Plan is to be a complementary piece to the *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan*. The update is meant to encapsulate the remainder of the North Loop neighborhood that has not been the beneficiary of small area planning in the past. The original plan continues to be relevant and this update will transfer its recommendations to the rest of the North Loop while providing more detail.

Vision and Principles of Development

As part of the community process, fourteen principles were established to guide the planning process and direction of the plan:

1. Pedestrian and Bicycle accessibility and connections are important aspects of livability for the residents, employees, and visitors of the North Loop.
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4. The North Loop Neighborhood is and will be host to transit lines coming from all parts of the region which provides tremendous opportunity to place new emphasis on the movement of all modes of travel to and through the neighborhood.
5. Neighborhoods of choice such as the North Loop enjoy a high level of neighborliness through mixed-use development and design standards that acknowledge the interconnectedness of land uses.
6. The North Loop benefits from a wide range of public and private sector stakeholders that work toward the common goal of creating a unique urban identity for the neighborhood.
7. Historic character of the private and public realm is highly valued by residents, employees, and visitors of the North Loop Neighborhood.
8. Improving safety conditions makes the North Loop a place that people want to live in and visitors want to revisit to experience all that the neighborhood has to offer.

9. The North Loop Neighborhood is a community of choice that provides a harmonious mix of housing options for a variety of incomes.
10. The unique uses and built form of Downtown neighborhoods require a specialized regulatory environment that supports the historic character of the area while acknowledging the need for adaptive reuse and context sensitive design in redevelopment.
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3. Summary of Research

This chapter provides a summary of the existing plans which currently impact the neighborhood, research on neighborhood conditions, and a historic and demographic profile of the North Loop.

Comprehensive Plan

The City of Minneapolis’ newly-adopted comprehensive plan, *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*, provides long term vision and strategy for the City as a whole. In contrast, small area plans such as this one provide more specific guidance for particular neighborhoods, while remaining consistent with the overall comprehensive plan. Once this small area plan is completed, it will be incorporated into the comprehensive plan as others have been in the past. Not all areas of the City have this level of guidance, but it is helpful where it does exist.

The land use section of the comprehensive plan organizes its policies in two main ways - in a Future Land Use Map and through designated land use features. There are mainly four future land use designations in the North Loop:

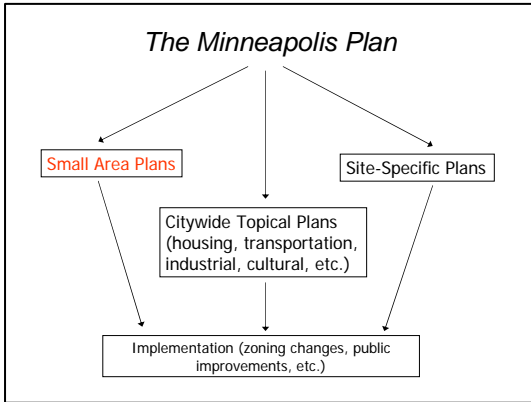


Figure 3.1 Planning Diagram

Urban Neighborhood – An area between 1st Street North and the River Parkway that is predominantly residential with a range of densities. More intensive non-residential uses may be located in neighborhoods closer to Downtown and around Growth Centers. These areas are not generally intended to accommodate significant new growth, other than replacement of existing buildings with those of similar density.

Mixed Use – The largest segment of the neighborhood between 2nd and 7th Streets North and Hennepin and 10th Avenue North is guided for mixed use development. Mixed use may include either a mix of retail, office or residential uses within a building or within a district. There is no requirement that every building be mixed use.

Transitional Industrial – This designation encompasses the entire Lower North Loop west of 7th Street North and east of I-94 with additional parcels on the far west side of the neighborhood. Industrial areas located outside of Industrial Employment Districts are labeled “transitional” since they may eventually evolve to other uses compatible with surrounding development. Although they may remain industrial for some time, they will not have the same level of policy protection as areas within industrial districts.

Industrial – A triangular segment of the neighborhood just south of Plymouth on either side of Washington Avenue North. This designation includes areas suited for industrial development and limited supporting commercial uses. Generally found within Industrial Employment Districts, with a high level of policy protection and an emphasis on job retention and creation. Industrial uses take precedent over other uses.

Land use features are located throughout the City and are defined by their function, density, and concentration of certain types of uses. Five major

types of features are relevant to the North Loop neighborhood – Growth Centers, Transit Station Areas, Commercial Corridors, Activity Centers, and Industrial Employment Districts.

Growth Centers are busy, interesting and attractive places characterized by a concentration of business and employment activity and a wide range of complementary activities taking place throughout the day and into the evening. The Downtown Minneapolis Growth Center encompasses the area within the Downtown freeway loop. As the physical and economic center of the city, Downtown is a logical place for a concentration of employment, housing, and other complementary uses. The employment base is largely office, although retail, education, and health care also play important roles. The land use pattern strengthens the concentrated office core with surrounding entertainment, cultural, and residential development. High intensity uses are encouraged to make the best use of the premium location and to strengthen the city's core.

Industrial Employment Districts ensure that future employment growth can be directed in such a way that it supports a long-term goal of economic prosperity. This is an important aspect of the City's economic development strategy. These districts are meant to protect prime industrial space, to provide opportunities for the City to support targeted industries and business clusters, and to redevelop underutilized sites for economic development purposes. A small corner of the neighborhood at Plymouth Avenue North and 2nd Street North is part of the North Washington Industrial District.

Transit Station Areas are defined in the existing comprehensive plan as approximately a one-half mile radius from light rail transit stations, with the intent of defining a ten-minute walk to the station. Transit Station Area (TSA) is a land use policy feature arising from regional investment in dedicated, fixed-route transit lines. These station areas represent unique opportunities and challenges that require special policy consideration. As such, TSAs call for tools that maximize potential community development benefits of transit while also strengthening and protecting the surrounding neighborhoods. Density, human-scale urban design, and public infrastructure are especially critical in these areas.

The Intermodal station at 5th Street North and 5th Avenue North, the most significant transit station in the region, is a TSA.

Commercial Corridors serve as boundaries connecting a number of neighborhoods and serve as focal points for activity. Development and revitalization of these corridors helps to strengthen surrounding urban neighborhoods. They can accommodate intensive commercial uses and high levels of traffic. The corridors support all types of commercial uses, with some light industrial and high density residential uses as well. While the character of these streets is mainly commercial, residential areas are nearby and impacts from commercial uses must be mitigated as appropriate. Additionally, the City encourages new medium- to high-density residential development along Commercial Corridors, particularly as part of mixed use development. These corridors frequently carry large traffic volumes and

must balance significant vehicular through-traffic capacity with automobile and pedestrian access to commercial property. Washington Avenue is a designated Commercial Corridor as well as the nearby Hennepin Avenue.

Activity Centers support a wide range of commercial, office, and residential uses. They typically have a busy street life with activity throughout the day and into the evening. They are heavily oriented towards pedestrians, and maintain a traditional urban form and scale. Activity Centers are also well-served by transit, not typically supporting auto-oriented uses. Unique urban character distinguishes them from other commercial areas because of the mix and complementary type of uses, as well as the traffic generated. The Warehouse District, primarily along 1st Avenue North and Hennepin Avenue, is a designated Activity Center.

Additional City-Adopted Plans

Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan

The *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan* is the only adopted land use plan in the North Loop neighborhood. The key impetus for preparing the plan (2003) was to capitalize on the opportunity presented by the incorporation of new rail transit infrastructure into the existing fabric of Downtown Minneapolis. The plan is guided by the “Complete Communities” planning principle. Complete Communities are neighborhoods or districts that are self-sufficient by virtue of interconnected transit and commercial environments that are, in turn, surrounded by a diversity of housing types, services, and amenities.

While some of the recommendations will be reviewed as part of this update to the plan, the existing plan will continue to provide policy guidance for most of Downtown. A summary of the main policy recommendations are presented below.

Overarching Policy Guidance

Planning Complete Communities requires the integration of transportation planning, land use planning, and urban design planning into an inter-related set of policies that reinforce one another. The overarching policies to promote Complete Communities in a mature downtown setting are organized into four categories: transit-oriented development and mixed use development, downtown housing, retail strategies and transportation, transit and parking. Policy guidance to advance these principles includes: (1) provide a mix of land-uses, housing types and transportation options to allow people to live, work, shop and play within the project area, (2) encourage housing development that accommodates a diversity of users, (3) promote ground level retail and create community retail centers with a variety of services that generate activity at most hours of the day and night, (4) support initiatives to improve and distinguish the design of the public realm, and (5) advance a multi-modal transportation system that accommodates a variety of transportation users.

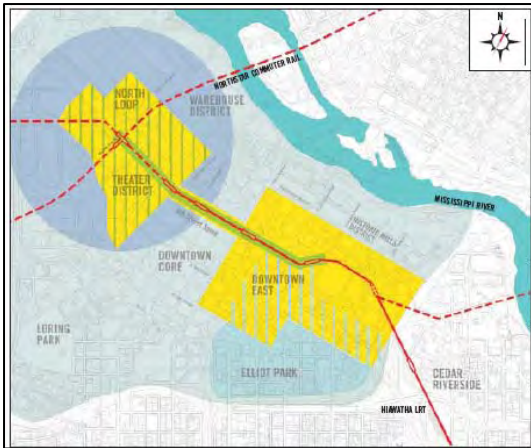


Figure 3.2 *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan study area*

Land Use Plan

The land use section of the master plan presents three land use scenarios developed as part of the planning process. The recommended scenario was Land Use Alternative 3, *Expansion of the Existing Core*. This alternative encompasses the maximum potential for allowing the Downtown East and North Loop components of the Project Area to develop into mixed-use, residential communities while complementing a concentrated office core. In addition, this scenario would help new and existing neighborhoods develop distinct community identities.

The land use plan breaks the study area into thirteen smaller “Development Precincts,” each of which is the basis for developing a Complete Community. Development Precincts create a unit of analysis that are more discrete than the existing neighborhood boundaries and allows the City and the development community to be more focused and more strategic in pursuing new projects. The recommended land use plan is informed by the findings from the market analysis conducted in the project area about the likely volume, character and locations of various types of development

Highlights of the Recommended Land Use Plan:

- Concentration of future Class-A Office development within an expanded Downtown Core;
- Development of “Complete Communities” in both Downtown East and the North Loop so people can walk to where they work, shop, and go to school;
- Preference for mid- to high-density mixed-use development → residential, commercial, and retail – in distinct, identifiable development precincts in both Downtown East and the North Loop;
- Land uses organized to encourage and support movement by public transit, bicycle and walking as viable alternatives to the private automobile;
- Structured parking built below or embedded within mixed-use development projects that feature active uses on all street frontages; prohibition of future “single-use” parking ramps;
- Promotion of pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, street-facing retail, transit nodes, and neighborhood services, all organized into compact “neighborhood” nodes.

Transportation Plan

A major factor informing the policies throughout the Master Plan is the auto-dependent nature of many parts of Downtown East and the North Loop, including auto-dominated streets, narrow sidewalks and large expanses of parked cars, and the opportunity to capitalize on LRT. A key principle of Complete Communities is to promote a range of transportation options (e.g. public transit, bicycling and walking) that are as convenient as the automobile. Policy guidance to promote a multi-modal transportation system in the project area includes:



Figure 3.3 Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan “Development Precincts: 9) West Hennepin, 10) Warehouse West, 11) Freeway West, 12) Municipal Service, and 13) The Cut

- Maintain and improve the downtown street grid to ensure access for pedestrians, bicycles, buses, trucks and automobiles;
- Extend the bicycle network to facilitate better integration with the downtown pedestrian circulation system, new rail transit lines, and proposed parks and open space;
- Ensure adequate supply of bike racks, lock points, and rental storage lockers for bicycle commuters;
- Minimize the number and extent of driveway crossings / curb cuts to maintain the right-of-way for pedestrians;
- Coordinate LRT service with bus service as well as pedestrian and bicycle circulation;
- Maintain prohibitions of new auto-oriented uses;
- Prohibit surface parking lots between sidewalks and retail storefronts;
- Encourage on-street parking wherever practical and phase-out existing surface parking lots;
- Promote programs that allow developers to reduce off-street parking requirements, such as employee/resident transit pass programs, car sharing programs, and in-lieu fees to fund public parking;
- Develop a new parking policy that incorporates parking maximums and reduces parking minimums in Downtown;
- Reduce street widths and introduce other traffic-calming measures, particularly around the HCMC and the Metrodome;
- Concentrate skyways within the Downtown Core and limit extensions beyond the core to high-intensity uses that generate a great deal of foot traffic (e.g. class A office space, the baseball stadium). Prohibit the construction of skyways beyond the recommended extension zone.

Urban Design Plan

The Urban Design Plan for the Project Area sets out policies aimed at improving the character and quality of the built environment at a variety of scales. The plan incorporates nuts-and-bolts solutions for how the public realm should be improved to promote the development of complete communities. Policy guidance in this chapter includes:

- Encourage improvements to the design and function of public realm for pedestrians including pedestrian scaled lighting, trees and street furniture;
- Establish significant public spaces throughout the project area,
- Promote ground level retail;
- Promote development that preserves significant views of existing landmarks and view corridors;
- Scale new construction to create positive, pedestrian oriented street environments including creating setbacks above the fourth floor;

- Design streets and buildings to eliminate long stretches of blank, inactive building walls for pedestrians;
- Encourage extensive tree planting in all public and private development projects as well as in public spaces;
- Evaluate new construction for its sensitivity to preserving significant views of existing landmarks and/or enhancing view corridors.

Implementation Plan

The implementation plan considers how and when the vision called for in previous chapters of the plan might be executed. Priorities are suggested to help the City move forward with enhancements to infrastructure and the public realm to help prime and reinforce the development market. It is recommended that the City foster a public-private partnership with other governmental agencies and the development community in implementing public realm and infrastructure improvements.

Changes or adaptations to the City’s primary regulatory tool for guiding new development – the Zoning Code – are recommended to remove existing barriers to realize the vision outlined throughout the master plan. Recommendations include the adoption of a mixed-use zoning designation as well as enhancements to the existing regulatory framework such as built form controls, minimum densities, and incentive zoning. In addition, the plan calls for significant changes to the City’s parking regulations.

Implementation steps accomplished since 2003

Downtown rezoning. In 2006 the City Council adopted a rezoning of nearly sixty blocks in downtown to ensure that development in this area is closely aligned with the approved policies in the Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan. The key change is that large areas of Downtown East, the Warehouse District, and the North Loop have been zoned to allow for and encourage more intense development that will complement the region’s expanding rail transit system. The zoning changes are intended to encourage growth that responds to renewed interest in living, working, and shopping in Downtown Minneapolis through the creation of medium- and high-intensity transit-oriented development.

Parking revisions. In 2009 the City Council adopted new parking standards for the entire city. The amendment brings the City’s off-street parking and loading regulations into alignment with approved and adopted policies related to land use, transportation, community character, economic development, and environmental sustainability. In addition, the revisions respond to policies that call for balancing the demand for parking with other important objectives such as maintaining the city’s traditional urban form and encouraging the use of alternative modes of transportation.

The new parking regulations include more flexible off-street parking minimums, combined with widespread maximums, allow the market to play a greater role in determining the amount of off-street parking provided for individual land uses, but within a range deemed acceptable by the City. In

addition, the new regulations introduce bicycle parking requirements citywide for most uses. Specific to downtown, to further recognize the availability of transportation alternatives and publicly available parking the new parking regulations eliminate all minimum automobile parking requirements in the B4, B4S, and B4C Districts.

Ballpark siting. In 2006 the decision was made to site the new baseball stadium on 3rd Avenue North between 5th and 7th Streets. Construction began on the site during the summer of 2007 and the ballpark is scheduled to open in 2010. This new development incorporates the proposed multi-modal transit station at the convergence of the recently extended Hiawatha Light Rail Transit Line, the Northstar Commuter Rail Line, the future Central Corridor Transit Line, Interstates 394 and 94 as well as the Cedar Lake Bike Trail.

Intermodal Station. A major component of the Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan were recommendations supporting the convergence of commuter rail, light rail, bicycle facilities, and other transportation lines at a Intermodal Station. While some of these modes are a certainty, Hennepin County is currently analyzing the feasibility of adding additional light rail, high-speed rail, and inter-city rail to a larger transit facility concept.

Access Minneapolis: The Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan

Access Minneapolis is a comprehensive citywide transportation action plan that addresses a full range of transportation options and issues, including pedestrians, bicycles, transit, automobiles, and freight. The purpose of the plan is to identify *specific* actions that the City and its partner agencies need to take within the next ten years to implement the transportation policies articulated in *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*. The action plan includes six components:

1. *Citywide Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan* (approved 2009)
2. *Downtown Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan* (approved 2007)
3. *Design Guidelines for Streets and Sidewalks* (received and filed 2008)
4. *Streetcar Feasibility Study* (received and filed 2008)
5. *Pedestrian Master Plan* (approved 2009)
6. *Bicycle Master Plan* (possible approval 2010)

Citywide Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan

The Citywide Action Plan sets the broad framework for the action plan. While regional transit facilities are needed to carry people to and from the city and are well used, Minneapolis also needs a much finer-grained transit system that will serve individuals living within the city who need or desire to rely on transit, walking and bicycling as their primary mode of transportation.

The action plan identifies a citywide Primary Transit Network (PTN) to help achieve this goal. The PTN network is a system of designated corridors that offer high frequency, all day transit service with improved transit amenities. Washington Avenue and 7th Street are identified in the PTN network.

The action plan also emphasizes the benefits of creating complete streets where moving traffic is not the only objective. A street design typology was developed to accomplish this objective by more directly linking land use, street design and urban form. This design typology is based upon the land use features in *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*. The North Loop neighborhood generally has four major street types:

- Activity Area Street – Washington Avenue North, 1st and 2nd Streets North
- Commuter Street – Lyndale Avenue North, Olson Memorial Highway, 7th Street North
- Industrial Street – 10th Avenue North, Glenwood Avenue
- Neighborhood Connector – 6th Avenue North

Downtown Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan

Within the system planning framework developed in *Access Minneapolis*, Downtown is identified as an Activity Area that has unique transportation needs. The new transportation policy for Downtown places particular emphasis on walking, biking, transit, and pedestrians, while also retaining automobile access. This approach ensures that automobile access is always accommodated, but gives appropriate priority to walking, biking and transit, which must take on a rising share of travel in and through Downtown as growth continues to occur. Key objectives to the downtown strategy include:

- Sustain continued growth;
- Maintain and improve the quality of life and the character of downtown;
- Use limited space efficiently and effectively – move more people using the existing infrastructure;
- Make it practical to live without a car if desired.
- Make downtown attractive and easy to navigate for visitors, customers, residents, and workers;
- Take actions now that set us on the right path for the future.

Primary Corridors identified in the action plan within the North Loop include:

- Primary Pedestrian Corridors - Washington Avenue, 5th and 6th Streets, 5th Avenue North, 1st Avenue North, Hennepin Avenue
- Primary Bicycle Corridors – 2nd Street, 7th and 10th Streets, 11th and 12th Streets, 5th Avenue North, Cedar Lake Trail
- Major Transit Service Spines – 7th Street, Hennepin Avenue, LRT and Commuter Rail routes

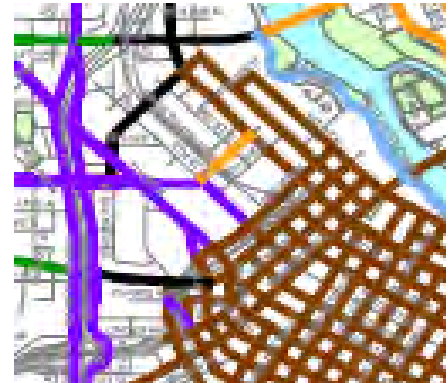


Figure 3.4 Access Minneapolis Street Types

Design Guidelines for Streets and Sidewalks

The design guidelines provide specific recommendations about the size and composition of the design elements that make up public street rights-of-way in Minneapolis. The intent is to foster the practice of providing complete streets that support and encourage walking, bicycling and transit use while promoting safe operations for all users. Design recommendations are based on the street typologies from the Citywide Action Plan.

Streetcar Feasibility Study

The Streetcar Feasibility Study identifies a long-term streetcar network made up of seven corridors that could be implemented in 20-50-years, depending on funding availability. The long-term network was developed from the most heavily used Primary Transit Network corridors that are both physically feasible for streetcar service, and that offer the greatest potential for long-term streetcar operation that meets the goals of increased ridership, increased attractiveness of transit to new markets, new connections between high capacity regional transit and local neighborhoods, enhanced environmental benefits, and the ability to catalyze redevelopment potential. The feasibility study also identified “initial operable segments”, or short segments, that can serve as building blocks to an ultimate line or system. Washington Avenue to West Broadway is a long-term route with Washington in Downtown as a possible initial operable segment.

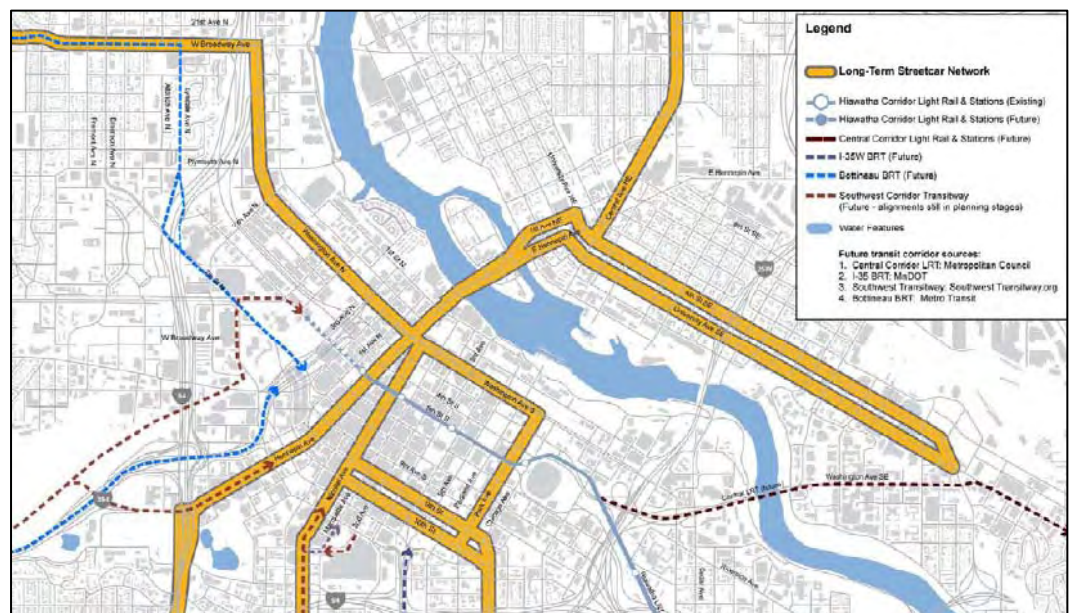


Figure 3.5 Streetcar Feasibility Study proposed network

Warehouse Historic District Design Guidelines

Adopted in 1978, the guidelines provide the regulatory framework for the locally-designated North Loop Warehouse Historic District. It is generally bounded by First Avenue North, Second Street North and Washington Avenue North, Third Avenue North and Sixth Street North. The North Loop area served as the city’s warehouse and wholesaling district during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, expanding when Minneapolis became a major

distribution and jobbing center for the upper Midwest. The Design Guidelines are currently being updated.

St. Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines

Adopted in 1980, the guidelines cover an area beyond the North Loop neighborhood that is generally bounded by Plymouth Avenue, 2nd Street North, 10th Avenue South, 6th Avenue Southeast, and University Avenue. This historic district is important because the falls of St. Anthony along the Mississippi River was harnessed to create power for what was to become the most important milling complex in the nation; the falls were instrumental in the development of Minnesota's largest city in all its stages of growth. Centered around this influential landmark, the St. Anthony Falls Historic District reveals the origins and early history of Minneapolis.

Bassett Creek Valley Master Plan

While not officially in the study area of the North Loop neighborhood, this plan provides recommendations for land use, transportation, and economic development directly to the west of I-94. It is important to consider the vision for adjacent neighborhoods in order to create a seamless city as well as to coordinate on existing implementation projects.

The boundaries for the Bassett Creek Valley project area were established by the Minneapolis City Council in 1998. The Valley is a 230-acre, largely industrial area bound on the west by Cedar Lake Road, on the east by I-94, on the north by the Heritage Park redevelopment area and on the south by I-394. Bassett Creek Valley is largely known because Glenwood Avenue provides a primary transportation route into downtown Minneapolis.

Recommendations include:

Preserve the existing homes. The plan respects this area by suggesting the rehabilitation of existing residential structures; new infill of similar building scale on vacant and dilapidated properties; and calling for new, adjacent residential development of similar scale and density to strengthen neighborhood qualities.

Preservation of views. Proposed redevelopment has been carefully situated and scaled to preserve existing views, capture new ones and create compelling gateways into downtown Minneapolis.

Redevelopment with a diverse but integrated mix of uses. What is proposed is a mix of uses that crescendos residential intensity from surrounding neighborhoods toward downtown, concentrates retail at the Van White & Glenwood intersection, expands on the market base created by IMS, builds impressive amounts of office where there is the greatest direct freeway and transit access in Linden Yards and concentrates industry around the existing substation.

A network of vital public space. The plan affords a great deal of attention to interconnected and diverse public spaces.



Figure 3.6 Illustration of Bassett Creek Valley, Lower North Loop, and the Downtown Office Core

Restoration of Bassett Creek. Restoration of the degraded and channelized Bassett Creek is the Valley's symbol of rebirth and is well as vital to establishing an open space amenity.

A range of housing prices and lifestyle alternatives. Housing types envisioned for the Valley range from single family homes to high-rise apartments and condos. The plan is committed to creating a community in which people of all ages, ethnicities and incomes want and have the opportunity to live.

Support for transit alternatives. Transit and commuter trails will play a significant role in redevelopment of the Valley.

Better connecting North and South Minneapolis. Redevelopment of the Valley will fill with people and energy what is today a no man's land between north and south. Van White Memorial Boulevard along with office and residential development will create the physical and perceived connections needed to bridge this historic divide.

Support for diverse employment. The plan suggests a focus on creating diverse employment opportunities including living wage jobs, job training, minority employment opportunities and an environment that supports neighborhood employment.

Previously Completed and Concurrent Plans

Warehouse District North Loop Neighborhood Design Guidelines

The design guidelines document was created by the North Loop Neighborhood Association (NLNA) in 2006 as a way to promote certain design ideals. The purpose of the guidelines is to:

- Reinforce the vision for the North Loop Neighborhood;
- Foster sustainable, high quality development practices and architecture;
- Promote a compact, efficient development pattern;
- Protect the public and private investment over time in the North Loop Neighborhood.

Place making principles in the guidelines include:

- Circulation: Integrate a network and hierarchy of streets;
- Open Space: Define a framework and hierarchy of open space and linkages;
- Architecture: Encourage high quality architecture.

Creating a New Urban Center: A Community at the Crossroads

This document was prepared in December 2008 for the 2010 Partners by Groundwork: The Foundation for City Building. The 2010 Partners is a public-private partnership that defines its mission as:

- Clearinghouse: convening regular meetings for dissemination of information;
- Platform: Providing organization support for planning and development projects;
- Incubator: Initiating projects and identifying sources of funding;
- Advocate: Promoting comprehensive, integrated planning and design.

Their focus area encompasses the majority of the North Loop neighborhood, particularly surrounding the Twins ballpark and multi-modal station. The next stage of work requires setting a vision with these components:

Building on our assets – expanding the scope of the geographic influence area, reinforcing the grid to create an easily understood hierarchy of streets, using urban design tools to connect across boundaries, reducing the scale of blocks to be more pedestrian friendly, and balancing land uses.

Creating the structure – identifying distinguishing physical characteristics, creating a vision to “connect all the pieces”, and finally to implement that vision with the help of public and private partners.

Opening Day and Beyond: Leveraging our Assets to Create Community Connections

This was another document prepared by Groundwork for the 2010 Partners to summarize a workshop hosted by William Morrish in March 2009. The workshop sought to capitalize on the energy surrounding the opening of the NorthStar commuter rail and LRT lines and Target Field, and to make decisions about the development of the area while retaining maximum future opportunity and flexibility. The workshop resulted in a work plan for 2010 Partners that includes improving pedestrian functionality and aesthetics for the opening day of Target Field in April of 2010 and then looking beyond to implementing larger infrastructure and planning strategies to better connect the intermodal station with the surrounding area.

Downtown Minneapolis Multi-Modal Station Area Master Plan (2002)

The Downtown Minneapolis Multi-Modal Station Area Plan was produced for the Hennepin County Transit and Community Works Department in 2002. Recommendations for the three focus areas are:

- Sunken Area (rail corridor and freeway trench)
 - A Downtown Greenway would provide a linear park corridor and incorporate the Cedar Lake Trail.

- A two-level street system would reconnect the downtown street grid between 3rd Street North and 5th Street North. A lower level street would be at the existing grade.
- Joint development of mixed-use buildings would go over the rail platforms and reinforce the two-level 4th Street concept.
- Viaduct Area
 - The MnDOT owned freeway viaduct between 10th and 2nd Avenues would be replaced by 3rd and 4th Streets North.
 - 3rd and 4th Streets North would need to be a one-way pair (3-4 lanes in each direction) and the connection to I-94 would need to be realigned west of 10th Avenue North.
 - New bridges would be required over I-394 and the rail corridor.
 - Development potential along 3rd and 4th Streets North would be characterized by infill mixed use buildings.
 - Daylight Bassett Creek in same area to create a series of small parks in order to create a network of green places.
 - Opportunities to connect this area with the riverfront should be pursued.
- Farmers Market Area
 - The Farmers Market should be expanded into a year-round facility and incorporated with a future Royalston LRT station.
 - Better transit connections will enhance the study area's attractiveness for office, light retail, and industrial development.
 - For housing to be successful here, appropriate sites, types, quantities, and price points must be identified.
 - Street environment, particularly along Glenwood, should be more inviting to pedestrians and bicyclists.

Intermodal Station Siting and Feasibility Study (2006)

The study was conducted to inform decision-makers of the spatial and functional requirements necessary for a transit center to accommodate lines planned to converge on this site in the North Loop neighborhood. The purpose of this study was to develop transit station design concepts that could accommodate:

- Light rail – Hiawatha, Central, potential Southwest Corridor.
- Commuter rail – Northstar, Red Rock, Norwood/Young America, South corridors.
- Intercity rail – Amtrak, Midwest Regional Rail Initiative (high speed)
- Bus connections
- Taxi/automobile pick-up/drop-off



Figure 3.7 HDR Intermodal Station conceptual illustration

- Bicycles
- Pedestrians

The ultimate objective was to define the three-dimensional envelope required to preserve the opportunity for the Intermodal Station and outline the steps that must be taken to ensure that the opportunity is not lost. The study area included properties within 7th Street, the BNSF rail corridor, Washington Avenue North, and 3rd Avenue North – the Twins ballpark had not been sited.

Hennepin County Intermodal Facility: Connecting the Transportation Crossroads, Supporting the Community Vision (2008)

Hennepin County hired HDR consulting firm to run a week-long workshop to re-envision what an intermodal station may look like and how it may function, particularly considering the land use and transit changes that had occurred in the area since the 2006 study. The goals of the workshop included:

- Understanding short term and long term needs
- Optimizing connectivity and wayfinding
- Enhancing mobility, community and environment
- Creating concepts for the future
- Incorporating sustainable solutions

They developed four concepts for each of the quadrants around 5th Street and the BNSF rail corridor. Broad recommendations important to each concept included:

- Rebuild the 5th Street Bridge to be level with Target Field
- Relocate the Hiawatha LRT platform to opposite side of 5th Street
- Incorporate additional platform(s) for LRT, Commuter rail
- Close 5th Street to traffic on game days
- Construct adequate mezzanine for ingress/egress to platform

Intermodal Station Study – Phase II (2009-)

Hennepin County will be conducting a study to update the Intermodal Station Siting and Feasibility Study from 2006. The study area is roughly within a ½ mile radius from the west end of the 5th Street Bridge over the BNSF tracks.

Historical Context

The North Loop neighborhood consists of two areas that are uniquely identified by their distinct character and feel. While the industrial Lower North Loop and the residential Upper North Loop have changed significantly over the years, the two areas have always been separate and unique from one another.

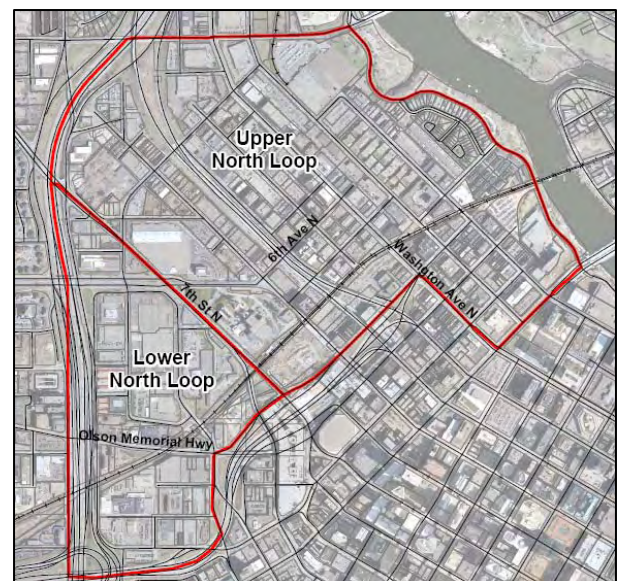


Figure 3.8 Upper and Lower North Loop

Lower North Loop

Bounded by 7th Street North and surrounding freeways, the Lower North Loop once exhibited a very different development pattern from what is seen today. In 1880, the Oak Lake Addition was platted for the development of single-family homes. Until that time, the Lower North Loop was largely untouched by development. The neighborhood of Victorian homes and tree-lined boulevards benefitted from close proximity to the Central Business District and the Near North residential areas on the west side of Lyndale. Over time the upper-middle class professionals that occupied the homes left the area and the structures became dilapidated. The City razed the entire Oak Lake Addition in the 1930's to make way for the land uses of today – public facilities, industrial businesses, social service providers, and a farmers market.

Upper North Loop

During the same period the Oak Lake Addition was thriving as a Downtown residential neighborhood, the Upper North Loop was growing in prominence as a railroad and warehousing hub. The rail yards and associated development created physical patterns we still see today – long blocks, blocky warehouse buildings, loading docks, and streets with brick pavers. The Warehouse Historic District is centered in the Upper North Loop and spans a time period of 65 years, from 1865 to 1930. In the late 20th century low-density residential development sprung up near the river, while hundreds of converted lofts and new residential units followed in the first decade of the 21st century. Now the Upper North Loop presents itself as a trendy Downtown neighborhood for young professionals and empty-nesters alike.

Demographic Context

Since 2000 the North Loop (as defined by census tract #s 3501 and 3502) has grown by more than 2,000 households to 3,054, with most of the growth attributable to new market-rate condominiums and apartment buildings. As a result of this growth, the owner/renter mix has changed substantially, with renters declining from 68.3 percent to 41.6 percent in 2008. Median household income in the North Loop is estimated at approximately \$69,000,

Demographic Indicators: Selected Areas, 2000-2013					
	2000	2008	Avg. Ann. Change	2013	Avg. Ann. Change
Households					
Minneapolis	162,352	168,788	0.5%	172,174	0.4%
Rental %	46.8%	47.1%			
Downtown	12,460	14,649	2.0%	15,533	1.2%
Rental %	74.9%	69.8%			
North Loop	640	1,961	15.0%	2,481	4.8%
Rental %	68.3%	41.6%			
Median Household Income					
Minneapolis	\$38,172	\$52,443	4.1%	\$66,554	4.9%
Downtown	\$27,264	\$41,532	5.4%	\$56,372	6.3%
North Loop	\$50,771	\$68,997	3.9%	\$87,790	4.9%

Source: ESRI; stdb, inc.

Figure 3.9 Demographics

which is higher than in the larger downtown area or the overall city.

As of the 2000 census only 67 permanent residents lived in 50 units within two buildings in the Lower North Loop, with very few changes to land use since then. There is also a large transitory population in the area – 88 transitional units that house up to 500 people, 80 beds for chronic alcoholics, and 88 units for homeless men and women.

As of 2010 estimates from the City’s comprehensive plan Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZ), the neighborhood has almost 12,000 jobs. Conversely, the majority of North Loop residents work in the Minneapolis office core but there also seems to be a trend toward jobs along the I-394 corridor.

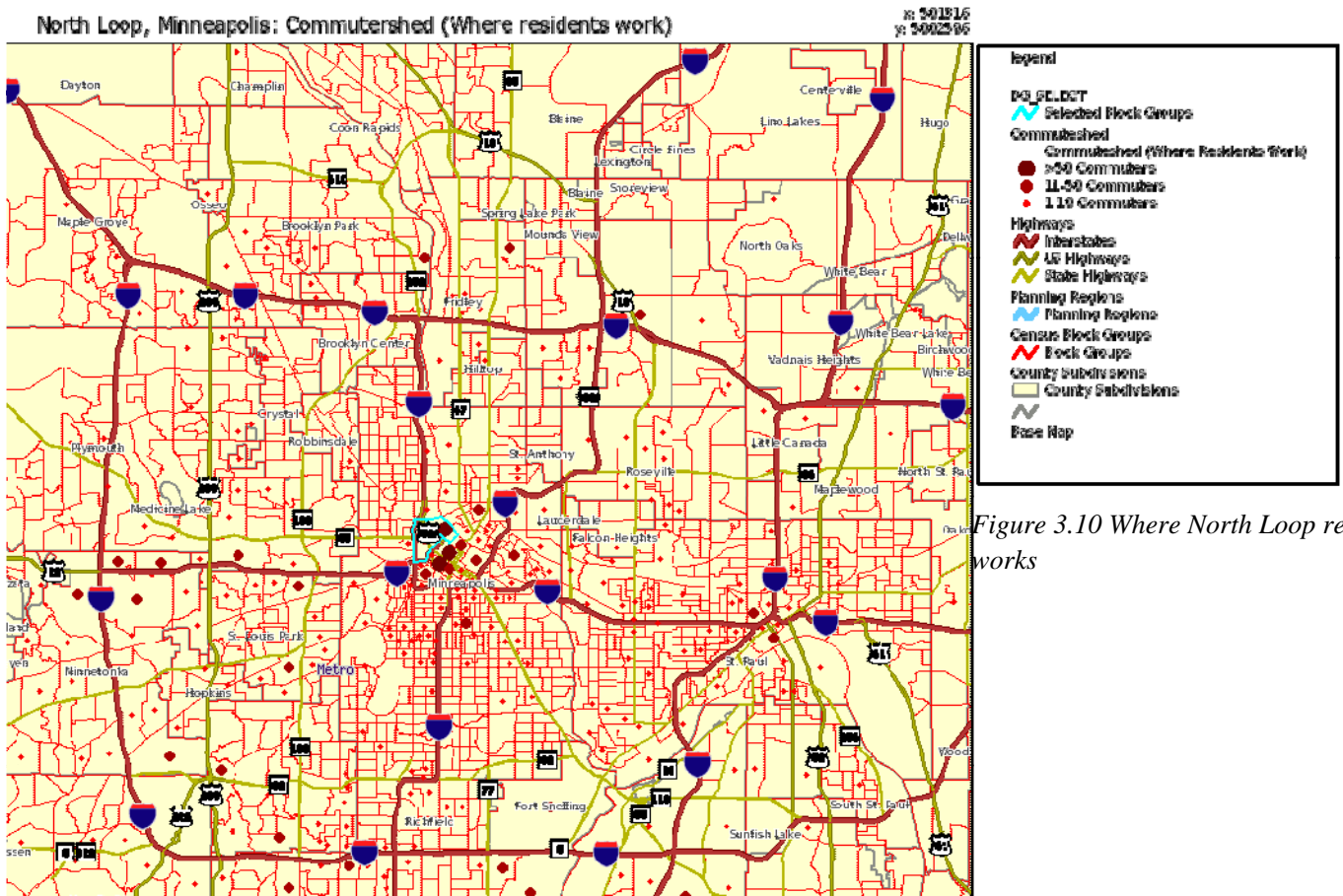


Figure 3.10 Where North Loop residents work

In addition to new residential uses, North Loop properties have also been redeveloped as office space. Of downtown Minneapolis’s 30.3 million square feet of private, multi-tenant office space, the North Loop contains 2.6 million square feet, or 8.6 percent of the total. Most of this space is in the Warehouse District portion of the North Loop; none is located in the Lower North Loop.

Other types of businesses that have established themselves in the North Loop over the last 15 years include new restaurants, a small number of specialty or convenience retailers, and a Marriott Towne Place hotel. Again, virtually all of this business activity has occurred in the Warehouse District

or in the Upper North Loop, northeast of the 5th Street viaduct. In the Lower North Loop, in approximately the last 10 years the only substantial investments in new development or redevelopment have been limited to one small industrial property (33,000 square feet) remodeled for office use, the City of Minneapolis's construction of a new Public Works facility, and the general maintenance and continued use of most existing properties.

Market Research

While the private market is strong and is expected to remain strong for new residential and commercial uses in the Upper North Loop, market direction is more uncertain in the Lower North Loop. Public investment in new amenities such as Target Field, the Intermodal Station, and possible Light Rail Stations, may spur development south of 7th Street North. To determine the possible impact of these amenities on development potential in the Lower North Loop, W-ZHA was hired to create a market and development feasibility report (see Appendix B for full report).

W-ZHA was tasked with overview-level analysis of real estate market conditions in the Study Area, which comprises the portion of Minneapolis's North Loop district that is situated to the southwest of 7th Street North (Lower North Loop). The purpose of the market analysis was to inform the broader planning process for the overall North Loop. The research, however, was limited to an overview of the development potential that is provided by known or reasonably foreseeable conditions and factors that will shape development viability.

A summary of the key findings include:

- The Study Area's most important asset is its proximity to Minneapolis's downtown core;
- Future assets that will exert important positive influences on the Study Area's development prospects include a potential LRT station serving the Southwest LRT Corridor, and a prospective large-scale development that anticipates a new Lund's grocery store at the edge of the downtown core, just one block from the Study Area;
- The Study Area's development constraints include (1) its prevailing uses, which include primarily industrial and social service providers, (2) its perceived access barriers to downtown, (3) its difficult internal circulation systems, and (4) an absence of buildings with the character desirable for conversion to higher-value uses;
- Prospective developments in the Study Area would most likely encounter ample competition among residential projects and weak market prospects for retail and office projects. Despite these obstacles, the Study Area may be able to offer opportunities among:
 - Lower-priced (but market-rate) multi-family residential developments;
 - Entertainment-related businesses;
 - Ongoing industrial tenancies; and



Figure 3.11 Lower North Loop and proposed transit lines (as of spring of 2009)

- Small-scale renovations for office/industrial users.
- In seeking to enhance development potential, properties at or near the Royalston Avenue/Glenwood Avenue intersection present key locations for public improvements and private developments. With the construction of a new Southwest Corridor LRT station and additional circulation improvements, this area can provide potential sites that (1) maximize access to downtown and (2) can serve as potential catalysts for other developments in the surrounding area;
- Timing will present an important consideration in weighing City decisions. Public infrastructure such as a new Southwest LRT station would provide an important asset for future projects, as would other circulation improvements and new private developments anticipated on the southern edges of downtown. Such improvements, however, are not likely to be completed within the next 3-4 years. At the same time, if new developments are not ready to move forward within the next ten years, they may lose the opportunity to capitalize on the broad demographic trends that have provided the impetus for the recent wave of multi-family development in and around downtown Minneapolis.

Capstone Report

The City worked with a capstone from the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota in the spring of 2009 to evaluate the constraints and opportunities in the Lower North Loop. A capstone is a group of graduate students seeking their Masters in Urban and Regional Planning that conduct a project for a real-world client. Both the market research and capstone report provided invaluable insight that led to better decision-making on the recommendations found later in the plan.

Bridging the Gap: The Future of the North Loop's "Other" Side explored the development potential of the Lower North Loop (see Appendix C for full report). The study area is located just south and west of Target Field, future home of the Minnesota Twins, and next door to a multi-modal transit station, now under construction. Up to four light rail lines, one heavy rail commuter line, and many local buses will one day converge here. These significant public investments could have a major impact on the neighborhood and this study aims to understand the issues in the area that will shape the potential for development and change in the area.

The capstone report is comprised of three components:

Diagnosis: The diagnosis chapter will focus upon the current state of the study area, examine relevant planning documents and peer experiences, and identify barriers to development, connectivity issues, and land uses.

Vision: The vision chapter will focus on the development potential for the study area, with an eye toward resolving the barriers discussed in the diagnosis chapter.

Action Plan: The action plan will describe how the barriers can be specifically addressed and how the vision can be realized by the City of Minneapolis.

Diagnosis

One of the most pervasive barriers to redevelopment of the Lower North Loop is the lack of connections within the area, as well as to downtown and adjacent neighborhoods. Inside the area, a series of superblocks make internal travel difficult on foot or bicycle. In addition, the Lower North Loop is bordered on all sides by high-speed roadways located either above or below the prevailing elevation of the neighborhood. In addition to existing connectivity issues, several substantial barriers will impede and discourage development if not addressed.

Funding: Initiating development in the Lower North Loop will require a significant investment by the public sector.

Political feasibility: There are few residents in the area and thus few constituents to please, and the area itself holds little political influence.

Public involvement: The Lower North Loop has the potential to become valuable real estate, but developers, elected officials, and current businesses and residents will likely have competing visions for the Lower North Loop.

No cohesive area identity: The Lower North Loop exists neither as a stand-alone area nor as an involved part of another established neighborhood.

Safety and security: Existing uses provide very little street life or pedestrian traffic that could provide natural surveillance for the area.

Industrial legacy of the land: Based on existing uses, it is anticipated that much of the land in the Lower North Loop will need to be cleaned up before it can be redeveloped.

Housing providers: The transient population in the Lower North Loop could be a deterrent to both residential and business development.

Hennepin Energy Recovery Center: The HERC facility raises problems for all nearby development due to the odors given off by trucks transporting waste to the facility.

Current land uses: Much of the Lower North Loop is occupied by large-scale public facilities (Metro Transit, City of Minneapolis) and quasi-public facilities (Xcel Energy) uses that will not likely be altered.

Scale problems: Grade-separated roadways that surround most of the neighborhood create differences in scale that are unwelcoming to pedestrian activity and create creepy nooks in the neighborhood.

Inadequate streetscape: Streetscaping is minimal or nonexistent throughout the neighborhood.

Bicycle gaps: Gaps in the Minneapolis bike network make it difficult and dangerous for bicyclists to get to destinations in the neighborhood.

Vision

The vision for the Lower North Loop is about possibility and what can happen if the barriers identified in the diagnosis are removed or resolved. The vision revolves around three themes of the study:

1. A balanced mix of land uses: new structures and green spaces
2. An improved public realm: coexistence between new and old
3. Effective connections: a gateway to the City of Minneapolis

Action Plan

Because the Lower North Loop is isolated from adjacent neighborhoods, has few residents, and is primarily a low-density industrial area with several overnight housing providers, the report anticipates that without significant public investment, it will be difficult to inspire the private development needed to realize the vision for this area.

Among the land use recommendations identified in the report, one of the priorities is to get the zoning in line with the vision. For example, the zoning along Glenwood Avenue is in the Office-Residence districts and may be better suited for Commercial districts to perpetuate more retail and restaurants.

Improvements identified in the report related to the public realm are focused on lighting and greening the study area, adding amenities throughout the neighborhood, managing the on-street parking supply, and creating a public identity for the area through a branding campaign.

Finally, infrastructure changes leading to improved connectivity were a major component of the report. The report highlights filling in gaps in the bicycle network on Glenwood Avenue and improving challenging pedestrian crossings along Lyndale Avenue North, 7th Street North, and 10th Street North. The report also proposes making east-west connections through the long block between Border and Royalston Avenues.

Hoisington Koegler Group Assistance

City staff hired the Hoisington Koegler Group to provide urban design assistance in thinking about public realm connectivity and design guidelines for the planning process. HKGi knew the area well through their subsequent work on the *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan* and the adjacent *Bassett Creek Valley Master Plan*. Their work consisted of three main components:

1. Issues and Opportunities Diagrams - This set of analysis maps comprised issues and opportunities specifically related to potential land use changes, development opportunities, transportation and streetscape improvements, and parks and open space strategies.

2. Evaluation of *Access Minneapolis* - This evaluation identified any issues and gaps related to applicability of *Access Minneapolis* and the related *Design Guidelines for Streets and Sidewalks* to the North Loop neighborhood, including functional street dimensions, street classifications and jurisdictions, and any historic preservation issues. This led to the preparation of alternative street design typology concepts.
3. Preparation of visionary urban design concepts – These concept plan graphics illustrated desired street and development character for the Lower North Loop as well as near the viaduct at a connected 8th Avenue North.

4. Existing Conditions

The North Loop Neighborhood has long been an area of growth and change, benefitting from its proximity to the Mississippi River and the Downtown Business District, and serving as the railroad hub for industry in the city for much of its history. The following pages discuss the existing conditions of the neighborhood, as well as some important historic conditions that currently influence and will continue to influence development in the neighborhood for the foreseeable future.

Current Land Use and Zoning

As discussed in Chapter 3, there are two distinct areas in the North Loop that are defined by their existing land uses. The area south of 7th Street exhibits an industrial character with a handful of housing providers located throughout. The area north of 7th Street has seen more change over recent years as redevelopment of former rail yards has occurred, while a number of historic warehouses have converted to office, residential, and commercial uses.

The base zoning in the neighborhood largely reflects existing land uses, with mixed use and residential zoning concentrated to the north of and adjacent to the Downtown office core. Following the adoption of the *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan*, a rezoning study implemented changes to the base zoning in the neighborhood. The most significant change that occurred was the expansion of the Downtown zoning districts to areas near Target Field and the Intermodal Station.

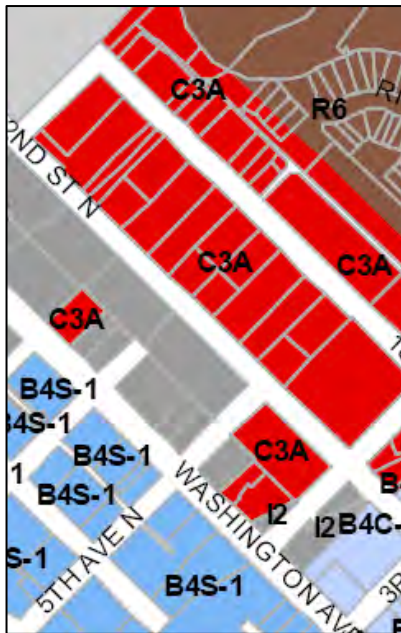


Figure 4.1 – Example of Base Zoning in the North Loop

While the neighborhood has experienced significant land use change in recent years, the most prevalent zoning district remains industrial. In addition, overlay zoning districts such as the Industrial Living Overlay District allow for residential and limited commercial uses on industrially-zoned land. Similarly, other overlay districts in the neighborhood either provide for more or less regulation than the base zoning district does for a particular property. More information on the purpose of these districts can be found in the [Minneapolis Code of Ordinances – Title 20](#).

Property Value and Condition

Both the public realm (portions of land that interact with the street) and private property exhibit characteristics that make portions of the neighborhood unique from one another. Private property in the Lower North Loop is more suburban in nature, with industrial development that is set back from the street with few windows. The large thoroughfare streets and freeways also influence the area, making it feel less a part of Downtown and the rest of the North Loop neighborhood.

While the condition of properties in the Lower North Loop varies from one building to the next, a marked improvement in overall condition has occurred in the last few years. Past issues with vagrancy and crime have been reduced through property owner vigilance and enforcement. However,

there are still a number of properties in the area using sites for outdoor storage, and a handful of properties are in various levels of disrepair.

Recent residential and office redevelopment nearer to the Mississippi River has made the area more attractive and pleasant for visitors, residents, and employees. The condition of the properties in the Upper North Loop has steadily improved over the past thirty years as the resident and working population has grown. Many properties that spent years in disrepair have been rehabilitated and continue to be properly maintained. Still, a number of vacant properties exist in the neighborhood that leaves the urban fabric incomplete on several streets. While the long term fate of these properties is likely redevelopment, some of these sites serve in the interim as surface parking lots, which can degrade the improving pedestrian oriented character of the area.

Property values in the neighborhood have risen steadily over recent years due to considerable reinvestment by both the public and private sector. Not only has private property seen reinvestment, but public entities have continued a strong presence in the neighborhood, including expansion of public works facilities, transit operations, Target Field, and the expansion of passenger rail service to the area. In addition, the proximity to the freeway network, the Mississippi River, and the Downtown office core serve as positive reinforcement for property values. All of these factors have contributed to a growth in property value that is expected to continue.

Historic Resources

A sizable portion of the North Loop neighborhood is covered by two historic districts; the Saint Anthony Falls Historic District and the Warehouse Historic District. Both districts exist to provide guidance to property owners when they seek to make changes to their property. The area consisting of the Warehouse Historic District was recently expanded with the designation of a larger local district. This new designation made the local and national district geographic boundaries match. This act is intended to create a clearer

understanding of the regulatory scheme under which properties must operate. In addition, design guidelines will be drafted and adopted in the near future to set expectations and ensure consistency with which properties in the district are evaluated when they are considered for redevelopment or remodeling.

Transportation System

The North Loop neighborhood is home to a wide variety of transportation options and amenities. Access to the freeway system is robust, and several other main automobile routes bisect the neighborhood on their way to the Downtown office core. Transit infrastructure is also present with a major bus

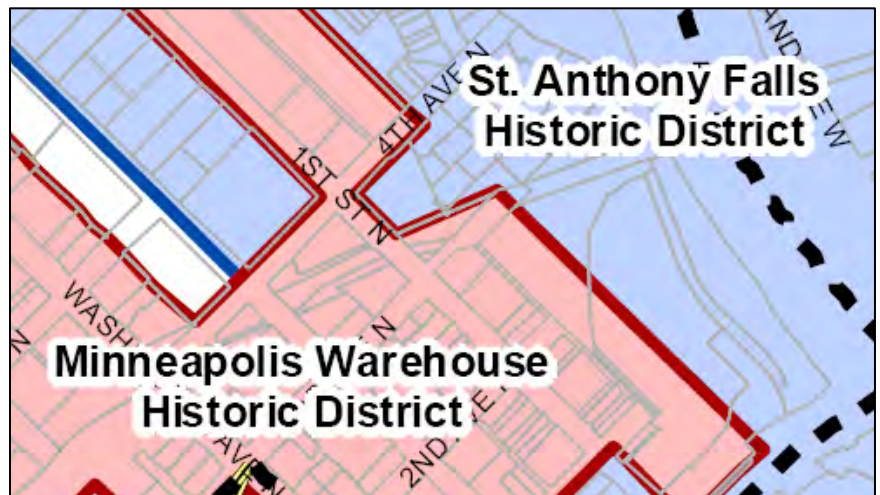


Figure 4.3 – Historic Districts in the North Loop

overlay facility near the center of the neighborhood. Transit routes are not limited to buses, as the presence of passenger rail (Hiawatha Light Rail, Northstar Commuter Rail) just south of the neighborhood will likely have an impact on travel patterns in the near future. Bicycle amenities and pedestrian improvements are the more recent changes that have come to the neighborhood and will likely prove to be a critical component of the future of the neighborhood.



*Image from the Metropolitan Design Center Image Bank.
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At the turn of the 20th century, growth in industrial uses required the expansion of large rail yards that interrupted the street grid in several portions of the neighborhood for multiple block segments. Over time industrial buildings lost their competitive advantage and the rail lines serving the neighborhood became less important. As the importance of freight rail diminished, the prominence of automobile travel increased. The North Loop neighborhood became a gateway for a number of freeways designed to get auto travelers into and out of the Downtown office core. At grade and grade separated highway expansion further divided the neighborhood into discrete sections resulting in an overall neighborhood transportation system that makes walking, bicycling, and driving difficult for the average user.

The North Loop neighborhood has access to a number of transportation amenities such as the Grand Rounds, Cedar Lake Trail, local freeway system, and the public transit network. However, the neighborhood also suffers from a lack of connectivity both between destinations within the neighborhood and outside to other areas of the city. The historic street grid of the neighborhood has been altered over time, first to accommodate an increase in freight rail activity in the late part of the 19th century, and later in

the 20th century to accommodate an increase in automobile travel into and out of the Downtown core. The street grid once seamlessly integrated the neighborhood with downtown, the river, and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Access Minneapolis

Access Minneapolis is the City of Minneapolis’ transportation action plan that addresses a full range of transportation options and issues, including pedestrians, bicycles, transit, automobiles, and freight. The purpose of *Access Minneapolis* is to identify specific actions that the City and its partner agencies (Metro Transit, Metropolitan Council, Hennepin County, Minnesota Department of Transportation) need to take within the next ten years to implement the transportation policies articulated in *The Minneapolis Plan*. The Streetcar Feasibility Study, Pedestrian Master Plan, and Bicycle Master Plan were initiated shortly after *Access Minneapolis* and incorporated into the *Access Minneapolis* planning process.

Recommendations are made in *Access Minneapolis* that impact the North Loop neighborhood. The plan recommends a series of street type designations that impact the possible options for reconstructing and restriping streets in the area. These recommendations are based on auto traffic volume, surrounding land uses, and other factors such as the need for access to pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

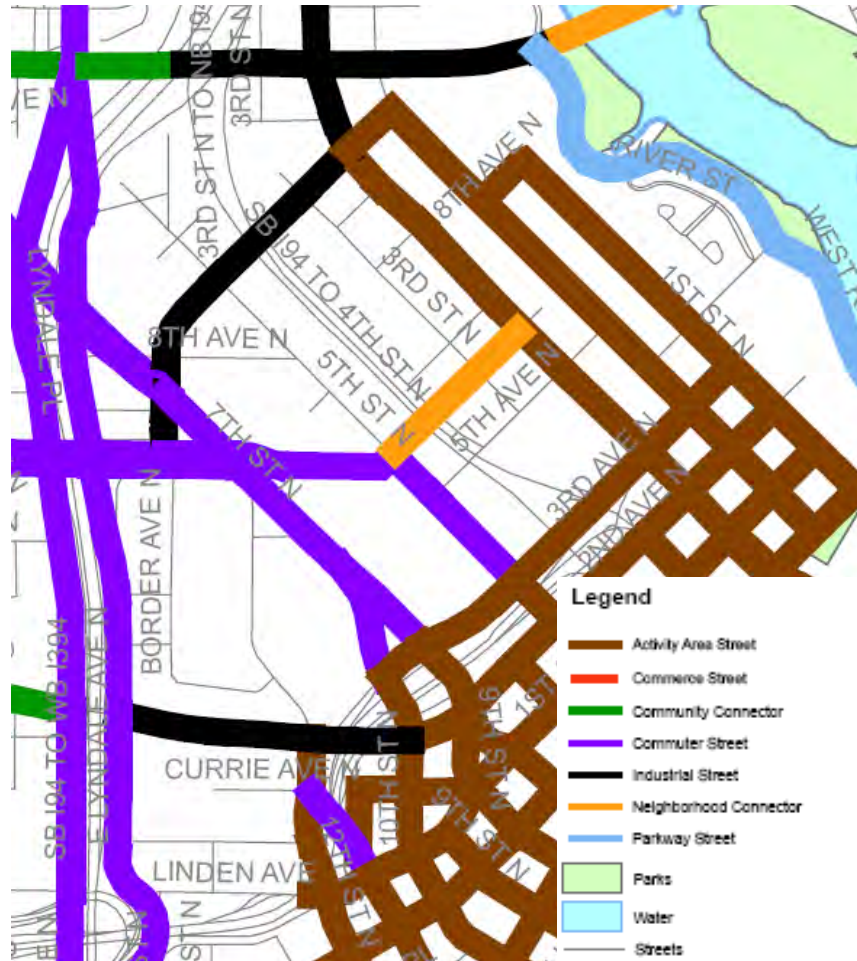


Figure 4.4 – Access Minneapolis Street Types

Automobile

At first glance, the North Loop appears to have abundant auto infrastructure. However, much of the infrastructure is designed to move users through the neighborhood, not within the neighborhood. Major commuting streets serve as the prime route for traffic between destinations within the neighborhood, while side streets serve as little more than access routes to businesses and residential dwellings. There is a perception that a happy medium between the two situations is lacking.

Access ramps to Interstate 94 in the form of viaducts serve as a major barrier to movement within the neighborhood as they effectively divide the neighborhood in half. Three routes remain that allow auto users to pass under the viaducts between the two halves of the neighborhood - 5th, 6th, and

10th Avenues. In addition to the viaducts, the major thoroughfares of Washington Avenue North, 7th Street North, and Olson Memorial Highway serve to get auto users through the neighborhood to destinations such as the Downtown office core.

Near the southern boundary of the neighborhood, an industrial rail corridor and Interstate 394 (collectively referred to as “the Cut”), serve as an additional barrier between the neighborhood and other Downtown neighborhoods. The western border of the neighborhood is flanked by Interstate 94, while the Mississippi River borders the neighborhood to the east. The combination of these infrastructure and geologic conditions make it difficult for residents and visitors of the area to access the neighborhood and surrounding areas by automobile.

The condition of the road surface varies throughout the neighborhood. However, it is clear that some areas are better off than others. Tenth and 5th Avenues North in particular are in poor condition, and there is strong community desire to address poor pavement conditions in the neighborhood on the worst streets first. In addition, a unique condition of the roads in and around the historic warehouse area of the neighborhood presents an interesting problem moving forward. With several roads (such as 5th and 6th Avenues North) being paved primarily with original brick, there is consideration as to how these streets should be reconstructed while maintaining the historic character of the area. This issue will be discussed further in upcoming chapters.

Parking

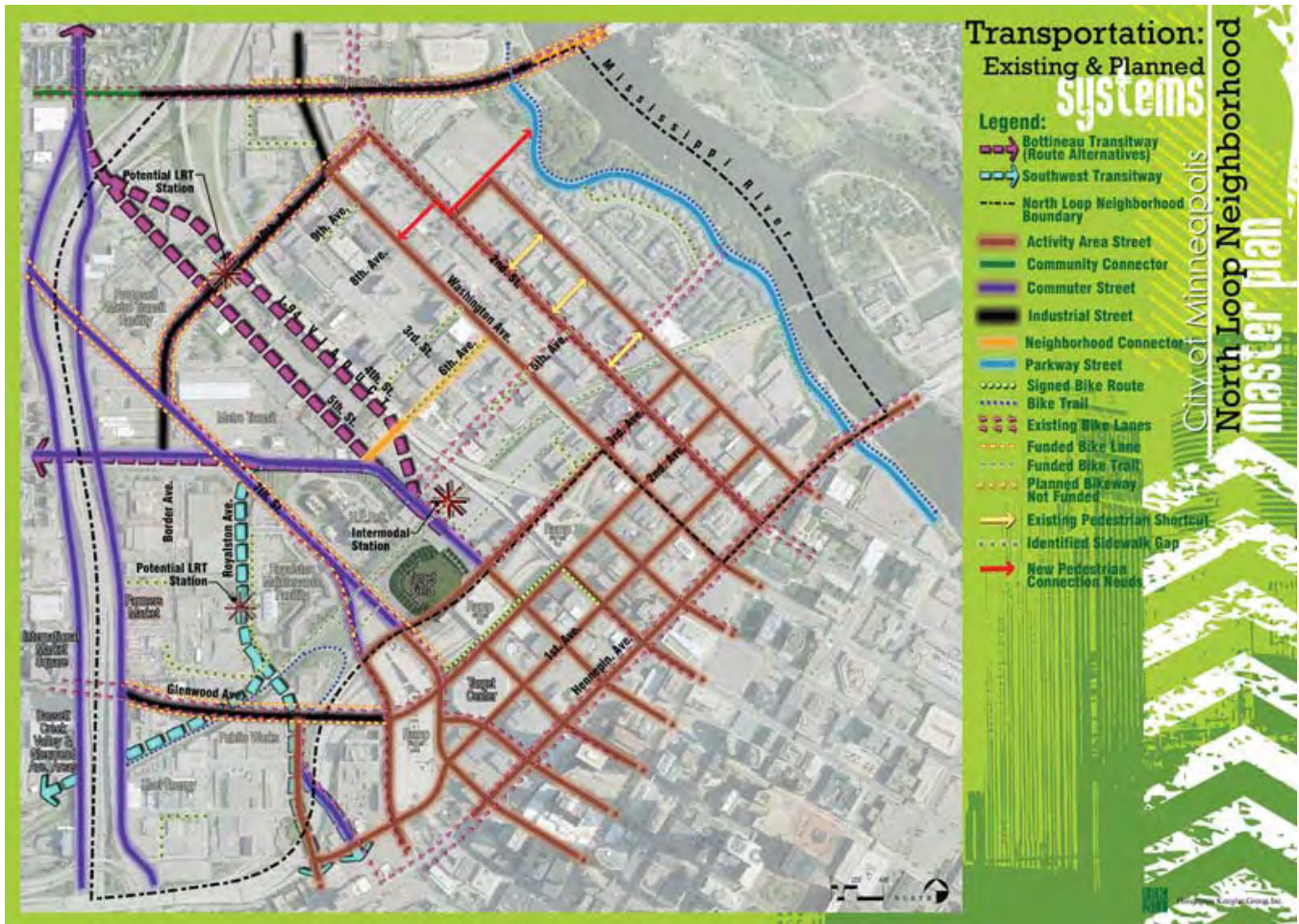


Currently, the North Loop neighborhood is served by a considerable amount of parking spaces - on street, surface, and structured. However, the majority of these spaces are privately owned, placing public on street spaces at a premium. While parking standards were recently lowered in the City of Minneapolis Zoning Ordinance, demand for on street spaces by office and

commercial users can at times outpace supply. Partly in response to this situation and also the expected parking pressures brought on by the opening of Target Field, Minneapolis Public Works is planning to install parking meters on a number of streets in the neighborhood. The additional meters should limit long term parking in key locations, freeing up spaces for patrons of local businesses at peak times as well as for residents' visitors.

Transit and Rail

Recent and upcoming changes to the transit network are expected to impact the level of service available to transit users in the neighborhood. Metro Transit operates a bus layover facility (and is planning to expand), and several local bus routes make stops in the neighborhood. Routes 5, 19, and 22 currently serve riders on 7th Street and Olson Memorial Highway. Bus routes 7 and 14 travel down 1st Street North and Washington Avenue, respectively.



Passenger rail recently started operation in the neighborhood as well. The Northstar Commuter train serves passengers from Big Lake to the Intermodal Station just inside the North Loop neighborhood boundary. Designed mostly for the purpose of getting daytime commuters into the Downtown core, there is also one reverse trip offered each morning and

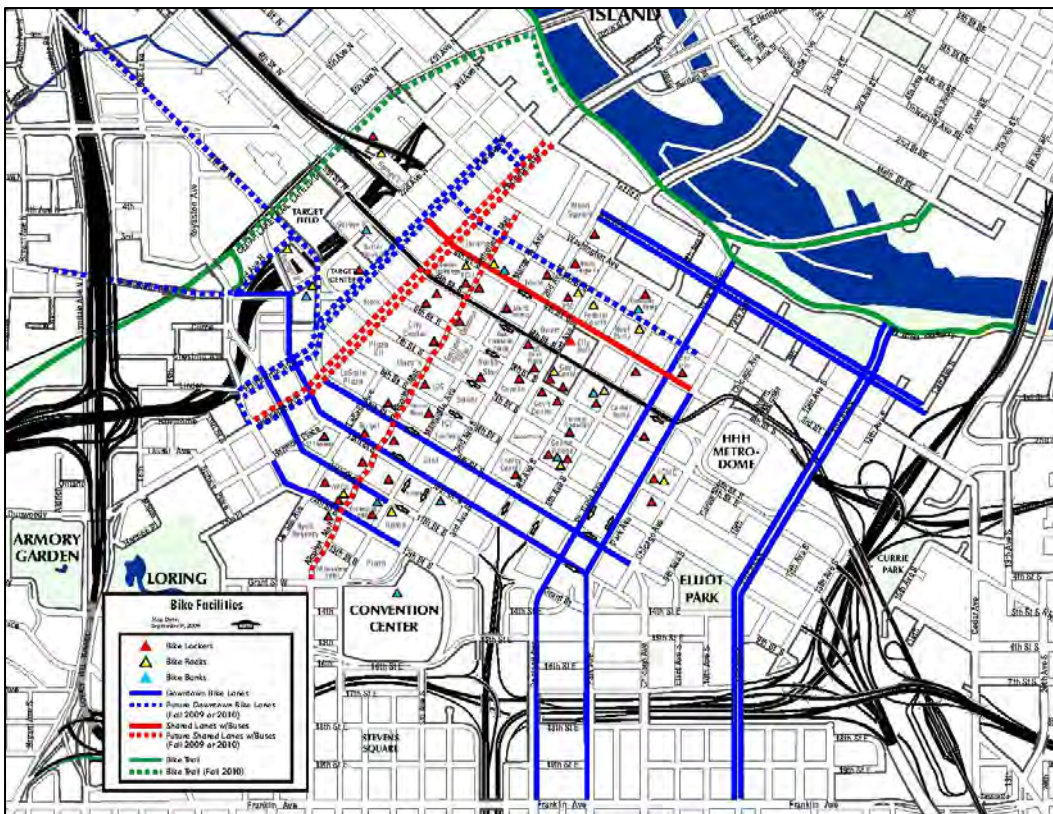
afternoon. Future service is expected to reach St. Cloud. Hiawatha Light Rail service has also been extended into the neighborhood adjacent to Target Field and the Intermodal Station. Frequent two-way service to the Downtown office core, South Minneapolis neighborhoods, MSP International Airport, and Bloomington should serve as a useful connection for the neighborhood. Additional passenger rail investment is expected in the neighborhood in the coming years with the possible construction of the Central, Southwest, and Bottineau LRT corridors, additional commuter lines, and possible inter-city high speed rail, all converging at the Intermodal Station.

Freight rail will continue to travel through the area for the foreseeable future. The formidable power that freight rail imposed on the area in the late 19th and early 20th centuries greatly impacted what is seen on the ground today in the neighborhood. The ability of freight rail to influence development in such a major way is all but gone; however, the vestiges of the freight rail industry still influence how development projects and transit projects will move forward. While very few businesses near the neighborhood are now directly served by freight rail, the freight rail corridor known as “the Cut” will continue to see freight rail service for years to come.

Bicycle

The North Loop neighborhood is home to several major pieces of bicycle infrastructure, and additional investment in cycling is planned in the immediate future. The Cedar Lake Trail travels through the eastern portion of the neighborhood along the industrial rail corridor and currently

terminates at Glenwood Avenue. Funds are dedicated to extend the trail beneath Target Field and to the Mississippi River in 2010. New bike lanes are also being striped on 7th Street and Glenwood Avenues in 2010. Existing bicycle facilities on 2nd Street North and along the River Road make it relatively easy to travel through the northern portion of the neighborhood. However, much like with other modes of travel, cycling north to south through the neighborhood (perpendicular to the



river) can be a challenge due to current and historic infrastructure barriers.

Pedestrian, Public Realm

An eclectic mix of pedestrian amenities and barriers exist in the North Loop neighborhood. As was previously noted, the viaducts that bisect the neighborhood create a barrier for auto travel, but this is also true for pedestrian travel. Since much of the auto traffic is funneled to a few key intersections in the neighborhood, the large volume that results requires wider intersections that are subsequently difficult for pedestrians to navigate.

A number of pedestrian improvements are currently under construction to address the increase in pedestrian activity that is expected to occur with the opening of Target Field in spring 2010. Improvements to the pedestrian realm are expected near Target Field and include:

- **Pedestrian Plaza** – with a number of art installations and greening projects yet to come, the plaza will be connected by stairway and skyway to surrounding parking ramps as well as to 1st and 2nd Avenues. It will also be open to the public year round, and there will be public access through certain portions of the ballpark site to various locations near the stadium.

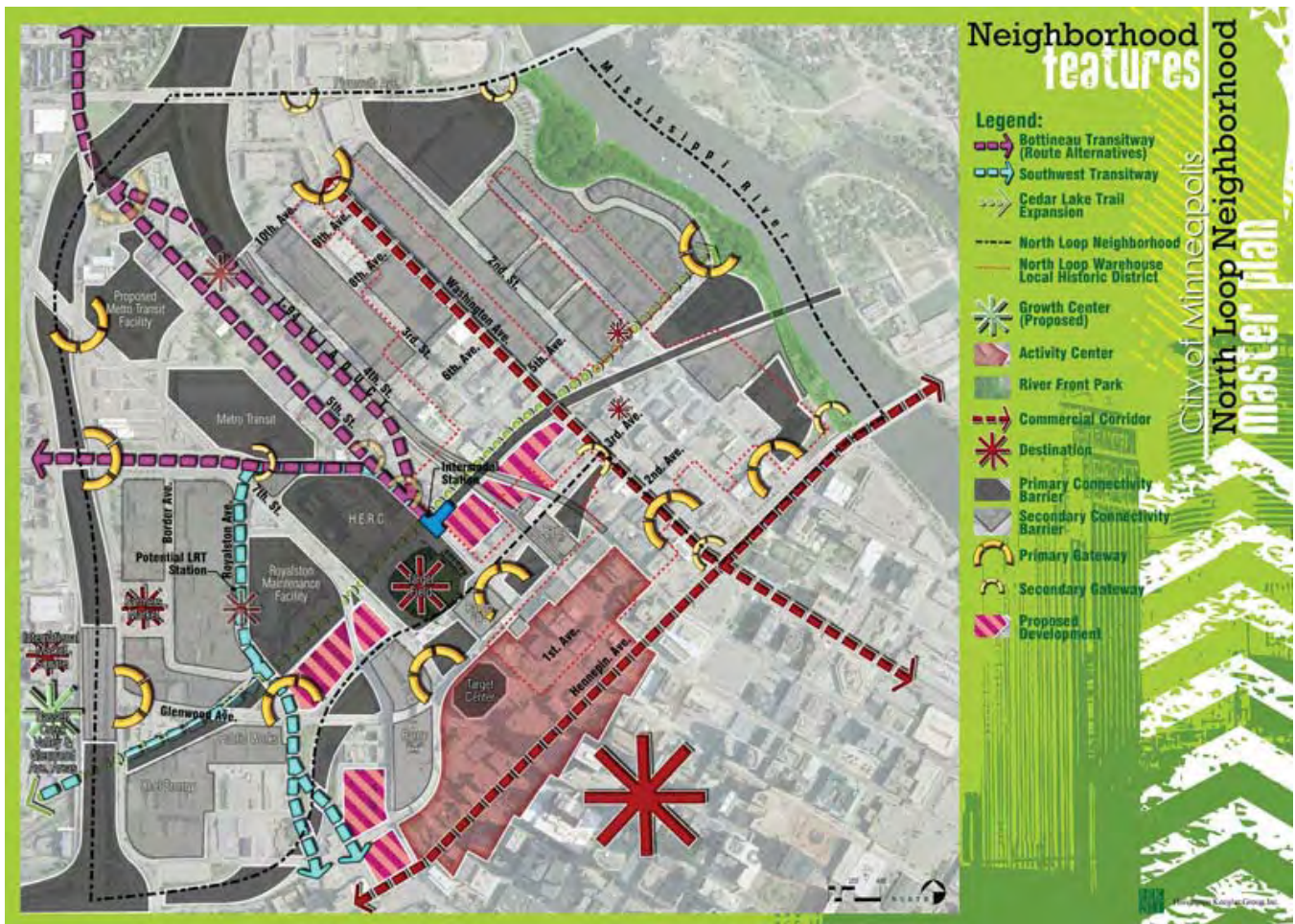


- **3rd Avenue North** – is under reconstruction from Washington Avenue to 5th Street, resulting in much wider sidewalks that better connect the ballpark to parking ramps, bus depot, and entertainment uses on Washington Avenue. Third Avenue North south of 7th Street will also see increased pedestrian space on the west side of the street as traffic lanes are shifted to the south.

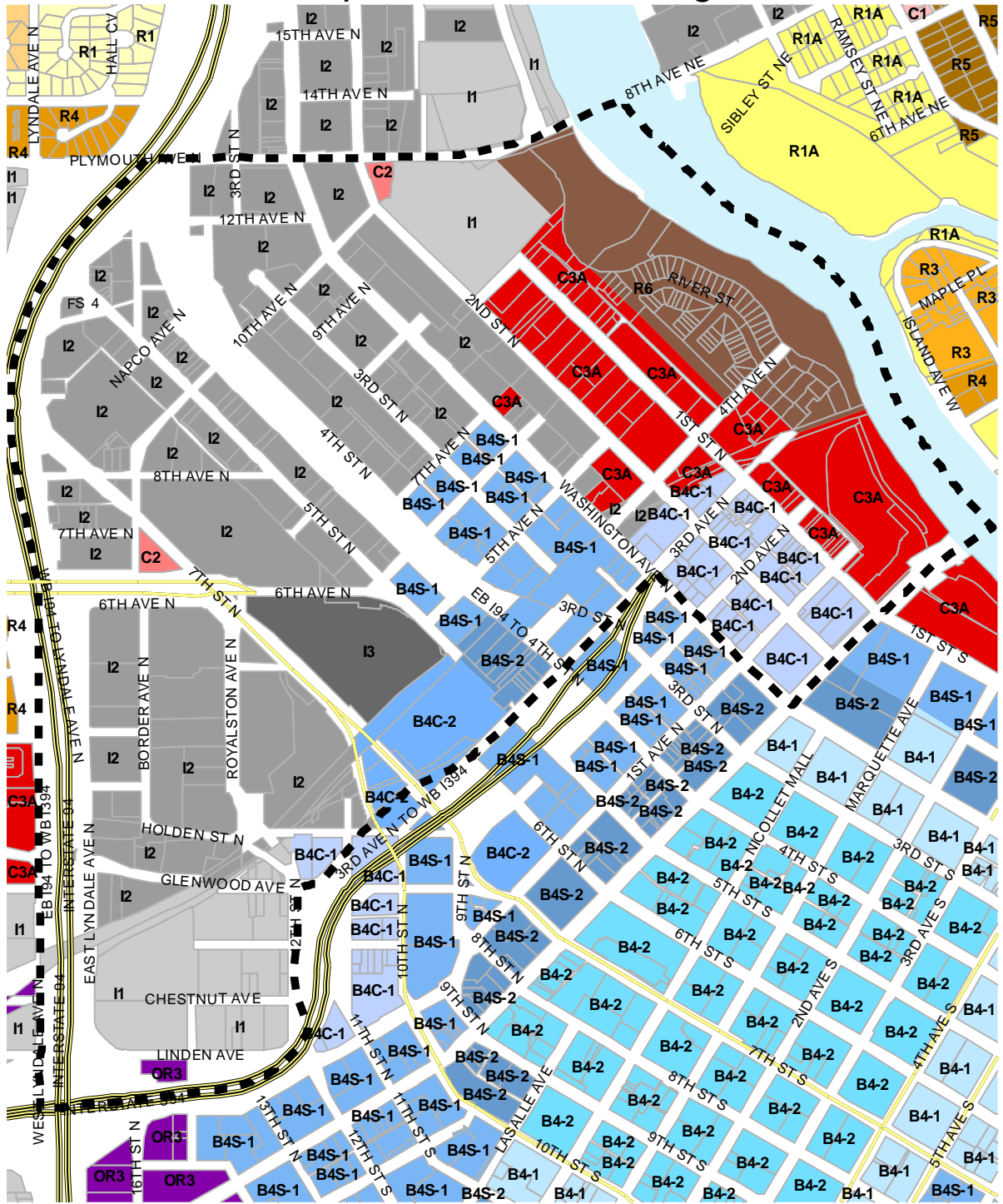


- **The Cedar Lake Trail** – should serve not only bike users southwest of Minneapolis, but may be a useful pedestrian link to and from the ballpark.
- **7th Street North** – improvements on 7th Street will include increased pedestrian space at the expense of an auto travel lane. The Hennepin Energy Recovery Center has also proposed some improvements to their site along 7th Street to make the area more pedestrian friendly.

The condition of sidewalks varies throughout the neighborhood. In some areas, such as Royalston Avenue, there are no sidewalks at all on one side of the street. In other areas, efforts have been made in conjunction with both redevelopment and with Public Works projects to increase the pedestrian amenities on the street. Washington Avenue North is seeing the implementation of trees on the sidewalk through the neighborhood, and there is a desire by the community to see more greening of sidewalks and other public spaces.

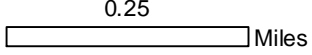


North Loop Small Area Plan Map A.5 Current Zoning



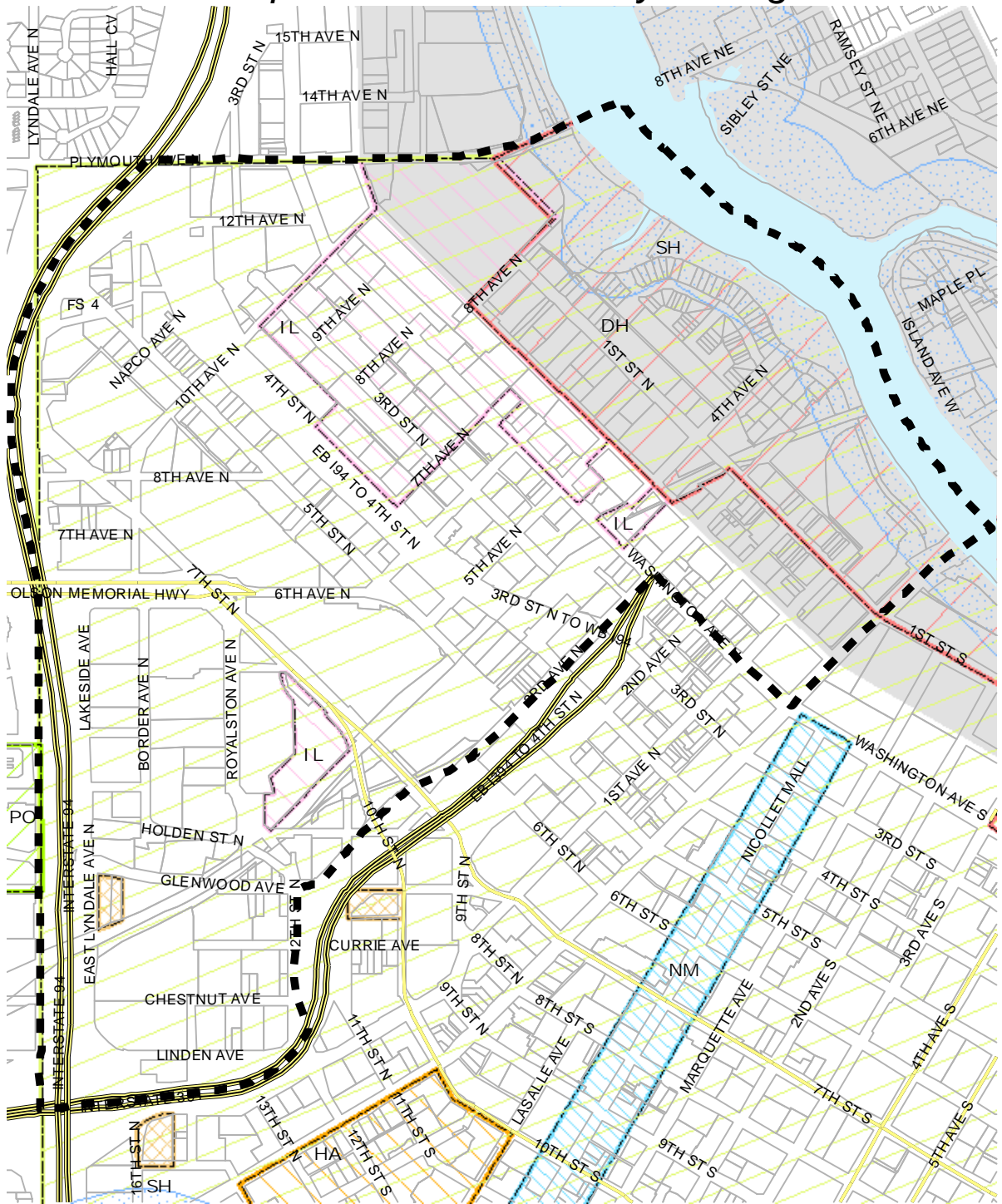
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	Parcels		B4C-1		B4S-2		C3A		I1		OR1		R1		R2B		R5
	B4-1		B4C-2		C1		C3S		I2		OR2		R1A		R3		R6

City of Minneapolis
CPED Planning Division



North Loop Small Area Plan

Map A.6 Current Overlay Zoning



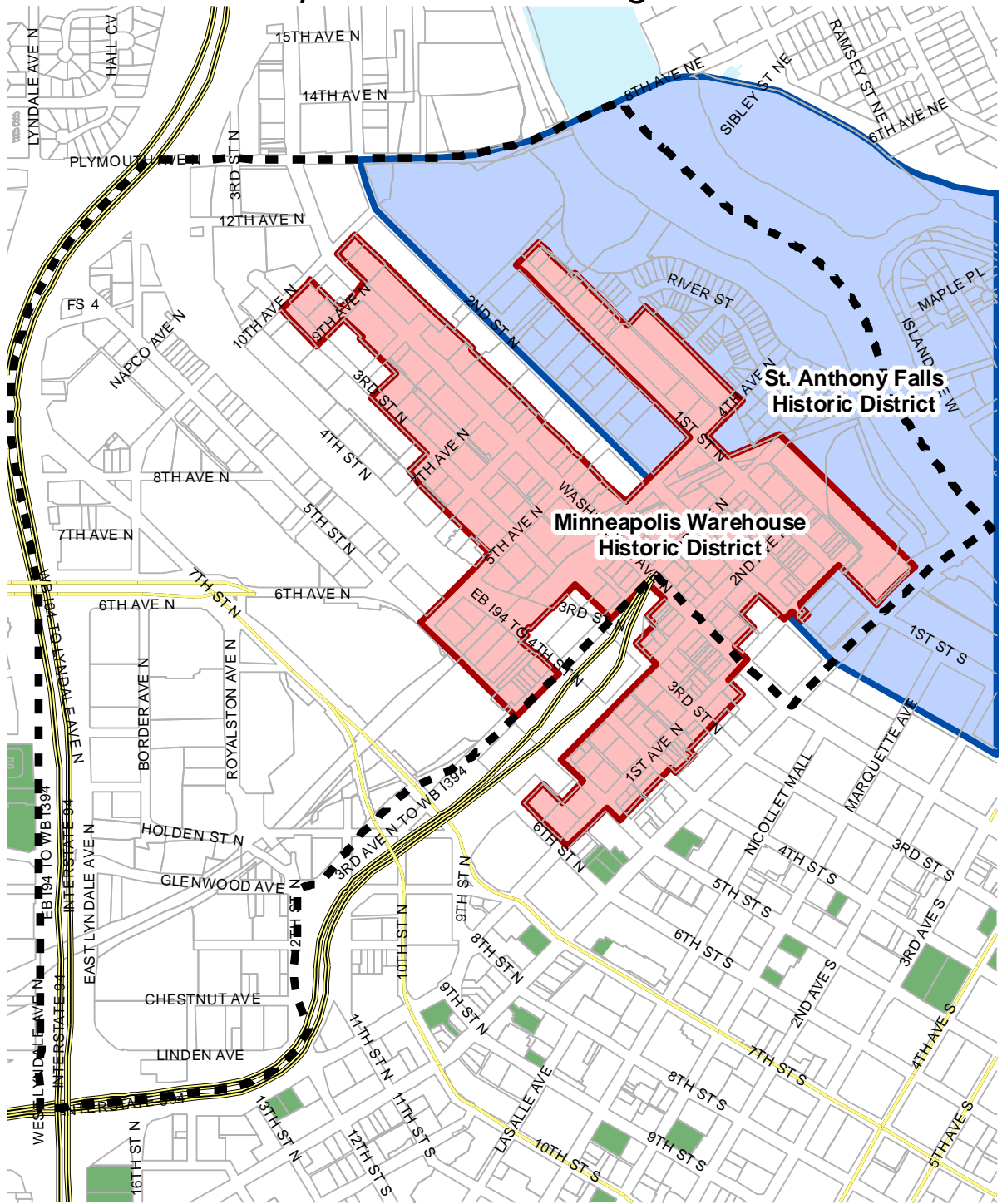
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|--|---------------|--|-------------------|--|------------------|--|---------------------|
| | Study Area | | Mississippi River | | Downtown Parking | | Pedestrian Oriented |
| | Parcels | | Industrial Living | | Downtown Housing | | Shoreland |
| | Nicollet Mall | | Harmon Area | | Downtown Height | | |






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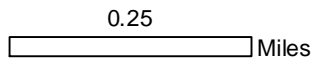


North Loop Small Area Plan Map A.7 Historic Designation



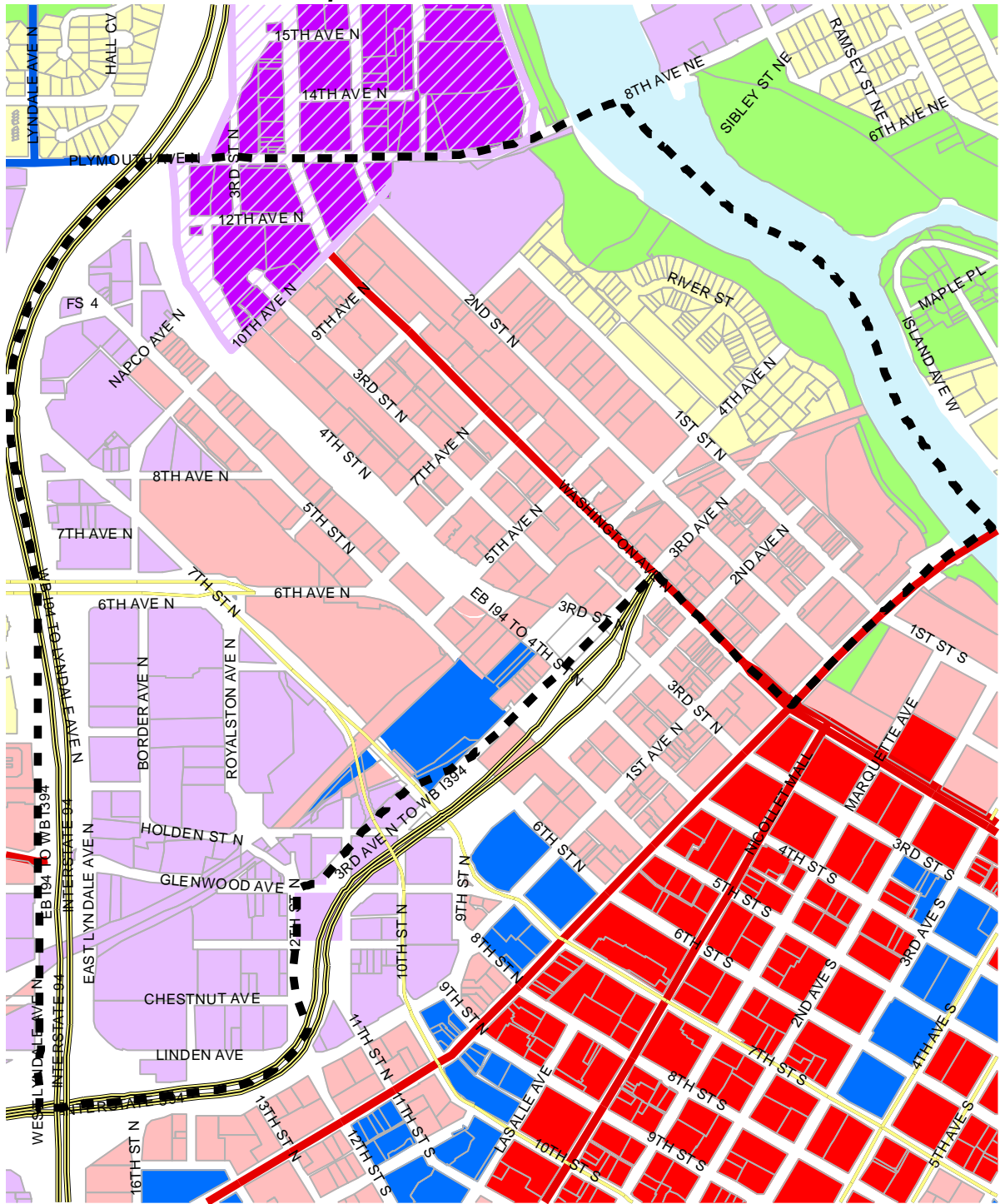
-  Study Area
-  Minneapolis Warehouse Historic District
-  Parcels
-  St. Anthony Falls Historic District
-  Locally Designated Landmarks

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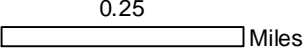
The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth

Map A.2 Future Land Use



-  Study Area
-  Community Corridor
-  Mixed Use
-  Transitional Industrial
-  Parcels
-  Industrial Employment District
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Commercial Corridor
-  Urban Neighborhood
-  Public and Institutional
-  Parks and Open Space

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5. Public Participation Process

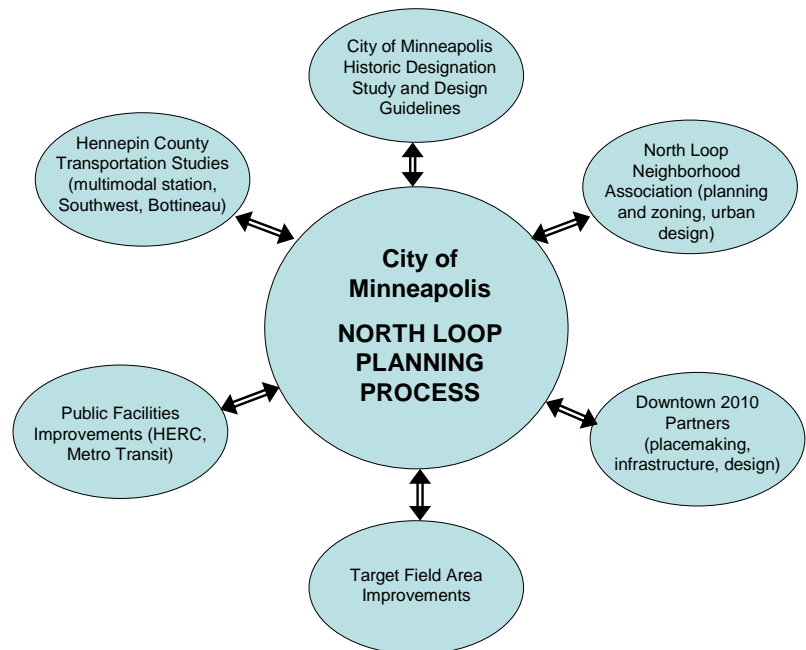
Introduction

Since the planning process is officially an update to an already-adopted small area plan with its own extensive participation process, the decisions and resulting recommendations from the original plan are assumed to still be relevant. Many parts of the neighborhood are not included in the original geography and therefore required a unique and strategic public participation process in order to reach all the stakeholders and receive input on what were priorities for the analysis and planning.

The North Loop Small Area Plan process officially began in January of 2009.

Purpose

A variety of stakeholders are involved in planning issues within the North Loop neighborhood, many conducting their own studies. One purpose of this planning process was to coordinate with City partners and community members to make sure the plans and studies respond well to each other. It was also critical to engage residents, property owners, and business owners who may not have been represented in any official way.



Strategy

Coordination with Community Groups

Early conversations with community groups such as the North Loop Neighborhood Association and 2010 Partners gleaned some priority questions for the planning process to answer:

- How should the infrastructure be improved to advance connectivity within the neighborhood and to adjacent areas?
- How will the market respond to the new regional amenities (i.e. Target Field, Intermodal Station)?
- What should land uses look like in the future?
- What should be the character of new development?
- How should publicly-owned properties be managed or developed?
- How can the public realm function better for pedestrians?

After initial conversations to develop the scope along with these priority questions, City staff continued to update interested community groups and receive feedback as the planning process progressed.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

A Technical Advisory Committee is essential in any planning activity in order to gain feedback on the reality, or feasibility, of implementing various aspects of the plan’s recommendations. In the case of the North Loop neighborhood, many of the public agencies represented were also conducting their own studies that could benefit from broader coordination. The TAC for the North Loop Plan consisted of representation from:

- City of Minneapolis CPED - Planning, Business Development, and Multifamily Housing
- City of Minneapolis Public Works – Transportation and Property Services
- Hennepin County
- Metro Transit

TAC members had three primary roles on the committee:

1. **Point of contact.** TAC members represented the policies and interests of their appointing public agencies but were not expected to have expertise in all aspects of their work unit. Instead, they worked with City staff to find the correct expertise for needed analysis.
2. **Advisory on implementation.** The TAC advised City staff and the CAC on methods for implementing the recommended policy direction.
3. **Broader representation?** TAC members represented the work of their departments as well as their own technical knowledge. They were asked to consider:
 - City-wide policies/values
 - The satisfaction of multiple needs
 - Most importantly - feasibility of plan implementation

Community Advisory Committee (CAC)

A Community Advisory Committee was a critical component to the planning process. The CAC included North Loop residents, business owners,

property owners, and representatives from the North Loop Neighborhood Association and 2010 Partners. Members had four main roles:

1. **Represent their appointing organization.** The role of CAC members was to officially represent the perspective of their organization as well as act as a communication conduit.
2. **Public engagement.** CAC members worked with their appointing organizations in getting the word out about public events related to the planning process.
3. **Advisory on plan content.** The CAC acted as a sounding board for plan content.
4. **Broader representation.** CAC members represented the values of their appointing organization. They also had a responsibility to factor in the perspectives of other groups and individuals. As with the TAC, they were asked to consider:
 - City-wide policies/values
 - The satisfaction of multiple needs
 - Feasibility of plan implementation

Summaries of each CAC meeting can be found in Appendix A.

Community Meeting

A main purpose of the North Loop planning process was to strategically reach out to community organizations by receiving input in their own meetings and to use the TAC and CAC to fill in the gaps. This strategy proved successful to an extent, but it was important for the broader community to understand the plan and provide valuable input.

A community meeting was held in late September of 2009 that was meant to introduce many more people to the planning process and receive input on the draft recommendations. The meeting was advertised widely in a few key ways:

- Mailings to every North Loop property owner and taxpayer
- Emails to North Loop community organizations for distribution
- Emails to adjacent neighborhood organizations and business organizations to advertise within their own memberships
- Press release and related Downtown Journal article
- Notice to public agency partners

Participants were asked in the meeting to confirm the original priority questions and identify if the proposed solutions were the right ones. They had the opportunity to converse with a number of City staff and CAC members on the rationale behind the draft recommendations. A summary of the community meeting can be found in Appendix A.

Technological Methods

As with any City planning process, the North Loop Plan had a dedicated webpage on the City's website. The use of a project website is twofold:

1. **Education.** It allows the broader public to better understand the context of the planning process through uploaded background material, research, and mapping.
2. **Transparency.** Any interested stakeholder was able to peruse the webpage for meeting announcements, agendas, and summaries in order to have a direct connection to the analysis and decision-making process. They also had access to City staff through a designated point person with contact information.

The webpage was also used as one venue for accessing draft material and the draft plan itself through any public review period or the approval process itself. Users were kept up-to-date on the process and how they can get involved.

The City also worked with the North Loop Neighborhood on a Wiki Pilot Project to offer interested stakeholders a complementary method of participating in the public process. The Wiki Pilot Project was hosted on an outside website and linked from the official City page. The Wiki allowed anyone the opportunity to provide input by editing the draft plan document directly. The City distilled the comments along with input received through existing methods and made the necessary revisions to the plan document. More information on the Wiki Pilot Project can be found in Appendix D.

6. Recommendations

Introduction

The North Loop neighborhood is unique in a variety of ways that influence the possible future of transportation and land use within its boundaries. Most notably however, while market conditions and expectations are clear in some portions of the neighborhood, catalytic change may be necessary to bring about growth in the private markets. Acknowledging this reality, the following framework was developed to prepare for a variety of possibilities ranging from minimal change in development patterns to complete overhaul of the landscape.

Functional Improvements – These recommendations can and should happen regardless of whether or not major private reinvestment occurs in the neighborhood. Current industrial, residential, and commercial users in the neighborhood will benefit immediately from these strategic improvements.

Managing Growth – Recommendations in this category should happen in conjunction with possible change in the neighborhood. Examples of such change include new transit facilities, infrastructure maintenance, and private sector redevelopment.

Visionary Change – These recommendations are meant to serve as an anchor point for the long term vision of the community. Functional and Managing Growth changes should not impede the possibility of visionary recommendations taking place.

While these categories are meant to give emphasis, definition, and a general timeline to the implementation steps, it is important to note that each category is meant to work in conjunction with each other. Each implementation step is meant to be considered as part of a continuum that acknowledges their reliance on each other, and the necessity to coordinate their outcomes so as not to conflict with each other.

As mentioned in Chapter 3, the North Loop neighborhood has two uniquely identifiable areas based on both historic development patterns and current character. While the industrial Lower North Loop and the residential Upper North Loop have changed significantly over the years, the two areas have always been separate and unique from one another. Most of the recommendations found in this chapter reflect this uniqueness but aim to improve connections and enhance an overall North Loop character.

Transportation and Infrastructure

Reconnecting the neighborhood both internally and to surrounding communities is the overarching goal of the transportation recommendations found in this chapter. This plan recommends reestablishing or creating a variety of connections throughout the neighborhood in a manner that serves pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers, and transit users.

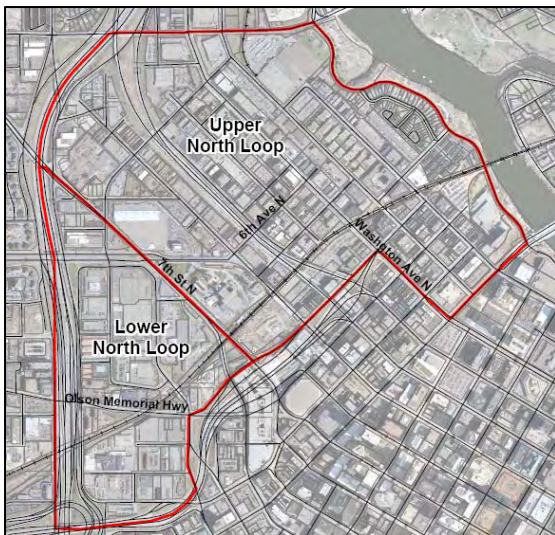


Figure 6.1 Upper and Lower North Loop

There is considerable opportunity to realize some of these changes in the near term. Major reinvestment has occurred in recent years in the portions of the neighborhood along the river and the Hennepin Avenue corridor. This reinvestment is continuing with the infusion of public dollars that are being spent on the new home of the Minnesota Twins, Northstar Commuter Rail, Hiawatha Light Rail Transit extension, and the possible introduction of three new light rail transit lines entering the neighborhood over the next 5-10 years.

As this private and public investment continues, the City of Minneapolis and its partners at Metro Transit, Hennepin County, MnDOT, and the North Loop neighborhood should work together to accomplish the goals and recommendations found on the following pages.

Create “Loop” Route

A seamless route through the neighborhood needs to be created that is easily traversed by bicycles, autos, pedestrians, and mass transit. The routes that currently connect the Upper and Lower portions of the North Loop neighborhood require a user to travel on high capacity streets or in circuitous patterns, making it confusing and unsafe for a variety of modes of travel. As the street network becomes more connected and easier to use, patronage of the neighborhood will increase. There are several ways to implement this recommendation, but the key will be in creating a connection through the neighborhood that allows a user to travel from one side to the other, creating a “Loop” through the neighborhood. Border Avenue, Oak Lake Avenue, and 10th Avenue North should be the basis for this opportunity. Right-of-way acquisition, reconstruction, resurfacing, restriping, repurposing, and new right-of-way treatments are all ways that this vision can be accomplished. This route should be renamed consistently for its entire length. Recommended action steps can happen incrementally or in conjunction with a larger project; changes to the infrastructure should not conflict with these plans.

Rail Transit

The North Loop neighborhood stands to benefit from its proximity to a variety of major public investments in the coming years. Southwest Light Rail Transit is one such investment that can help to make the neighborhood a destination of choice long into the future. However, to accomplish the goals outlined in this plan, certain aspects of the line should be considered carefully, following the recommendations found in this chapter. Royalston Avenue is currently indicated as a possible station location. A station serving the Lower North Loop provides potential for numerous benefits, but there are several issues that must be handled carefully in order to create a positive environment for transit use. The station would directly serve the southern end of the Downtown office core, the Minneapolis Farmers Market, and increase the development potential of the Lower North Loop. These destinations should be part of a marketing plan for the station in an effort to create a strong district identity. In addition, the station would serve as an event reliever for Target Center and Target Field activities, lessening the burden on the Warehouse and Target Field light rail transit stations.

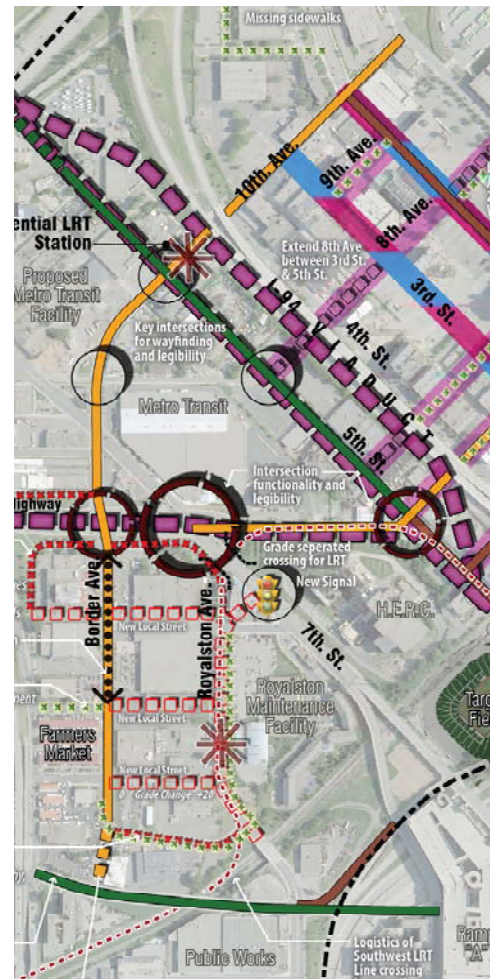
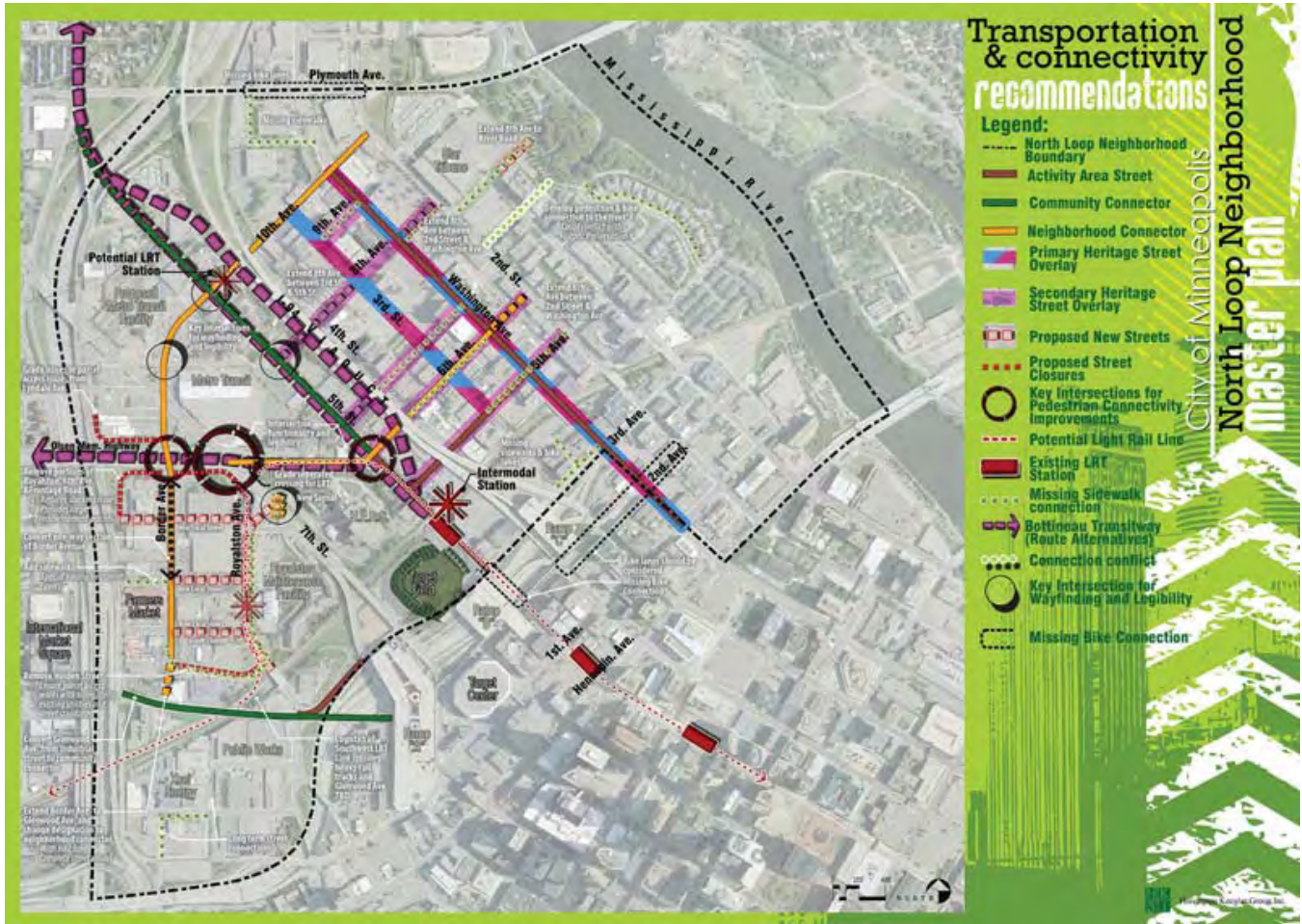


Figure 6.2 Illustrates the “Loop” Route as well as the Farmers Market area with new streets for improved circulation

Clear pedestrian connections need to be made between the Royalston Station and the Minneapolis Farmers Market, Target Field, the Downtown office core, and to the residential areas of the neighborhood. Without additional pedestrian connections and safety measures, the station will not serve patrons in its fullest capacity. Part of the solution to the pedestrian access issue relates to grade separation of light rail transit. Grade separated facilities have created pedestrian, auto, and bicycle barriers in the neighborhood for years. Engineering plans should keep LRT vehicles at grade with other modes of travel in an effort to maintain safe and functional pedestrian, auto, and cycling connections.



The Bottineau Transitway, while still in early stages of planning, has the potential to have a similarly positive impact on the neighborhood. The mode of travel (LRT or BRT) and whether the project is viable is yet to be determined; however, this plan takes several positions on how the line may exist in the neighborhood in the future. No matter which route is chosen through the neighborhood, every effort should be made to do no further damage to the already fragmented street grid. In fact, the street grid should be expanded and healed in areas that improve access to the line and any potential station. For example, a route that takes Lyndale Avenue North and 5th Street North to the Intermodal Station should serve to reintroduce two-

way auto traffic on Lyndale and 5th by way of a new bridge over Interstate 94. In addition, a station should be included in plans that bring the line through the neighborhood, whether it is a shared station with Southwest LRT or an independent station near the intersection of 10th Avenue and 5th Street.

The Southwest LRT, Bottineau Transit Line, and any other proposed rail lines should be at street grade. Trains should not be elevated above or lowered below street grade. All transit projects, existing and proposed, should leave the streets and the connections better than current conditions.

While the concept is still in its early stages, analysis has been done on possible streetcar routes in Minneapolis. Recommendations found in the Minneapolis *Streetcar Feasibility Study* identify Washington Avenue North as a possible route for a future streetcar line. This plan supports locating additional transit facilities such as streetcar within the neighborhood and on Washington Avenue in particular.

Connections and Pedestrian Safety

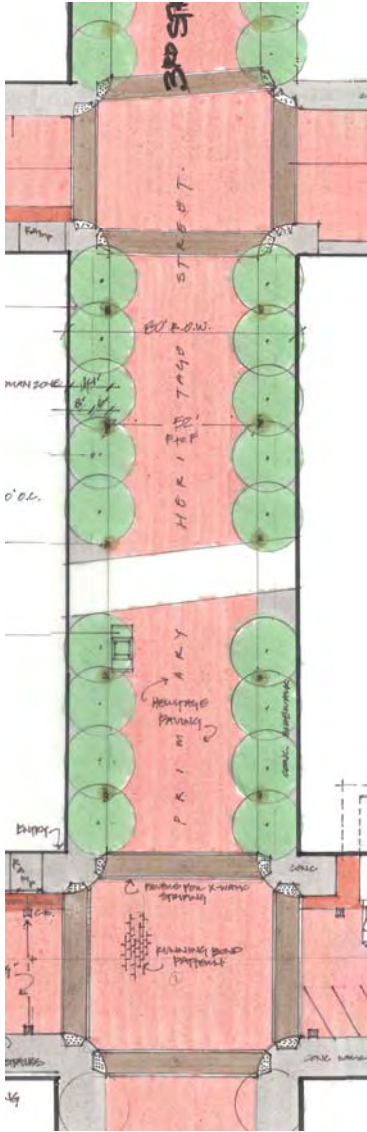
To ensure equal access to all of the amenities the North Loop neighborhood has to offer, more meaningful connections should be created between the Mississippi River, the Downtown office core, neighboring communities, and destinations within the neighborhood. Recommendations in this chapter emphasize the need for improved access and circulation of all modes of transportation but places special emphasis on improving the pedestrian environment in key areas.

Pedestrian safety is a priority issue in the North Loop. This is caused by lack of connectivity, condition of infrastructure, and in some cases a complete lack of infrastructure. With existing high traffic pedestrian areas such as the Mississippi River, the Minneapolis Farmers Market, and the Warehouse District; and with new areas of pedestrian activity coming online soon such as Target Field and the Intermodal Station, pedestrian safety should be carefully considered with new infrastructure and development projects. New connections and access points are proposed in the recommendations that will improve the circulation and safety of pedestrian travel in the neighborhood.

Repair, Reconstruction, and Reclassification

Several streets in the neighborhood are approaching a point of disrepair that will require some form of reconstruction or repair over the life of this plan. One way in which Public Works determines which streets receive repair or reconstruction priority is by looking at the condition of the pavement, referred to as Pavement Condition Index (PCI). Five streets are currently identified as having a PCI of “poor” in the North Loop:

- 10th Avenue North from Olson Memorial Highway to 2nd Street North
- 5th Street North from Napco Avenue North to 6th Avenue North
- Royalston Avenue North from 6th Avenue North to Glenwood Avenue



- Currie Avenue
- 12th Street North from Currie Avenue to Interstate 394

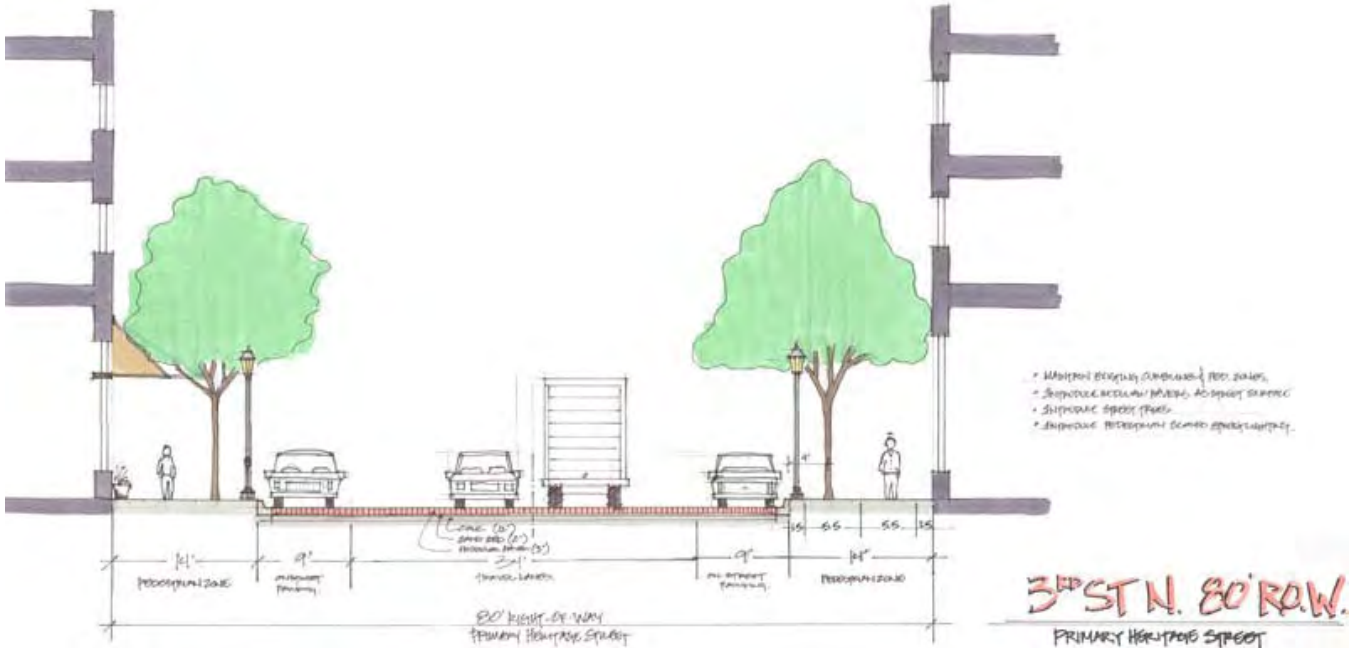
Due to the importance of 10th Avenue North serving as a “Loop” road through the neighborhood, it should be given priority in repair and reconstruction over the other areas listed above. In addition, roads that may be altered during the construction of Southwest LRT should be given a lower priority when being considered for repair and reconstruction.

Access Minneapolis

A new concept being proposed in this plan is to reclassify streets in the neighborhood from their current designations in the *Access Minneapolis* Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan (referenced in Ch. 3 Summary of Research and Ch. 4 Existing Conditions). *Access Minneapolis* is an implementation plan addressing infrastructure needs for all modes of travel within the City over the next ten years. A key element of the document assigns classifications to streets based on a number of attributes including traffic volume, right of way width, and future adjacent land uses. This plan suggests that several streets in the neighborhood should be reclassified to better suit the future of the area.

Heritage Streets

In addition to reclassification of several streets, an entirely new category should be created that addresses the needs of streets that serve historic districts in the City. The Heritage Street designation is not a replacement designation but an overlay that works in tandem with the existing recommendations in the *Access Minneapolis* plan. Heritage Streets indicate a need for additional sensitivity to the historic nature of the surrounding area. The streets recommended for this designation include:



Figures 6.3 and 6.4 Depict the possible layout of a Primary Heritage Street

Secondary Heritage Street Overlay

- 5th Avenue North from 2nd Street North to 5th Street North
- 6th Avenue North from 2nd Street North to 5th Street North (some sections yet to be constructed)
- 7th Avenue North from Washington Avenue North to 5th Street North (some sections yet to be constructed)
- 8th Avenue North from Washington Avenue North to 5th Street North (some sections yet to be constructed)
- 9th Avenue North from Washington Avenue North to 3rd Street North

Primary Heritage Street Overlay

- Washington Avenue North from 1st Avenue North to 10th Avenue North
- 3rd Street North from 5th Avenue North to 10th Avenue North
- 1st Street North from 3rd Avenue North to 8th Avenue North
- 3rd Avenue North from 1st Street North to 5th Street North

Secondary Heritage Streets are the side streets that serve as loading docks for the warehouse buildings in the neighborhood. These streets have unique pedestrian, loading, parking, and surfacing requirements that require special attention be paid to them. Analysis and illustrations completed through this planning study are shown in the appendix to this plan. A solution that incorporates the needs of these sometimes conflicting attributes must be found before reconstruction takes place.

Primary Heritage Streets are those that serve as major circulators or transportation spines of the neighborhood. While they contribute to the historic nature of the area, they do not have as many conflicts or characteristics that complicate street design. Some of the changes suggested for these streets can happen incrementally, with greening and lighting being an emphasis for improvement.

CPED and Public Works staff convened with stakeholders around this issue as part of the planning process. Several main issues were addressed, and the outcomes below were agreed upon by all parties as a way to frame implementation of the Heritage Streets concept.

- Loading docks will continue to maintain their operational ability and appearance
- Primary pedestrian movement will take place at the street level, which will likely require a reduction in automobile space in certain areas
- Pedestrian space will be clearly delineated from automobile and loading dock space through an as of yet undetermined physical treatment

Additional issues discussed included possible pavement materials, storm and sewer water configuration, ADA and other safety compliance standards, and parking configuration. These issues must be discussed and final plans identified per the recommendations outlined below.

Recommendations

Functional Improvements

1. Classify 6th Avenue North, 10th Avenue North, Oak Lake Avenue, and Border Avenue as Neighborhood Connector streets; Washington Avenue North and 5th Avenue North as Activity Area streets; and 5th Street North, 7th Street North, and Glenwood Avenues as Community Connector streets in *Access Minneapolis*.
2. Establish a Heritage Street overlay in *Access Minneapolis* that applies to 3rd Avenue North, 5th Avenue North, 6th Avenue North, 7th Avenue North, 8th Avenue North, 9th Avenue North, Washington Avenue North, 1st Street North, and 3rd Street North as outlined in this chapter.
3. Establish a working group of public agency stakeholders to develop an implementation strategy for the reconstruction of Heritage Streets in the North Loop. The working group should identify priority streets for reconstruction or rehabilitation, develop a timeline for the work, and explore funding strategies to support the work.
4. Improve the connections between the Lower North Loop and the Downtown core via 16th Street North, 12th Street North, 11th Street North, Glenwood Avenue, and Linden Avenue by installing improved signage that indicates appropriate pedestrian and auto routes through the neighborhood and clear routes to destinations in the area.
5. Evaluate the feasibility of adding a left turn movement from Chestnut Avenue onto 12th Street North.
6. Enhance the pedestrian and bicycle experience on Glenwood Avenue by incorporating bike lanes, on street parking, and street plantings where possible.
7. Emphasize 7th Street North as a major pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile route that safely connects the Downtown office core, the North Loop neighborhood, and neighborhoods in North Minneapolis. Pedestrian enhancements on the 7th Street North bridge over Interstate 94 and the intersections with West and East Lyndale Avenue North should be a priority.
8. Extend Border Avenue from Holden Street to Glenwood Avenue. This will require right of way acquisition and is most feasible as a project that occurs in conjunction with the introduction of the Southwest Light Rail transit line. Without this connection, the “Loop” road concept falls flat. It should be considered one of the top priorities of this plan.
9. Restore two-way traffic to Border Avenue between Cesar Chavez Avenue and Olson Memorial Highway. This project is also uniquely important in that the “Loop” road concept relies on restoring two-way traffic to Border Avenue. Other infrastructure changes in the vicinity will be necessary to make this happen including reconfiguration of the

intersection of Border Avenue, 6th Avenue, Royalston Avenue, 10th Avenue, and Olson Memorial Highway.

10. Reconfigure the intersection of Olson Memorial Highway, Border Avenue North, 10th Avenue North, and 6th Avenue North to improve safety and ease of use for all modes of travel. This project is important in realizing the vision of the “Loop” road.
11. Reconfigure the intersection of Olson Memorial Highway and 7th Street North to improve safety and ease of use for all modes of travel.
12. With a pavement condition rating of poor, the “Loop” road (including 10th Avenue North, Oak Lake Avenue, and Border Avenue) may come up for reconstruction on the City’s capital improvement plan in the near future. A new lane configuration should be identified that considers the addition of bike lanes, on-street parking meters where appropriate, and widens sidewalks. Consider renaming the route to one street name at the time of reconfiguration.
13. Royalston Avenue should be rerouted in conjunction with the conversion of Border Avenue to two-way traffic. Royalston should terminate at 7th Street North. In conjunction with this project and any development proposal between Royalston and Border north of Cesar Chavez, vacation of Royalston between 5th and 6th Avenue North should be considered. This project may also benefit the alignment of the Southwest Transitway if Royalston Avenue is part of the chosen route.
14. Locate signaled pedestrian crossings at key locations in the neighborhood. At both 7th Street North between Olson Memorial Highway and Target Field, and 5th Street North between the Ford Center and the Target Field Station platform. The 7th Street opportunity may exist at 5th Avenue North where a rerouted Royalston Avenue may terminate. Otherwise pedestrian only mid-block crossings would be appropriate to address pedestrian safety concerns related to an anticipated increase in foot traffic during Target Field event days. These crossings would also serve to better connect the neighborhood to current and future light rail infrastructure.



Figure 6.9 HKGi: An illustration of a possible street connection at 8th Ave N underneath the viaduct

Managing Growth

1. Better connect the neighborhood to the river through a combination of a pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile connection that extends 8th Avenue North under the viaducts from 5th Street North to and through the north portion of the neighborhood. A public/private partnership should be developed to make this opportunity a reality.
2. Extend 8th Avenue North from 1st Street North to the East River Road in order to improve access to the river.
3. If the Southwest Transitway enters the neighborhood via the Burlington Northern rail alignment, a station should be located in the neighborhood on either Royalston Avenue or Border Avenue.

4. Create a clear pedestrian connection between the Minneapolis Farmers Market and the Royalston LRT Station. The route should be direct, clearly marked, and visible from both destinations.
5. If engineering of the Southwest Transitway requires the closure of Holden Street North, mitigation will be required with the extension of Border Avenue to Glenwood Avenue and the extension of Cesar Chavez Avenue from Border Avenue to Royalston Avenue.
6. In an effort to improve pedestrian access and ease of use, light rail transit should be routed in such a way that allows for LRT vehicles to remain at grade with autos, pedestrians, and cyclists.
7. If the Bottineau Transitway study identifies Olson Memorial Highway as the main route into Downtown, every effort should be made to properly integrate facilities with the street grid in a way that repairs the fragmented street network in the North Loop neighborhood. A station serving the neighborhood should also be considered, if not part of the initial project, then as a future station addition.
8. If the Bottineau Transitway study identifies Lyndale Avenue North as the main route into Downtown, the route should utilize 5th Street North through the North Loop neighborhood. In the event this route is chosen, a station should be sited near the intersection of 10th Avenue North and 5th Street North to serve both residents and employees of the area, and visitors attending events in the vicinity.

Visionary Change

1. Create a southbound automobile, bicycle, and pedestrian route through the Lower North Loop that connects with 16th Street North through the neighborhood to the southern end of downtown. Consider preserving space for an extension of the “Loop” road through the Xcel Energy site if there is a reconfiguration of their campus.
2. Connecting Lyndale Avenue North with 5th Street North for two-way automobile and bicycle traffic should be explored. The Bottineau Transitway project may offer the opportunity to study the feasibility of the connection, however, the connection should be explored regardless of the presence of light rail along the route.

Land Use

A major component of any small area plan is a Future Land Use Plan. Since this is an update to an existing plan, future land use direction should be taken from the *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan* within its study boundaries and from this document for the remaining parts of the North Loop neighborhood.

The future land uses proposed here build upon the City’s comprehensive plan and will provide better specificity. The Future Land Use Plan will be used by the various public and private stakeholders as a tool for encouraging and regulating long-term land use decisions. If redevelopment occurs within the neighborhood, it will be required to adhere to the future land use plan.

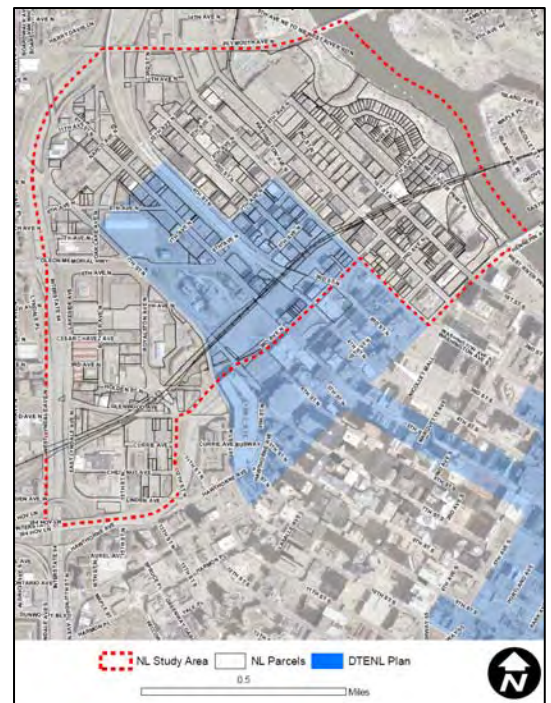


Figure 6.10 North Loop neighborhood boundary along with study area of Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan

The future land use map provides parcel and district level guidance for future uses. Any new land use designations in the future land use map were chosen based on several factors. These include current land use and zoning, City land use designations and planned uses, community input and potential for redevelopment. The majority of the plan's land use recommendations will aid in managing growth if and when development occurs. The following section discusses in depth the research findings, policies, and principles upon which these decisions were based. The policy basis for decisions included current policies in *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* (the City's Comprehensive Plan) and the guiding principles established in this plan.

There are three major components of the Future Land Use Plan:

- Land Use by Parcel
- Designated Land Use Features
- Land Use Districts

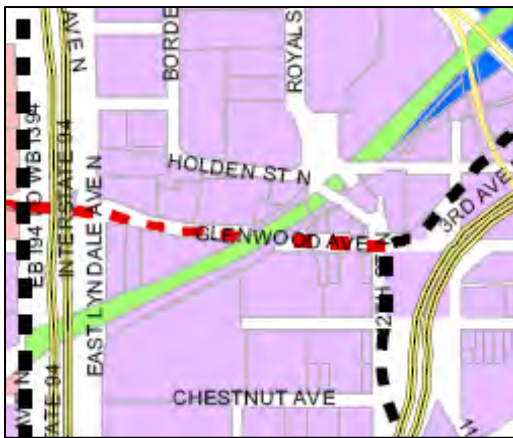


Figure 6.11 Proposed designation of Glenwood Avenue as a Commercial Corridor

Land Use by Parcel

Reflected in *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*, each parcel within the City is assigned a future land use designation. Minneapolis and other cities in the region are required by the Metropolitan Council to regulate land use so they can accommodate new growth, respond to change, and implement land use policies. To make sure that regulation matches the policy in the neighborhood, a rezoning study should be performed as an implementation step to the North Loop Small Area Plan. Identifying future land uses also allows a city to manage its growth by preserving areas that should largely stay the same over time, such as established neighborhoods, while promoting change in other areas where needed.

Future land uses in the North Loop neighborhood are generally consistent with those identified in the Comprehensive Plan and can be found depicted in Map A2: Future Land Use. Parcels within the *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan* will continue to be guided with the Future Land Use Map associated with that document. Additional land use guidance for the whole neighborhood can be found in the description of the Land Use Districts.

Designated Land Use Features

As mentioned in Chapter 3: Summary of Research, the North Loop neighborhood has five existing designated land use features identified in *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*.

- Growth Center: Downtown
- Industrial Employment District: North Washington
- Transit Station Area: Intermodal Station
- Commercial Corridor: Washington Avenue
- Activity Center: Warehouse District

This plan proposes to designate Glenwood Avenue as a Commercial Corridor. This identification recognizes the commercial potential along this corridor in the Lower North Loop and is also consistent with the designation

of Glenwood as a Commercial Corridor just east of the study area in the Bassett Creek Valley redevelopment area.

The designation by parcel of future land uses as well as designated land use features can be found in Map A.2 Future Land Use.

Land Use Districts

As described above, the North Loop neighborhood has two distinct character areas. Within these areas, there are smaller districts that allow for a more nuanced look at the future of land use. Figure 6.12 and Map A.4 Land Use Districts build on the districts created in the *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan*. Many of the original districts were expanded further into the North Loop neighborhood and include enhanced policy guidance, while other districts are new.

When updating an existing policy document, it is important to recognize and perpetuate the main components of its recommendations for general land use guidance throughout the North Loop. By continuing the policy direction from the original plan, this planning process recognizes that it is still sound and relevant policy. General guidance for the North Loop Small Area Plan, consistent with the original plan, is:

- Land uses in the North Loop that support the strength and character of the Downtown Core instead of competing with it;
- Concentration of future Class-A Office development contained within the existing Downtown Core;
- Preference for mid- to high-density mixed-use developments that combine residential, commercial, and retail (where appropriate) uses;
- Promotion of an overall increase in neighborhood housing density that includes a continuum of housing choices;
- Land uses organized to encourage and support public transit, cycling, and walking as viable alternatives to the private automobile;
- Preference for structured parking built below, or embedded within, development projects. New accessory and commercial surface parking lots are prohibited;
- Promotion of pedestrian-friendly streetscapes, street-facing retail in identified locations, transit nodes, and neighborhood services.

To further the concept of creating a community of choice, this plan promotes an overall increase in housing density within the neighborhood for a variety of reasons:

- The North Loop, as a Downtown neighborhood, is contained within a designated Growth Center;
- Surface parking and other under utilized sites exist;
- Transit access in the neighborhood will be better than any other part of the City and region.

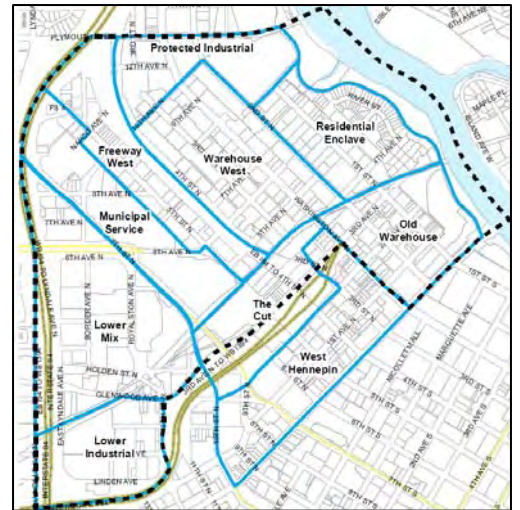


Figure 6.12 Land Use Districts

As more housing is developed, it is important to offer options for renting and owning for a variety of income levels. The neighborhood currently contains hundreds of ownership units in the Upper North Loop. As of the 2000 census only 67 permanent residents lived in 50 units within two buildings in the Lower North Loop, with very few changes to land use since then. There is also a large transitory population in the area – 88 transitional units that house up to 500 people, 80 beds for chronic alcoholics, and 88 units for homeless men and women.

As emphasized in the City’s Comprehensive Plan, a major housing policy is to foster complete communities by preserving and increasing high quality housing opportunities suitable for all ages and household types. A priority within the North Loop neighborhood would be to see additional ownership and rental housing options to meet the needs of low and moderate incomes.

The North Loop Small Area Plan will also continue to adhere to the original plan’s overarching belief that new development projects in the North Loop should be geared generally toward a continuation of medium-intensity infill development. Map A.3 Development Intensity further defines the most appropriate scale for various parts of the neighborhood.

West Hennepin

As one of the original Land Use Districts from the *Downtown East/North Loop Plan*, the West Hennepin District is mostly outside of the North Loop neighborhood. The West Hennepin district will continue to encourage development that is medium-intensity and mixed-use, with a scale similar to the existing buildings. New or rehabbed development should maintain and enhance the historic character of the Warehouse District, perpetuate the theater and entertainment uses, and include new commercial and residential options with increased street-level retail. Emphasis for development is on several surface parking lot infill sites near the Warehouse District transit station which offer an opportunity to intensify and fill in the neighborhood.



Figure 6.13 New parking should be hidden

Warehouse West

The Warehouse West district also comes from the original plan but has been geographically expanded west to 10th Avenue North. Development in this district should continue to protect and preserve the historic warehouse structures with an emphasis on adaptive re-use. New development should be geared toward the removal of surface parking lots and other under-developed sites and continue the eclectic mix of commercial, residential, and industrial uses. Publicly-accessible open space is desired by the neighborhood and would generally be appropriate in this centrally-located district. More discussion of green space can be found in the Development Guidelines section of this chapter.

Washington Avenue serves two purposes in the North Loop neighborhood. It is the main commercial street for the Upper North Loop so retail and service establishments that serve this part of Downtown are encouraged. It also functions as a destination district for a much broader market area. For this reason, destination retail, services, and entertainment establishments are also

encouraged. Opportunities for retail off of Washington should be service-oriented and accessory to the primary use on the site. Consistent with recommendations earlier in this chapter, the “Loop” connection along 10th Avenue North should be improved with building and site designs that include pedestrian-oriented design features, including adding principal entrances on this north-south street.

Freeway West

As an existing district in the original plan, most of the recommendations for land use and development continue to be relevant. The original plan recommended a new residential neighborhood in the western reaches of the 5th Street North corridor. This plan recognizes some opportunities for development on under-utilized sites and offers more flexibility for future uses while recognizing that residential is the likeliest option. Freeway West offers tremendous opportunities for increased housing density and/or improved opportunities for employment that build on direction from the original plan to view 5th Street as a major transit and pedestrian spine throughout Downtown as a whole.

The original plan recommended dismantling of the freeway viaduct. After further analysis, this plan reverses the original recommendation due to:

- The long life-span of the existing infrastructure;
- Freeway traffic converting to local road use;
- Grade issues at both the railroad trench and the I-94 entrance ramp that would allow for only two to four blocks of local road;
- Ramping up to I-94 would eliminate the possibility of a new connection of 8th Avenue North (as described earlier in the chapter).

The freeway viaduct should stay and new opportunities to re-establish the street grid underneath should be explored. As with Warehouse West, street-level retail is encouraged along 5th Avenue North and new development should have a prominent presence on 10th Avenue North with the inclusion of pedestrian-oriented design features.

Municipal Service

The Municipal Service district has been expanded to include the proposed Heywood II Metro Transit bus layover and maintenance facility on the Ragstock site along 10th Avenue North between 7th and 5th Streets North. Because the majority of sites in this district are publicly-owned, major redevelopment is not likely. Opportunities exist, however, to better utilize the public sites with a transition over time to co-location of public services for a higher utilization of these Downtown sites. If public uses are required to expand, preference is for a creative use of land area by such methods as decked parking or office space over existing buildings before use of additional land is explored. Any new or expanded public facility should adhere to site plan review standards with an emphasis on ground-floor views in and out of the building. They should also make improvements over time to site and building design by incorporating more

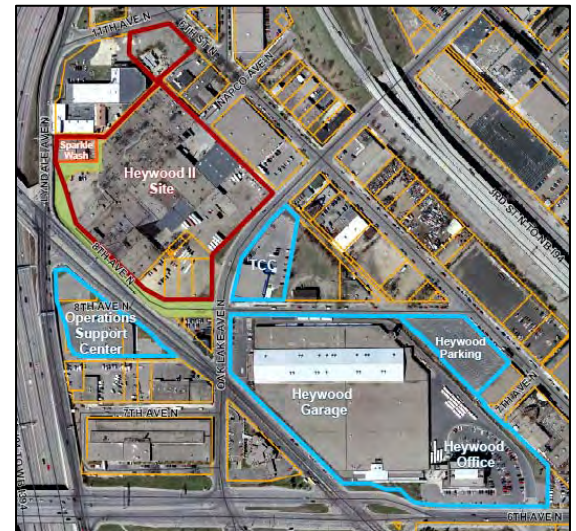


Figure 6.14 Land owned by Metro Transit in the North Loop (graphic courtesy of Metro Transit)

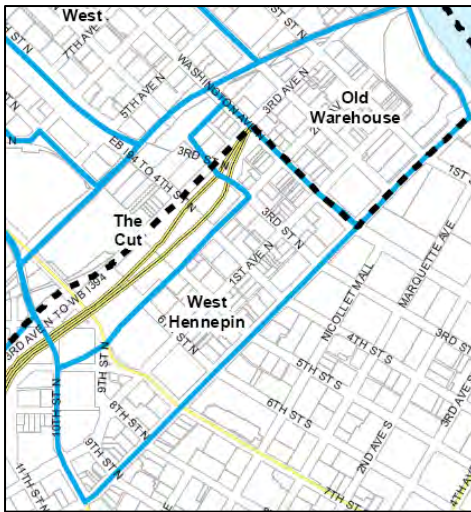


Figure 6.15 Land Use Districts – West Hennepin, The Cut, and Old Warehouse



Figure 6.16 Former Jaguar site on Hennepin Avenue



Figure 6.17 Land Use District – Protected Industrial

landscaping and reducing the amount of pavement or hardscape. Any new buildings along 10th Avenue North/Oak Lake Avenue North should include pedestrian-oriented design features and recognize other plan recommendations to use this street as an improved connection through the neighborhood.

The Cut

Direction in this district from the original plan should be continued. With the addition of Target Field and the realization of a Intermodal Station, The Cut continues to be a prominent location to improve the connection between the office core and the North Loop neighborhood. The City and its partners should continue to work toward the recommendations in the original plan to use 5th Street as a major east-west spine throughout Downtown. Large-scale development opportunities still exist in this district. New development should take advantage of the airspace above the Intermodal Station with commercial, office, hotel complexes, and even residential buildings. The rest of the site should create housing density appropriate to support a regional transit hub.

Old Warehouse

This district covers the area where the historically-designated Warehouse District originated. There are possibilities for large-scale redevelopment along Hennepin Avenue that should include a mix of uses. Otherwise, new development should maintain and enhance the historic character of the district. A concentration of street-level destination retail, services, and entertainment establishments are encouraged along Washington and Hennepin Avenues.

Residential Enclave

Limited opportunities for new large-scale development exist in this district. The majority of new development should maintain the residential character of the area with limited opportunities for retail if small and accessory to the residential uses. New projects should maintain and enhance the district’s historic character. The plan also supports current neighborhood efforts to incorporate a children’s play area on Park Board property at the river.

Protected Industrial

The majority of this district is included in the larger North Washington Industrial Employment District as an appropriate location to protect existing industrial uses and to encourage the location of new industry. It is a beneficial location for industrial businesses because it has nearby freeway access, contains larger sites, has access to rail, and is generally separated from housing (therefore avoiding common land use conflicts that arise between industrial and residential properties). In the event that the Star Tribune vacates their property at 2nd Street North and 8th Avenue North, this plan proposes the site continue as an industrial use that is high-wage and job-intense. Because the existing building is in good condition and fits well into the surrounding area, the likeliest scenario is that one or more industrial users would not demolish it but instead adjust it to their needs. Additionally, a new industrial business can take advantage of the existing rail spur, a hot

commodity for industry. If using the existing building for a new industrial use proves infeasible, the site may also be viable for residential if the development fits the character of the neighborhood.

Lower Industrial

Within the Lower North Loop, this district is the most self-contained industrial area. While it is guided for Transitional Industrial in the Future Land Use Map, the primary land use in the future should remain industrial with intermittent opportunities for residential and commercial. It is a high priority of this plan to perpetuate the unique location of these industrial job opportunities in proximity to the Downtown Core and nearby transit.

As summarized in the market analysis in Chapter 3 Summary of Research, Glenwood Avenue offers the best opportunity for the expansion of commercial uses in the district for a variety of reasons:

- Its connection to future commercial uses in the Bassett Creek Valley area west of Lyndale;
- Direct connections into the office core;
- The Southwest LRT Royalston Station one block away;
- It has the best walkability of any corridor in the Lower North Loop;
- A non-motorized transportation pilot grant will restripe to allow a bike lane and on-street metered parking.

Another prominent reason for promoting more commercial on Glenwood is due to the presence of Lee’s Liquor Lounge and two City-owned parcels at the intersection with 12th Street. This plan proposes to increase the number of commercial uses at this corner with the intention of City staff working actively in the short-term towards achieving this goal.]

Lower Mix

The Lower Mix district currently is an eclectic mix of Public Works properties, the Minneapolis Farmers Market, large warehouses, private industrial and commercial businesses, and social service housing providers. This plan proposes to continue this diversity of uses. As a major citywide asset, the Farmers Market should be capitalized on and expanded over time to a full-year market with an inside component. In order to accomplish this, more land would need to be acquired, likely at a significant capital cost to the City. To expand in both scope and physical presence, political interest in funding will be important and likely a need for a public-private partnership. In the event of a Southwest Transitway alignment and station along Royalston, clearly identified pedestrian connections need to be made to the market so patrons have the choice of using transit. An expanded market and transit station may be an ideal opportunity to connect these two public amenities into a larger project with the intention of creating a premier destination location, or a clearly-identifiable “Farmers Market District”. The direction in this district should be refined once a Southwest Transitway station is a certainty and the current market has improved – an updated market analysis will likely be needed.



Figure 6.18 Corner of Glenwood and 12th St

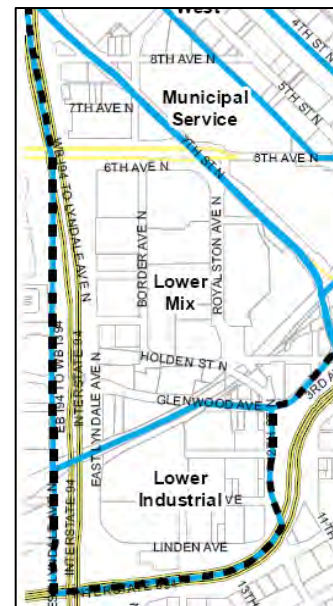


Figure 6.19 Land Use Districts – Lower Mix and Lower Industrial

As with the Lower Industrial district, commercial uses should be emphasized on Glenwood with a focus at the intersection with 12th Street North. 11th and 12th Streets North should serve as strong pedestrian connections into the Downtown office core and to any future development south of the study area - pedestrian improvements need to be made to these streets in order to achieve this goal. An opportunity for large-scale redevelopment in this district is possible on the block between Border and Royalston and just south of Olson Memorial Highway, especially in the event of a Southwest LRT station.

Figure 6.20 shows a possible concept for what the Lower Mix area may look like over the life of this plan. The important features in this illustration include a Southwest LRT station on Royalston Avenue, an expanded



Figure 6.20 HKGi illustration of the possibilities in the Lower North Loop

Farmers Market that acts as a premier destination and public connection to the station, and an extension of Border Avenue to the Glenwood Avenue Commercial Corridor. While some of these elements will be more challenging to implement than others, they are all essential to achieving a successful transit-oriented area.

Much interest exists among both public and private stakeholders to capitalize on the wealth of environmentally sustainable uses and opportunities within and adjacent to the neighborhood. These opportunities include:

- The Hennepin Energy Recovery Center would like to increase the amount of energy that is provided to neighborhood structures through cogeneration to ensure efficient use of the energy created by the facility. Hennepin County is currently examining the feasibility of a district energy system to reduce the carbon footprint of the North Loop neighborhood.
- Xcel Energy, located in the Lower Industrial district, is working in coordination with the public sector to achieve an Energy Innovation Corridor along the Central Corridor LRT route that could lead to possible conservation or renewable energy development projects in the neighborhood.
- A number of technical schools adjacent to the North Loop – MCTC, Dunwoody, and Summit Academy - are interested in further developing their curriculum for green industry jobs.
- The Minneapolis Farmers Market can be improved to achieve greater sustainability through the use of alternative paving materials and inclusion in a district energy plan.
- Many industry sectors are turning toward green innovation and could benefit from these other opportunities by locating in the neighborhood.

While the Lower Mix district is an ideal location to perpetuate this idea, the whole neighborhood can benefit from it.

As noted in the market analysis, land uses are not likely to change dramatically in the Lower North Loop because of the Intermodal Station – there are just too many physical barriers that prevent creating a meaningful connection to the station. The introduction of a Southwest Transitway station on Royalston Avenue, however, could improve development potential in the area. Whether or not there are significant land use changes in either the Upper or Lower North Loop, it is still critical to remove the barriers that exist for pedestrians in reaching both of these stations. Connectivity improvements to the existing infrastructure system will make accessing the transit stations easier for people who already live and work in the neighborhood, and removing these barriers may also spur interest in under-developed sites.

Recommendations

Functional Improvements

1. Build structured parking below, or embedded within, development projects.
2. Expand destination retail, services, and entertainment establishments along the Washington and Hennepin Commercial Corridors.
3. Improve the look and feel of both public and private properties along 10th Avenue North with building and site designs that include pedestrian-oriented design features, including adding principal entrances on this north-south street.
4. Better utilize public sites with a transition over time to co-location of public services.

Managing Growth

1. Conduct a rezoning study to best match the regulations with the policy. New zoning districts should be considered as a possible way to create consistency between policies found in this document and regulations in the Zoning Ordinance.
2. Designate Glenwood Avenue as a Commercial Corridor from Lyndale Avenue to 10th Street North and incorporate more retail, services, and entertainment establishments.
3. Develop a short-term strategy for marketing the City-owned sites at Glenwood and 12th Street North for new commercial uses.
4. Concentrate future Class-A Office development within the existing Downtown Core.
5. Perpetuate the unique location of industrial job opportunities within the Lower Industrial district in proximity to the Downtown Core and nearby transit.
6. Promote an overall increase in neighborhood housing density that includes a continuum of housing choices.
7. Actively work toward supplying additional ownership and rental housing options to meet the needs of low and moderate incomes.

8. Educate property owners and developers on the existing regulatory framework that prohibits new accessory and commercial surface parking lots.
9. New development should be geared toward the removal of surface parking lots and other under-developed sites.
10. Service-oriented retail uses continue to be appropriate in areas of the neighborhood off the designated Commercial Corridors.
11. Expand the original plan's recommended land uses in Freeway West to allow for a variety of uses that either increase the amount of housing density or offer improved opportunities for employment.
12. Any new development in the Residential Enclave district should maintain its residential character.
13. Realize a children's play area on Park Board property near the river.
14. The primary land use in the Lower Industrial should remain industrial with intermittent opportunities for residential and commercial.
15. Expand the Minneapolis Farmers Market to run year-round with improved infrastructure connections to the proposed Royalston LRT Station.

Visionary Change

1. Promote the Lower North Loop as a prime location for a concentration of environmentally-sustainable practices and uses.

Development Guidelines

These guidelines are meant to complement recommendations related to land use and infrastructure and lay out fundamental urban design principals for both the public realm and development. Urban design tools can be used to creatively address and affect bulk, height, and use to create a more human-scale, pedestrian-friendly environment. It can also identify the community's ideal vision for how to create seamless connections within the public realm, increase the amount of green space, and incorporate context-appropriate design in the development and rehabilitation of existing buildings.

The fundamental urban design principles include:

- The establishment of a connected network of streets that provide circulation for automobiles, pedestrians, bicyclists and transit;
- Development standards that clearly define street frontages at the pedestrian level of the built environment and that guide the overall massing, height and form of buildings.

Development Intensity

The main impetus for the *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan* was the introduction of light-rail transit in Downtown along the 5th Street corridor. That plan is essentially a large transit station area plan with particular focus at the Downtown East and Intermodal Station locations. This update to the plan further emphasizes the need to:

- Articulate the market potential inherent in underdeveloped districts of Downtown;
- Promote vertical mixed-use “complete communities”;
- Capitalize on rail transit and encourage a less auto-dependent Downtown;
- Encourage the design and delivery of high quality public spaces and streetscapes.

Broad policy and public support for increasing development intensity exists to perpetuate the existing character of this Downtown neighborhood and to capitalize on opportunities to further the goals of transit-oriented development to support the Intermodal Station and other transit stations in the North Loop neighborhood.

In order to provide guidance for the scale of new buildings and infill development within the neighborhood, Map A.3 Development Intensity categorizes sites into three Development Intensity Districts – A, B, and C. Each district corresponds to a level of development intensity and density related to current and anticipated uses in the North Loop in all categories – residential, commercial, industrial, and public. District C is located around current and anticipated station areas and is the most intensive, from a development standpoint, of the three districts. District B supports land areas that are developing in a pattern consistent with medium density building types of up to ten stories. District A is intended to support new development that is compatible with the existing density and pattern of an area. Because the North Loop is a Downtown neighborhood, intensity will be reflected differently than it would in neighborhoods outside of the Central Business District. The Development Intensity map covers areas included in the *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan* and is consistent with that existing policy.

Density and intensity is frequently measured using parameters like floor area ratio or dwelling units per square foot of land area. These density measures are not very intuitive, in part because they do not lend themselves to being depicted visually. This plan attempts to make the proposed density levels more intuitive by correlating each district with a mix of compatible development types. New development should offer a mix of development styles, and larger sites should consider site designs that provide a mix of development types within the development.

Development Intensity District	Description
District A	Appropriate building types include residential, commercial, or industrial buildings of two to six stories. In commercial areas, buildings may include commercial businesses on the ground floor.
District B	Appropriate building types include housing, commercial, and industrial structures of two to ten stories. This type is generally consistent with the bulk and height of historic warehouse structures in the neighborhood.
District C	Appropriate building types include a mix of uses with commercial businesses on the ground floor. They are greater than ten stories and geared toward a nearby transit station.

* The Development Intensity Districts and Building Types are reflective of the character of a Downtown neighborhood.

There may be situations where it is appropriate for new development to be allowed additional height in the development review process. In these cases, the proposed development should be showcasing ideas that help to further priorities in the plan.

Factors in evaluating additional height:

- Zoning code considerations for a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for increased height:
 - Access to light and air of surrounding properties;
 - Shadowing of residential properties or significant public spaces;
 - The scale and character of surrounding properties;
 - Preservation of views of landmark buildings, significant open spaces or water bodies.
- If a development is achieving these plan priorities:
 - Dedication and construction of public right-of-way to implement the plan’s recommended street connections;
 - Design of the site to allow for a pedestrian and/or bicycle public easement connecting opposite sides of the block;
 - Increasing the amount of affordable housing in the North Loop at the 60-80% of the Metro Median Income (MMI);
 - Publicly-accessible open space.

For the purposes of drawing the boundaries of each of these Development Intensity districts, this plan is consistent with height guidance in the original plan as well as the Warehouse Historic District. More specifically in District A, the height guidance of six stories is consistent with both the Warehouse

Historic District regulation of two to six stories and the St. Anthony Falls Historic District regulation of four to six stories. In cases where the underlying zoning district permits less height than the plan calls for, a property owner or developer should be achieving a plan priority outlined above in order to be supported for a Conditional Use Permit.

General and Private Development

Density

Because the North Loop neighborhood is served heavily by multiple modes of transit, increased density is supportable throughout the neighborhood. All new buildings should be at least two stories in height. More specific geographic guidance for density of new development is established in the plan's Development Intensity Districts.

Frontage

A building's frontage refers to the relationship between the building and the street, including the scale and setback of the building. A variety of frontage types occur in the North Loop. In general, buildings should have an urban frontage, which means the building is immediately accessible to the public sidewalk and in some cases have active ground floor uses. New industrial buildings should include a principal entrance facing the sidewalk without the impediment of a surface parking lot. Existing industrial buildings should improve their frontage by adding more landscaping and elements of visual interest to pedestrians. Frontage in the historic Warehouse District should adhere to those design guidelines by bringing buildings up to the sidewalk with a flat face to the street.



Figure 6.21 Example of poor street frontage

Off-street parking

New surface parking lots and the conversion of accessory lots to commercial lots are prohibited in Downtown. Parking for new structures should be underground or hidden behind structures. If new principal parking facilities are built, they should include ground floor active uses at the street. Bicycle parking should typically be provided for any new development consistent with the zoning code, however it is especially important on existing and designated bicycle routes.

Fencing and landscaping

Edges of parking areas need to be clearly distinguished from the public right of way with a combination of fencing and landscaping. The fencing serves to clearly mark the transition from public right of way to private property, where the private property would be expected to be managed more actively by property owners, business owners, and business employees. Landscaping is recommended on private and public property along the public sidewalk—particularly at parking areas, and in locations where there is space between the sidewalk and buildings. It greens the street, which is particularly needed in the North Loop, and makes it more attractive. Planters, and planted containers or pots, should be considered next to buildings, but only where enough space remains on the sidewalk so that pedestrians can still comfortably use the sidewalk. In the historic Warehouse District, site design



Figure 6.22 New landscaping in historic district

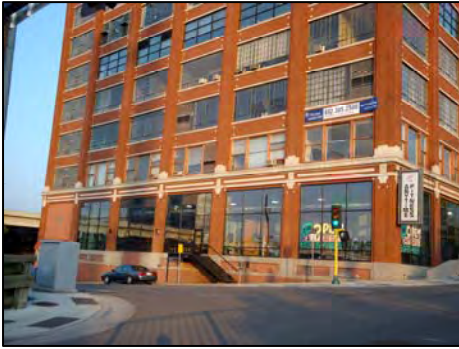


Figure 6.23 Large transparent windows for ground-floor gym at the Ford Center

should adhere to the historic design guidelines with buildings generally built to the sidewalk. While greening is appropriate in the historic district, it should follow the recommendations set forth in the guidelines

Building facades

Facades should include prominent front entrances and abundant window glass. Principal entrances of buildings – commercial, industrial, residential – should face the street. They should be clearly defined and emphasized through the use of architectural design features. Storefronts should have an abundance of large display windows with transparent glass in order to improve visibility out and in and therefore improved street safety.

Primary Public Realm Features

The original *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan* placed special emphasis on how to achieve a higher aesthetic and livability standard in the North Loop neighborhood. Since this is an update to that small area plan, the recommendations related to the public realm should be extended through the rest of the North Loop Neighborhood.

Streets. One of the best features of the public realm in Downtown is the well-defined street network divided into relatively compact, walkable blocks. Maintaining the utility and convenience of the existing street grid is critical to ensuring access to all modes of transportation – in the North Loop this is especially important. As discussed earlier in this chapter, as new opportunities present themselves, it is important to consider modifications and adjustment to the existing North Loop street system to provide additional connections through long blocks that benefit the larger infrastructure system.

Streetscapes, Open Space, and Reforestation. As a former and, in some cases, current industrial area, the North Loop still exhibits a character devoid of green amenities. In the local historic district, this needs to be done carefully and consistent with the historic design guidelines. In the neighborhood broadly, emphasis for streetscape should initially be placed on streets that connect through and to adjacent areas. If streets such as Washington, 7th Street, Olson, and Glenwood are emphasized with landscaping and wayfinding, it will not only be a benefit to North Loop residents but also aide visitors in experiencing the neighborhood in a clearer and more pleasant way.

Residents of the neighborhood have called out additional publicly-accessible open space as a priority. Expanding the number and quality of green spaces is a difficult conundrum to overcome, however. Despite recent growth in the North Loop residential market, the long term viability of the neighborhood is highly dependent on its livability. While the river is nearby, it is challenging for residents to walk there due to limited access points. The construction of new parks and green space is difficult to initiate as wholly independent projects because of the relatively high cost of Downtown land. Identifying new park space on a Future Land Use Map is also not advisable because it may insinuate a property “taking” when one is not intended. Incorporating

new parks and open space as part of larger individual development projects, likely through the Planned Unit Development process, may be the most realistic way to overcome these hurdles. For instance, the original plan identified the buried Bassett Creek tunnel near 8th Avenue North as an appropriate place to add green space since it is challenging to build over the creek pipes due to the need for continued subterranean maintenance of the infrastructure. If this area were to be redeveloped as a Planned Unit Development (PUD), there may be opportunities for development flexibility in exchange for new public amenities.

Potential open space opportunities and other amenities are illustrated in a diagram created by the Hoisington Koegler Group, Inc. of Map A.7 Parks and Open Space.

Gateways and View Corridors. Even as a neighborhood like the North Loop possesses a distinct individual identity, it should also complement Downtown as a whole by serving as a threshold or transition zone into the rest of the Central Business District. This can be done both through gateways at specific points where visitors enter the neighborhood as well as through the preservation of view corridors that penetrate the built environment to punctuate a Downtown landmark. Maps of gateway opportunities and prominent view corridors can be found in the original plan. Hoisington Koegler Group identified additional North Loop gateways for this planning process that are highlighted in the Map A.8 Neighborhood Features Diagram.

Recommendations

Functional Improvements

1. Design new and rehabbed buildings to have an urban street frontage with direct access to the public sidewalk.
2. Add additional landscaping and screening to existing industrial and public sites, slowly transitioning them to include a more livable aesthetic.
3. Build parking for new development underground or behind the building.
4. Improve greening and landscaping along public sidewalks.
5. Include prominent front entrances and abundant window glass on building facades.
6. Face principal entrances of buildings – commercial, industrial, residential – to the street and public sidewalk.
7. Apply site plan review standards to any new or expanded public facility with an emphasis on ground-floor views in and out of the building.
8. Incorporate more landscaping and reduce the amount of pavement or hardscape at public facilities.
9. Highlight key through-streets with improved wayfinding to prominent destinations and additional streetscape elements.



Figure 6.24 HKGi: Illustration of Bassett Creek location in underground pipes

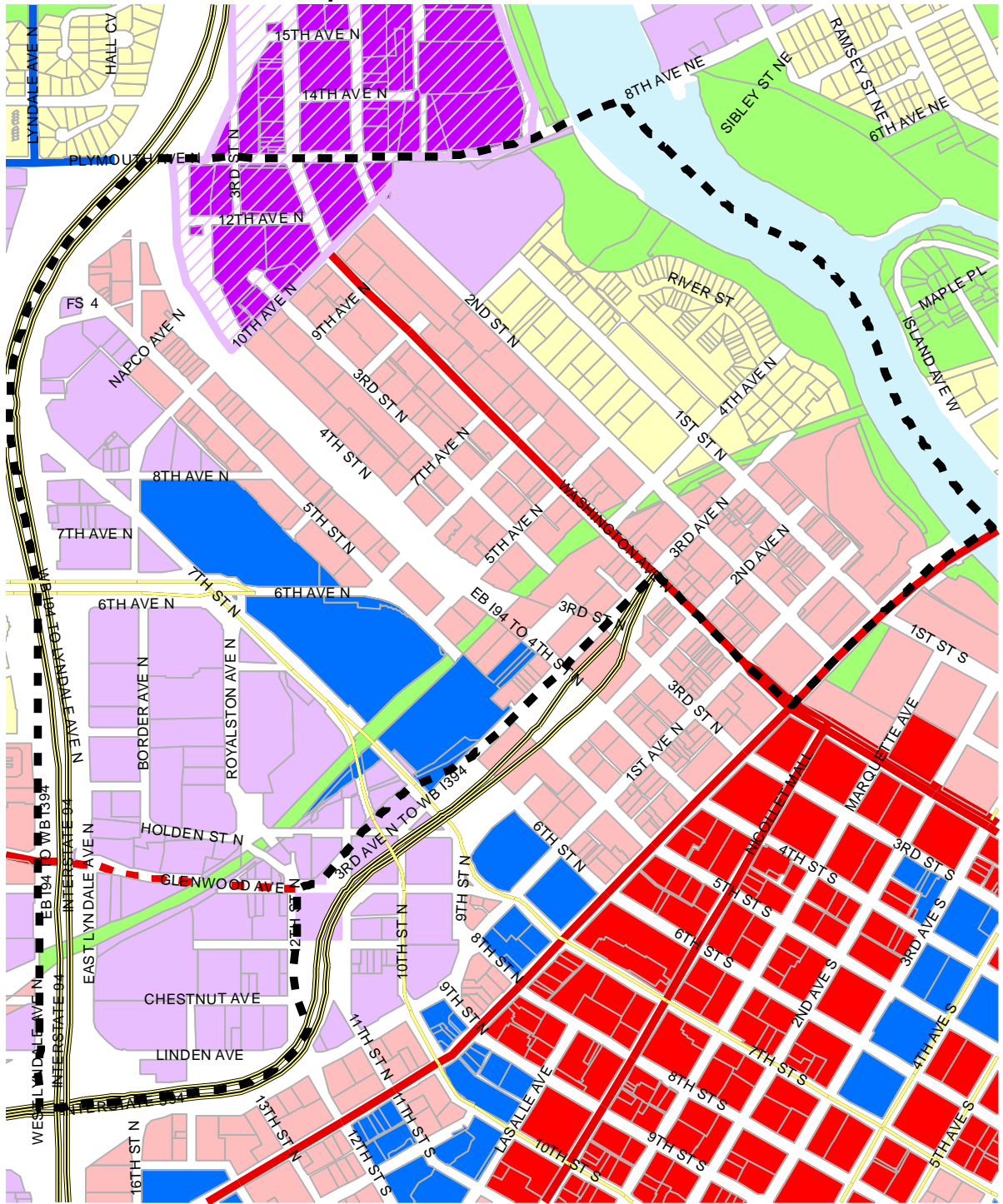


Figure 6.25 View corridor on 5th St N to the IDS

Managing Growth

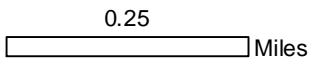
1. Increase development intensity consistent with the character of a Downtown neighborhood.
2. Identify opportunities to plan and build new publicly-accessible open spaces in the neighborhood.
3. Design new development in the Warehouse Historic District to maintain and enhance the historic character of the district.
4. Evaluate new construction for its sensitivity to preserving significant views of existing landmarks and/or enhancing view corridors from public spaces that need further definition.
5. New Planned Unit Developments should set aside publicly-accessible open space.

North Loop Small Area Plan Map A.1 Future Land Use



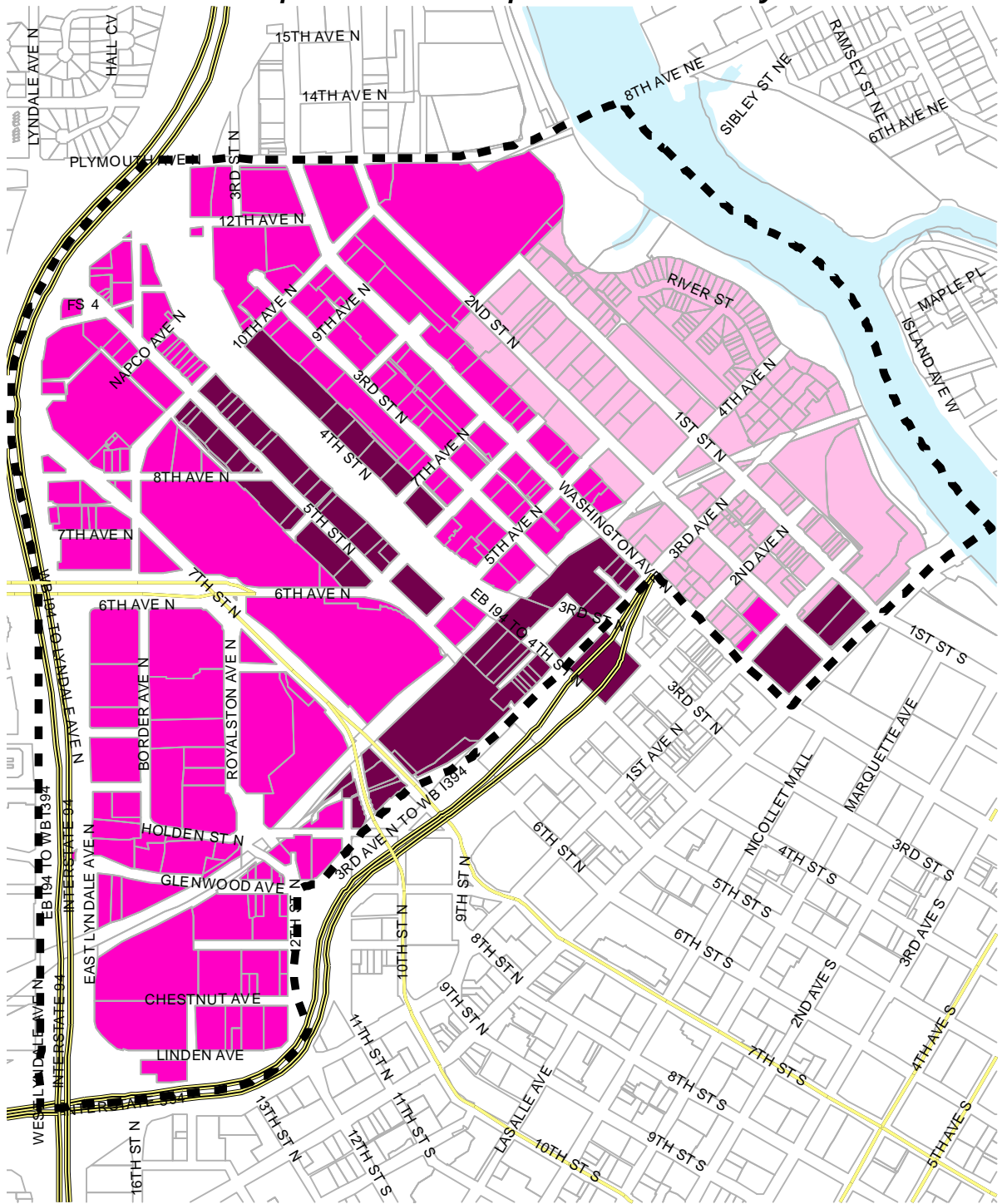
- Study Area
- New Commercial Corridor
- Mixed Use
- Transitional Industrial
- Parcels
- Industrial Employment District
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Commercial Corridor
- Urban Neighborhood
- Public and Institutional
- Parks and Open Space
- Community Corridor

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CPED Planning Division

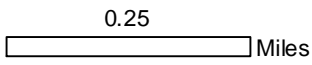


North Loop Small Area Plan

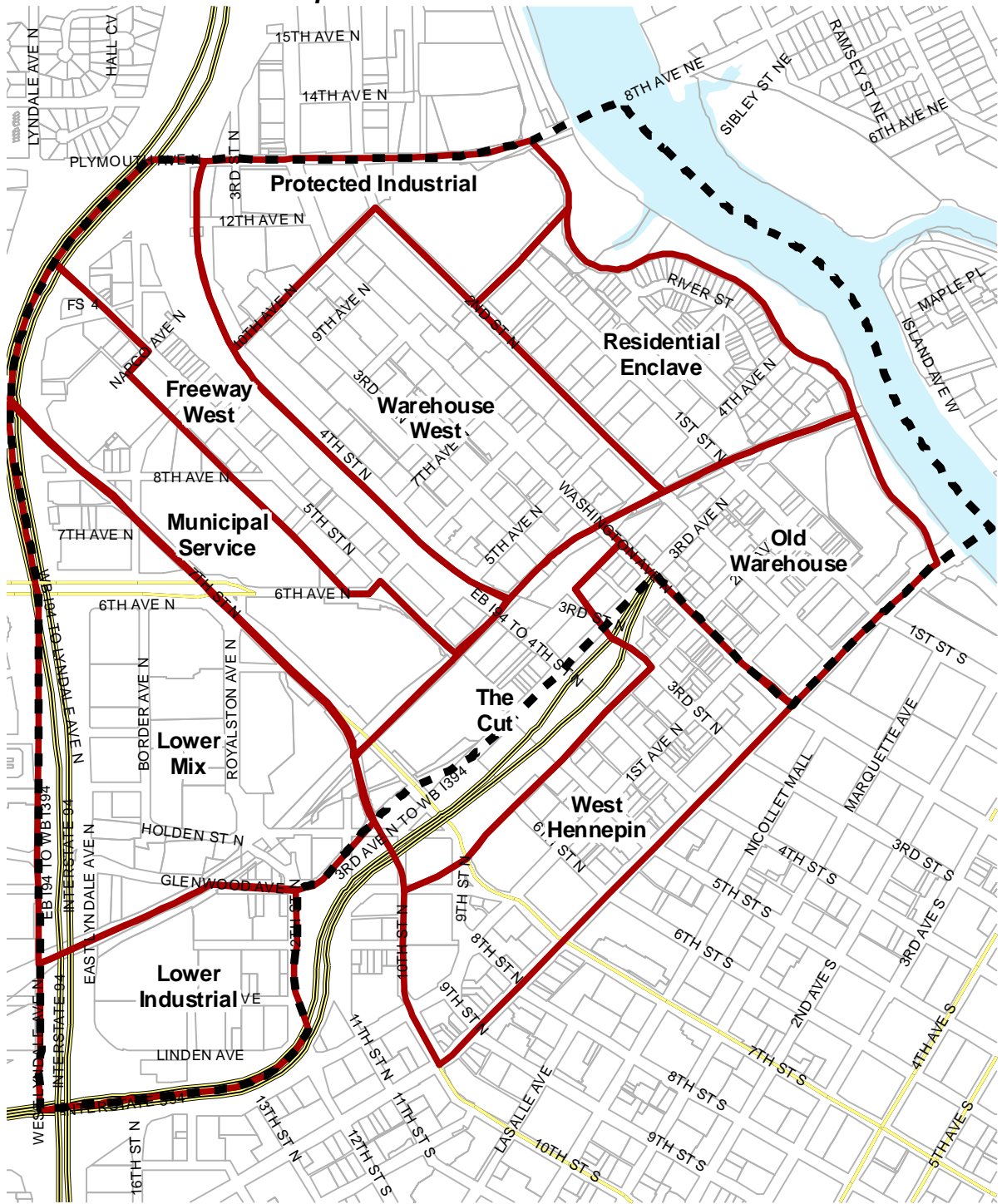
Map A.3 Development Intensity



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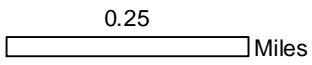


North Loop Small Area Plan Map A.4 Land Use Districts



-  Study Area
-  Parcels
-  Land Use Districts

City of Minneapolis
CPED Planning Division



7. Implementation

The following chapter outlines an implementation methodology for the North Loop Plan and offers tools to assist the public and private sectors in the realization of the community vision for the neighborhood. After adoption by the City Council, the Plan will become a part of the City’s comprehensive plan. While many implementation strategies will be the responsibility of the public sector, most of the directives will take a cooperative effort over time to achieve from community organizations, business owners, and private developers and property owners.

The tables on the following pages outline initial ideas for how the recommendations in this Plan can begin to be realized. The table defines responsible parties and timeframe for implementation (Near Term: 0-5 years; Mid Term: 5-10 years; Long Term: 10-20 years).

Transportation and Infrastructure

Many public entities have authority over transportation elements in the North Loop. Roads are either owned by Hennepin County or the City of Minneapolis and the Metropolitan Council and Metro Transit are responsible for transit and their own facilities. Because of this complicated system of ownership and management, all parties will need to work in partnership to implement the transportation recommendations. From the public side, the primary implementation tool for infrastructure improvements are capital improvement plans. Federal, state, and local grants may also be a possibility should an opportunity for funding become available.

As with any transportation improvement project citywide, a main goal is not only to improve connectivity within the neighborhood but to improve connections to other parts of the city. This will be a primary consideration as transportation infrastructure projects are designed and implemented throughout the life of this plan.

While recommendations are listed individually, this does not imply that they must be implemented that way. As discussed in the Transportation and Infrastructure section of the Recommendations chapter, several of these could be grouped together as part of larger projects. A prime example of this is “The Loop” road that has its own smaller improvements that lead to implementation of the whole concept. This will not only result in greater benefits for the area, but has the potential to reduce long-term costs and minimize disruption from construction.

Implementation of this plan will include identifying these projects and seeking appropriate funding, either through the capital improvements process, public/private partnerships, general City funds, grant programs, or other sources.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Time Frame
Functional Improvements		
Classify 6 th Avenue North, 10 th Avenue North, Oak Lake Avenue, and Border Avenue as Neighborhood Connector streets; Washington Avenue North and 5 th Avenue North as Activity Area streets; and 5 th Street North, 7 th Street North, and Glenwood Avenues as Community Connector streets in <i>Access Minneapolis</i> .	CPED, Public Works	0-5 years
Establish a Heritage Street overlay in Access Minneapolis that applies to 3rd Avenue North, 5th Avenue North, 6th Avenue North, 7th Avenue North, 8th Avenue North, 9th Avenue North, Washington Avenue North, 1st Street North, and 3rd Street North as outlined in this chapter.	CPED, Public Works	0-5 years
Establish a working group of public agency stakeholders to develop an implementation strategy for the reconstruction of Heritage Streets	CPED, Public Works	0-5 years

in the North Loop. The working group should identify priority streets for reconstruction or rehabilitation, develop a timeline for the work, and explore funding strategies to support the work.		
Install improved wayfinding signage on 16th Street North, 12th Street North, 11th Street North, Glenwood Avenue, and Linden Avenue connecting the Lower North Loop to the Downtown core.	CPED, Public Works, NLNA, Minnesota Ballpark Authority	0-5 years
Evaluate the feasibility of adding a left turn movement from Chestnut Avenue onto 12th Street North.	Public Works	0-5 years
Incorporate bike lanes, on street parking, and street plantings where possible on Glenwood Avenue.	CPED, Public Works	0-5 years
Emphasize 7th Street North as a major pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile route. Pedestrian enhancements on the bridge over I-94 and the intersections with West and East Lyndale Avenue North should be a priority.	CPED, Public Works, MnDOT, Hennepin County	0-5 years
Extend Border Avenue from Holden Street to Glenwood Avenue.	Public Works, Hennepin County	0-5 years
Restore two-way traffic to Border Avenue between Cesar Chavez Avenue and Olson Memorial Highway.	Public Works, Hennepin County	0-5 years
Reconfigure the intersection of Olson Memorial Highway, Border Avenue North, 10th Avenue North, and 6th Avenue North to improve safety and ease of use for all modes of travel.	CPED, Public Works, MnDOT, Hennepin County	0-5 years
Reconfigure the intersection of Olson Memorial Highway and 7th Street North to improve safety and ease of use for all modes of travel.	CPED, Public Works, MnDOT, Hennepin County	0-5 years
A new lane configuration should be identified on 10th Avenue North that considers the addition of bike lanes, on-street parking meters where appropriate, and widens sidewalks.	CPED, Public Works	0-5 years
Royalston Avenue should be rerouted in conjunction with the conversion of Border Avenue to two-way traffic with a termination at 7th Street North.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County	5-10 years
Locate signaled pedestrian crossings at both 7 th Street North between Olson Memorial Highway and Target Field, and 5 th Street North between the Ford Center and the Target Field Station platform.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County	5-10 years
Managing Growth		
A combination of a pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile connection should be created that extends 8 th Avenue North under the viaducts from 5 th Street North to and through the north portion of the neighborhood.	Public Works, Hennepin County	0-5 years

Extend 8 th Avenue North from 1 st Street North to the East River Road in order to improve access to the river.	Public Works	0-5 years
If the Southwest Transitway enters the neighborhood via the Cedar Lake Trail, a station should be located in the neighborhood on either Royalston Avenue or Border Avenue.	Hennepin County, Met Council	0-5 years
Create a clear pedestrian connection between the Minneapolis Farmers Market and the Royalston LRT Station. The route should be direct, clearly marked, and visible from both destinations.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County, Met Council, property owners, developers	5-10 years
If engineering of the Southwest Transitway requires the closure of Holden Street North, mitigation will be required with the extension of Border Avenue to Glenwood Avenue and the extension of Cesar Chavez Avenue from Border Avenue to Royalston Avenue.	CPED, Public Works, property owners, developers	5-10 years
Light rail transit should be routed in such a way that allows for LRT vehicles to remain at grade with autos, pedestrians, and cyclists.	Hennepin County, Met Council	0-5 years
If the Bottineau Transitway study identifies Olson Memorial Highway as the main route into Downtown, every effort should be made to properly integrate facilities with the street grid.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County, Met Council	0-5 years
If the Bottineau Transitway study identifies Lyndale Avenue North as the main route into Downtown, the route should utilize 5th Street North with a station sited at the intersection with 10 th Avenue North.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County, Met Council	0-5 years
<i>Visionary Change</i>		
Create a southbound route through the Lower North Loop that connects with 16 th Street North to the southern end of downtown.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County	10-20 years
Explore connecting Lyndale Avenue North with 5 th Street North for two-way automobile and bicycle traffic.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County	10-20 years

Land Use

The recommendations for land use improvements will be implemented first with a rezoning study and then over the long-term in the development review process as sites redevelop or property owners make improvements to structures and their surroundings. Once the zoning matches the policies set for in this plan, the City's main tool for implementation will be the development review process which provides community members and policymakers the opportunity to weigh in on specific land use and development changes. This plan will be the main policy tool used by city staff and policymakers in that decision-making process.

Recommendation	Responsible Parties	Time Frame
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Functional Improvements		
Build structured parking below, or embedded within, development projects.	CPED, property owners, developers	0-5 years
Expand destination retail, services, and entertainment establishments along the Washington and Hennepin Commercial Corridors.	CPED, property owners, developers	0-5 years
Improve the look and feel of both public and private properties along 10th Avenue North with building and site designs that include pedestrian-oriented design features, including adding principal entrances on this north-south street.	CPED, property owners, developers	0-5 years
Better utilize public sites with a transition over time to co-location of public services.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County, Met Council	5-10 years
Managing Growth		
Conduct a rezoning study to best match the regulations with the policy. New zoning districts should be considered as a possible way to create consistency between policies found in this document and regulations in the Zoning Ordinance.	CPED	0-5 years
Designate Glenwood Avenue as a Commercial Corridor from Lyndale Avenue to 10 th Street North and incorporate more retail, services, and entertainment establishments.	CPED	0-5 years
Develop a short-term strategy for marketing the City-owned sites at Glenwood and 12 th Street North for new commercial uses.	CPED, Public Works	0-5 years
Concentrate future Class-A Office development within the existing Downtown Core.	CPED, property owners, developers	5-10 years
Perpetuate the unique location of industrial job opportunities within the Lower Industrial district in proximity to the Downtown Core and nearby transit.	CPED, property owners, developers	0-5 years
Promote an overall increase in neighborhood housing density that includes a continuum of housing choices.	CPED, Hennepin County, NLNA, property owners, developers	5-10 years
Actively work toward supplying additional ownership and rental housing options to meet the needs of low and moderate incomes.	CPED, Hennepin County, NLNA, property owners, developers	5-10 years
Educate property owners and developers on the existing regulatory framework that prohibits new accessory and commercial surface parking lots.	CPED, Regulatory Services	0-5 years
New development should be geared toward the removal of surface	CPED, NLNA, property	5-10 years

parking lots and other under-developed sites.	owners, developers	
Service-oriented commercial uses are appropriate in areas off the designated Commercial Corridors.	CPED, NLNA, property owners, developers	5-10 years
Expand the original plan's recommended land uses in Freeway West to allow for a variety of uses that either increase the amount of housing density or offer improved opportunities for employment.	CPED, NLNA, property owners, developers	5-10 years
Any new development in the Residential Enclave district should maintain its residential character.	CPED, NLNA, property owners, developers	5-10 years
Realize a children's play area on Park Board property near the river.	MPRB, NLNA	0-5 years
The primary land use in the Lower Industrial should remain industrial with intermittent opportunities for residential and commercial.	CPED, NLNA, property owners, developers	5-10 years
Expand the Minneapolis Farmers Market to run year-round with improved infrastructure connections to the proposed Royalston LRT Station.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County, Met Council, NLNA, property owners, developers	5-10 years
<i>Visionary Change</i>		
Promote the Lower North Loop as a prime location for a concentration of environmentally-sustainable practices and uses.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County, NLNA	5-10 years

Development Guidelines

The Development Guidelines should be used as a complement to the Land Use recommendations in order to achieve the best possible outcome with not only the prescribed use(s) but also how the public and private realm interact with each other. The guidelines related to general and private development mainly articulate already-existing regulations found in the Site Plan Review chapter of the zoning code and are important to retroactively apply to existing buildings and sites as improvements are made.

Recommendation	Responsibilities	Time Frame
<i>Functional Improvements</i>		
Design new and rehabbed buildings to have an urban street frontage with direct access to the public sidewalk.	CPED, property owners, developers	0-5 years
Add additional landscaping and screening to existing industrial and public sites, slowly transitioning them to include a more livable aesthetic.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County, Met Council	5-10 years
Build parking for new development underground or behind the building.	CPED, property owners, developers	5-10 years

Improve greening and landscaping along public sidewalks.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County, Minnesota Ballpark Authority, property owners, developers	0-5 years
Include prominent front entrances and abundant window glass on building facades.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County, property owners, developers	0-5 years
Face principal entrances of buildings – commercial, industrial, residential – to the street and public sidewalk.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County, property owners, developers	0-5 years
Apply site plan review standards to any new or expanded public facility with an emphasis on ground-floor views in and out of the building.	CPED	0-5 years
Incorporate more landscaping and reduce the amount of pavement or hardscape at public facilities.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County, Minnesota Ballpark Authority	5-10 years
Highlight key through-streets with improved wayfinding to prominent destinations and additional streetscape elements.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County, Minnesota Ballpark Authority	5-10 years
<i>Managing Growth</i>		
Increase development intensity consistent with the character of a Downtown neighborhood.	CPED, NLNA, property owners, developers	5-10 years
Identify opportunities to plan and build new publicly-accessible open spaces in the neighborhood.	CPED, NLNA, Hennepin County, property owners, developers	5-10 years
Design new development in the Warehouse Historic District to maintain and enhance the historic character of the district.	CPED, NLNA, property owners, developers	0-5 years
Evaluate new construction for its sensitivity to preserving significant views of existing landmarks and/or enhancing view corridors from public spaces that need further definition.	CPED, NLNA, property owners, developers	5-10 years
New Planned Unit Developments should set aside publicly-accessible open space.	CPED, NLNA, property owners, developers	5-10 years