

## **Uptown Small Area Plan**

**Minneapolis, Minnesota**

**Approved by the Minneapolis City Council February 1, 2008**



**Prepared for:**

The Community Planning and Economic Development Department

**Prepared by:**

Cunningham Group, PA  
GVA Marquette Advisors  
Biko Associates  
SEH, Inc

## **Table of Contents**

1. Executive Summary
2. Public Participation
3. Physical Analysis
4. Policy
5. History, Demographics and Market
6. Vision and Goals
7. The Plan
8. Plan Elements
9. Implementation

## **Appendices**

- A. Summary of Public Involvement
- B. Steering Committee Meeting Summaries
- C. Community Meeting Summaries
- D. Market Study
- E. Traffic FAQ
- F. Uptown Parking and Transportation Study
- G. Minneapolis Air Quality Study

## Acknowledgements

### Elected Officials

R. T. Rybak	Mayor
Paul Ostrow	Ward 1
Cam Gordon	Ward 2
Diane Hofstede	Ward 3
Barbara Johnson	Ward 4
Don Samuels	Ward 5
Robert Lilligren	Ward 6
Lisa Goodman	Ward 7
Elizabeth Glidden	Ward 8
Gary Schiff	Ward 9
Ralph Remington	Ward 10
Scott Benson	Ward 11
Sandy Colvin Roy	Ward 12
Betsy Hodges	Ward 13

### Planning Commission

David Motzenbecker	<i>President</i>
Ted Tucker	<i>Vice President</i>
Walid El-Hindi	<i>Secretary</i>
Lauren Huynh	
Robert Lashomb	
Sheldon Mains	
Tom Nordyke	
Lara Norkus-Crampton	
Gary Schiff	
T. Williams	

### Consultant Team

Cunningham Group, PA
Biko Associates
SEH, Inc.
GVA Marquette Advisors

A special thanks to all those not named on this page who gave their time and energy to this important effort.

### Steering Committee

Ralph Remington	<i>City Council</i>
Renee Gust	<i>East Isles</i>
Gabe Keller and Dominic Sposeto	<i>East Isles</i>
Sue Bode	<i>Lowry Hill East</i>
Steve Benson and Ken Kalina	<i>Lowry Hill East</i>
Lara Norkus-Crampton	<i>East Calhoun</i>
Tim Prinsen	<i>East Calhoun</i>
Aaron Rubenstein	<i>CARAG</i>
Keith Sjoquist	<i>CARAG</i>
Michael Finkelstein	<i>Uptown Association</i>
Michael McLaughlin	<i>South Hennepin Business Association</i>
Leslie Modrack	<i>Midtown Greenway Coalition</i>
Jill Bode	<i>Council Member Appointee</i>
Caren Dewar	<i>Council Member Appointee</i>
Thatcher Imboden	<i>Council Member Appointee</i>
Jennifer Schultz	<i>Council Member Appointee</i>
Pam Price	<i>Council Member Appointee</i>
Roger Worm	<i>Council Member Appointee</i>

### City Staff

Amanda Arnold AICP	<i>CPED Planning</i>
Kim Malrick	<i>Ward 10 Policy Aide</i>
Paul Mogush	<i>CPED Planning</i>



---

# 1. Executive Summary

## Introduction

Uptown is one of the most strategically located communities in the region. Minutes from downtown and adjacent to the Chain of Lakes, Uptown offers the best qualities of urban living—it is green, well-connected, and urban.

Throughout the past century, Uptown has attracted a mixture of residents, businesses, visitors, and investors. The result is a mixed-income and mixed-use community that is a regional destination for shopping, dining, entertainment, and recreation. It is a haven for artists and a full-service community with access to daily uses and activities for local residents. Furthermore, Uptown has geographic brand recognition unmatched by any other locale in the region.

Residents of Uptown and the surrounding neighborhoods are passionate about their community, and investors large and small remain interested in Uptown as a place to do business.

But once again, Uptown is in a state of change. Change is happening quickly on several fronts and is creating a sense of uncertainty among stakeholders.

A renewed interest in urban living spurred proposals for several high profile projects in 2005 and 2006. The absence of a plan directing new development resulted in a fear of increased traffic and loss of neighborhood identity.

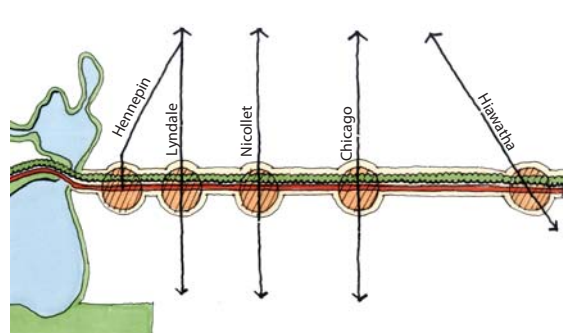


**Uptown in the region:** Uptown is strategically located near the Chain of Lakes and downtown Minneapolis.

To date, many of the most controversial projects have not materialized, and in the meantime market influences beyond Uptown have resulted in a loss of daily goods and services, a loss in daytime population, and increased commuter through-traffic. Moreover, a few high profile crimes and retail turnovers have added to the sense of unpredictability.

Fortunately, this plan can provide predictability, find common ground, and help make Uptown the leading urban neighborhood it should be. To this end, the Plan:

- Recognizes, protects, and enhances the established neighborhoods of East Isles, Lowry Hill East, East Calhoun, and CARAG.
- Recognizes the value and benefits of high quality, well-located, and well-designed urban density.
- Celebrates Uptown's primary amenities, its adjacency to the Lakes and the Midtown Greenway.
- Prioritizes streets (especially Hennepin Avenue, Lake Street, and Lagoon Avenue) as places for social interaction and urban activity instead of just as conduits for through-traffic.
- Accepts the dual role of Uptown as a regional attraction and a local community.



**The Midtown Corridor:** Lake Street and the Greenway will facilitate strong growth corridors for mixed-use development in South Minneapolis.

## Growth

It is important to encourage growth in Uptown. Growth in Uptown will help bring about positive changes that residents desire. Growth will support transit and pedestrian infrastructure improvements. Growth will help stabilize local businesses and create opportunities for new businesses. Growth can help bring about new open spaces, gathering spaces and improved connections to the Lakes and the Greenway. In short, growth is needed to strengthen Uptown's eclectic urban character.

As important as it is for Uptown to grow, it cannot do so in a sustainable manner without simultaneously stabilizing the edges of existing neighborhoods and creating new and improving existing public spaces. The area's public spaces and neighborhoods are, after all, the foundation for Uptown's quality of life and desirability. This Plan proposes specific patterns of new growth that can achieve the goals of providing development capacity while simultaneously stabilizing the neighborhoods and improving open spaces and streets.

Uptown's growth strategy, as outlined in this Plan has several components. They include:

- Focusing the most intense development in the Core of Uptown.
- Defining the edges of new growth, and shaping the edges of new growth such that transitions to the neighborhoods are clear and predictable.
- Shaping the new growth, and the additional height and density in the Core such that it creates high quality public streets and green spaces.



**Current Zoning Analysis, Allowable Height:** Current zoning directs growth to different parts of Uptown, including into the neighborhoods.



**Proposed Development Intensity:** The majority of new development should be directed to the core of Uptown, between Hennepin Avenue and Bryant Avenue, the Greenway, and Lake Street.



**Sculpted Building Envelopes:** The Plan recommends future development be sculpted to create better transitions and reduced shadowing of public spaces and streets.

## Public Participation

The Small Area Plan process took place in three phases over approximately eighteen months. The depth of public outreach was a foundation for the Plan, and the process was open, transparent, and inclusive; all focus group, steering committee, and public meetings were open and accessible. The steering committee met approximately eleven times throughout the process and helped to guide the project. The design team hosted nine community meetings at Calhoun Square and facilitated fourteen focus group discussions. In addition, the team gave regular updates to the Planning Commission and interested groups such as the Midtown Greenway Coalition and the Uptown area business associations. Total meeting attendance exceeded 500 people.

### Steering Committee

The Uptown Small Area Plan Steering Committee was selected in June 2006. The committee was made up of:

- One (1) Council Member
- Two (2) representatives from each neighborhood
- Six (6) City Council Member appointees
- One (1) representative from each business association
- One (1) representative from the Midtown Greenway

Responsibilities of committee members included:

- Communicating with appointing organizations.
- Helping to engage the public.
- Advising on the planning process.
- Advising on plan content.
- Balancing the various values.

### Other Public Input Sessions

Visioning sessions, focus group meetings, and public input meetings provided opportunities for stakeholders to participate in the planning process.

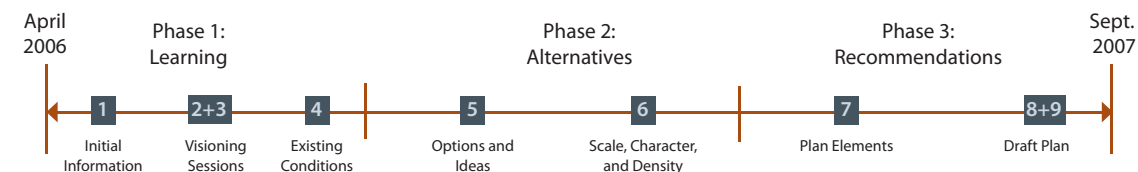
Key points from the visioning sessions included:

- What participants value about Uptown: livability, parks and green spaces, transportation options, unique and quirky character.
- What participants' concerns are about Uptown: transportation and traffic, incompatible development, crime and safety, loss of identity and diversity.

Key themes from the focus group meetings included:

- Business mix is out of balance.
- Parking is a problem.
- Calhoun Square is critical.
- People love Uptown.
- Public infrastructure is poor.

This Plan addresses these concerns by identifying where growth should occur and how it should be designed to create a high-quality environment.



**Public Process:** The process included nine community meetings. Presentations and feedback sessions were part of each meeting.

## Vision

In November 2006, over 100 people attended visioning sessions to discuss their hopes and concerns for Uptown. Participants described the Uptown they want to see in the future. The Vision Statement below is a synthesis of the individual visions.

Uptown is a **welcoming** neighborhood, with a **diversity** of people, places, and architecture.

Uptown is a **green** community. Its buildings, streets, lakes, and parks form a green cityscape that contributes to a sustainable region.

Uptown looks and feels like no other place. It offers its own **urban character** with a dense, mixed-use core of new and old buildings surrounded by quiet, tree-lined neighborhoods.

Uptown is a **vibrant** center of activity where people gather throughout the day and into the evening.

Uptown is a car-optional environment. Walking, cycling, and transit use are the preferred **transportation choices** of many residents and visitors.

Uptown has a rich social and architectural **history** that contributes to and sustains its unique character.

This vision could be used to describe some of the nation's greatest urban neighborhoods, such as the Pearl District in Portland, Oregon, Downtown Santa Monica in Santa Monica, California, and Dupont Circle in Washington, D.C.

Urban neighborhoods like these typically contain a variety of services convenient to a residential population. These include community destinations and gathering places, good access to public transit, and a prominent public realm of parks, plazas, and open spaces. A compact, well-connected pattern incorporates a variety of building types at a range of price points, all set within an area that is comfortable for walking and biking. Uptown can have these characteristics and can be a premier destination location as well.

## Goals

The following goals make the vision tangible. They connect ideas with the physical place, and help realize the vision outlined by Uptown stakeholders. The goals are to:

1. Reinforce surrounding neighborhoods.
2. Reinforce a mixed-use core.
3. Establish public open spaces.
4. Improve streets for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit.
5. Improve parking options.





## Character Areas

Not all of Uptown is the same. Different parts of the study area have different characteristics and thus should evolve differently over time. This Plan recognizes that change and growth should be informed by the study area's strong context and surroundings, and ensures this happens by organizing the study area in six distinct Character Areas.

Just as the vision and goals reflect variety in thoughts and ideas expressed by the public, the Character Areas come from the variety of characteristics demonstrated by the place itself. Each Character Area has a different economic niche, land use pattern, circulation need, and range of building types, frontage types, and open space. The purpose of defining the different Character Areas is to reinforce the varied urban character of Uptown. Defining the Character Areas helps promote orderly and predictable development.

### Hennepin Avenue Commercial Corridor

This area is primarily the retail/service that lines both sides of Hennepin. A healthy mix of neighborhood and commercial serving uses includes established favorites and new emerging businesses. Various building types and parking conditions, including on-street parking, exist in this area. Recent development has been incremental on smaller sites.

**Recommended Uses:** Primarily mixed-use/commercial

**Preferred Heights:** Primarily 2-4 stories with occasional buildings up to 84 feet on larger blocks.

### West Lake Street Live/Work

This area is an eclectic mix of higher-density housing and residential converted to retail/service uses. Significant features include the lake edge, the Mall, and the heavily traveled one-way Lake Street segment. The area is characterized as live/work partially due to the residential scale of smaller, independently-owned shops and offices. A portion of this area includes the Shoreland Overlay District.

**Recommended Uses:** Primarily residential/live/work

**Preferred Heights:** 2-5 stories



**Character Areas:** Future growth in Uptown will be diverse and varied, yet appropriate to its context.

## Urban Village

(North and South Sub-Areas)

Residential development in this area includes a number of for-sale and for-rent developments with others in progress or planned. The Urban Village was envisioned in 1998 as the area immediately north of the Greenway. This Plan expands the definition of the term to include the parcels on Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue.

**Recommended Uses:** Primarily mixed-use/residential

**Preferred Heights:** Primarily 3-5 stories with some opportunities for taller buildings up to 84 feet on major corridors (as shown in section drawings throughout the Plan)

## Activity Center

The Activity Center is primarily a shopping and entertainment area with an established pattern that relies on traditional store fronts, active sidewalks and a mix of daytime and evening uses. A major focus of this Plan is to define more clearly the area's Activity Center, which is at the crossroads of Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street.

**Recommended Uses:** Mixed-use/commercial

**Preferred Heights:** Primarily 3-5 stories with opportunities for taller buildings up to 84 feet on major corridors. (as shown in section drawings throughout the Plan)

## South Hennepin Community Corridor

Mostly residential in scale and character, Hennepin Avenue south of 31st Street includes neighborhood serving commercial uses at selected sites and intersections (32nd, 34th, 35th, and 36th Streets). The avenue features a predominance of front yards and several former single-family houses that have been converted to professional office use.

**Recommended Uses:** Primarily residential/office, small commercial

**Preferred Heights:** 2.5-3 stories

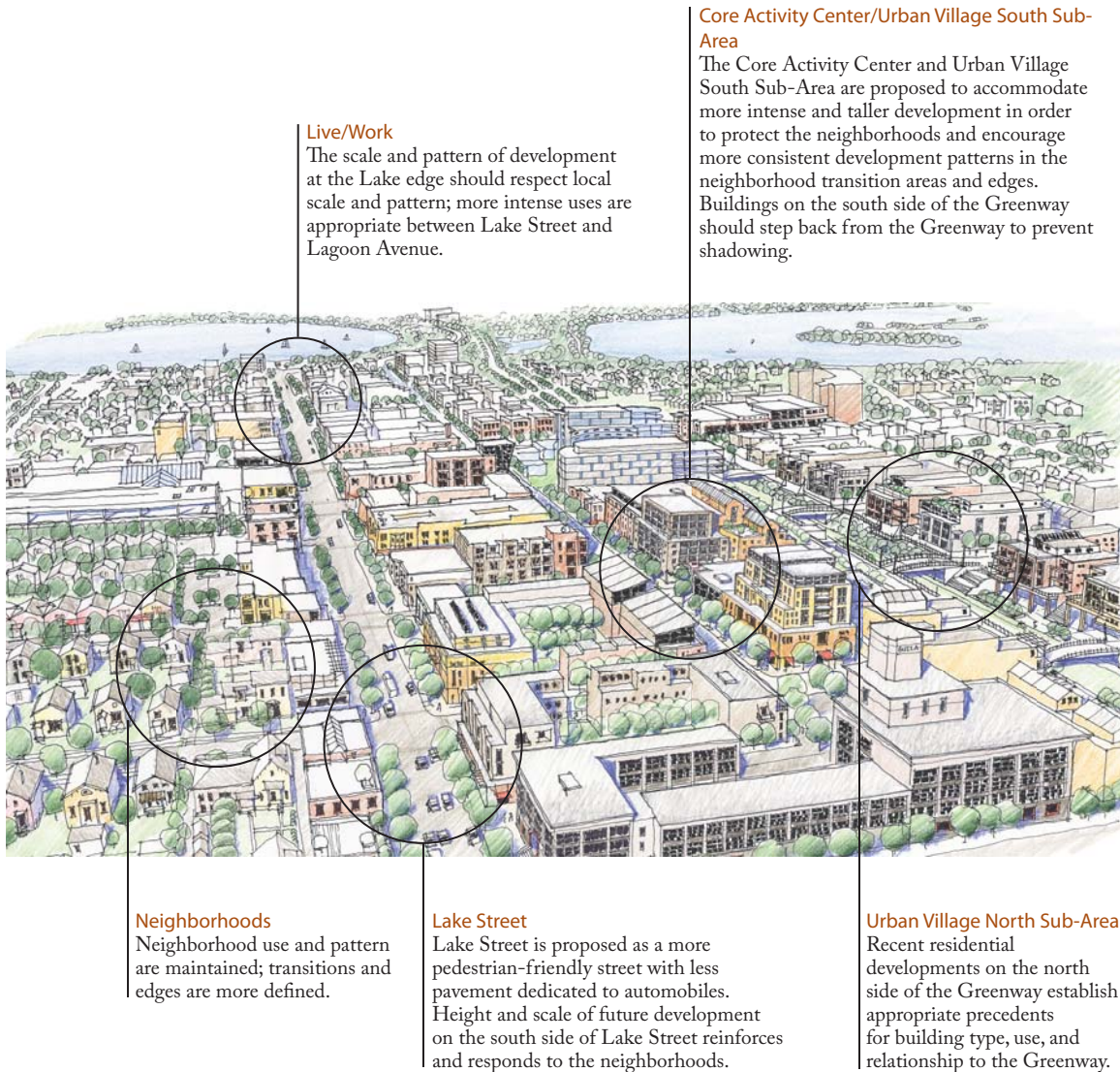
## Neighborhood

The neighborhood Character Areas are residential, mostly single-family duplex, triplex and small apartments, and are well established and maintained.

**Recommended Uses:** Residential

**Preferred Heights:** 1.5-3 stories

*Preferred height is discussed generally on this page. Preferred height is described in stories and is based in large part on the existing building context. Please refer to Section 7: The Plan and Section 8: Plan Elements (Land Use Sub Section) for more detailed discussion on building height, building envelope, and the zoning code. Building scale is more specifically defined in feet later in the document.*



#### Live/Work

The scale and pattern of development at the Lake edge should respect local scale and pattern; more intense uses are appropriate between Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue.

#### Core Activity Center/Urban Village South Sub-Area

The Core Activity Center and Urban Village South Sub-Area are proposed to accommodate more intense and taller development in order to protect the neighborhoods and encourage more consistent development patterns in the neighborhood transition areas and edges. Buildings on the south side of the Greenway should step back from the Greenway to prevent shadowing.

#### Neighborhoods

Neighborhood use and pattern are maintained; transitions and edges are more defined.

#### Lake Street

Lake Street is proposed as a more pedestrian-friendly street with less pavement dedicated to automobiles. Height and scale of future development on the south side of Lake Street reinforces and responds to the neighborhoods.

#### Urban Village North Sub-Area

Recent residential developments on the north side of the Greenway establish appropriate precedents for building type, use, and relationship to the Greenway.

*note: all graphics included in this Plan are illustrative and were created at various times throughout a year long process. They represent a long term vision for Uptown, not specific development proposals.*

## Plan Elements

In addition to acknowledging Uptown as a series of different Character Areas, it is important to consider its overall urban fabric. To create a high quality environment, each element of the urban fabric must be studied both independent of and together with each of the other elements. The three main elements of this plan include Built Form, Open Space, and Access.

### Built Form

Built Form is further classified as Land Use, Development Intensity, and Physical Features. The Plan provides detail for appropriate implementation of each. Primary recommendations are to:

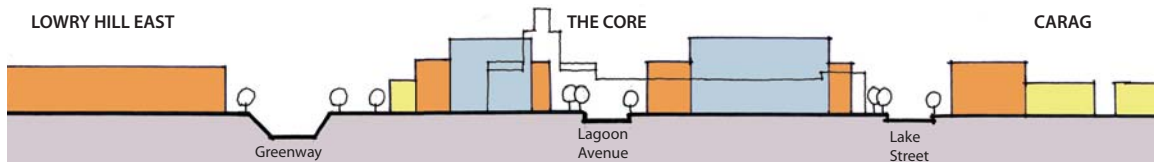
- Focus growth in areas where it is most appropriate, or where surface parking, underutilized land, large parcels, and market interest is abundant.

- Establish - through design and use - strong, gradual transitions between residential and commercial areas.
- Discourage one-story buildings
- Encourage retail on specific blocks.
- Stitch neighborhoods together by promoting residential uses and low impact neighborhood services on side streets.
- Encourage mixed-use along Lake Street to connect Uptown and Lyn/Lake.
- Identify the area most near the intersections of Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue and the Midtown Greenway as the “Activity Center,” and contain high intensity entertainment uses in this area.
- Locate tallest buildings along corridors.
- Step back upper floors of buildings to limit shadowing of streets and the Midtown Greenway.

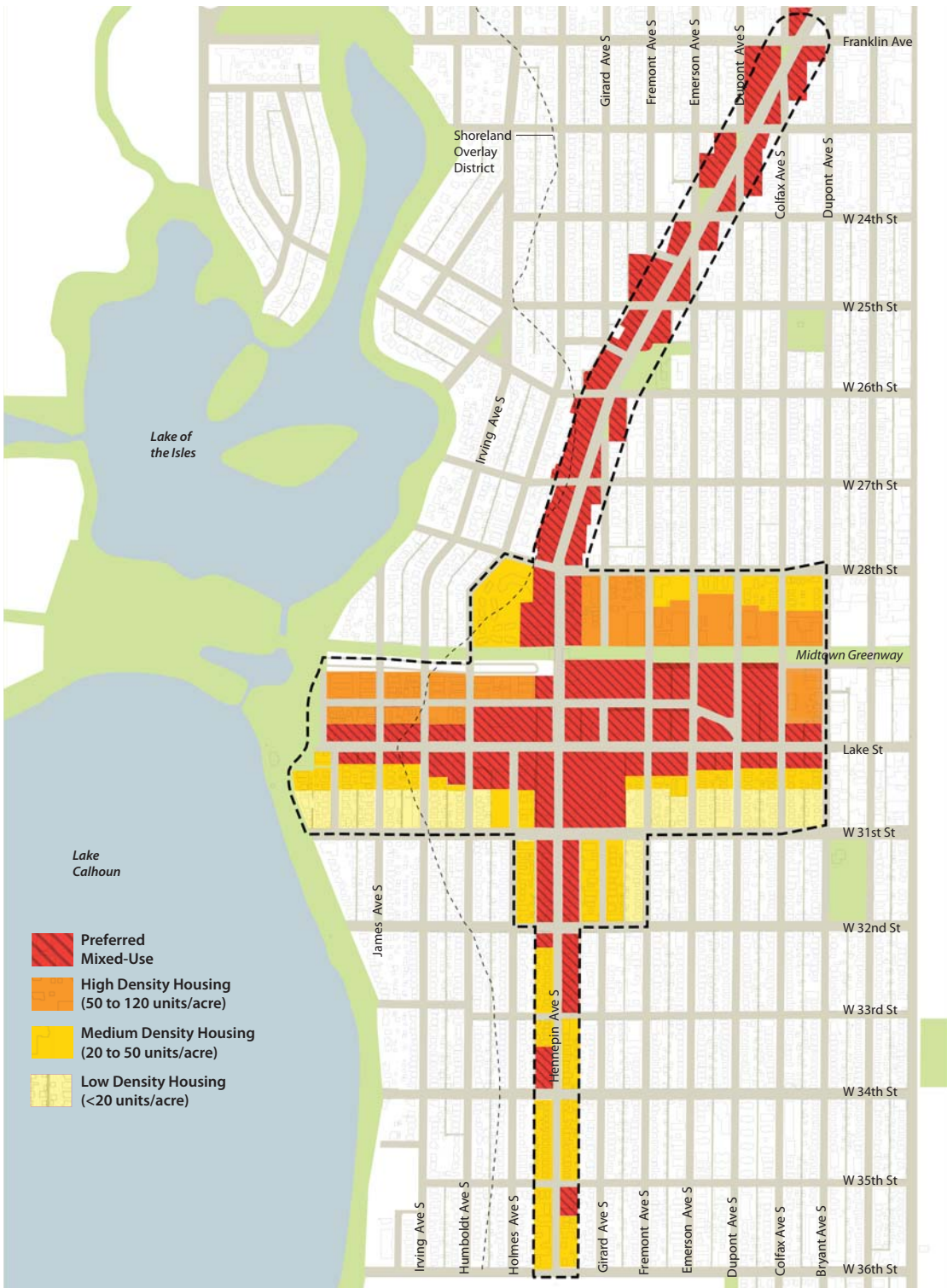
### Building Types



**Building Types:** A range of building types in Uptown will assure transitions are smooth and density is focused in the appropriate locations.



**Sculpted Building Envelopes:** The Plan recommends future development be sculpted to create better transitions and reduced shadowing of public spaces and streets.

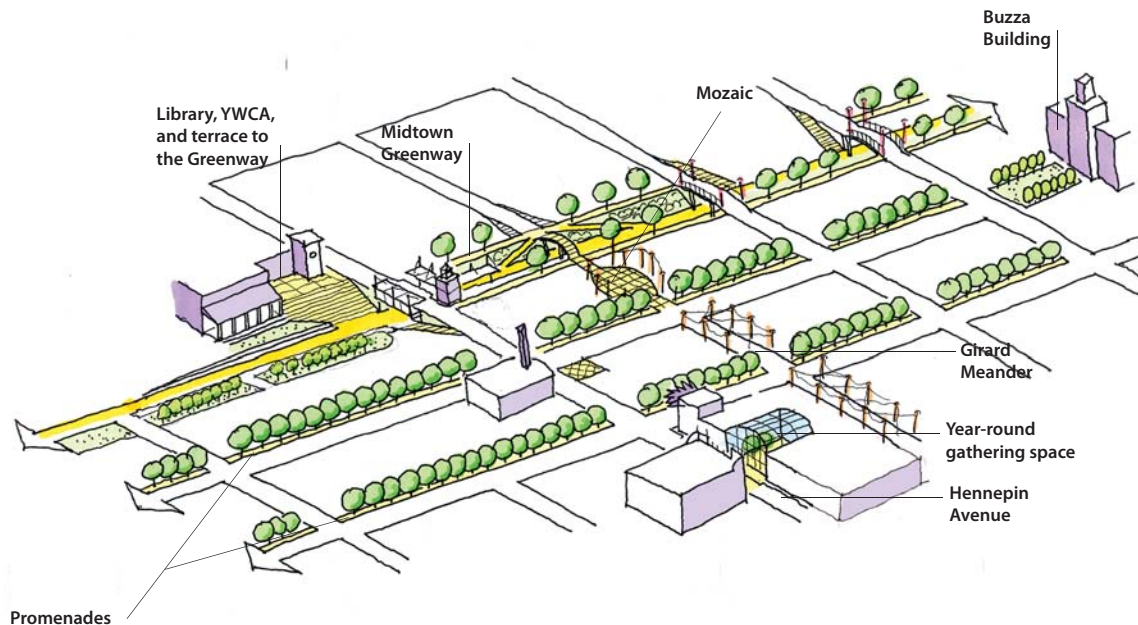


**Future Land Use:** Suggested land uses focus development in the Uptown core.

## Open Space

Open Space is further classified as Public Open Space and Private Open Space. The Plan provides detail for appropriate implementation of each. Primary recommendations are to:

- Create several small urban gathering spaces instead of one large space.
- Create wider sidewalks through setbacks of buildings or narrowing of streets.
- Create broad pedestrian promenades on Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue.
- Establish street level pedestrian promenades on both sides of the Midtown Greenway except where buildings or public open spaces are proposed that open up down in the Greenway.
- Encourage new development on north side of Greenway to animate the Greenway with active, privately owned open spaces.
- Create terraces to the Greenway on development blocks that slope to the Greenway.
- Create a year-round indoor/outdoor space in Calhoun Square.
- Create the Girard Meander, a narrow street with wide sidewalks connecting the Mozaic site and Calhoun Square.
- Create a public open space at the eastern terminus of Lagoon Avenue.
- Create additional triangular urban plazas on the north segment of Hennepin Avenue.
- Pursue public/private funding and operational options to development additional public spaces.



**Open Space Ideas:** The Plan suggests a more connected public realm and open space network that may include more connections/terraces to the Midtown Greenway, additional sidewalk promenades along Lake Street, and pedestrian/gathering place features such as the Girard Meander and Calhoun Square Winter Garden.

## Access

Access is further classified as Pedestrian and Bicycle, Transit, Parking, and Traffic. Primary recommendations are to:

- Promote land uses and development densities that create and support strong transit markets, such as high density housing, employment, and retail.
- Improve bicycle connections between the Greenway and the Uptown core.
- Implement Southwest Transit Corridor through Uptown or extend a streetcar to connect at the future West Calhoun Transit Center.
- Pursue, through public/private cooperation, a circulator along Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue connecting Uptown with the Lakes and Lyn/Lake.
- Support the possible future development of streetcars on Hennepin Avenue.
- Establish shared parking practices between complementary uses such as entertainment and offices.
- Develop district parking lots in the core.
- Shorten the walk distance by providing bump-outs at signalized intersections.
- Reduce lane widths to match East Lake Street standards and consider reducing the lane count on Lake Street east of Hennepin.



**District Parking:** The Plan recommends locating district parking in the Uptown core to increase wayfinding efficiency and to encourage a “park once” approach.

- Encourage property owners on Hennepin Avenue north of 28th Street to combine parking lots behind their buildings and to connect them to side streets, which would reduce the number of curb cuts, add on-street parking, and reduce mid-block left turns on Hennepin Avenue.
- Make interim/temporary improvements to Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue (re-stripping, curb extensions, countdown timers, and well designed planters) that narrow the travel way and create additional pedestrian space.
- Study the possibility of converting Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue to two-way streets.



### Existing Shared Parking



**Proposed Shared Parking:** The Plan recommends combining parking lots behind buildings along Hennepin Ave. north of 28th Street to reduce curb cuts and mid-block left turns, and to maximize on and off-street parking.

## Implementation

This Plan will update the Minneapolis Plan regarding land use and land use designation. Adoption of this Plan by City Council should signal the beginning of a new era for Uptown. The Plan will be implemented over the next 15 to 20 years with both private and public resources. Implementation will amount to significant changes and improvements in Uptown – changes that are both qualitative and quantitative.

The Plan promotes responsible growth. Over the next two decades, Uptown has the potential to accommodate substantial new residential, commercial, retail, and office space. This growth should be directed away from the edges of the residential neighborhoods and toward the core. This growth will bring support for existing and new local businesses.

New growth will broaden the area's housing options, provide new employment opportunities, and bolster the local retail and service base. It also will support transit, help fund public improvements, reduce automobile use, and make a positive contribution to the environment. In addition,

new growth has the potential to contribute to connections to the Lakes, transit connections to Midtown, the southwest and downtown, new plazas and parks, new cultural and community facilities, more efficient parking, and improved and enlarged sidewalks and bikeways.

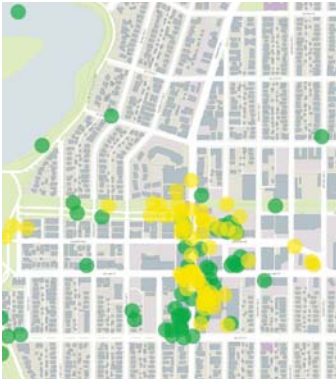
Together these private and public investments will help Uptown reassert itself as a regional destination for recreation, shopping, and entertainment, as well as stabilize itself as a desirable local mixed-use residential community.

Partnerships and civic cooperation are as important to the implementation of this Plan as the physical legacies described above. This Plan is not a blueprint for how to spend public resources. Rather, it is a document designed to raise investor confidence, form partnerships, and inspire new ideas. The ideas come from vested interests and passions of Uptown's diverse body of stakeholders. The realization of these ideas depends on continued cooperation and coordination between an active public sector, an entrepreneurial private sector, and an engaged citizenry. The result of such partnerships will be a renewed Uptown – a place that embodies the best qualities of urban living in Minneapolis.



**New Growth, Old Neighborhoods:** The Plan clearly defines intense and taller investment in the Activity Center and Urban Village South Sub-Area (between Lake Street and the Greenway) in order to direct that pattern away from neighborhoods and neighborhood transition areas.





---

## 2. Public Participation

## Public Participation

The Small Area Plan process was conducted in three phases over approximately 18 months. The depth of public outreach was a foundation for the Plan, and the process was open, transparent, and inclusive; all focus group meetings, Steering Committee and public meetings were open and accessible. The Steering Committee met twelve times throughout the process and helped to guide the project. The design team hosted nine community meetings at Calhoun Square and facilitated fourteen focus group discussions. Total meeting attendance exceeded 500 people. In addition, the team gave periodic updates to the Planning Commission and interested groups such as the Midtown Greenway Coalition and the Uptown area business associations. Below are highlights from and outcomes of the public input sessions. In addition, a robust project website was updated with regular information about the process. Over 20 e-mail updates were sent out to meeting participants over the 18 month process. Additional notes and details are located in the Appendices.

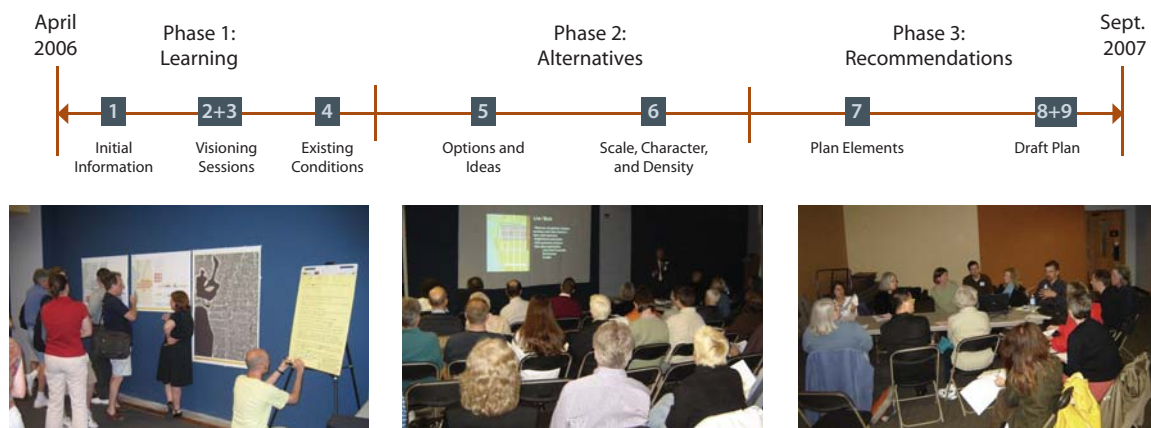
## Steering Committee

The Uptown Small Area Plan Steering Committee was selected in June 2006. The Steering Committee was comprised of:

- One (1) Council Member
- Two (2) representatives from each of the surrounding four neighborhoods
- Six (6) City Council Member appointees
- One (1) representative from each of the two business associations
- One (1) representative from the Midtown Greenway Coalition

Responsibilities of committee members included:

- Communicating with appointing organizations.
- Helping to engage the public.
- Advising on the planning process.
- Advising on Plan content.
- Balancing various values.



**Public Process:** The Small Area Plan included nine Community Meetings over 18- months. Presentations and public feedback sessions were part of each meeting.

## Visioning Sessions

In November 2006, the City hosted two Community Visioning Sessions in Uptown. Participants shared their concerns and discussed what they value about Uptown. Input from these meetings helped draft the vision statement that guides the Plan. Listed below are the most frequent responses from the visioning session discussions.

### What you value about Uptown:

- Livability issues such as “balance of destination to residential,” “small town feel with urban amenities,” human scale, sense of community, “walkability.”
- Lakes, Greenway, parks, and green spaces.
- Transportation options, walking, biking, transit, auto.
- Fun, quirky, unique character, “energy.”
- Diversity—small business, population and cultures, aesthetics and activities.
- Historic nature of residential houses.

### What your concerns are about Uptown:

- Transportation & traffic.
- Incompatible development (height & density in inappropriate locations).
- Safety and crime.
- Affordability (both housing & commercial spaces).
- Loss of identity and diversity.
- Loss of residential services.
- Air, noise, and water pollution.

## Focus Groups

In February 2007, the consultant team hosted focus group meetings to identify specific issues within each group as well as general issues across groups. The following stakeholders participated in the focus group meetings:

- Retail operators
- YWCA representative
- Developers
- Restaurant and bar operators/owners
- Office employees
- Residents (variety of ages)
- Multi-family property owners/managers
- Public safety officers and personnel
- Public realm representatives (parks, art)
- Business associations
- Transportation planners
- Faith-based community members and leaders
- Arts and culture representatives
- Families

Results from the focus group meetings included these common themes and conclusions:

### Business mix is out of balance

As daily uses and activities have decreased, so has the daytime population. In the past ten years, the



**Public Process:** The Small Area Plan process included nine community meetings. Presentations and feedback sessions were part of each meeting.

business mix has shifted towards evening uses such as restaurants, bars, and theaters. The lack of daytime uses creates an unhealthy imbalance that is inconsistent with the desired future of the area. A strong daytime population will help stabilize and attract community-oriented businesses.

### **Parking is a problem**

There is a need to better use existing parking supply and create a long term parking strategy. There is enough parking; however, access and quality are poor.

### **Calhoun Square is critical**

As the largest property in Uptown, Calhoun Square has a huge impact on the overall health and vitality of the region. The uncertainty about Calhoun Square's future has hurt not only the building tenants, but also the entire area. It is time to rethink the building format and consider a major overhaul that improves the building's relationship to the street and to the neighborhood.

### **People love Uptown**

There is a passion and desire for Uptown to remain an "enclave of the weird." People are drawn to Uptown because it offers amenities within walking distance unlike any other place in the region.

### **Public infrastructure is poor**

With the exception of recent investments on Hennepin Avenue north of 28th Street (street lamps, small parks), the study area has seen few improvements to public infrastructure.

## **Public Input Meetings**

The team hosted nine public meetings at which ideas and recommendations were presented and feedback was sought. Typically, public meetings contained a presentation and either small groups or an open house format in which stakeholders and residents could offer opinions and feedback. The public meeting schedule and outline was as follows:

### **2006**

November: Visioning Sessions (2 meetings)

### **2007**

February: Existing Conditions

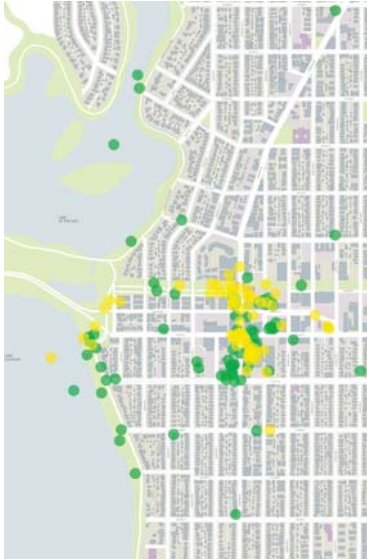
March: Goals and Initial Ideas

May: Character Scale and Design

June: Land Use, Built Form, Transportation and Public Realm Improvements

September: Final Recommendations and the Adoption Process (2 meetings)

On February 8, the design team hosted a public meeting in Calhoun Square. The team reported on the focus groups and solicited input from attendees on the topics of streets, gathering spaces, and new development. The purpose of this meeting was to begin transitioning from visioning to place-based design, as well as to identify common themes or patterns. Participants were asked to answer specific questions by locating places on the map with colored dots and writing responses on index cards. The responses are below.



**Favorite (green) and New (yellow) Gathering Places:** Stakeholders desire new gathering places to be located close to the core, at Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street and at Hennepin Avenue and the Greenway.



**Opportunities for New Development:** Stakeholders identified the Arby's site and Calhoun Square as the priority locations for redevelopment.



**Traffic and Street Problem Areas:** The Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street intersection, the one-way split, and portions of Hennepin Avenue between 26th Street and Franklin Avenue emerged as the most significant problem areas.

### What are the qualities of ideal gathering places in Uptown?

- Open space / green / landscaped
- Accessible / open / comfortable
- Seating / benches
- Public art
- Public access
- Variety of commercial / community uses
- Usable in all seasons

### What are the qualities of ideal new development in Uptown?

- Mixed-use and dense but appropriately scaled
- Modern
- Traditional
- Incorporates green space
- Serves the needs of Uptown: useful stores and daily activities of life
- Diverse, unique, weird, affordable
- Good frontage
- Hidden parking

### What are the qualities of ideal new streets in Uptown?

- Pedestrian friendly / sidewalk / lighting
- Trees / landscape / green
- Buildings relate to street
- On-street parking
- Good traffic conditions



---

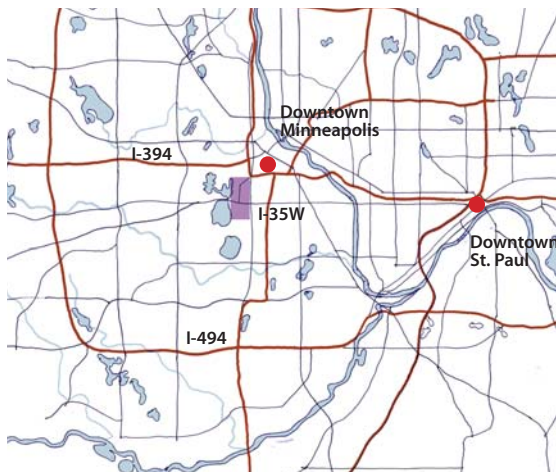
### 3. Physical Analysis

## Urban Design Analysis

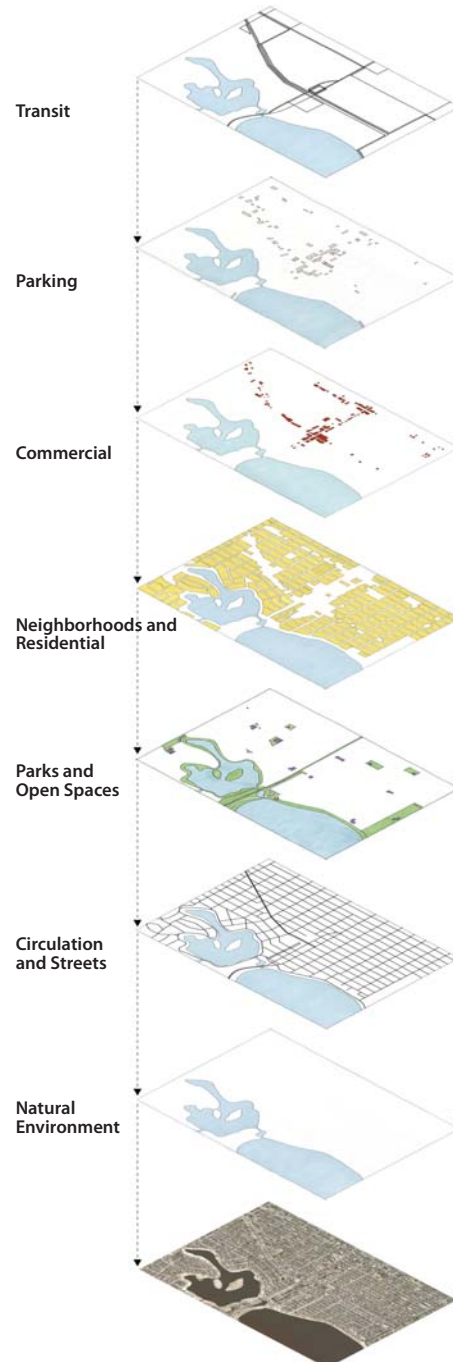
Uptown's history and community character are products of regional growth patterns, natural features, and built systems. Each of these components connects the area to its immediate community and to the greater region.

Urban areas like Uptown are composed of overlapping and related systems. Each individual system's health and ability to interact and support other systems impacts the overall area's health. On the following pages, selected systems of the City are extracted as layers and are analyzed for their health and viability.

Over time, some of the urban systems that have made Uptown a desirable place to live, do business, visit, and invest have eroded. Although neighborhoods surrounding Uptown remain desirable because of their proximity to the Lakes and downtown; and residential properties continue to increase in value, underlying structural flaws inhibit the area from developing to its full potential.



**Regional Locator:** Uptown is located near the western edge of Minneapolis, but it is located in the center of the region.



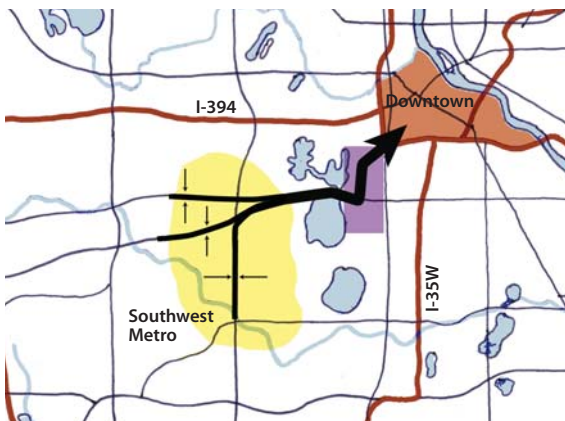
**Urban Systems:** Uptown is a series of functional layers that, when healthy, reinforce and strengthen each other.

## Circulation and the Street Grid

The street grid in Uptown is incomplete. Incremental changes over the past twenty years have disconnected once-connected streets, thereby limiting options and forcing traffic onto a limited number of routes. These changes forced the urban grid system to operate like a suburban traffic system.

- Links in the street system have been vacated: 29th Street, Girard Avenue, and Holmes Avenue.
- Neighborhood streets have been converted to one-way to prevent “cut through” traffic.
- Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue were converted to one-way streets to reduce intersection delay and maximize “through-put” in an effort to reduce air pollution.

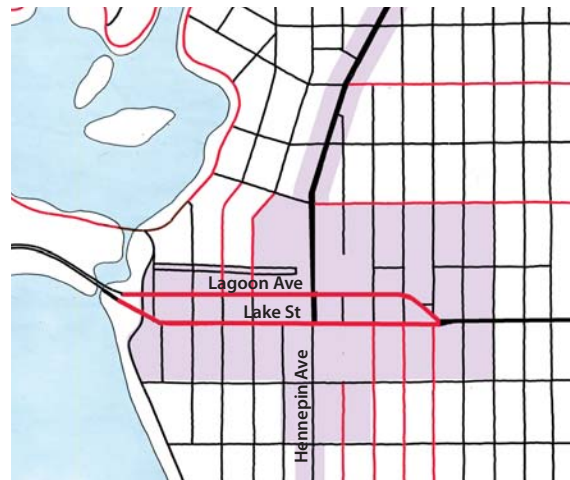
The Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue intersection consists of super-blocks (blocks that have been combined through street vacations) on two of



**Regional Traffic Pattern:** The Chain of Lakes acts as a barrier to east/west traffic. Three of the region’s main east-west arterials merge to become Lake Street in Uptown. Since Uptown is located adjacent to downtown, Hennepin Avenue is a primary commuter route for residents in the southwest suburbs. Nearly one-third of all vehicles heading east on Lake Street turn north or south at Hennepin Avenue.

four corners. The large blocks and one-way streets disrupt natural circulation patterns and put undue pressure on the Hennepin/Lake intersection.

This Plan will investigate ways Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue can be improved as settings for new investment and pedestrian activity, as well as ways overall area circulation can be improved to lessen the burden on the Hennepin Avenue/Lake Street intersection.



**Street Grid and One Way Streets (in red):** One-way streets in Uptown facilitate through-traffic, reduce intersection delay, and prevent “cut-through traffic,” but they also add turning movements, misdirect drivers, and reduce storefront visibility.





**Existing Conditions:** Uptown consists of a mix of uses, including residential neighborhoods, commercial corridors, and aging industrial uses. North of 28th Street and south of 31st Street, Uptown has a positive relationship to the surrounding neighborhoods. However, in the core, the neighborhoods are separated.

## Parks and Open Spaces

Uptown is located in one of the region's most amenity-rich areas. It is adjacent to the Chain of Lakes and the Midtown Greenway, which connects the Lakes and the Mississippi River via south Minneapolis neighborhoods. Although the Greenway is a valuable public amenity, it is difficult to see and to access from Uptown because of its location in a former railroad trench.

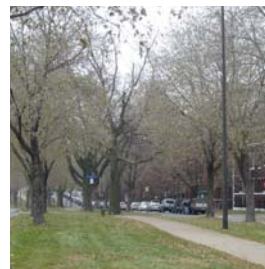
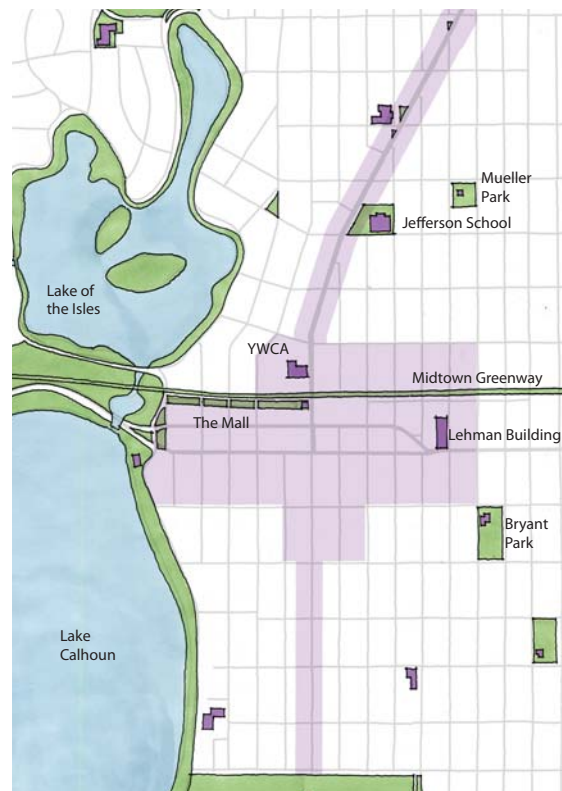
### Environment and Air Quality

An urban environment needs to respect the natural systems that support it. Maintaining water quality and air quality are important considerations. Uptown is adjacent to the Chain of Lakes, which provide infinite value in the form of recreation,

beauty, and natural processes. If the quality of the Lakes is not preserved, Uptown will suffer. Likewise, air quality is a key issue in an urban environment. While air quality in Minneapolis is among the best in the country when compared to that of other major cities, the impacts of traffic congestion and the location of polluting businesses needs be carefully considered. A 2007 air quality study conducted by the City of Minneapolis included six monitoring stations in Uptown. Details of this study can be found in the Appendix.



Regional Open Space System: The Chain of Lakes

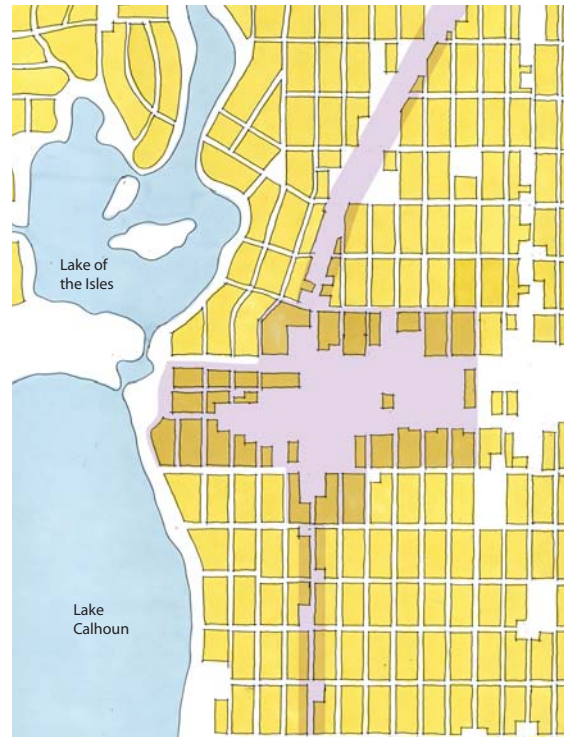
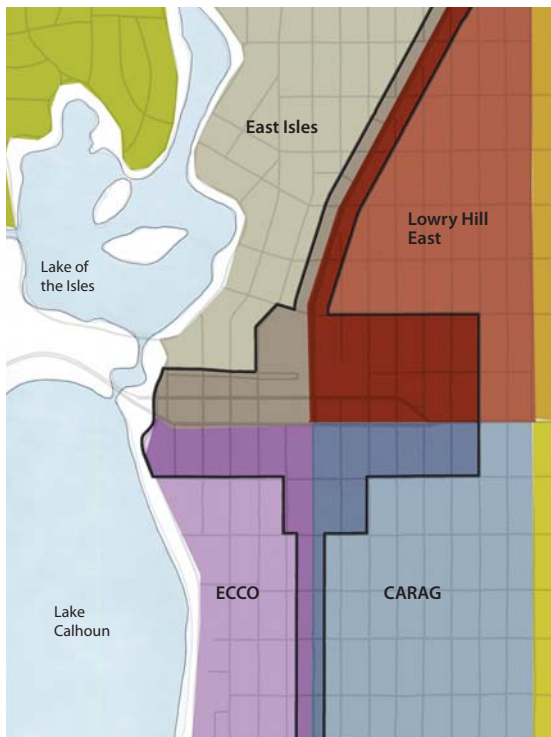


Local Open Space System: The Mall and Midtown Greenway

## Neighborhoods & Residential

Uptown extends into four well-defined neighborhoods comprised of different household and building types. These neighborhoods rely on Uptown for a range of daily goods and services. Two business associations, the South Hennepin Business Association and the Uptown Association, represent the Uptown area.

The physical orientation of Uptown neighborhoods primarily follows the north-south Minneapolis street grid system, and the majority of housing structures face east and west. The residential pattern is established and solid, but it erodes as it blends with commercial areas along Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street. Former industrial land along the Midtown Greenway forms a hole in the residential fabric, thereby further eroding the residential pattern at its edges.



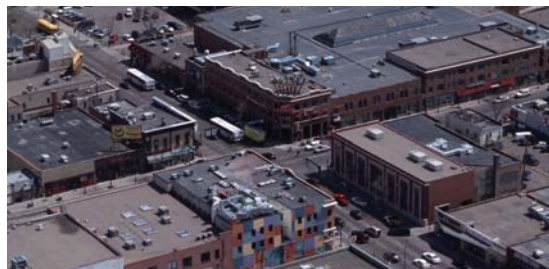
**Neighborhood Building Types:** A variety of housing types, including single family and multi-family buildings, exists in Uptown neighborhoods.



**Residential Area Characteristics:** New housing in the core along the Greenway and a typical north-south neighborhood street are typical conditions in Uptown residential areas.

## Land Use / Built Form

A range of building sizes in Uptown reflects the range of needs and uses in the study area. Because of their regular spacing and consistent positions, smaller scale residential buildings form and define blocks in surrounding neighborhoods. Contrarily, irregularly shaped larger scale commercial buildings in the study area core do not define spaces or street edges.



Calhoun Square

## Transit

Local and regional transit routes pass through Uptown to and from all major directions. A transit center located in the center of the study area is the hub for buses serving these routes, and Uptown could be a stop along the future Southwest Transit LRT corridor.



Southwest Corridor Transit Options: Kenilworth alignment (red); Greenway alignment (black).

## Commercial

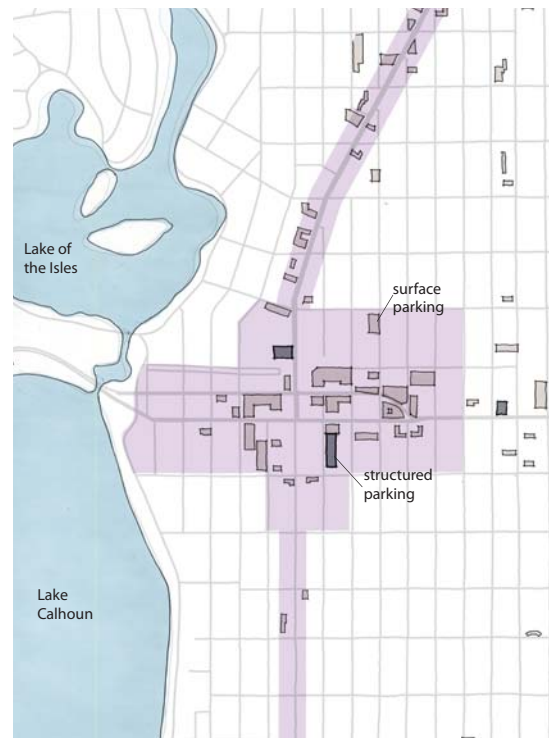
Several distinct commercial patterns occur in Uptown. North of 28th Street on Hennepin Avenue, commercial uses occupy mixed-use buildings at corners and single-use retail buildings mid-block. The largest concentration of commercial buildings is at Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street. Several houses have been converted to service retail between 31st and 32nd Streets, and south of 32nd Street, commercial uses follow a traditional streetcar pattern where some corners contain small storefronts.



**Commercial Building Types:** A converted house and storefront on Hennepin Avenue are typical commercial building types.

## Parking

The existing Uptown parking supply is not well coordinated, balanced, or utilized. With the exception of weekend evenings, a parking surplus exists; however, it is not well-managed and therefore is not well used. The lack of a coordinated parking system discourages walking between destinations, and instead encourages short car trips between parking lots.



**Parking Conditions:** Surface parking for individual businesses discourages a “park once and walk” approach; underground parking for residences is accessible but hidden and unobtrusive.

## Historical Resources

Uptown's changing history and eclectic collection of architectural styles is reflected in many remaining structures. Several older, revered public buildings lack a dominant architectural style but contribute to the variety that characterizes Uptown. The residential neighborhood architectural style is more stable and consistent than that of the commercial corridors. This is because most neighborhood construction occurred between 1900 and 1930, at a time when building styles in the region were primarily Midwestern Colonial, Classical, Craftsman, and

Victorian.

There are no historic districts in the Study Area however, the following five buildings are designated historic landmarks:

- Walker Library
- Uptown Theater
- Suburban World Theater
- Moorish Mansion Apartments
- Scottish Rite Temple



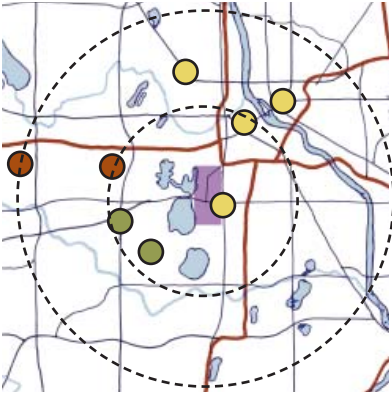
Residential Buildings



Mixed-use Buildings



Other Buildings



---

## 4. Policy

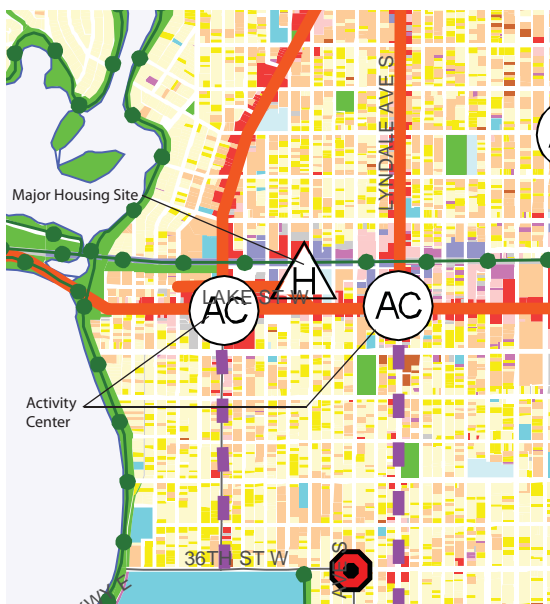
## Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan

In 2000, the City of Minneapolis adopted the current comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan, known as The Minneapolis Plan, is a city-wide policy document that directs growth and community character. The Minneapolis Plan:

- Analyzes trends in the City's population, economic growth, and neighborhood livability.
- Proposes a vision for the physical development of the City.
- Identifies steps the city must take in order to achieve that vision.

The Plan recommends creating Small Area Plans for areas of the City where growth and change are encouraged. The Plan designates these areas as Activity Centers, Major Housing Sites, and Commercial Corridors. Each of these designations occurs in the Calhoun Isles Community generally, and in Uptown specifically.

The Minneapolis Plan designates the area around Lake and Hennepin Avenue as an **Activity Center**.



**Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan:** The Comprehensive Plan designates Uptown as an Activity Center. Activity Centers are the places in the City where a range of uses are encouraged, including evening activities and regional destinations.

According to The Minneapolis Plan, “Partially as the result of the city’s historical development, certain districts have functioned as hubs of activity and movement for decades. Other areas are just recently experiencing a renaissance of business and development interest as unique destinations. Activity Centers are the places that shape Minneapolis’ urban identity. By encouraging a mix of uses that hold appeal for many residents and visitors, a long day of activity that stretches into the evening, traditional urban form in buildings that enhance the pedestrian environment and a sense of safety through street level activity, Activity Centers attract interest and patrons throughout the city.”

For Activity Centers, The Minneapolis Plan directs the City to:

- Undergo a small area plan that establishes boundaries, addresses the identity role and features of the Center, gives guidance to the mix of land uses, scale and size of development in these areas and identifies transportation and circulation needs.
- Support diverse commercial and residential development types which generate activity all day and into the evening.
- Promote mixed-use buildings.
- Preserve traditional urban form.
- Discourage automobile services and drive through facilities.
- Establish parking facilities and management strategies that promote shared facilities, while minimizing visual impacts, and adverse effects on sidewalks and pedestrians.
- Manage transitions between high traffic land uses and adjoining residential areas.
- Apply street design criteria that incorporate pedestrian orientation.

As the region grows and demographics change, Minneapolis will want and need to absorb new households. These new households will search for housing types more varied than what currently exists in Minneapolis. In order to meet this demand the Minneapolis Plan designates **Major Housing Sites**. The Urban Village site, located between the Midtown Greenway, 28th



Street, Hennepin Avenue, and Lyndale Avenue is designated in the Minneapolis Plan as a Major Housing Site because of its adjacency to the Activity Center and natural features such as the Lakes and public facilities such as the Midtown Greenway. The Minneapolis Plan encourages such sites to contain medium to high-density housing in a variety of types and income levels.

The Plan identifies Hennepin Avenue, between Franklin Avenue and Lake; Lagoon Avenue; and Lake Street as **Commercial Corridors**. Commercial Corridors are streets in Minneapolis that are primarily commercial in nature, carry high volumes of traffic, and retain a traditional urban building form and street orientation of businesses. The Minneapolis Plan encourages strengthening these corridors by:

- Encouraging new compatible development along them.
- Promoting alternative uses such as mixed-residential, office, institutional and low impact clean and light industrial uses, and addressing issues of parking, traffic and transit.
- Assisting with the reuse and rehabilitation of older commercial buildings.

Hennepin Avenue from Lake Street to 36th Street is designated a **Community Corridor**. Community Corridors connect neighborhoods and are predominately residential in character. Commercial uses on Community corridors are located at specific intersections and they are small scale, neighborhood oriented.

This document, when adopted, will be a part of the Comprehensive Plan and will be the official guiding policy for the area. The Plan recommends changes to some of the above detailed designations. Recommendations for such changes are described in the Land Use Section.

## Current Zoning

The study area contains a variety of zoning classifications and two overlay districts. Most properties lining Hennepin Avenue (north of 31st Street), Lagoon Avenue (east of Hennepin) and Lake Street are zoned for commercial uses. Some industrial zoning is present just north of the Greenway, west of Hennepin. Hennepin Avenue south of 31st Street is lined with a mix of commercial and residential zoning.

The area is influenced by two overlay districts: the Shoreland Overlay District that extends 1000 feet from the Lakes and a Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District in the Core of Uptown. The Shoreland Overlay District is a state-wide ordinance designed to protect waters. It seeks to accomplish this goal by managing development within 1000 feet of all water bodies - rural and urban. The ordinance contains provisions for locations of buildings, height of structures, development on slopes, grading and filling, removal of vegetation, and stormwater management.

The Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District was established to preserve and encourage the pedestrian character of commercial areas and to promote street life and activity by regulating building orientation and design. The Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District prohibits auto-oriented uses such as drive through restaurants, banks, and auto service uses. In addition, it contains provisions for locating buildings close to the sidewalk and parking to the side or rear of buildings. The Uptown Pedestrian Overlay District also requires a Travel Development Management Plan for any development over 4000 square feet.

This Plan does not recommend zoning changes directly. However, this Plan recommends the City undergo a zoning study for the area in which existing zoning will be examined and potentially changed. As this Plan gives direction for future growth in the area, it will be used to direct the zoning study.

### Additional Land Use Policy

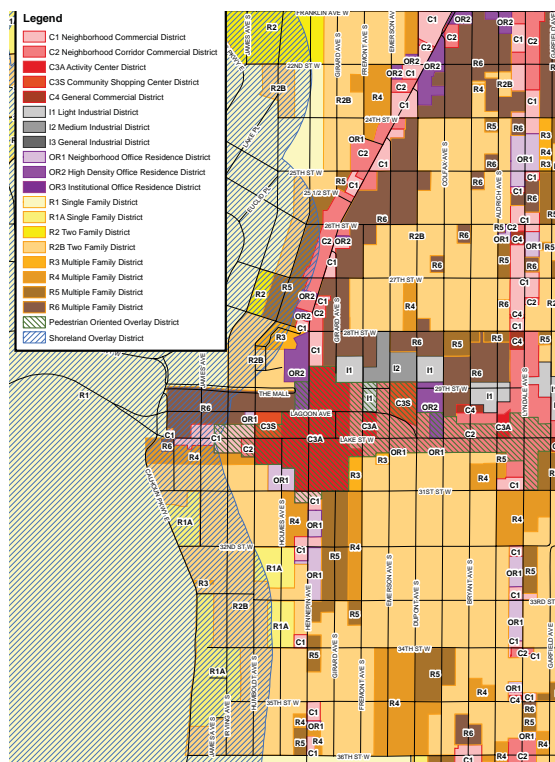
There is no existing adopted plan for the extent of this study area. The area has been formally governed by the comprehensive plan and the zoning code and the Midtown Greenway Land Use and Development Plan, and informally directed by the following Plans:

- Uptown Parking and Transportation Study (2005)
- Hennepin Avenue Strategic Plan (1995)
- CARAG Neighborhood Master Plan (2000)
- West Lake Street Urban Village Charrette (1998)

In addition, this Plan has taken into consideration the following studies that have been concurrent with this project:

- Access Minneapolis Citywide Transportation Action Plan
- Southwest Transit Alternatives Analysis Study
- City of Minneapolis Citywide Comprehensive Plan Update

The Midtown Greenway Land Use and Development Plan overlaps with this plan in the area bounded by Humboldt Avenue, 28th Street, Bryant Avenue, Lagoon Avenue, and a line approximately mid block between Lake Street and the Greenway. This plan has suggested new land use designations for a few parcels in this area, but retains most of the previously adopted uses. Additional policy direction related to height, massing, and design is contained in this document in an attempt to provide refinement of previous policy for this area.



## Past and Related Planning Efforts

This small area plan builds on previous plans. In 1995, the Hennepin Avenue Strategic Plan was completed. Many of that plan's recommendations have been implemented:

- A Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District was enacted.
- Small parks were constructed at the ends of triangular blocks.
- Selected parking lots were consolidated.
- Streetscaping was implemented between Franklin Avenue and 28th Street.
- Bicycle connections to Lyndale Avenue were established.

In 1998, Town Planning Collaborative conducted the Uptown Lake Street Charrette. The Plan was not adopted by the City, but several investments resulted:

- The Metro Transit Hub.
- The Urban Village with an upper promenade on the Greenway.
- Development on the Police Garage Site (Lake Street between Emerson Avenue and Fremont Avenue).
- District parking at Lyndale/Lake.

In addition to the Minneapolis Plan, several adopted City plans influenced the making of this Plan. They include:

- Each surrounding neighborhood's NRP plans.
- Midtown Greenway Development Objectives.



---

## 5. History, Demographics and Market Summary

## The History of Uptown's Urban Form

The Chain of Lakes has been a destination since the 1870s. It was then a popular fishing spot and a setting for resort hotels. Streetcars connected the area to the larger region in the late 1800s, when the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board began purchasing property adjacent to the Lakes for a city-wide park system. Residential development followed, and flourished during the first two decades of the 20th Century. By 1930, the area was completely subdivided and built out with homes and businesses.

Uptown was the premier retail district outside downtown, and had emerged as a regional entertainment destination by the time the Lagoon Theatre (later named the Uptown Theatre) opened in 1913. The Minneapolis Arena drew nearly 100,000 people a year to the area. Ample employment opportunities in lumber yards, stoneyards, and factories located along the 29th Street rail line supported the sale of commercial goods and services.

Following World War II, Uptown responded to increased competition from the suburbs as returning soldiers, the baby boom, the GI bill, and highway construction fueled a suburban development boom.

Uptown's tradition as a hub of commercial, recreational, and residential activity continued, though it experienced a relative erosion in commanding those markets as other markets increased the competition. In the late 1950s and into the early 1970s, a period of redevelopment activity and the expansion of

Lagoon Avenue east of Hennepin Avenue created an Uptown that had more single-use buildings with larger parking lots. Along Hennepin Avenue north of 28th Street, auto-oriented buildings replaced small, multi-tenant commercial buildings. In the Uptown neighborhoods, larger apartment developments replaced pockets of single family houses

Throughout the economic and demographic cycles, the Chain of Lakes remained popular to residents and visitors alike. Their popularity grew steadily and has contributed to Uptown's identity.

During the 1970s and 80s, Uptown experienced another transformation. During the late 1970s through the 1980s, Uptown experienced investment aimed at rebranding Uptown as a premier urban, retail district. Calhoun Square, an urban mall, acted as a catalyst for the change when it opened in 1983. A group of business and property owners created the first Special Service District in Minnesota. The district allowed Uptown to improve its image through the imposition of a local tax assessment to provide services such as snow plowing, additional trash removal, tree lights, etc. These efforts renewed interest in Uptown as a regional destination and set the stage for the late 1990s when interest in the "urban experience" for living and entertainment grew significantly.

In the 1990s, Uptown's image changed again when national retailers opened local stores. During this time, Uptown also thrived as a place for entrepreneurs offering rare and unique goods and services.



The Uptown business community flourished throughout most of the 1990s. However, significant transition has occurred since 1995. Several national retailers and popular local stores have closed. Entertainment and restaurant offerings have flourished, but the daytime population (generated by basic daily goods, services and employment) has declined significantly. Several residential projects have been approved (+500 units) in the past 5 years, but only 125 new units have been built.

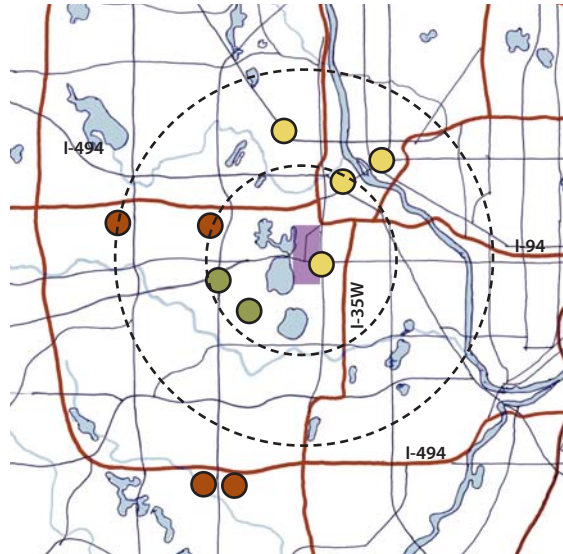
The current transition in Uptown is of concern, as the community has voiced concerns regarding the health and growth of Uptown. There are structural and market issues at work and the need for a Small Area Plan is not only about controlling and guiding growth, but also about fixing structural flaws.

### The region has grown

Uptown is a regional destination. As the region grew westward, Uptown went from the edge (and accessible) to the middle (and less accessible) of the regional retail area. It is not uncommon for retail uses to thrive on the edges of regions, and struggle in the middle. Often, the most central locations are the least accessible and most confusing to infrequent users. In addition, as the region has grown, competing community centers have emerged throughout the City and suburbs. Whereas Uptown once was one of a few options, now it competes against many.

### The EPA and the One-Way Pairs

In the late 1980s, EPA air quality measures of the Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue intersection exceeded acceptable limits. To maintain federal funding, the City and County switched Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue to a one-way pair street system. This conversion had a long-term effect on retail in the area, specifically on Lagoon Avenue, which has become the location of more auto-oriented uses and is much less pedestrian friendly.



**Increased Competition:** During the past 15 years, other regional commercial (red), neighborhood commercial (green), and art districts (yellow) have emerged and solidified their identity.



**Increased Competition:** Area destinations that draw from a regional base include (clockwise from top left) Excelsior and Grand in St. Louis Park, 50th and France in Edina and Minneapolis, East Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis, and Grand Avenue in St. Paul.

### Calhoun Square

Calhoun Square was built in 1983. Depending on one's perspective, Calhoun Square either saved Uptown or, as stated by one resident, "killed the soul of Uptown." Calhoun Square is the largest building and development in Uptown and it is centrally located, so the health of the area is linked to its successes and failures. Calhoun Square is an interior mall – a successful model for retail development in the early 1980s, but a less successful model now. The lack of street interaction, the absence of a coherent business plan, and the transition in ownership suggest it is time for a significant overhaul of the Calhoun Square property.

### Decisions to vacate streets and disrupt the grid

Over the years, several local links in the street network were vacated or switched to one-way. Each street connection contributes to the overall network. Thus, when one is altered, cut off, or switched to one-way, it adds load to the remaining network and intersections – in particular to Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street.

### National Retailing Trends

Throughout the 1990s, retail across the country underwent a major shift. Goods and services typically purchased in neighborhoods at small and medium sized stores shifted to suburban areas where large box retailers with sophisticated inventory and distributing systems, larger customer bases, and bulk purchasing offered the same products at lower prices.

### Recent Development Proposals

Several recent projects were proposed and approved in 2005, 2006 and 2007, but not yet constructed at the time of this Plan. These include:

- Hornig Development received approval in January 2006 for the development of The Portico. Approved Plans called for 34 for-sale condominium units to be located at the intersection of Lagoon Avenue and Irving

Avenue.

- Ackerberg Group received approval to construct Mozaic, which was approved to include 135 condominium units, 1550 seat theater, approximately 40,000 s.f. of office, and 13,500 s.f. retail restaurant space, at the intersection of Girard Avenue and Lagoon Avenue (currently being occupied by the Uptown Theatre and a surface parking lot).
- Solomon Group received approval for the redevelopment of Calhoun Square at the intersection of Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue. Approved Plans include 108 for-sale condominium units above 190,000 square feet of retail space, 95,000 square feet of office space, and 35,000 square feet of restaurant space. During the study, the property changed hands and is currently owned by Blackrock.
- Nob Hill Investments LLC received approval for a 114 unit hotel on Holmes Avenue between Lake Street and 31st Street.

This plan treated these approved projects as soon to be existing conditions. This plan uses these approved plans as context and does not suggest that the approved plans should be revisited. If plans for these project change, the new proposals should be evaluated based on the analysis that went into the initial approval, the merits of a new design, and the recommendations in this Plan.

## Demographic Snapshot

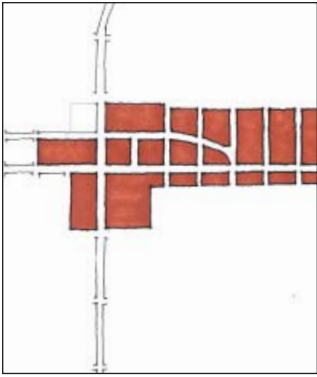
- Uptown's population has grown minimally over the past 15 years (.2%). Both the City (.7%) and the metro area (1.3%) have grown considerably.
- While population is relatively steady, Uptown has been and will continue to age in the coming years. There are 30 percent fewer 20- to 24-year-olds in Uptown than there were in 2000. There are nearly 40 percent more 55- to 65-year-olds in Uptown than there were in 2000. The loss of 20- to 24-year-olds since 2000 will likely translate into a decline in families with children in the coming decade.
- Uptown's median income (\$40,000) is considerably lower than that of the rest of the City (\$48,000) and the metro area (\$68,000). It is, however, expected to increase faster (26%) than the City (22%) or the metro area (22%) in the coming decade.
- Uptown has considerably higher percentage of households renting (79%) than the City (48%) and the metro area (27%).
- In the 55408 ZIP code, approximately 800 rental units (10% of the total) have been converted to condominiums in the past six years. These 800 new condominiums represent nearly half of all owner occupied units in the 55408 ZIP code.

## Market Snapshot

- Approximately 500 units of new housing in Uptown have been approved in the past five years; however, only approximately 125 have been built.
- With the exception of Calhoun Square, retail vacancy in Uptown is very low (2.5%). Despite this low vacancy rate, turnover is very high. Space does not stay empty for long. Typically, there is another business waiting in line to test the market.
- There is very little office space in Uptown. It is in high demand. Only 4.6 percent of the office space is vacant, compared to approximately 15 to 20 percent in downtown Minneapolis.
- Uptown businesses capture considerable spending dollars from residents outside Uptown in restaurants, used merchandise, groceries, health and personal care, and alcoholic beverages.
- Uptown residents spend considerable dollars outside Uptown in the following categories: electronics, appliances, furniture, building materials, clothing, lawn and garden, and home furnishings.

For additional detail on demographics and the Market Study, please refer to the appendices.





---

## 6. Vision and Goals

## Uptown Vision

In November 2006, over 100 people attended visioning sessions to discuss their hopes and concerns for Uptown. Participants described the Uptown they want to see in the future. The Vision Statement below is a synthesis of the individual visions.

Uptown is a **welcoming** neighborhood, with a **diversity** of people, places, and architecture.

Uptown is a **green** community. Its buildings, streets, lakes, and parks form a green cityscape that contributes to a sustainable region.

Uptown looks and feels like no other place. It offers its own **urban character** with a dense, mixed-use core of new and old buildings surrounded by quiet, tree-lined neighborhoods.

Uptown is a **vibrant** center of activity where people gather throughout the day and into the evening.

Uptown is a car optional environment. Walking, cycling, and transit use are the preferred **transportation choices** of many residents and visitors.

Uptown has a rich social and architectural **history** that contributes to and sustains its unique character.

## Design Goal #1

Reinforce surrounding neighborhoods.

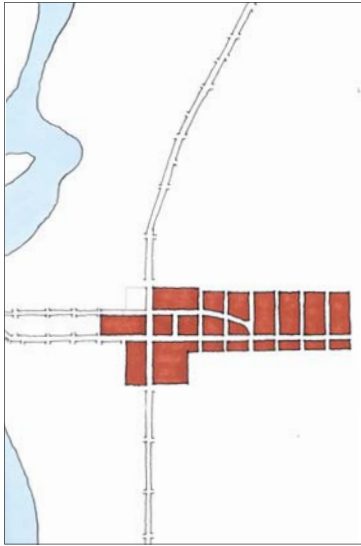


The neighborhoods surrounding Uptown are vital to its success. They contain a local customer base with significant buying power. Neighborhood stability requires support for neighborhood initiatives such as maintaining housing stock and improving local parks. Properties on the corridors must be designed to reinforce neighborhood edges. The goals are to:

- Strengthen neighborhood edges.
- Reinforce neighborhood uses by limiting commercial encroachment.
- Establish a high quality transition area, including green buffers between neighborhoods and surrounding uses.
- Improve streets for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit.
- Improve parking options.

## Design Goal #2

Create a dense mixed-use core.



The center of Uptown is strongly defined at the edges by an established residential pattern. Mixed-use development in this well-defined area will concentrate commercial, office, and entertainment activity at the core, and a healthy mix of business and commercial activity will bring complementary daytime population to the area. In addition, a residential component will connect existing neighborhoods and provide a smooth transition between them.

- Support high quality mixed-use commercial and residential development.
- Support a healthy mix of businesses.
- Increase the daytime population.

## Design Goal #3

Establish public open spaces that connect to the Greenway and the Lakes and encourage interaction and gathering.

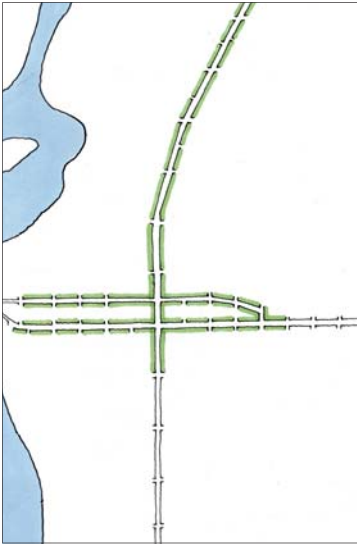


The Midtown Greenway and the Lakes are adjacent to Uptown. However, these significant public spaces are not well-connected or easily accessible, physically or visually, from the Uptown core. Better connections and accessibility will increase movement between and within these public spaces and the Uptown core. This, in turn, will improve the relationship between Uptown and its surroundings, and will allow Uptown to capitalize on the prominent public assets the larger area offers.

- Improve connections between the Midtown Greenway, the Lakes, and Uptown.
- Establish a central public gathering place.
- Establish a variety of smaller public urban spaces.
- Use green space to improve connectivity between amenities such as the Lakes and the Greenway and to preserve and improve air and water quality.

## Design Goal #4

Improve Hennepin, Lagoon, and Lake for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit.

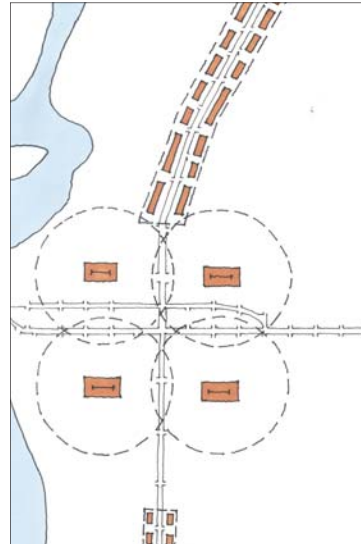


Uptown thrives because it supports alternative transportation options and because it is well-connected to regional routes and trail systems. However, sidewalk and street conditions in the Uptown core are inhospitable for walkers, cyclists, and transit riders. Investment that improves the public right-of-way by widening, greening, and otherwise activating sidewalks, adding bicycle lanes, and prioritizing transit, will contribute to a friendlier experience along these major Uptown routes. Furthermore, investment in human-scaled building frontage, or the interface between the public and private realm, will also improve the public experience.

- Reconnect the street and sidewalk network where feasible.
- Widen, green, or otherwise activate sidewalks.
- Prioritize transit.

## Design Goal #5

Improve and coordinate parking options.



Ample parking options exist in Uptown, but access, cost, and wayfinding challenges prevent visitors from using these parking options. A coordinated Uptown parking strategy that includes appropriately located structures and lots that are affordable, easy to find, and shared among all Uptown visitors regardless of their specific destinations, will alleviate parking pressures experienced by area residents, visitors, and workers. This strategy will address short (shoppers), medium (visitors), and long (employees) term needs.

- Establish a coordinated parking strategy.
- Improve access to parking areas.
- Address short-term, medium-term, and long-term users.



---

## 7. The Plan

## Overview

### The Neighborhoods and the Corridors

Uptown is a complex, diverse, dynamic, and unique place in the region. It is a community of constantly evolving commercial corridors surrounded by stable, quiet, pleasant residential neighborhoods.

Uptown neighborhoods continue to be desirable because of the Lakes, the pedestrian-oriented neighborhood streets, and the unique architecture. The corridors, on the other hand, have changed significantly. As the region grew and Uptown and the Lakes established themselves as regional attractions, the corridors expanded and intensified. Managing the transition between the stable residential neighborhoods and the ever-changing corridors is the essence of this Plan.

### Growth

An important premise of the Plan is to recognize that in order to maintain the high quality of life in the neighborhoods, change and growth must occur along the corridors. The growth must be orderly, predictable, and sustainable. It must build upon strengths, eliminate weaknesses, and be incremental. It must yield positive public benefits, make contributions to the public realm, and reinforce the local retail infrastructure. New development along the corridors must be both qualitatively and quantitatively additive. That is, growth on the corridors must increase economic vitality and density while at the same time improving the overall quality of the area with positive physical improvements.

As important as it is for Uptown to grow, it cannot do so in a sustainable manner without simultaneously stabilizing the edges of existing neighborhoods and creating new and improving existing public spaces. The area's public spaces and neighborhoods are, after all, the foundation for Uptown's quality of life and desirability. This Plan proposes specific patterns of new growth that can achieve the goals of providing development capacity while simultaneously stabilizing the neighborhoods and improving open spaces and streets.



**Development Opportunities:** Parking lots (orange) and properties with development proposals and interest (brown) are highlighted on the drawing above. The majority of likely development opportunities are located adjacent to the Greenway and north of Lake Street.



**Existing Conditions:** The Core of Uptown is underutilized. Surface parking lots and one-story buildings dominate the area of Uptown that is most accessible by transit.

Uptown's growth strategy has several components. They include:

- Focusing the most intense development in the Core of Uptown.
- Defining the edges of new growth, and shaping the edges of new growth such that transitions to the neighborhoods are clear and predictable.
- Shaping growth near the Lakes.
- Shaping new growth, height, and density in the Core such that it creates high quality public streets and green spaces.

### Focusing the Most Intense Development in the Core

The Plan proposes the majority of new growth to occur in the Core of Uptown (the Activity Center and the Urban Village). This area of Uptown can accommodate the most growth because there is ample vacant and underutilized land and it is the area of Uptown best served by transit.

### Defining the Edges of New Growth

The Plan carefully manages the edges of new growth such that transitions to the neighborhoods are predictable. Areas north of the Greenway and south of Lake Street will be carefully designed to

preserve the valuable residential qualities of the adjacent neighborhoods.

### Shaping Growth Near the Lakes

Growth near the lakes has been a community concern. This plan encourages future development to be in keeping with the existing scale and respect the intent of the Shoreland Overlay District (a zoning overlay district that adds additional requirements for development within 1000 feet of water bodies throughout the state). On occasion, variances and conditional use permits within the Shoreland Overlay District may be appropriate, but this Plan attempts to avoid conflicting guidance, and suggests that more intense growth is more appropriate in the Activity Center and Urban Village (South Sub-Area).

### Shaping New Growth in the Core

The Plan proposes guidelines for how new growth in the Core should be shaped such that it creates high-quality public spaces. The Plan recommends stepping buildings back on the upper floors on the south sides of Lake Street, Lagoon Avenue, and the Greenway in order to help create an active green public realm. Taller portions of buildings should be stepped back so that their height does not substantially shadow public spaces.

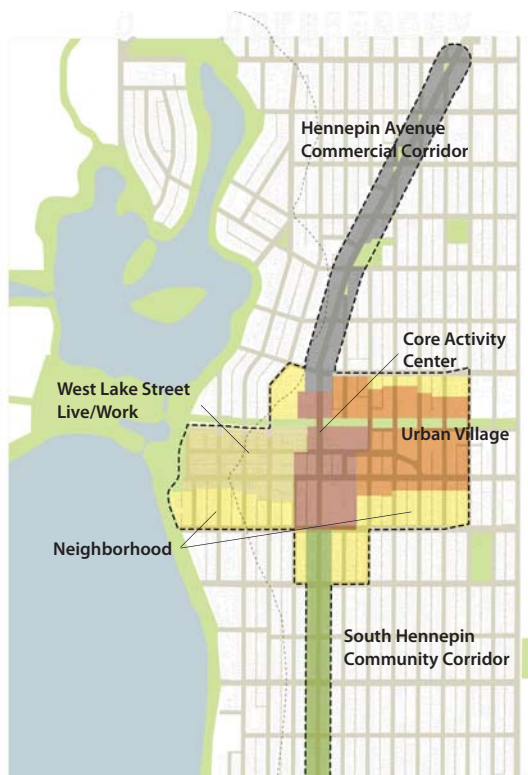


**Proposed Build-out:** The Core of Uptown will become primarily a mid-rise mixed-use district. New development is concentrated between the north edge of the Greenway and Lake Street.

## Character Areas

Another important premise of this Plan is to recognize that change and growth should be informed by its context and surroundings. To this end, the Plan recommends six different Character Areas for Uptown:

- Activity Center
- Urban Village (North and South Sub-Areas)
- Neighborhood
- Hennepin Avenue Commercial Corridor
- West Lake Street Live/Work
- South Hennepin Community Corridor



**Character Areas:** Future growth in Uptown should be diverse and varied, yet appropriate to its context.

Each Character Area has a different economic niche, land use pattern, circulation needs, and range of building types, open space, and frontage types. The purpose of defining the different Character Areas is to reinforce the varied urban character of Uptown. Defining the Character Areas helps promote orderly development that is qualitatively and quantitatively additive.

The drawings contained in this Plan are illustrations of ideas. They are not development proposals. The illustrations were produced over the length of the Planning Process. The purpose is to help the reader understand the possible outcomes of the Plan.



Hennepin Avenue Commercial Corridor



Activity Center and the Urban Village (South Sub-Area)



West Lake Street Live/Work

**New Development:** Development in the corridors should be appropriately scaled to its context.





**Illustrative Master Plan:** The drawing above illustrates development potential (orange) in Uptown and the recommended public realm improvements.



Future opportunities to interface with the Greenway at the Transit Center.



Girard Meander

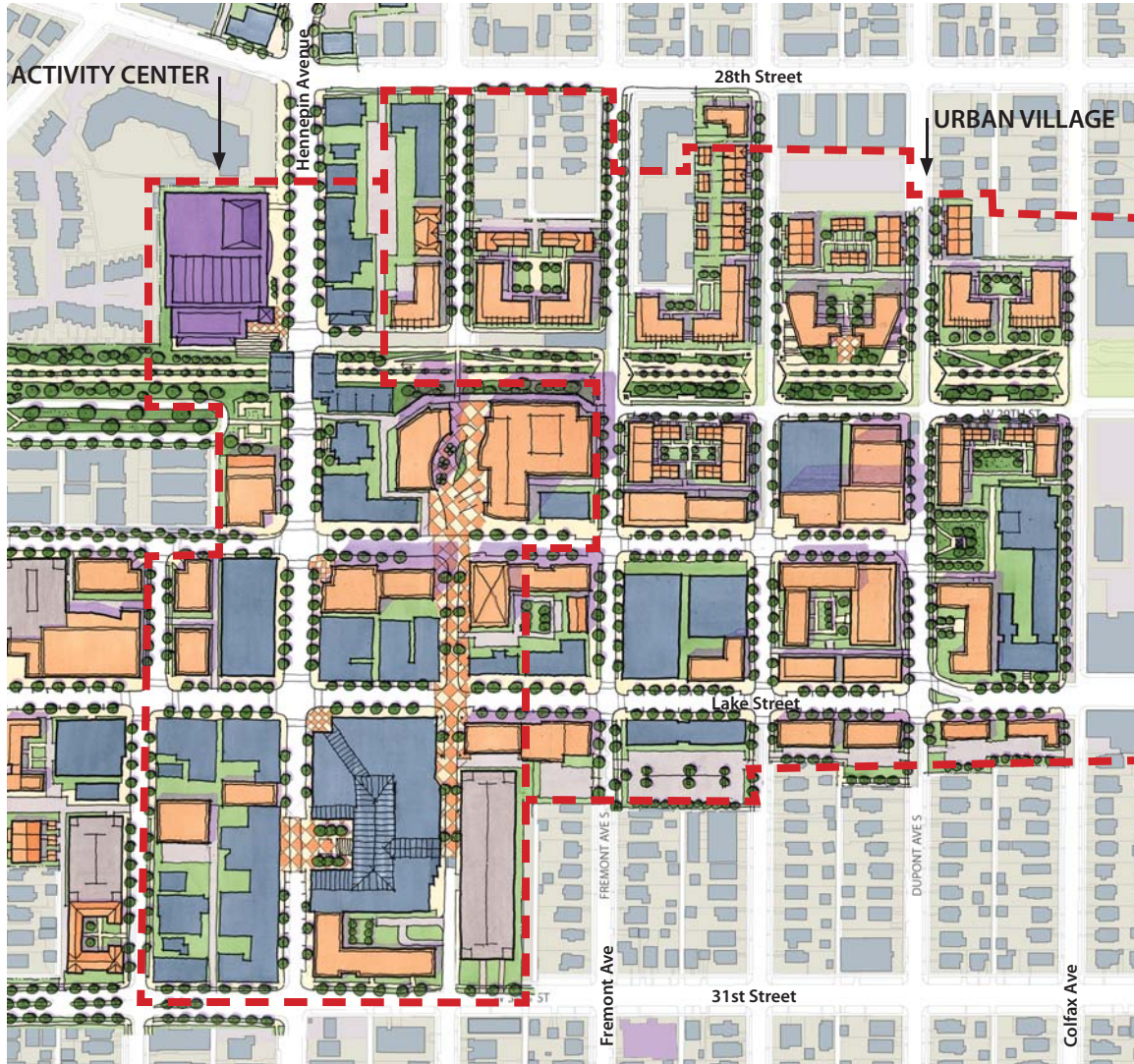


Calhoun Square Atrium



West Lake Street Promenade

The Core: The Activity Center and the Urban Village



The Core: Growth in Uptown will be focused on the Core (The Activity Center and the Urban Village). The Core represents a fraction of the overall area.

4 Neighborhoods:	1000 acres
Study Area:	123 acres
Core:	12 acres

## Activity Center

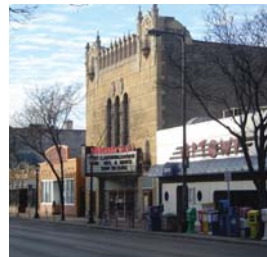
The Core of Uptown should remain at Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street. The Activity Center should be mixed-use, containing entertainment, hotels, restaurants, shopping, and destination uses, as well as (local and national) retailers on the ground floor of all buildings. Upper floors should contain residential and office uses. Regional attractions and evening-oriented uses should be concentrated in the Activity Center.

The Activity Center will be a vibrant area with broad sidewalks and an active street life consisting of both a high volume of pedestrians and vehicles. The activity from both will create an energetic urban district.

The Activity center currently contains mostly two-story buildings. However two large scale projects, Calhoun Square and Mozaic, have received approvals for buildings 6 to 9 stories (Calhoun Square) and 8 to 10 stories (Mozaic). This Plan suggests that these are signature buildings. Buildings three to five stories would be sensitive to the existing conditions and provide transitions to approved taller buildings. In some locations on major corridors buildings up to 84' may be permitted.



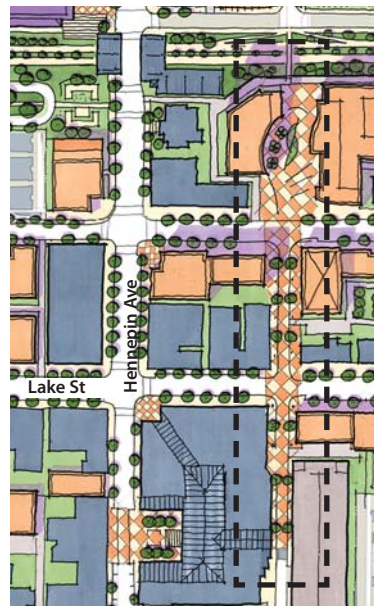
**Core Activity Center:** A redeveloped, urban-oriented Calhoun Square should remain an anchor in Uptown.



**Core Activity Center:** The center of Uptown is a mix of entertainment and shopping uses.

The Plan recommends increasing daytime population by encouraging office developments in the Activity Center. Non-Residential developments will provide employment and economic development opportunities for established businesses and new entrepreneurs alike. A greater number of employees in Uptown will also lend market support to existing retail uses and restaurants.

A redeveloped Calhoun Square should remain the anchor for Uptown and the Activity Center. The Plan recommends Calhoun Square continue to house restaurants and regional shopping attractions. However, the Plan recommends the new Calhoun Square introduce housing and offices onto the property, assuring the 100 percent corner of Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street remain active around the clock. Commercial development on the site should be located toward Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue. Building height should be toward the core of the Activity Center and the existing neighborhood scale on Fremont Avenue and 31st Street should be respected.



**Girard Meander:** Girard Avenue, connecting Mozaic to Calhoun Square, will become an active pedestrian street, closed to traffic on evenings and weekends.

**Precedent Images:** The Core of Uptown will be transformed with high quality public spaces: plazas, wide sidewalks, pedestrian friendly streets, and all season gathering places.

The redeveloped Calhoun Square should also remain a community anchor by redesigning the internal corridor as a public atrium, forecourt or courtyard. The new gathering space should be programmed and designed to accommodate a range of users, including families. The Plan recommends the new Calhoun Square be more urban and interactive by opening directly onto the sidewalks (whenever possible) and creating common spaces that encourage gathering and interaction for residents and visitors alike throughout the seasons.

Anticipating increased pedestrian activity in the area, the Plan recommends developing a strong pedestrian link between the north side of the Greenway and Calhoun Square along Girard Avenue. Such a connection can be realized in many ways. With the possibility of a redeveloped Calhoun Square and the Plaza at Mozaic, the Girard Avenue entrance to Calhoun Square should be emphasized for evening use. Girard Avenue should be redesigned as the Girard Meander, a pedestrian spine between the Greenway, Mozaic and Calhoun Square. The Girard Meander should become a festive public space that, like the main streets of Uptown, is animated with pedestrians walking from Calhoun Square to Mozaic and the Greenway. Girard Avenue should remain a vehicular street but should be designed to be closed, on occasion, on weekends and evenings or for special events.

Hennepin Avenue between Lake Street and 31st Street can become an important and unique public space in Uptown. Unlike Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue (north of Lake Street) it is a narrow retail street with relatively low traffic volumes. The Plan recommends taking advantage of these unique features by designing the street as a human scaled shopping street with wider sidewalks and pedestrian amenities. The street should be designed to be closed on occasion for festivals, events, and markets. Consideration should be given to widening sidewalks and removing some on-street parking to create additional streetscapes and space for outdoor dining and cafes.



**Hennepin Avenue and Calhoun Square:** By redeveloping Calhoun Square and orienting its interior retail space to Hennepin Avenue, a new public gathering space can be created. The Plan recommends opening Calhoun Square to Hennepin Avenue with a courtyard, forecourt or atrium. Hennepin Avenue, between 31st Street and Lake Street, should be redesigned as well to become Uptown's primary public space. It could be closed occasionally (or regularly) for street fairs, markets, and events.

Many existing older urban buildings in Uptown should remain, as many are high quality and contribute to the character and quality of the area. New development will be located primarily on existing parking lots and on properties with low value one-story single-use buildings. Older buildings that contribute to the unique character of Uptown, such as the Rainbow Building and Magers and Quinn, Suburban World Theatre, (and several buildings on North Hennepin Commercial Corridor) should be protected and encouraged to be improved as investment pressures increase.

During this planning process the YWCA and Walker Library contemplated a joint development on the YWCA site. This project has been tabled, but opportunities exist in the future to create a signature gathering space at these sites which are key because of their proximity to both the transit center on Hennepin Avenue as well as rail transit in the Greenway. Connections to the Greenway and the creation of an additional gathering space should be explored when future development is proposed. A premier front door to Uptown from the Greenway could be provided with a gathering space here at the below-grade Greenway level where it could be seen and experienced by Greenway trail and transit users.

Improving transit connections, parking strategies, and the general quality of the pedestrian experience is critical to the success of Uptown, particularly in the Core. Whether arriving by transit, bike, or car, everyone in the Core becomes a pedestrian. Therefore the Plan recommends wider sidewalks and pedestrian amenities wherever possible. Over time, the Plan recommends a series of modestly scaled parking structures throughout the Core to intercept visitors and encourage a park once and walk approach.

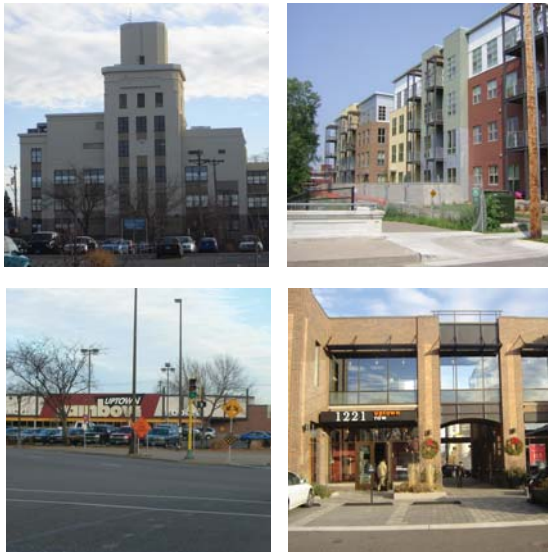
Transit will become critical to the Core of Uptown as the Plan supports transit in the Greenway, streetcars on Hennepin Avenue, and investments in a circulator connecting the Lake, the Core of Uptown, and Lyn/Lake.

## Urban Village

The Urban Village should be a dense district with a variety of building heights. The Urban Village presents the most future development opportunities in all of Uptown as it currently contains a proliferation of surface parking lots, vacant properties, aging industrial uses, and one-story single-use buildings, and its proximity and access to open space amenities and existing (and future) transit.

### Infrastructure

The basic street grid should remain intact, however the Plan suggests that high-quality development in this area requires improvements to the streets, in particular improvements to Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue. To this end, the Plan recommends improvements that will slow traffic, widen sidewalks, and improve pedestrian conditions without impacting the overall through-put of the streets. The Plan also recommends examining the feasibility of converting streets back to two-way as additional measures to creating pedestrian friendly streets. (Additional discussion is included in the Plan Elements Section of this Plan).



**Urban Village:** Currently, the area is a mix of under utilized properties, historic buildings, and new urban redevelopment.

The most significant infrastructure improvement will be the creation of The West Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue promenade (described in detail in the West Lake Street Section). The Promenade should extend from the Lake, east through Urban Village to Bryant Street. The Plan recommends narrowing both Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue and improving the quality of the sidewalks in order to create the Promenade.

### Development Patterns

Development Patterns north of the Greenway should be different from those south of the Greenway. North of the Greenway, new development should be residential only as the purpose should be to infill underutilized properties with high and medium density housing that transitions to the neighborhood. South of the Greenway will be high density mixed-use development.

The Urban Village has a variety of existing building types. Some buildings are one-story and auto oriented, whereas other buildings like the Buzza Building are much taller. As in the Activity Center, buildings three to five stories can provide transitions and taller buildings may be appropriate along major corridors.



New development south of the Greenway should be encouraged to maintain the existing community-oriented retail, by incorporating those uses into new, more dense, urban buildings. Restaurants are permitted in the Urban Village (south sub-area) but other evening uses such as night clubs and hotels should be located in the Activity Center. The Plan recommends this area be redeveloped with varied building heights. The street wall should be continuous but varied. For all new developments, special attention should be paid to the transitions to the neighborhoods north of the Greenway and South of Lake Street.

Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue should contain mixed-use buildings. The Urban Village will reinforce the commercial patterns on Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue by lining these streets with active storefronts. Sidewalks should be widened (especially, the north side of the street) and be active places where people can walk, eat, and enjoy the urban character of Uptown.



**Precedent Photos:** The Urban Village will contain a mix of uses in buildings typically ranging from three to five stories, with the possibility of a few taller buildings on select sites.



**Urban Village Illustrative Plan:** Single story commercial buildings and surface parking lots should be redeveloped. Retail should line Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue. Residential uses should be oriented to north-south streets and the Greenway.



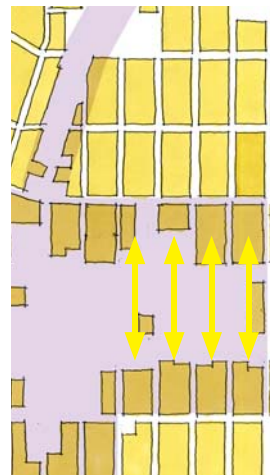
The gap in the urban fabric between CARAG and Lowry Hill East should be repaired by extending residential uses on the north and south streets (Dupont, Emerson, and Fremont Avenues). North-south streets should also be considered for smaller scale low cost retail space.

The Greenway will be an important component of the Urban Village. New high-density housing should line the north side of the Greenway and extend to approximately mid-block between 28th Street and the Greenway. Buildings north of the Greenway should be of a smaller scale than those south of the Greenway in order to provide transitions into the lower density residential areas (see page 76). Buildings on the Greenway should either engage the Greenway at the lower level or they should be set back 15' at the street level of the Greenway to create a promenade.

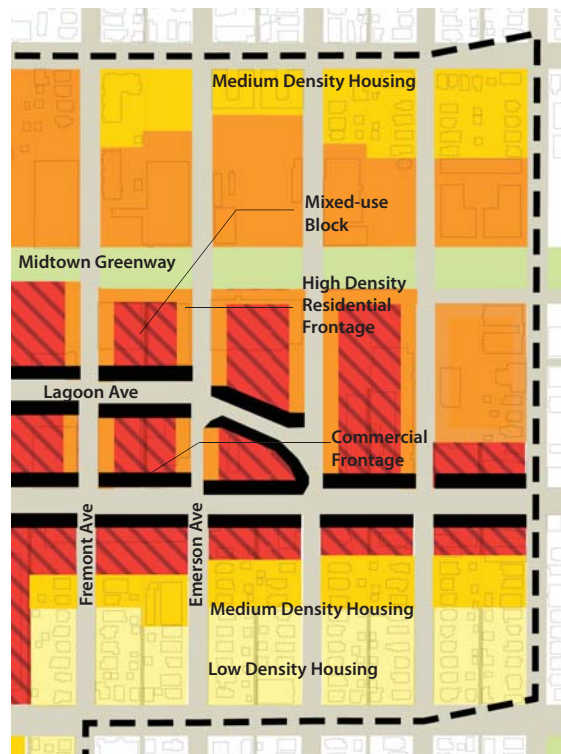
Further north of the Greenway, on the half block south of 28th Street, efforts should be made to preserve the existing residential fabric of small apartments and single family homes. New development should be sensitive to the scale of these buildings as new development approaches the existing neighborhood. Infill development should be medium density housing, while remaining low-scale, similar to the Track 29 project under construction.

The blocks on the south edge of the Greenway should contain townhouses and apartments and lofts facing the Greenway. They should be scaled to minimize shadowing on the Greenway. Internal raised courtyards and terraced buildings should maximize views of the Greenway and density without overwhelming it with scale. 29th Street should be extended along the south edge of the Greenway wherever possible to assure the Greenway has a public edge.

Larger apartments and mixed-use buildings should be located along Lagoon Avenue and Lake Street. Properties with existing community oriented



**Residential on North-South Streets:** Throughout Minneapolis, the north/south street are typically lined with neighborhood housing. The gap between neighborhoods can be stitched together by extending residential uses along the north/south streets.

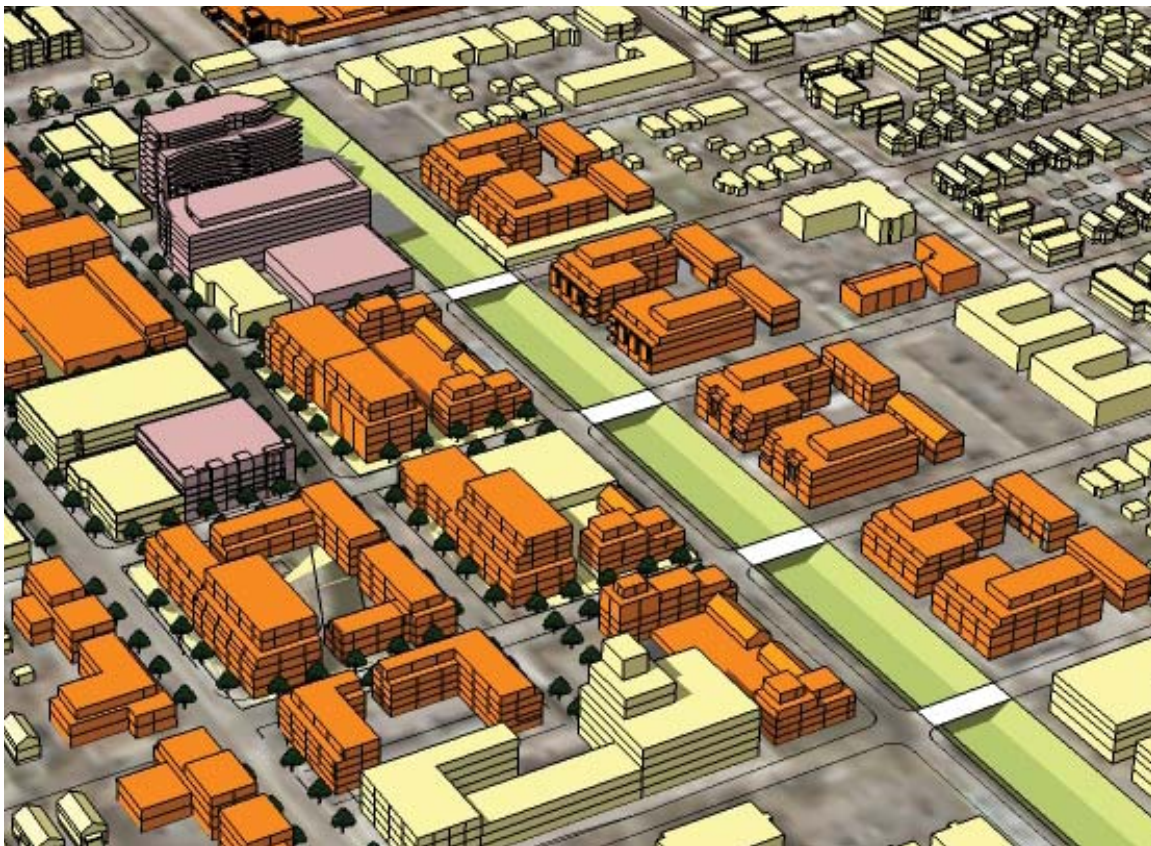


**Mixed-use Blocks:** Within the Core, most blocks should contain a mix of uses. The Plan recommends reinforcing retail along Lagoon Avenue and Lake Street and reinforcing residential uses on the north-south streets.

uses, such as the Rainbow grocery store, should be encouraged to rebuild on their existing sites (with additional density) as they provide important community services. New development on Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue should contain upper floor offices as well as residential uses.

closer to Lake Street, with greater density than currently exists, and with a scale and form similar to existing houses. This Plan supports the goals of improving the neighborhood's relationship to Lake Street by accommodating such changes.

The south edge of Lake Street should intensify with mixed-use development. The new development should have retail at grade, on Lake Street, but should transition in height as it turns the corner and approaches the existing neighborhood. The CARAG neighborhood envisions the block between Lake and 31st Street as an appropriate plan for some new "lifestyle" (medium density, low maintenance, and compact) housing, particularly



**Conceptual Build-Out:** The Urban Village will become a dense mixed-use district. Buildings will be sited and designed to create high-quality streets and public spaces.

### Midtown Greenway



Illustrative Master Plan: New Development will create a mixed-use district in the Core of Uptown.



Section AA: Midtown Greenway: Buildings on the north side of the Greenway should either engage the Greenway at the lower level with workspaces and residences or should be set back on the upper level to create a public edge and overlooks.

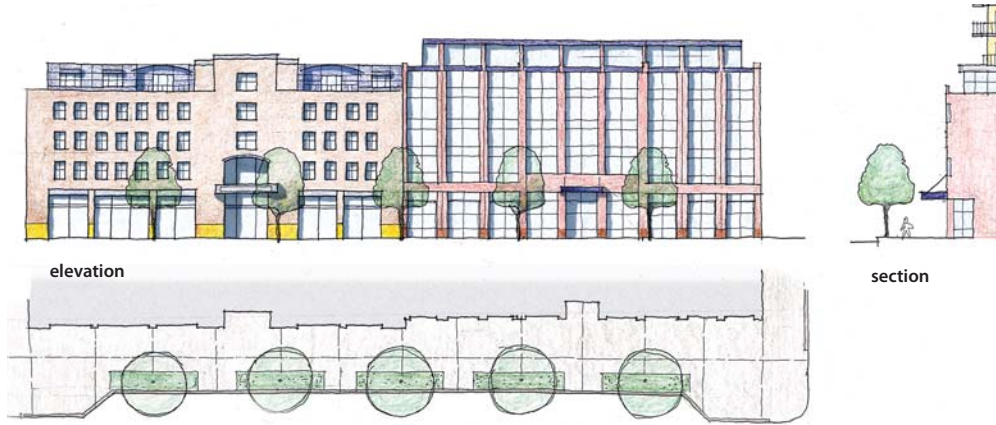


Section BB: North edge of Midtown Greenway

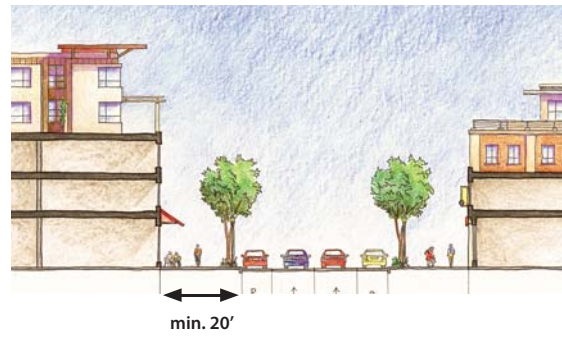


Perspective

### Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue

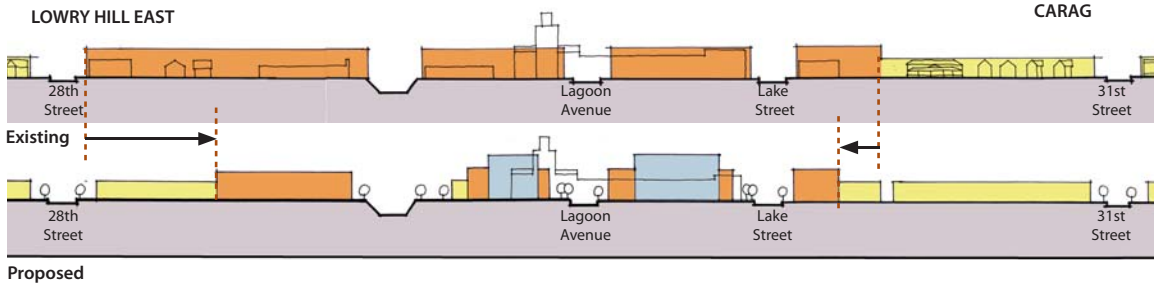


**Activity Center and the Urban Village:** New Development will consist of higher density housing, offices and retail uses.



**Lagoon Avenue and Lake Street, looking east:** Lagoon Avenue should become an urban street with mixed-use buildings. Buildings should contain step backs on their upper floors to permit sunlight to the street. Sidewalks should be broad and active with retail/commercial uses.

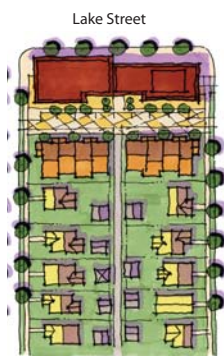
### Neighborhood Transitions to the North and South



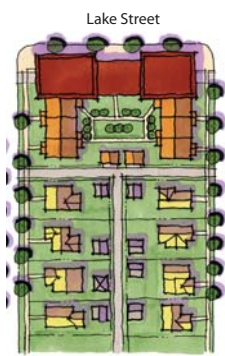
**Neighborhood Transitions and Building Height:** Buildings will be sculpted to create development capacity in the Core while still preserving neighborhoods and creating high quality public realm.



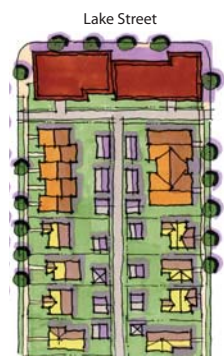
**Building Scale:** Buildings step down in scale as they transition from the mixed-use core to the neighborhoods



CARAG Lane



Courtyard and Accessory Buildings



Step Down in Building Scale



Alley and Landscaping (least preferred, requires extensive landscaping)

**A Menu of Strategies:** Transitions to the neighborhoods can occur in a variety of ways. Above are four strategies that will create a clean transition from the mixed-use core to the residential neighborhoods.

## South Hennepin Community Corridor

South Hennepin Avenue, between 31st Street and 36th Street, is the portion of the study area least affected by development pressures. Traffic volumes decrease significantly south of 31st Street; accordingly, Hennepin Avenue becomes a Community Corridor, consisting of primarily residential structures south of 31st Street. This stretch of Hennepin Avenue developed as a streetcar line and therefore contains a few commercial and mixed-use buildings at corners where the streetcar used to stop. These buildings remain today as they house neighborhood specialty retail, coffee shops, and small scale service retail.



**South Hennepin Community Corridor:** South of 31st Street, Hennepin Avenue is residential in character with occasional corner stores

Over the past decade, several residential homes have been converted to service retail uses between 31st Street and 33rd Street. Such conversions have not been detrimental to the neighborhood as they generally have preserved and adapted existing structures and introduced low-impact commercial uses (small offices and service retail uses) into what was predominantly a residential corridor.

The existing scale at Hennepin Avenue South of 31st street is primarily 1.5 to 3.0 story buildings. This height is appropriate for future development as well.

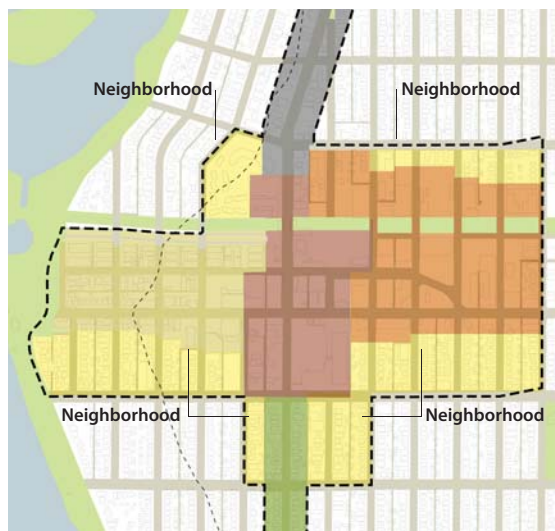
The Plan recommends this portion of Hennepin Avenue remain a Community Corridor. The Plan recommends the future of this area be marked by incremental low-impact changes that maintain the residential buildings and support innovative adaptations to them such that they remain financially viable in the future.

## Uptown Neighborhoods

The study area for this Plan intentionally extended a few blocks into the neighborhoods in selected locations. The purpose of extending the study into the neighborhoods is to define the transition between the neighborhoods and commercial areas. The Plan defines five mixed-use character areas. The sixth character area, the Neighborhood Character Area, is single-use - residential only. Investments in these areas should focus on maintaining, preserving, and improving the residential character. Any new construction should be in keeping with the prevailing scale of the neighborhood. Development adjacent to this character area should step down in scale so as to facilitate the transition.



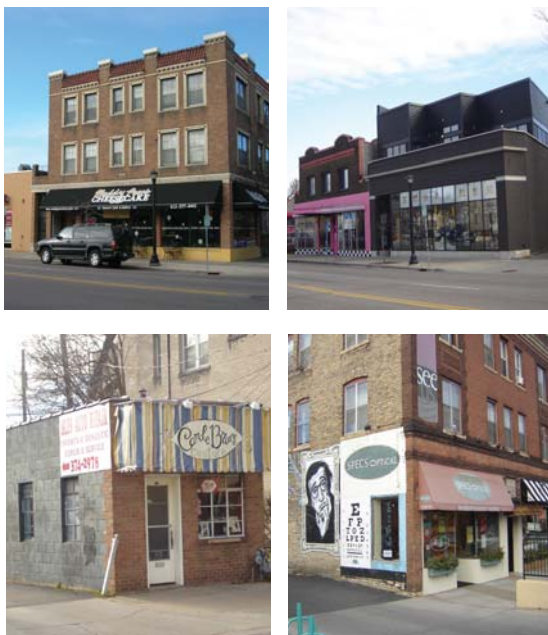
**Uptown Neighborhoods:** The Plan preserves neighborhood scale and fabric where it is at risk.



## Hennepin Avenue Commercial Corridor

Hennepin Avenue between Franklin Avenue and 28th Street should continue to develop as a commercial corridor. It will be characterized by medium density housing containing street-level retail, and residences and small offices above. The retail and commercial uses should be mostly neighborhood and community oriented. Triangular blocks and parcels will yield relatively small footprint buildings, with relatively small stores and offices.

The existing scale of buildings ranges from one to three stories. Many single-story retail buildings, especially those that do not face the street and have a suburban character, should be replaced, over time, with more urban buildings – buildings that face the street and have parking behind. Local serving auto-oriented uses such as auto repair shops should be supported; however, property owners are encouraged to design their properties to be pedestrian friendly. Properties that extend from Hennepin Avenue to a parallel neighborhood street should be redeveloped with residential uses on the neighborhood street and mixed-use on Hennepin



**Hennepin Avenue:** The strengths of Hennepin Avenue lie in its eclectic mix of stores, neighborhood services, and architectural styles.

Avenue (see following page). Private parking for all new developments should be either underground, at the rear of the property, or in a surface lot in the interior of the block. On-street parking will remain critical to the existing businesses as it represents the accessible and visible parking. Reducing curb cuts will maximize on-street parking, improve pedestrian safety, improve traffic flow, and create opportunities for new infill development.

Parking and circulation should be improved on many blocks on the west side of Hennepin Avenue by combining rear parking lots wherever possible and connecting them to side streets. This will allow vehicles to access parking areas by side streets, not mid block; thereby increasing on-street parking, reducing or eliminating the need for mid-block left turns, and, in places, creating new development parcels.



**Illustrative Plan of Hennepin Avenue Main Street:** Hennepin Avenue will continue to mature with new urban oriented buildings replacing suburban strip centers. Potential near term development opportunities are shown in orange.



New developments should create a strong urban street wall of two to four stories. Greater height will be rare given the small parcels and triangular block patterns. However, on larger blocks taller buildings may rise to 84 feet mid-block and along Hennepin Avenue. The ground floor should contain either storefronts, common entries to apartment buildings, or stoops to townhouses. Where the sidewalk is less than ten feet wide, buildings should be set back from the property five to eight feet in order to widen the sidewalk and allow for outdoor seating, small plazas, and forecourts. In the short term, bus facilities and operations should be improved at key intersections by relocating bus stops to more efficient and comfortable locations and integrating them into new developments. There is the potential for buses to one day be removed from Hennepin Avenue and be replaced with streetcars.



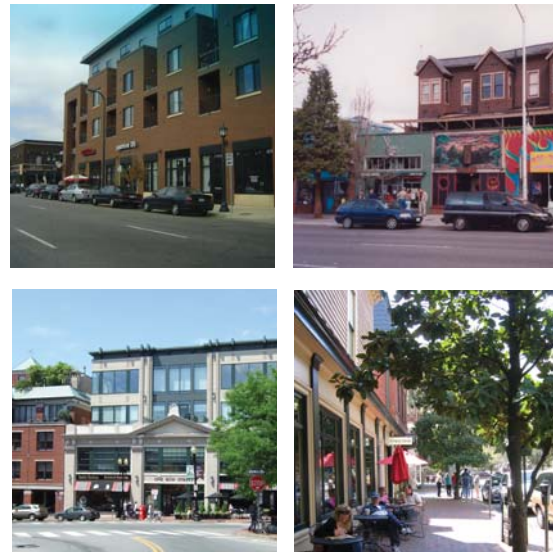
existing: multiple curb cuts, individual parking lots

proposed: connected parking

**Connected Parking:** Where possible, the Plan recommends private property owners coordinate their rear parking lots, thereby improving access and circulation and creating opportunities for infill development. Refer to Plan Elements Section for identification of blocks where connected parking is possible.



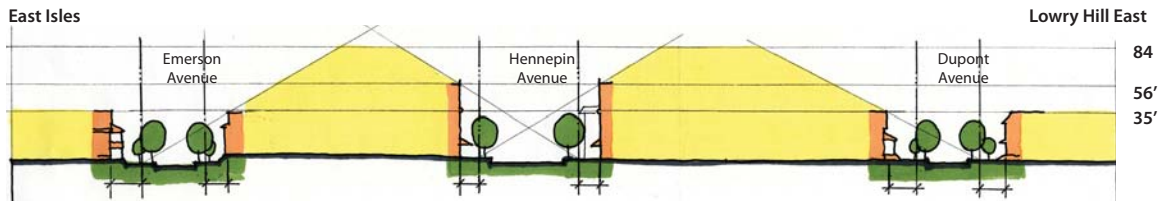
**Infill Development:** New development should be mixed-use with commercial uses on Hennepin Avenue and residential uses on neighborhood streets as shown in these case study examples.



**Precedent Photographs:** Due to the unique parcel arrangements and block structure, Hennepin Avenue should evolve incrementally and organically consisting of renovations, additions, and new mixed-use development.



Existing Height Limits per Base Zoning



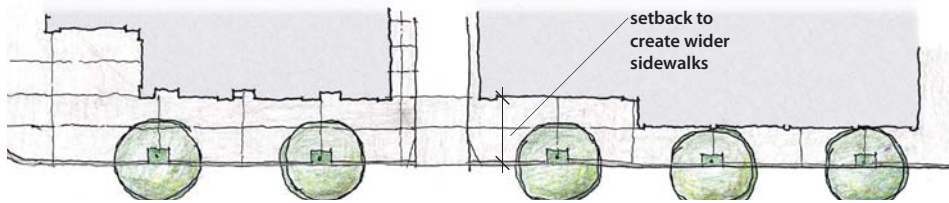
Proposed Building Envelope

**Neighborhood Transitions:** Currently, the zoning code permits six stories or 84 foot buildings on selected neighborhood blocks, but restricts Hennepin Avenue buildings to two stories or 35 feet and four stories or 56 feet. Through a combination of select rezoning and good individual building designs, the Plan recommends preserving neighborhood scaled streets in the neighborhoods (maximum 35 feet) while allowing greater height mid-block (between Hennepin Avenue and the north/south neighborhood street)



elevation

section  
setback to create wider sidewalks



plan

**Sample Infill Buildings:** New development on Hennepin Avenue should have storefronts facing the street. Buildings should be set back five to eight feet from the property line in order to create a wider sidewalk with pedestrian amenities. Additions and renovations to older buildings are encouraged as incremental improvements.

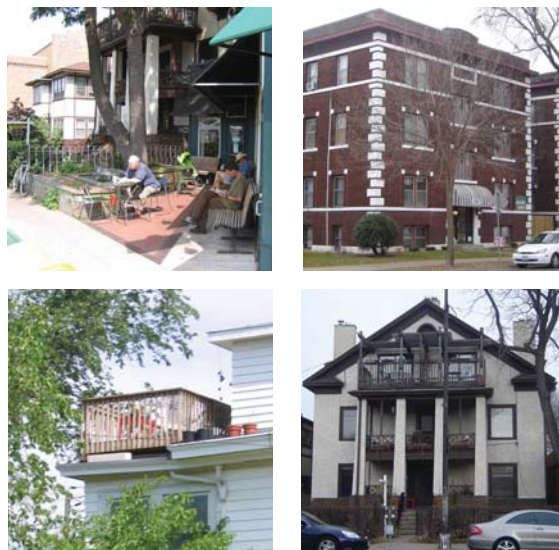
## West Lake Street Live/Work

West Lake St. and Lagoon Ave. between James Ave. and the Lakes should continue to develop as a mixed-use live/work area. West Lake Street (80' right of way) should be transformed into a promenade street with extensive landscaping, broad sidewalks, and narrower travel lanes. The promenade will facilitate bicycle and pedestrian movement between the Lakes and the Core of Uptown and will provide open space for outdoor gathering and seating festivals and events. This Plan offers several options for a promenade. The sidewalk on the south side of the street should be widened to a minimum of 15 feet. The street can be symmetrical, or a wide promenade (24 feet) can be located on the north side of the street to maximize sun exposure.

Lagoon Ave has a narrower right of way (60 feet) than West Lake Street with sidewalks as narrow as 6 feet. Lagoon Avenue, therefore will not afford the same promenade options as West Lake Street. Nonetheless, lane widths, lane configurations, and on-street parking should be examined and possibly narrowed in order to slow traffic and widen sidewalks. Eliminating parking on one side of West lake Street and narrowing lane widths would afford a total of 17' of sidewalk space that can be

distributed to both sides of the street. Selective curb extensions would increase the pedestrian space to 23'.

Live/work opportunities are relatively limited per the current zoning code. This issue should be examined in the future in order to create a live/work district that permits more opportunities to live and



**West Lake Street:** West Lake Street is a Live/Work area with lake related commerce and a mix of building types. Many buildings in the area seek views of the lakes with balconies, terraces, roof gardens, etc.



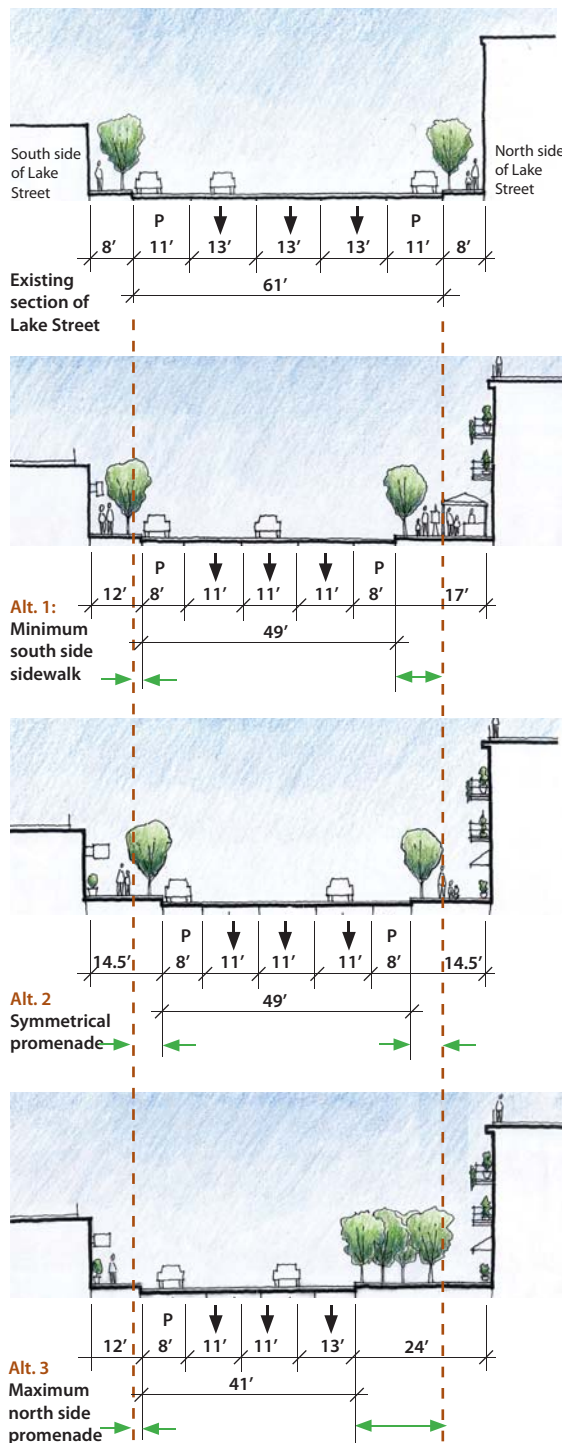
**West Lake Street Live/Work District Illustrative Master Plan:** The new Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue promenades will change the image of these two important roads. The Plan recommends new development be primarily residential with workspaces, galleries, and small lake related commercial uses.

work in the same building. New development should resemble the current scale of buildings in the area. Over time single family homes between Lake St. and the Mall/Greenway will likely be redeveloped as small apartments or live/work buildings. In some cases, matching the scale of existing buildings will result in buildings taller than the 30 feet limit mandated by the Shoreland Overlay District (which extends 1000 feet from the Lakes to approximately Irving Avenue). To respect the intent of that ordinance, building heights should gradually step down from Irving Avenue (matching the height of the Sons of Norway Building, approximately 55 feet) towards the Lake (35 feet). Buildings on the north side of Lake St., should be set back and activate the street with forecourts, patios and galleries. Buildings on the south side should contain residential entrances and limited retail uses and be carefully integrated into the existing residential fabric by stepping down in scale as they approach existing residential buildings on the side streets.

Buildings on West Lake Street should be intentionally eclectic and diverse. Like other buildings around the Lakes, the new buildings on West Lake Street are encouraged to have balconies, roof terraces, large bay windows, and tower rooms in order to capture views of the lake and the promenade. Buildings should range in style and expression.



**Precedent Photographs:** West Lake Street should contain a broad promenade containing live/work buildings of eclectic and varied styles.



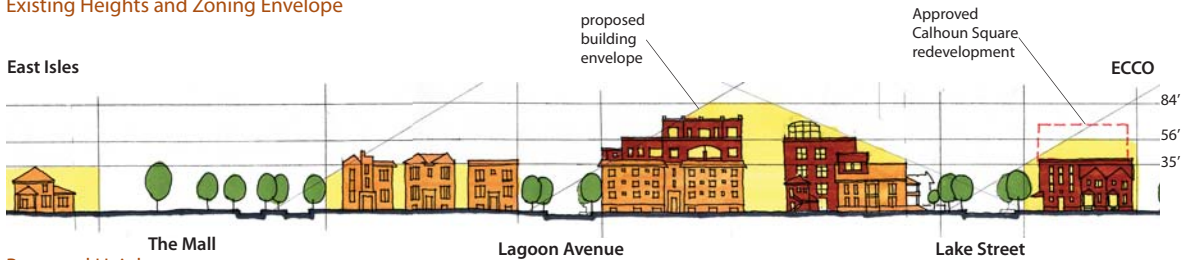
**Lake Street Promenade:** By reducing lane widths, Lake Street can offer an enhanced pedestrian realm and increased open space. The drawings above illustrate three possibilities for improving West Lake Street. (Note: the above lane widths match the East Lake Street reconstruction, and 8' parking required a variance)



**New Development on West Lake Street:** New development should be dense but low in scale, respecting the Shoreland Overlay District. New live/work buildings should be eclectic in style, containing tower rooms, roof gardens, balconies, and terraces oriented to the Lakes. Forecourts and patios should line the street.



Existing Heights and Zoning Envelope



Proposed Heights

**Neighborhood Transitions:** The single-family neighborhoods north of the Mall and south of Lake Street will not be impacted by new dense development along Lagoon Avenue and Lake Street. New development should step down to the neighborhoods and up to mid block between Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue. The illustration to the right describes how this may occur on one case study site located on West Lake Street.





---

## 8. Plan Elements

## Introduction

This section of the Plan separates concepts from the previous section of the Plan into their functional urban components: Built Form, Open Space, and Access. The purpose of delayering the recommendations is to understand how they relate to each other as well as to other elements. This section is intended to be used by investors, developers, city staff, and neighborhoods as they seek direction for how to incrementally implement the Plan.

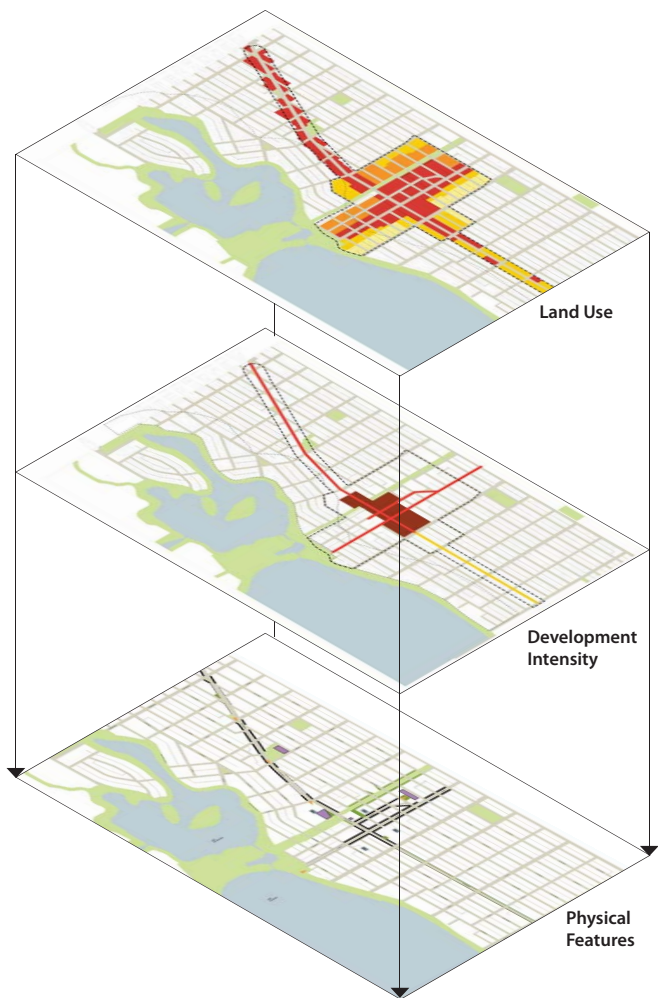
These Plan elements are intentionally interrelated. They offer investors and implementers of the Plan a means of separating out their specialty or one component of the Plan.



**Built Form:** Land use patterns, and the arrangement of buildings and their component parts contribute to the making of memorable and identifiable urban places. The photos above, while showing buildings taller than encouraged in Uptown, nonetheless illustrate important urban design concepts of stepping buildings and wide generous sidewalks.

## 9.1 Built Form

Built Form consists of three layers: Land Use, Development Intensity, and Physical Features. These three sub-layers fully describe how buildings will shape the public realm in Uptown. Investors, developers, neighborhoods, and City Staff are encouraged to use these three layers together as they implement the Plan.



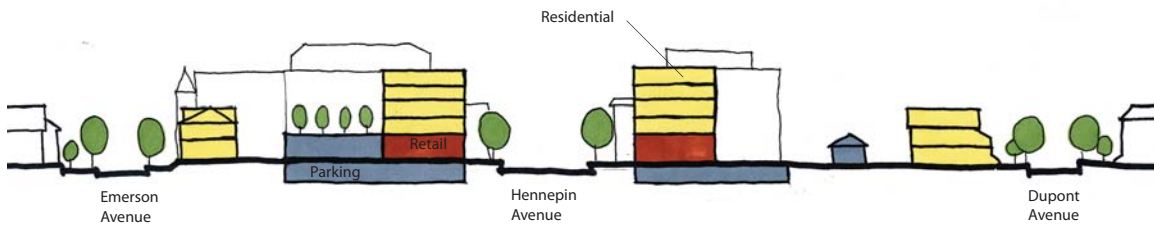
Physical  
Features

Development  
Intensity

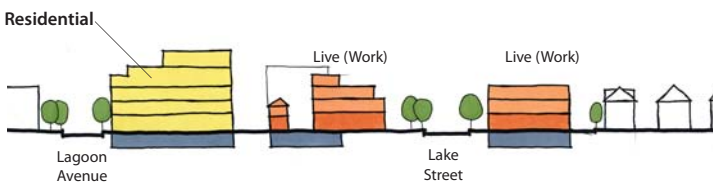
Land Use

### Land Use

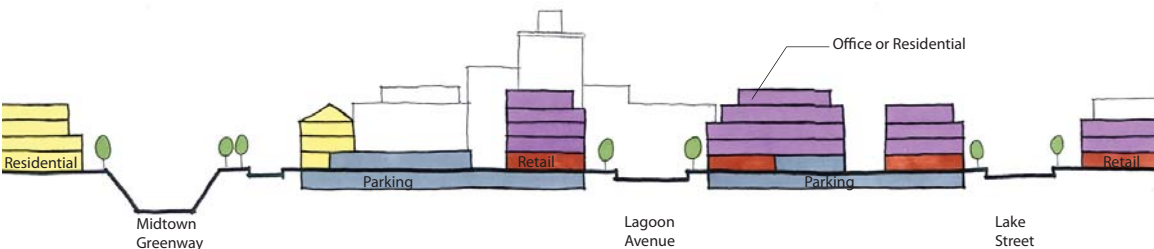
Uptown is, and will remain, a mixed-use area. This Plan clarifies land use patterns by concentrating retail activities at key locations on Hennepin Avenue and along Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue (east of Hennepin and east of James Avenue). The Plan recommends vertically mixing land uses throughout much of Uptown. The ground floor should contain active uses, typically retail (however, other uses are acceptable), while upper floors should contain offices or residential uses.



**Section AA (Hennepin Avenue at Franklin Avenue):** The Main Street character of Hennepin Avenue should be reinforced with medium density mixed-use buildings. Most should contain retail at grade and residential or small offices above. Residential at grade is acceptable if located mid-block.



**Section BB (West Lake Street at Irving Avenue):** The West Lake Street Live/Work District should contain apartments, lofts and live/work buildings. Small scale retail related to the arts or to lake/recreational activities is acceptable on corners.



**Section CC (Urban Village at Emerson Avenue):** The Urban Village should contain multi-story buildings with parking beneath. Retail should line Lagoon Avenue and Lake Street.



## Density

The Land Use Plan defines three different housing densities. Housing density is the measurement of the number of units per acre of a particular project. Defining densities is important because it helps establish consumer markets and demands for public investments such as transit and open space, as well as private investments such as retail and entertainment.



**High Density Housing: Mid Rise**  
(50 to 120 units/acre; R6 and C3A zoning) Note: R6 allows 6 stories; C3A allows 4 stories "by right"; CUP is required for additional stories



**High Density Housing: Low Rise**  
(50 to 120 units/acre; R4, R5, C1, C2, OR2 zoning)



**Medium Density Housing**  
(20 to 50 units/acre; R3, R4, C1 zoning)



**Low Density Housing**  
(<20 units/acre; R1, R1A, R2, R2B zoning)

### Height, the Zoning Code, and Community Preference

Each zoning category in the zoning code contains height and density standards as well as regulations related to what kind of uses are permitted. In mixed-use and multiple family residential zoning districts, there are three height standards depending on the individual zoning category. These height standards are 2.5 stories or 35 feet, whichever is less; 4 stories or 56 feet, whichever is less; or 6 stories or 84 feet, whichever is less.

If a developer proposes to build higher than these heights or more stories than is permitted, he or she has the right to apply for a Conditional Use Permit for additional height. In granting or denying a Conditional Use Permit, the City Planning Commission shall consider, but not be limited to, the following factors:

- Access to light and air of surrounding properties.
- Shadowing of residential properties or significant public spaces.
- Scale and character of surrounding uses.
- Preservation of view of landmark buildings, significant open spaces or water bodies.

This Plan strives to give guidance for how build-



**Height vs. Stories:** It is possible to have two buildings at the same height with a different number of stories. Likewise it is possible to have two buildings with the same number of stories and have different heights. For this reason stories are used in general descriptions and feet are used in most graphics in this Plan.

ings can be designed to achieve the above goals at a variety of heights. As discussed in earlier sections of this plan, the community values the existing character of Uptown, which is varied. Thus, preferences for height responsive to the context of each area were described. This Plan attempts to balance the desire for contextual design and transitions with allowed heights in the Zoning code.

Stakeholders in Uptown desire to see a future Uptown whose urban form is varied, eclectic and diverse. This desired urban form cannot be achieved through application of the zoning code alone since the zoning code provides height regulations on a parcel by parcel basis, thus a sculpted building envelope is suggested.

There is general consensus that building exceeding the outlined building envelope should set off their potential impacts by providing public amenities such as access to the Greenway, public parking, affordable housing, green roofs, etc. Whereas this Plan gives specific guidance on a sculpted building envelope with a maximum height of 84' (between the Greenway and Lake Street), a broader public discussion that evaluates and weighs the overall public contributions and merits of an individual project should be expected on occasion in the future in the event that a taller building is proposed.

### Setbacks and Stepbacks: Sculpting Taller Buildings

In most of the character areas, the Plan reinforces existing patterns. The building and land use pattern proposed in the Uptown Core will be more intense, taller, and denser than the existing conditions. The design of the buildings, in particular how they are sculpted on their upper floors, will be critical to the success of the overall area.

New growth in the Core of Uptown should not be mandated with one consistent height limit. Each project should be judged on how well it addresses the suggested building envelope described on the following pages. Uniform height would not respect the unique features (open spaces, historic buildings, and the Greenway) of Uptown, would not create transitions to the neighborhoods, and would not leverage the streets, the sidewalks, and the Greenway as primary assets of Uptown. Imparting a single height limit across the Core of Uptown would not be in keeping with residents' vision of Uptown as a unique urban place with varied buildings and spaces. In addition, a single building height would artificially suppress the market supply, which would likely lead to additional development pressures along the edges and within the neighborhoods.

Additional development pressures in the neighborhoods will destabilize the neighborhoods and their edges.

Instead of a single height limit across the Core of Uptown, this Plan recommends a **sculpted building envelope** that responds to the area's unique conditions. The proposed building envelope assures orderly and predictable, yet incremental and organic growth patterns. The proposed building envelope balances the need for development capacity with the need to protect low rise neighborhoods. The proposed building envelope balances the need for solar exposure to sidewalks and the Greenway with the equally important need to use building facades to enclose streets and create pedestrian friendly sidewalks.



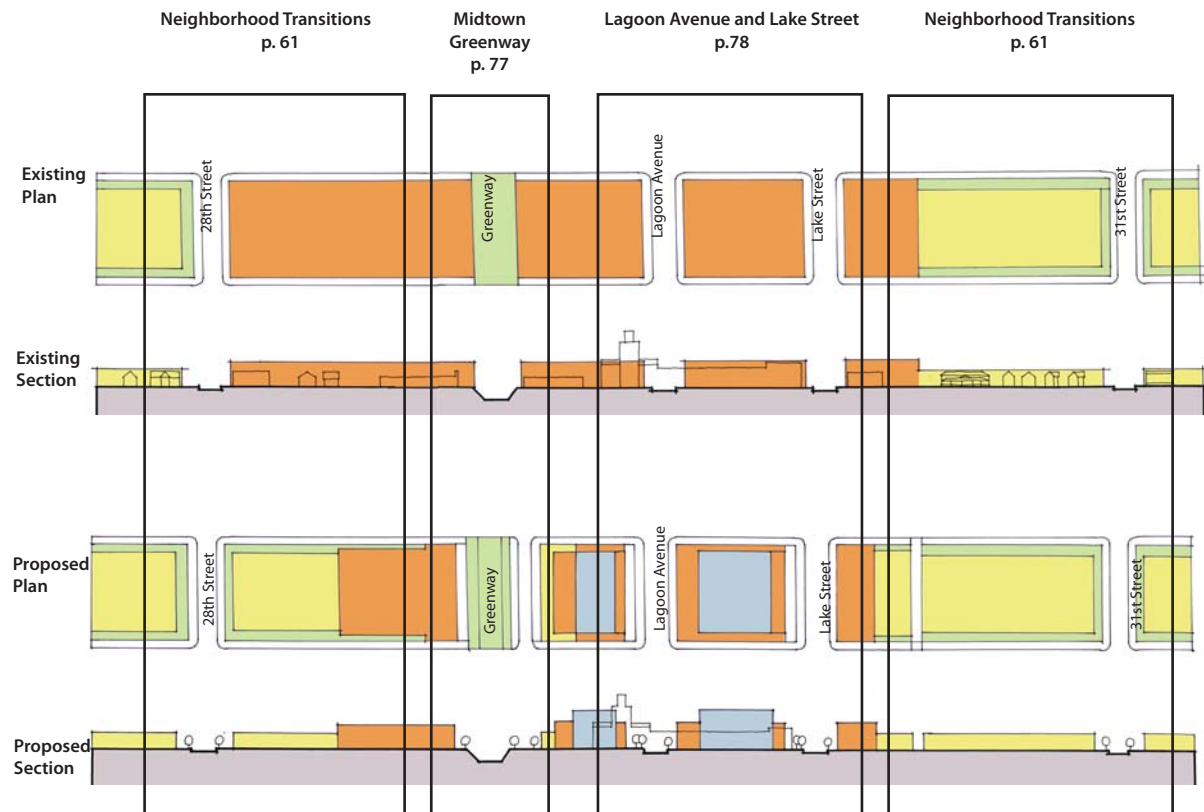
Single building height and unarticulated street wall (not recommended)



Varied building heights and articulated street wall: (recommended)

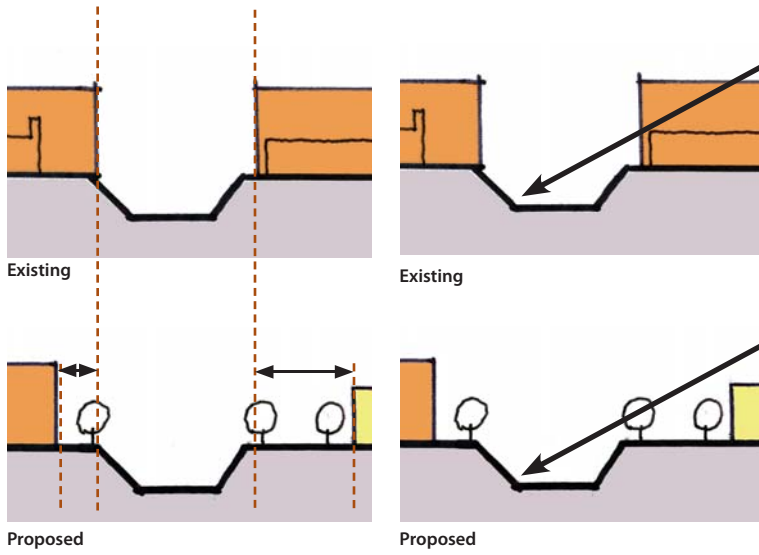
The proposed building envelope contains:

- Building setbacks on both sides of the Greenway to create public promenades and overlooks.
- Stepbacks and roof terraces between the Greenway and Lagoon Avenue such that shadows on the Greenway are minimized.
- Low rise buildings along the south edge of the Greenway and buildings up to 84 feet in the middle of the blocks between Greenway and Lake Street.
- Generous step backs on the south side of Lagoon Avenue and Lake Street to minimize shadowing on streets and the Greenway and modest step backs on the north side of Lagoon Avenue and Lake Street to prevent a 'canyon' effect.
- Generous setbacks on the north side of Lake and Lagoon to create broad sidewalks that accommodate heavy pedestrian use, outdoor cafes, and robust streetscapes.
- In addition, the Plan recommends continuous retail activity along both sides of Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue and residential frontage along both sides of the Greenway and the north south streets. Finally, the Plan recommends upper floors of all buildings are a healthy mix of residential uses and office uses.

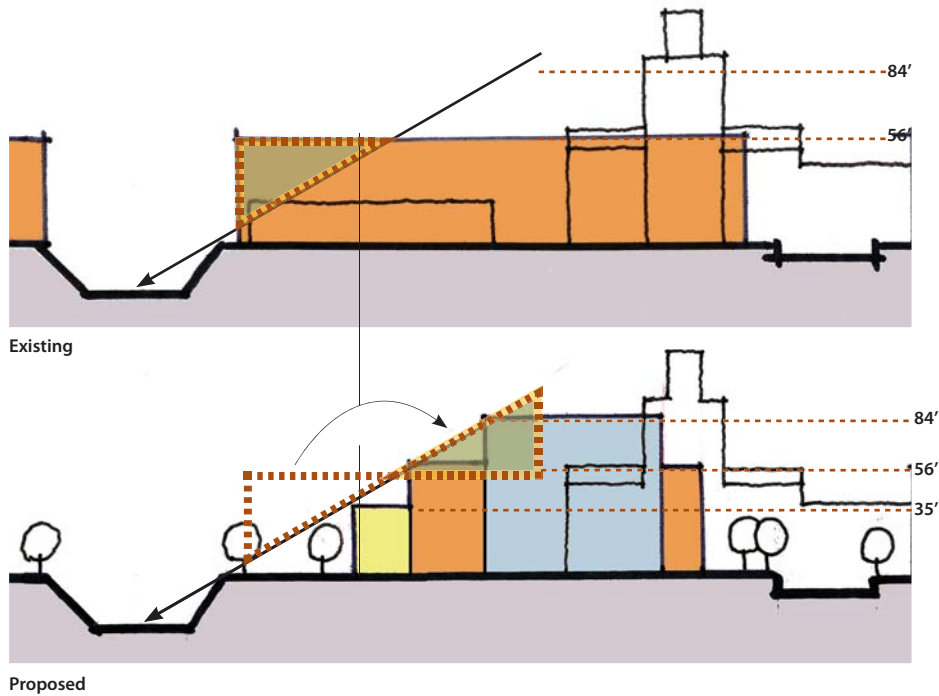


**Sculpted Building Envelopes:** 35' (yellow), 56' (orange), 84' (blue) The Plan recommends a sculpted building envelope that achieve neighborhood transitions, and allows greater height in the Core.

### Midtown Greenway

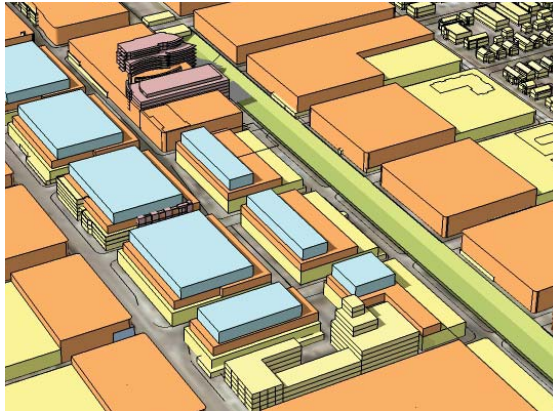


**Public Access and Solar Access to the Greenway:** The Plan recommends public access along the top edge of the Greenway as well as setbacks that permit sunlight into the Greenway.

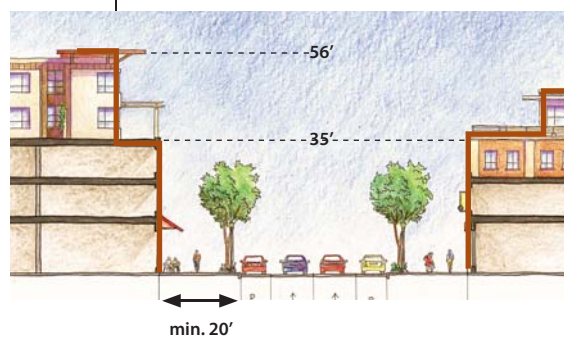
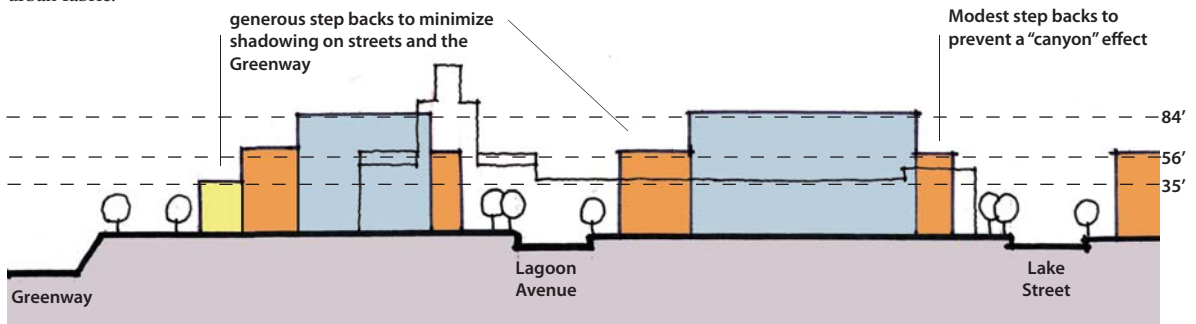


**Redistribution of Height:** The Plan recommends redistributing the massing of the building from the Greenway side of the block to mid-block by setting buildings back at the ground floor and stepping back the upper floors, for public and solar access. The result is a sculpted building envelope that accommodates development capacity without encroaching on the neighborhoods.

### Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue



**Conceptual Massing:** 35 feet (yellow), 56 feet (orange), 84 feet (blue). Not all buildings will have the same height. Uptown will evolve incrementally assuring a varied street wall and an eclectic urban fabric.



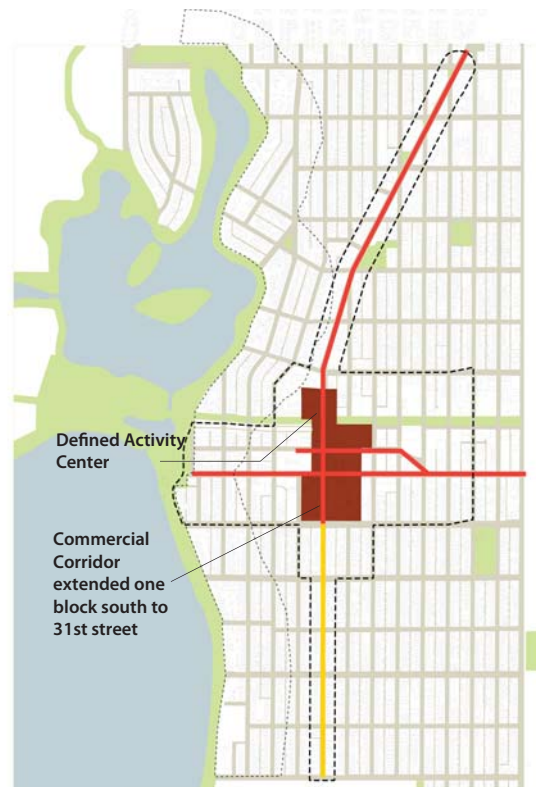
**Lagoon Avenue (left) and Lake Street (right), looking east:** Lagoon Avenue should become an urban street with multi-story buildings. Building elements taller than four stories or 56 feet should be set back from the front facade. Stepbacks on the south side should be greater than stepbacks on the north side. Buildings on the north side of the street should be set back from the property line 8 feet to create minimum 20' sidewalk/promenade.

### Land Use Recommendations

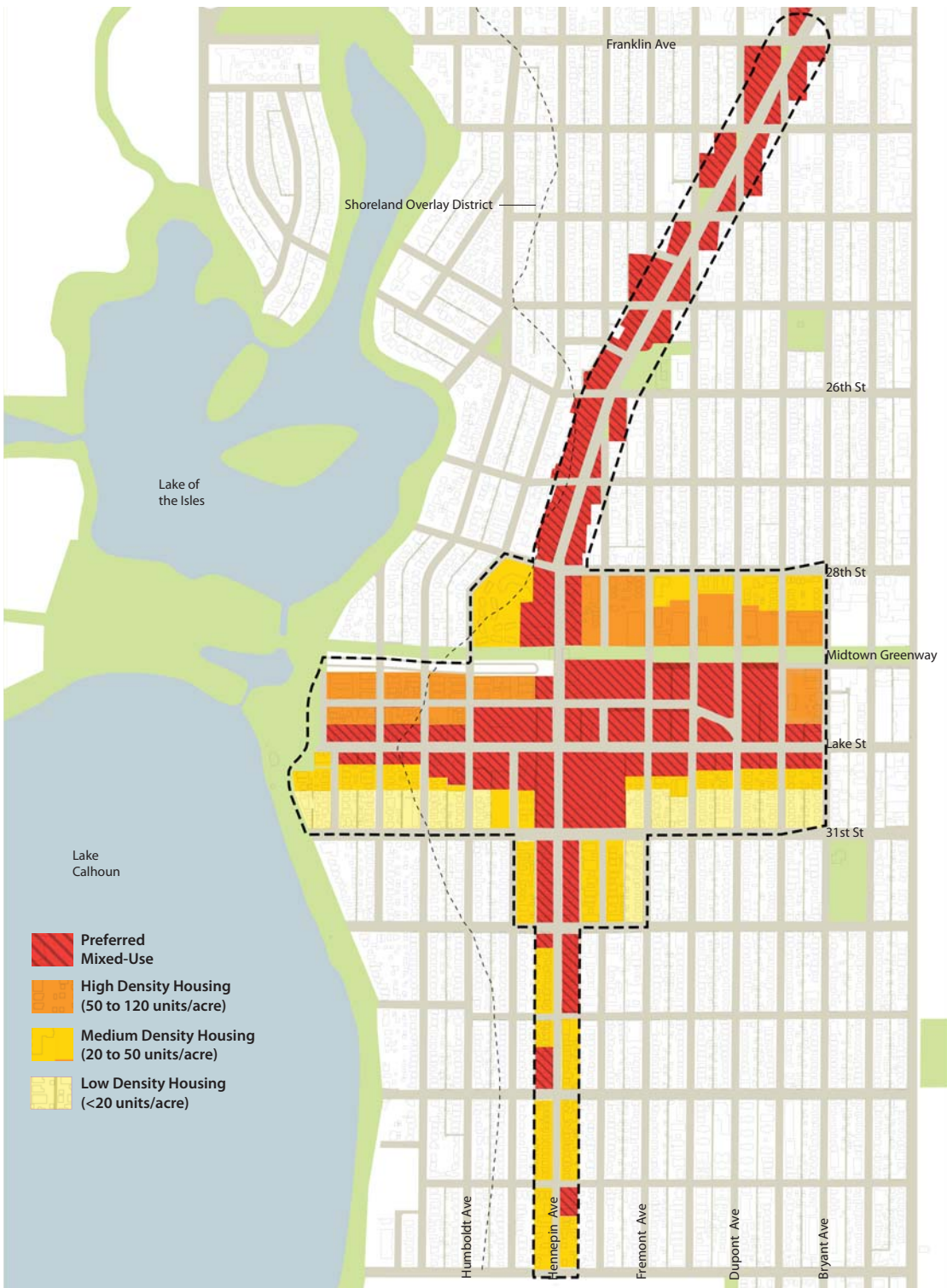
- Discourage one-story commercial buildings.
- Encourage retail on Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue, east of Hennepin Avenue, and on Hennepin Avenue north of 31st Street.
- Encourage mixed-use blocks along Lake Street with the goal of improving walkability and connectivity between Uptown and Lyn/Lake.
- On mixed-use blocks east of Hennepin Avenue in the Core, reinforce retail uses on Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue and residential uses on the north/south streets.
- Encourage office and employer uses in the Core as means of boosting daytime population.
- Create transitions between the Core and the neighborhoods by encouraging medium-density housing.
- Encourage medium density housing and neighborhood retail on Hennepin Avenue, north of 28th Street.
- Create a Live/Work district on West Lake Street.
- Preserve the character of existing residential low-density housing.
- Define the Activity Center boundaries as shown below. Extend the Commercial Corridor designation on Hennepin Avenue one block south of 31st Street as Calhoun Square is more typical of commercial corridor development than community corridor development.



Existing Comprehensive Plan:



Proposed Changes to Comprehensive Plan:



Future Land Use



## Development Intensity

This section of the Plan describes how private development (buildings) will contribute to and reinforce the public realm in Uptown. The section provides guidance for intensity of use, building heights, building types, and how buildings should be designed at the street level.

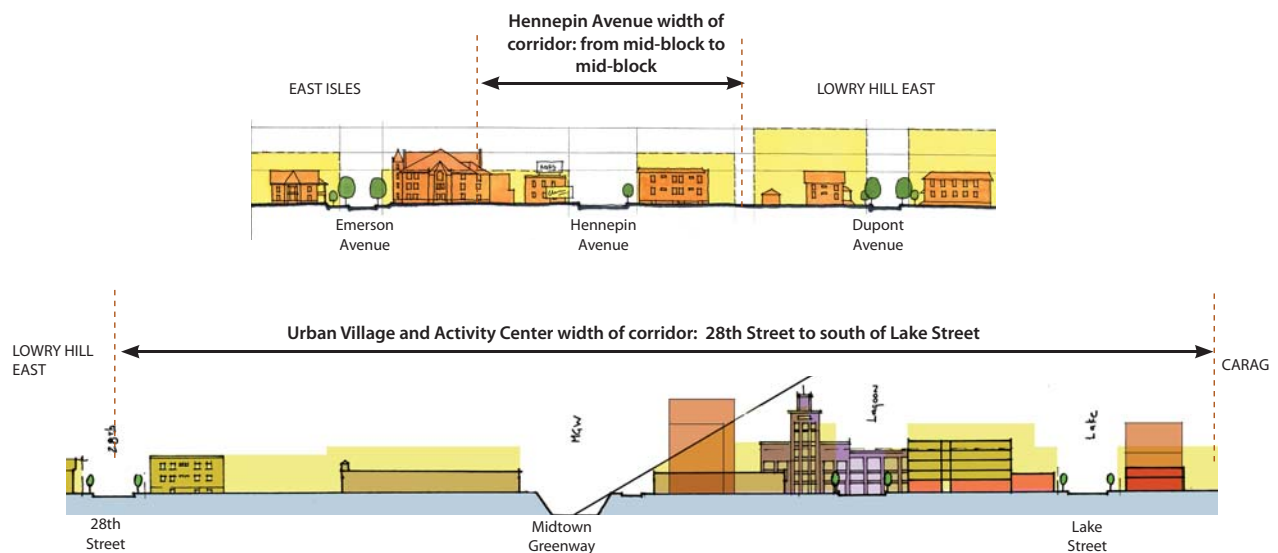
The Plan defines three different development intensities (Transit-Oriented, Urban-Oriented, and Neighborhood-Oriented). Development intensity is defined by building type, density of land use, and frontage type. When applied, there is overlap between the recommended building and frontage types. This overlap helps reinforce the transitions.

In general, the Plan concentrates the most intense development in the Core of Uptown (The Activity Center and the Urban Village South Sub-Area): The area generally bound by Lake Street, Hennepin Avenue, the Greenway, and Bryant Avenue. It is in these areas that the most square footage of development is encouraged, where the tallest buildings are suggested and where the most active and regional uses should be located. Specifically, the Plan proposes a building envelope in the Core that ranges from 35 feet on the south edges of the Greenway, to 84 feet in the middle of the blocks

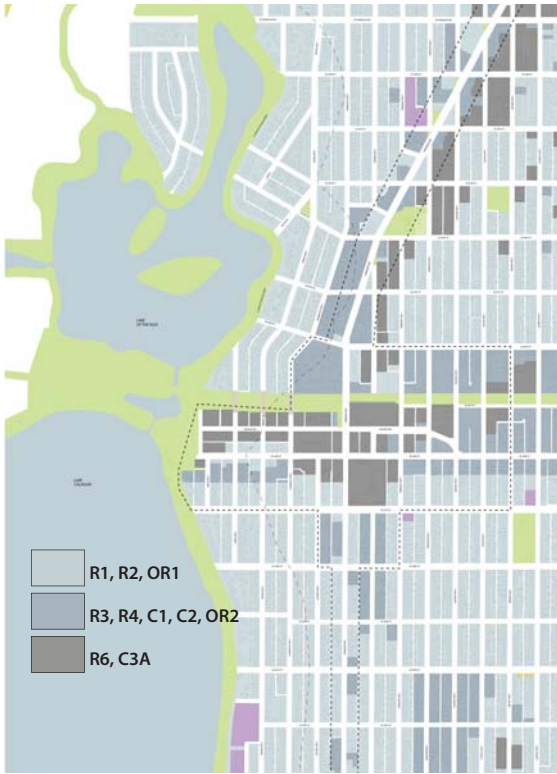
between the Greenway and Lake Street. The Plan also pays particular attention to the low-scale surrounding neighborhoods by recommending that buildings transition in height down to the neighborhoods.

The Core has been identified for intense development for several reasons:

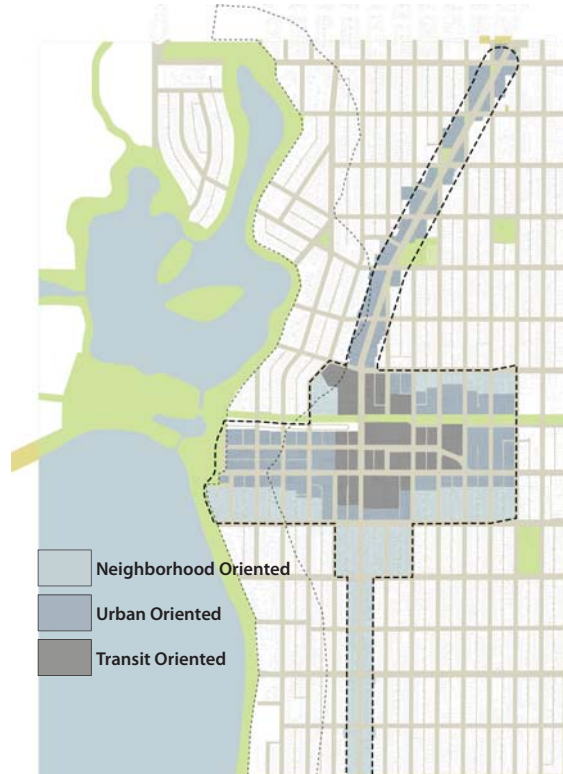
- Lack of current identity.
- Prevalence of surface parking lots and single-use buildings.
- Distance from the low-scale neighborhoods. Unlike the Hennepin Avenue corridor, where the low scale neighborhoods are within a half block of the corridor, the distance between the single family homes south of Lake Street and north of the Greenway is approximately 800 feet. There is ample distance to transition from taller buildings to low-scale neighborhoods.
- Access to transit and retail infrastructure.
- Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue identified as Commercial Corridors by The Minneapolis Plan.



**Development Intensity and Neighborhood Transitions:** The most intense development is directed to the Core (Activity Center and Urban Village) where the corridor is wide and transitions can be made to the neighborhoods.



Existing Allowable Density



Recommended Intensity



**Current Zoning Analysis, Allowable Height:** Current zoning directs growth to different parts of Uptown, including into the neighborhood.



**Proposed Height Distribution:** The majority of new development should be directed to the core of Uptown, between Hennepin Avenue and Bryant Street, the Greenway, and Lake Street.

**Building Frontage**

A building’s physical impact and contribution (positive and negative) to the public realm is determined largely by the type and quality of its frontage. The frontage is the manner in which a building interacts with the sidewalk, how the building feels when one walks next to it, and how it contributes to the public realm. A building’s frontage can also be thought of as “the first 15 feet and the first couple of floors.” The design of the “first fifteen feet” should:

- Reflect the uses at ground level.
- Provide opportunity for personalization (by resident or shopkeeper).
- Perform the transition between public and private realms.
- Be inviting and comfortable to pedestrians and passersby.

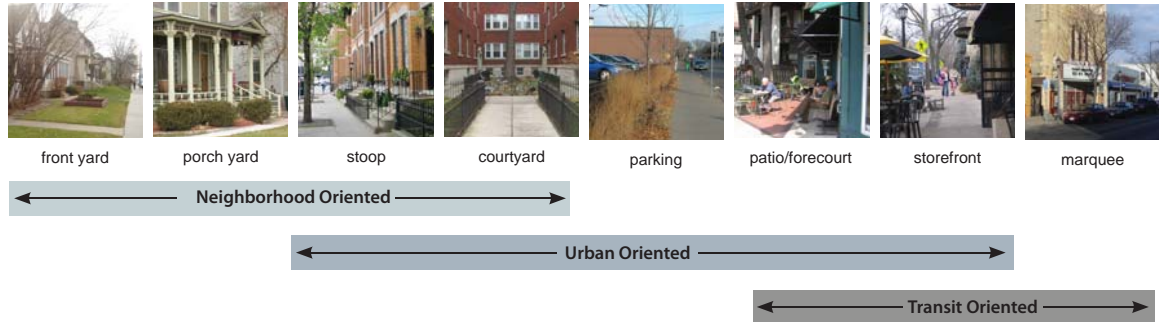
The “first couple of floors” are equally important as they dominate the cone of vision of both pedestrians and motorists. The design of the lower floors of a building defines the public quality and the private purpose of the buildings. The lower levels of buildings should:

- Be especially well designed and executed with high quality materials and finishes.
- Be punctuated with frequent windows and entrances that lend interest and activate the sidewalk.
- Reflect the scale of surrounding development.
- Contain signage that is appropriately scaled and designed.

There are several different types of frontages in Uptown. The Plan defines several of the frontage types and stipulates which types are appropriate in which areas of Uptown. The frontage types described in this Plan represent a spectrum, ranging from Transit-Oriented to Neighborhood-Oriented. Neighborhood-Oriented frontages typically consist of landscaped front yards with porches, whereas Transit-Oriented frontages typically consist of storefronts set directly on the sidewalk.

The design of the private buildings, in particular, the frontage, can have a positive impact public safety. Buildings with transparency, and a strong relationship to the sidewalk and the street provide indirect or “civic” surveillance of the street and the sidewalk.

**Frontage Types**



**Frontage Types:** The first 15 vertical feet of the building are important because they define how pedestrians interact and relate to buildings. The Plan recommends a range of frontage types that are consistent with the recommended development intensity map.

**Building Types**

Like frontages, the Plan recommends a range of appropriate building types for Uptown. The selected building types represent a selection of the existing inventory of appropriate urban buildings in Uptown. While the City does not regulate materials or styles, these building types provide guidance for the types of structures that are appropriate. If Uptown is developed with regard to appropriate building type and frontage type, architectural style will and should vary.

which has been an issue of concern in Uptown. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) is a philosophy about designing the physical environment to enhance defensible space. CPTED principals such as natural surveillance and well designed outdoor spaces should be considered when evaluating use and design.

Building types and frontages can also impact safety,

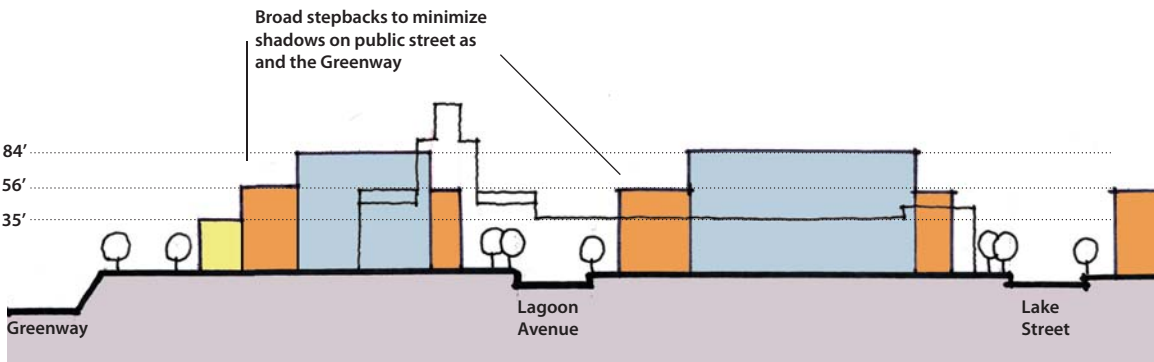
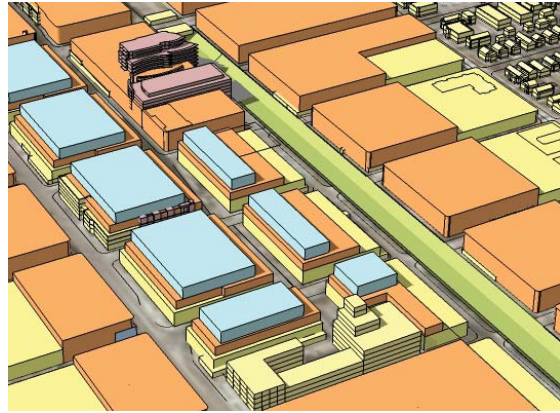
**Building Types**



**Building Types:** A range of building types in Uptown will assure transitions are smooth and density is focused in the appropriate locations.

**Setbacks and Stepbacks**

The Plan recommends concentrating density and height in the Core of Uptown. However, the Plan also recommends that height be carefully distributed within selected blocks of the core so solar access to the public realm is maintained and a high quality public realm is created. Generally, the Plan recommends stepbacks and setbacks in order to create a sculpted building envelope.



stepback and penthouse



narrow side to the street



stepback

**Sculpting taller buildings**

The photos, while showing buildings taller than encouraged in Uptown,, nevertheless illustrate important urban design concepts relevant to future buildings in Uptown



stepback and change of materials



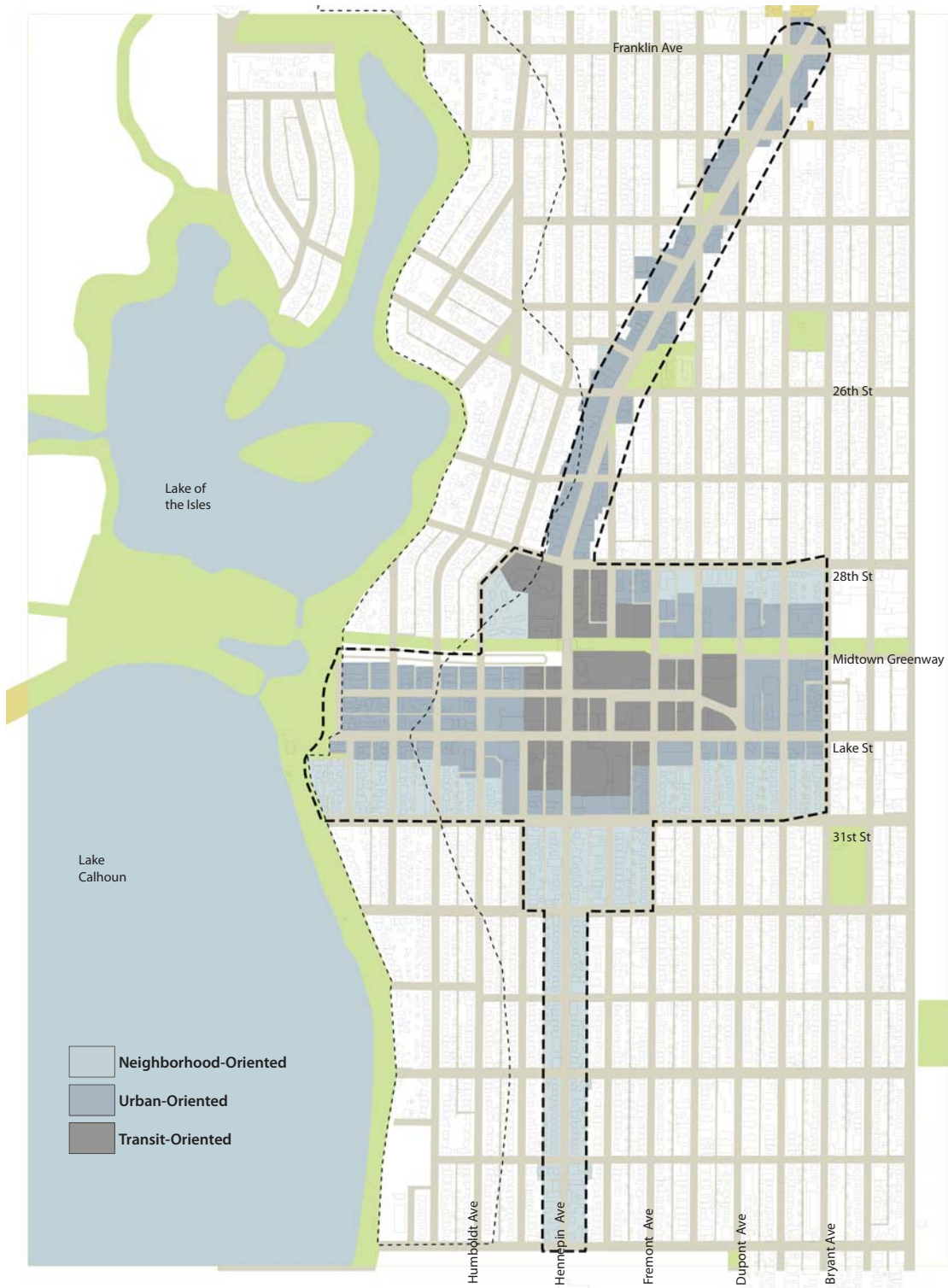
roof terraces



roof terraces and podium

### Built Form Recommendations

- Concentrate density and intensity in the Core.
- Encourage buildings in the Core to fit within a sculpted envelope that maximizes sunlight to the Greenway, Lake Street, and Lagoon Avenue.
- Encourage all buildings on Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue, east of Hennepin Avenue, to contain storefronts.
- Set buildings back on the north side of Lagoon Avenue and Lake Street to create broad sidewalks.
- Encourage buildings south of Lake Street to step down to meet the neighborhood scale.
- Encourage buildings on Lagoon Avenue to create a three to four story street wall.
- Encourage buildings west of Irving Avenue to gradually step down in height from the height of the Sons of Norway Building to 2.5 stories at the Lake.
- Encourage buildings on Hennepin Avenue, north of 28th Street, to contain active fronts and wide sidewalks.
- New buildings throughout Uptown, and in particular on the Greenway, are encouraged to be designed as Green buildings with sustainable landscaping



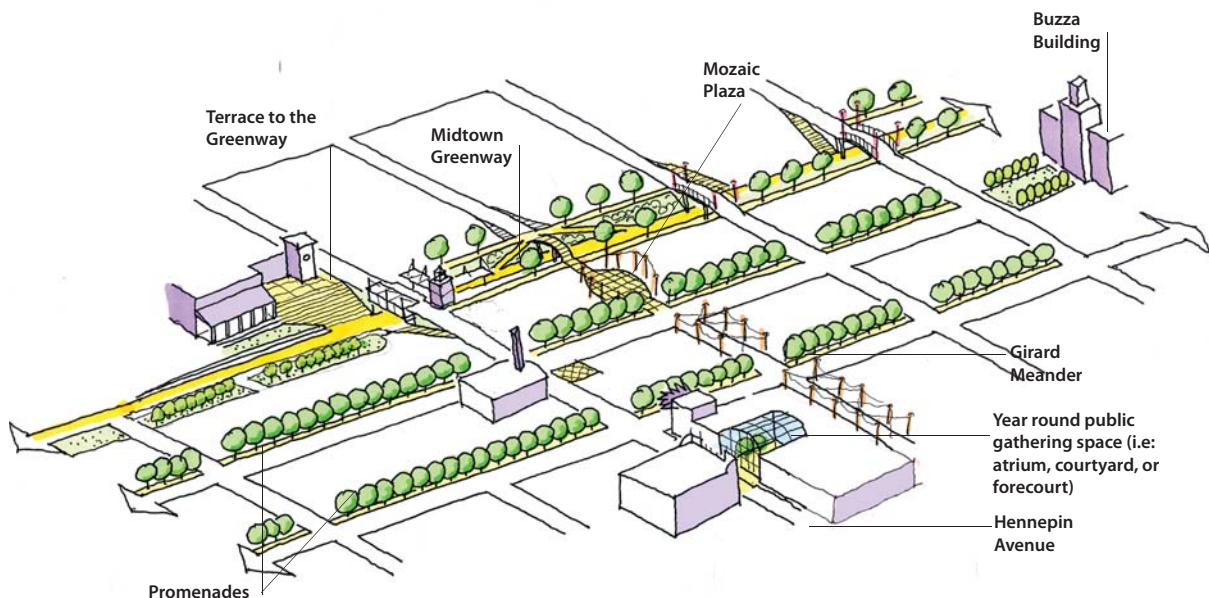
Proposed Development Intensity

## 9.2 Open Space

Open Space in Minneapolis is an important component to the overall quality of life and livability of the City. The Minneapolis park and open space system is one of the most complete and extensive of any City in the country. As a system, it connects neighborhoods to natural/recreational systems. However, it does not provide small urban spaces within commercial nodes, Activity Centers, or along Community or Commercial Corridors. Uptown itself does not contain meaningful open space or gathering spaces within it. In the past, the atrium at Calhoun Square has filled the role of community gathering space; however, that role has diminished with the changes to the property over the past several years. In the more recent past, private businesses such as restaurants, bookstores, coffee shops, and community buildings, such as the YWCA and the Library, have filled the need for gathering spaces.

The Public input process revealed the desire to preserve the environment, and to have access to additional green spaces in the core of Uptown. In addition, participants in the process identified the need for improved and additional gathering spaces and an overall improved public realm in Uptown. The Plan recommends the future of open spaces in Uptown not be in the form of large parks or broad recreational connections, but rather in the form of a series of smaller urban oriented spaces that are connected to each other and the regional system via high quality sidewalks and promenades.

The Plan relies on the design of superior open spaces for pedestrians in Uptown. Such spaces will function as gathering places, addresses for new mixed-use development, nodes for commercial and retail activity, and settings for urban events (markets, festivals, and fairs) and public art (static and performance). They should be designed for people of all ages and physical abilities.



**Possible Open Spaces:** Several small urban gathering spaces can be developed to highlight buildings (Suburban Theater, Uptown Theater, Buzza Building, original Walker Library, and the new Library/YWCA).



### Open Space Recommendations

- Create several small urban gathering spaces.
- Create a year round indoor/outdoor gathering space in Calhoun Square that accommodates existing and attracts new, diverse residents and customers.
- Establish upper pedestrian promenades on both the north and south sides of the Greenway.
- Create Girard Meander, a narrow street with wide sidewalks connecting Mozaic to Calhoun Square. Design Girard Meander such that it can be closed to vehicular traffic as necessary during evenings and on weekends.
- Where sidewalks are less than 8 feet wide, consider either setting back buildings 5 feet to 8 feet to create wider sidewalks that can be used for outdoor seating, narrowing the street, and widening the sidewalks to provide additional pedestrian amenities.
- Consider a public open space at the eastern terminus of Lagoon Avenue in front of the Lehman Building.
- Aggressively pursue private/public funding and operational options for the development of additional public spaces.
- Explore options for additional greening of 31st Street east of Hennepin Avenue.
- Create broad promenades along the north side of Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue.
- Create additional small triangular urban plazas on Hennepin Avenue north of 28th Street as properties are redeveloped.
- Create terraces to the Greenway on development blocks that are graded down to the Greenway.
- Encourage new development on the north side of the Greenway to animate the Greenway with active privately owned open spaces.

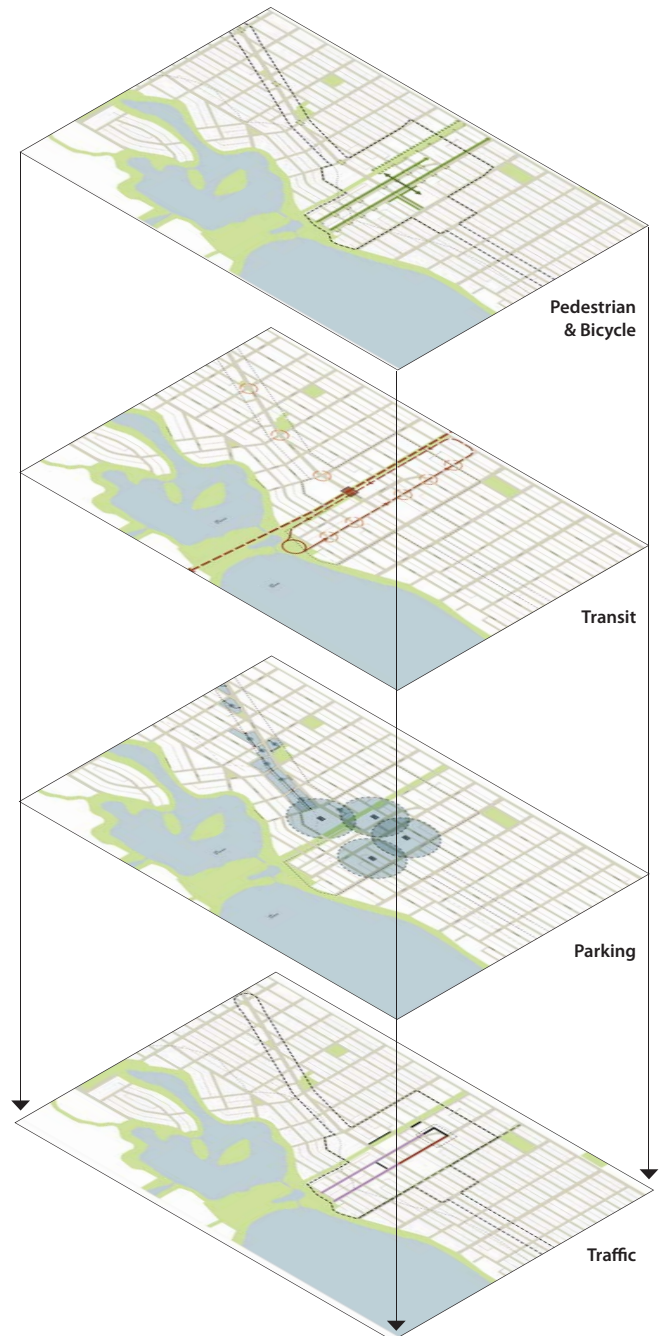




**Open Space Plan:** The Plan recommends creating additional East/West connections through Uptown as well as a series of smaller urban spaces in the core of Uptown.

## 9.2 Access

Organizing and prioritizing access to Uptown is critical to the success of the area. Uptown suffers from, as well as thrives on, its regional location. It is close to the Lakes; however, the Lakes interrupt the regional network and force traffic to concentrate on Lake Street. Uptown is adjacent to downtown; however, since downtown Minneapolis is the region's largest job center, thousands of people per day drive through Uptown to get to downtown.



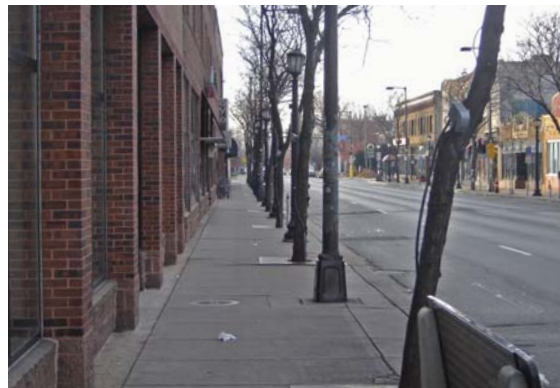
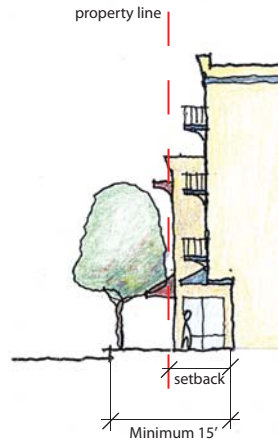
## Pedestrians and Bicycles

Uptown is a community that wants walking and biking to be the preferred mode of travel for local needs. Uptown residents view biking and walking as a major factor in the livability and quality of life. It is viewed by most as more than simply a recreational activity. It is viewed as a viable means of traveling for all purposes, including commuting, shopping, etc.

One of the reasons Uptown residents support bicycling is that the neighborhoods are remarkably well-connected to the regional recreational system. The Midtown Greenway, the Chain of Lakes, and the Grand Rounds grant access to the regional open space system. These amenities are well-used assets that help define Uptown as a unique community. In addition to recreational cycling on the Greenway and Chain of Lakes, Uptown residents view cycling as a desirable means of travel for all daily activities of life; unfortunately, much of Uptown is not particularly bicycle friendly. There are no bicycle facilities along either of the corridors, bicycle storage and parking is limited (in particular on the west side of Hennepin Avenue, north of 26th Street), and the inter-neighborhood connections (between the four adjacent neighborhoods) are non-existent.

The Plan's strategy towards bicycling is to design the physical environment such that it is a fully supported, attractive, and encouraged means of travel for everyday needs. Achieving this goal will require several interventions and investments by both private investors and the public sector. In addition, the Plan encourages innovative solutions to achieve this goal.

The Plan encourages the surrounding neighborhoods to create inter-neighborhood (or "park to park") bike connections on residential north/south and east/west streets. Such connections would facilitate movement among the four neighborhoods, allowing individuals and families to visit friends and parks in a comfortable and safe manner. In addition, the Plan suggests a bicycle connection between the Lakes and the core of Uptown. This can occur either along the



**Sidewalks:** Where possible, new development should set back from the property line in order to create a minimum 15 foot sidewalk on commercial corridors.

Greenway, or along Lake Street, in the proposed promenade, or along 31st Street.

The Plan promotes increased use of bicycles as a mode of transit to and from Uptown as well as between destinations in Uptown. Therefore, the Plan supports adding to the existing inventory of bike racks with new centralized bike rack facilities for multiple bikes. These should be located close to the Core, perhaps at the top of the Mall where the Greenway meets Uptown, as well as where the proposed inter-neighborhood or “park to park” routes intersect Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue. In order for such facilities to succeed, they should be well designed, visible, and accessible. Further, the plan supports improved bike parking on each block of the core, integrated with street furniture and within easy access of businesses.

### Pedestrian

Whether one arrives to Uptown by car, transit, or bike, everyone in Uptown is a pedestrian. Uptown’s pedestrian infrastructure is substandard and in need of improvement. In locations throughout Uptown, sidewalks are too narrow, crosswalks are not well marked, and street trees are damaged or missing. Consistent with the currently proposed Access Minneapolis street guidelines, the Plan recommends widening sidewalks to a minimum of 12 feet (preferably 15 feet in commercial areas) by either narrowing the street or setting buildings back. In addition, the Plan recommends creating additional pedestrian connections along the Greenway and through larger blocks where streets have been vacated. Additional pedestrian amenities can be located in wider sidewalks and setbacks.



**Promenades and Wide Sidewalks:** Sidewalks on Lagoon Avenue and Lake Street should be widened to become promenades connecting the Lakes to the core of Uptown.

### **Pedestrian and Bicycle Recommendations**

- Establish a group of business leaders, property owners, and residents that would promote better management of existing parking resources, promote transit options, and help implement other transportation recommendations.
- Shorten the walk distance for pedestrians crossing streets in Uptown by providing bump outs at signalized intersections.
- Install pedestrian count down signals at busy intersections in Uptown so pedestrians know how much time they actually have to cross the street.
- Reestablish practice of striping crosswalks annually rather than every two years so that markings are clearly visible to drivers and pedestrians.
- Where streets have been vacated, encourage new and existing development to establish publicly accessible sidewalks, paths, trails, or promenades to complete the pedestrian network.
- Encourage setback for new developments in areas where the existing sidewalk is less than 12 feet wide.
- Pursue placing the reconstruction of Lake and Lagoon on the Hennepin County Capital Improvements Program.
- Study the narrowing of the curb-to-curb dimensions of Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue, west of Hennepin Avenue; use the additional width to create promenades on the north sides of these streets.
- Consider reducing the lane count on Lake Street to two lanes in each direction, thereby matching the lane count on East Lake Street.
- Explore interim measures for improving pedestrian comfort and safety.
- Develop the Girard Meander to connect the Mozaic to Calhoun Square.
- Where possible, create an upper pedestrian promenade on both the north and the south sides of the Midtown Greenway. In locations where buildings engage the Greenway at the lower level, efforts should be made to maintain pedestrian connectivity.
- Ensure that new development (residential and commercial) provides an adequate number of bicycle parking stalls.
- Encourage centralized bicycle parking (such as on-street bike parking corrals) at convenient locations for bicyclists to “park their bikes and walk” to several places in Uptown.
- Work with the neighborhoods to identify inter-neighborhood bicycle routes and/or “park to park” routes.
- Improve bicycle connections between the Greenway and the Core of Uptown.
- Explore design options for bike lanes on 31st Street and Bryant Avenue.



**Pedestrian and Bike Plan:** The Plan should increase pedestrian connectivity and improve existing pedestrian areas.

## Transit

Improving transit service in Uptown is fundamental to the future success of Uptown. Superior transit service in Uptown is necessary to relieve congestion, improve air quality, encourage economic activity, maintain affordability, and restore the retail infrastructure.

Currently transit service in Uptown is relatively good. The Uptown Transit Station is well used, ridership is high, and there is strong local support for additional transit investments. Despite this strong base, transit in Uptown has not reached its full potential. In particular, the land use mix in Uptown is not fully transit supportive due to some remaining auto oriented uses, the lack of high density housing along the corridors, and the relatively low daytime population of employees. In addition, the design of the streets and rider facilities such as waiting areas and amenities have made transit less desirable than it would be if more attention were paid to such matters.

Superior transit throughout Minneapolis in general, and to Uptown specifically, via streetcars and LRT is a stated policy supported by Access Minneapolis (a ten year transportation plan currently being drafted). Both Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue are defined by Access Minneapolis as important pieces to the PTN (Primary Transit Network). The Primary Transit Network has five performance criteria:

- Frequency: service all day at frequencies of 15 minutes or better.
- Span: service at least 18 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Speed: average operating speed of no less than 30% of the speed limit.
- Reliability: service operates as posted and expected.
- Loading: generally passengers have seats available, and standing, while acceptable, is not excessive and uncomfortable.



**Transit in Uptown:** Alternative means of accessing and circulating through Uptown are critical. The Plan strongly supports regional, local, and private/public transit investments. Streetcars, circulators, enhanced bus service, and LRT can help define the unique identity of Uptown.



Access Minneapolis states “The Primary Transit Network’s value, as well as its success, relies on a three way interdependence among Density, Service Quality, and Ridership.” These three strategies are interdependent and self-reinforcing.

This Plan fully supports improving transit service by creating a physical environment that increases density, improves passenger facilities, and encourages ridership.

### **Density**

This Plan supports a future Uptown with more households, businesses, and employees. With added density, transit service will improve; Uptown can become a community where transit is a preferred option. The future land use mix will support transit by:

- Increasing the number of uses that support and rely on transit such as higher density housing, neighborhood and community serving retail, high-density employment, social services, and community uses.

### **Service Quality**

Improving service quality is not the sole responsibility of the transit agency. Transit service quality should be more broadly defined from the perspective of the user and their trip “from door to door.” From this perspective the waiting time and the ride itself are just a small portion of the trip and experience. The experience includes the process of walking or biking to the station as well as the process of walking or biking to the final destination, and all experiences in between. When service quality is more broadly defined to include such issues as the ability to complete an errand en route to the station, to roll one’s suitcase to the station and onto the vehicle, to easily and safely park one’s bicycle, and to comfortably cross a street on foot, all become critical issues as they relate to service quality.

### Transit Recommendations

- Establish a group of business leaders, property owners, and residents that would promote better management of existing parking resources, promote transit options, and help implement other transportation recommendations.
- Encourage new developments to provide transit facilities (shelters and boarding areas). Coordinate locations with Metro Transit.
- Implement Southwest Transit Corridor to either connect through Uptown or to extend to the possible future streetcar system to future West Calhoun Transit Center.
- Enhance and expand service on existing and new routes (increase frequency, hours, and non-rush hour service).
- Explore a reduced rate for “Uptown Zone” riders or aggressively market and promote existing low cost fares and services.
- Pursue, through public/private cooperation, a circulator along Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue/Greenway or 29th Street connecting Uptown with the Lakes and Lyndale/Lake. This circulator should augment, not compete with, other transit plans for the area.
- Support the possible future development of streetcars on Hennepin Avenue.
- Support transit by promoting land uses and development densities that create and support strong transit markets, such as high density housing, employment, and retail.
- At the future rail transit stop at Hennepin Avenue, create a new gathering space at the Greenway level
- Encourage employers to increase transit use by participating in existing programs that allow them to treat the costs of employee bus passes as a business expense.
- Design streets that prioritize the transit experience, including comfortable loading and waiting areas, and that do not require buses to exit traffic flow. Curb extensions for transit facilities will impact traffic flow, but will improve transit service.
- Work with Metro Transit and the business community to improve transit operations. This would include assessing bus stops to determine most efficient locations passenger payment and loading procedures, marketing, and passenger facilities.



Improve bus operations:  
improved shelter, waiting area, lane  
designation, etc. (typical)

Possible future  
circulator connecting  
lakes, Uptown, and  
Lyndale/Lake.

Fixed Transit in Greenway

Uptown Transit Center

28th St

Midtown Greenway

Lake St

31st St

Humboldt Ave

Hennepin Ave

Fremont Ave

Dupont Ave

Bryant Ave

Franklin Ave

26th St

Lake of the Isles

Lake Calhoun

Transit

## Parking

During the public process, the issue of parking was raised by several participants. Residents, business owners, property owners, and visitors discussed their personal challenges as they related to lack of parking, access to existing parking, price of parking, and ease of parking. Opinions varied from those who believe there is not enough parking and that it is too expensive and hard to find, to those who stated there is too much parking and that it is too inexpensive and too accessible.

Parking plays an important role in creating vibrant urban places. Parking itself, however, is a means to an end. The goal is to improve access to Uptown, not necessarily to maximize parking. Parking is simply one of many ways to access Uptown. Parking has to be accessible and affordable while not dominating and obtrusive. It must be well designed so as to contribute to the public realm by reinforcing pedestrian and vehicular patterns, easy to find and well signed so as to avoid “cruising” or

“circulating,” integrated into the architectural fabric of Uptown, and effectively operated and managed.

Parking solutions for Uptown should be as varied as the parking problems they intend to solve. There is no one single solution to parking in Uptown, rather, there are several small solutions. In Uptown there are short term, medium term, and long term parking needs. These parking needs vary according to the time of day and the day of the week. They also vary from one part of Uptown to another. For example, on-street parking (not including the neighborhoods) should turn over frequently and is reserved for short term parking needs (maximum two hours). Upper floors of parking garages should be reserved for long-term parking and employees.

Several parking issues emerged throughout the process. They include:



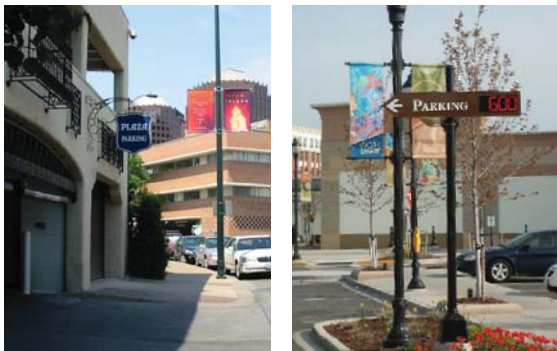
**Parking Edges:** Parking lots adjacent to streets should be enclosed with well designed edges.



**Parking Buildings:** Parking garages that are visible from public streets should be designed with architectural facades.

- Overflow parking (medium and long term) into the neighborhood during the weekday by employees, and on the weekends and evenings by employees, visitors, and bar patrons.
- Negative signing (“Parking for Customers Only, Violators will be Towed”) not conducive to parking once and walking to several places (short-term and medium-term).
- Businesses with no dedicated parking suffer from the high cost and inaccessibility of short-term public parking.
- Confusing and inconsistent on-street and off-street parking regulations. Rules differ from one neighborhood (several blocks in CARAG have been designated a Critical Parking Area and have 24 hour parking restrictions) to the next and from one commercial block to the next. Visitors are confronted with different parking options depending on where they are in Uptown.

Parking occupancy studies show that in Uptown there are several empty parking stalls even while the demand for parking is at its highest on weekend evenings. Many privately owned parking lots are underutilized at different times throughout the day due to the specific demands of each business type. Underutilized parking lots during times of peak demand show that the parking supply in Uptown is not well managed, coordinated, or accessible. Adding more parking without addressing these management issues will not solve problems and will



**Parking Signage:** Coordinated graphics and technology can improve wayfinding in Uptown.

possibly exacerbate them.

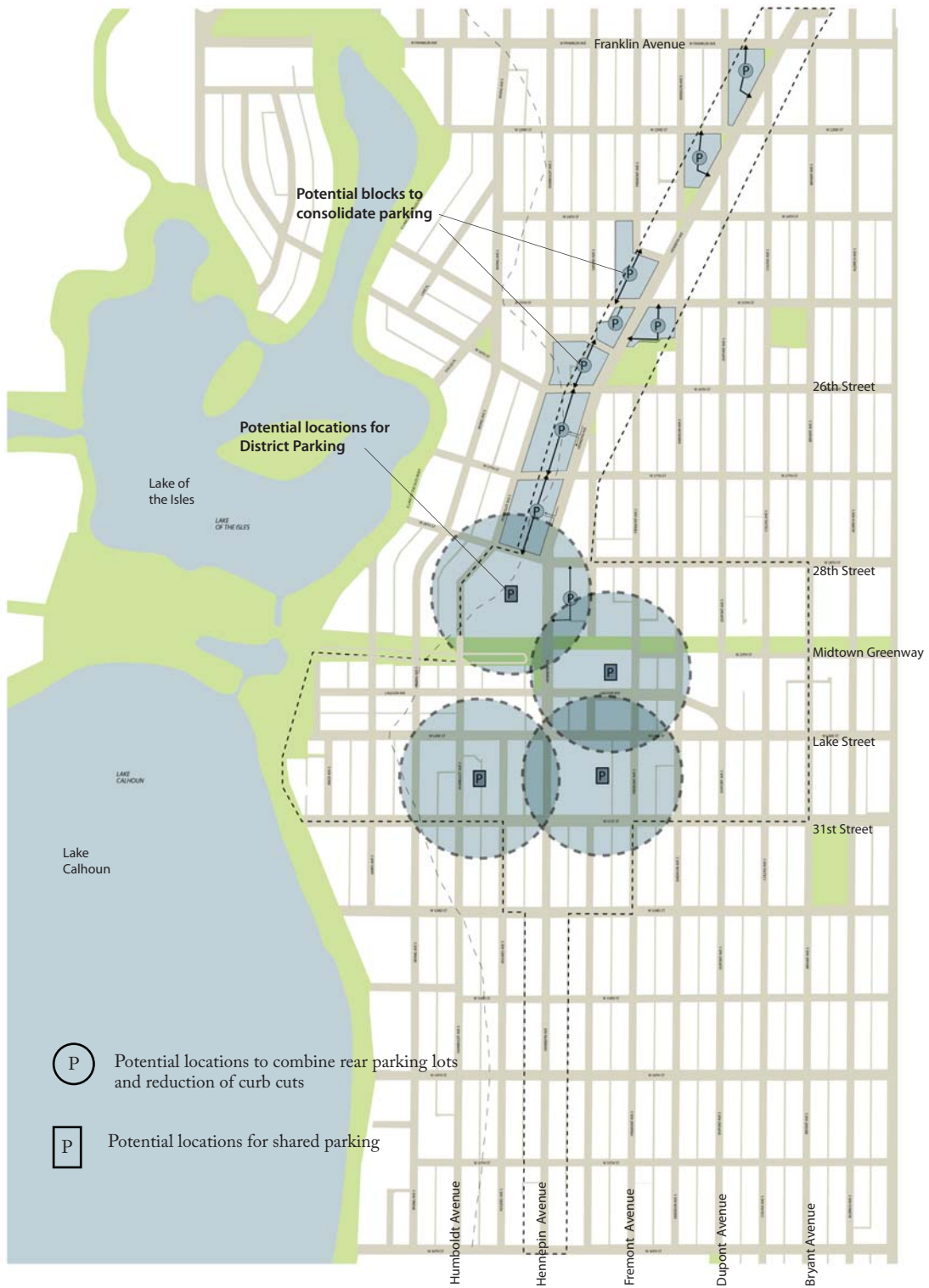
Parking issues should be addressed on two fronts. First, in the immediate years, the current parking supply should be better managed and organized. Second, as parking demand tightens, additional parking should be carefully and selectively added in locations it is needed. Determination of need should consider the negative effect of excess parking, blank unadorned facades, and potential impacts on surrounding properties. It can be assumed that additional public parking will likely be needed in the core to support additional retail and entertainment uses. Additional public parking should be “District Parking” serving multiple needs and uses throughout Uptown.



**Parking on Hennepin Avenue between 28th Street & Franklin Avenue:** Private property owners are encouraged to combine their rear lots in order to reduce curb cuts, thereby maximizing on and off-street parking and reducing mid-block left turns.

### Parking Recommendations

- Establish a group of business leaders, property owners, and residents that would promote better management of existing parking resources, promote transit options, and help implement other transportation recommendations.
- Establish shared parking practices which could allow for better utility of large lots such as Lunds, Sons of Norway and the YWCA in the evenings.
- Encourage property owners on Hennepin Avenue (north of 28th Street) to combine parking lots in the rear of their buildings and to connect them to side streets allowing the reduction of curb cuts, the addition of on-street parking, and the reduction of mid-block left turns.
- Develop district parking facilities in the Core.
- Encourage shared parking practices between complementary uses such as entertainment and offices.
- Adjust cost of parking at metered on-street parking to maintain approximately 85 percent occupancy throughout the day and evening. Low occupancy is inefficient; occupancy greater than 85 percent discourages parking and encourages “cruising” or “trolling.”
- Work with businesses to create a voucher parking program for visitors and consumers.
- Create a transportation and parking guide.
- Promote the existing parking card (debit card to eliminate need for quarters at parking meters) similar to Downtown.
- Coordinate the criteria and processes of the Critical Area Parking System with area wide parking supply and demand.
- Improve signage and wayfinding (LCD screens with directional arrows to available parking spaces) to public parking areas. Use “smart signs” and consistent signing practices to assist motorists in finding available parking thereby reducing cruising.
- Encourage parking garages to the interior of the block, minimally visible from the street. If the façade of a garage is visible from the street, it should be architecturally treated as a “parking building.”
- Conduct employee surveys to determine where they live and what improvements would encourage them to use transit.



Parking

## Traffic and Streets

In great cities, streets serve many purposes. As public right-of-way, streets have the important utilitarian responsibility to move traffic and provide access to properties. Beyond this functional requirement, streets are places to interact, invest, do business, as well as travel by car, foot, transit, and bicycle. Streets are the single most connected element of the public realm; they are the City's highly valued civic spaces and are the settings for private development - the primary generator of revenue. This Plan proposes modifications to the existing street network in order to prioritize streets as:

- Opportunities for placemaking and high quality addresses for redevelopment.
- Means of getting to (as opposed to getting through) Uptown via transit, bicycle, foot, and/or car.

Due to Uptown's geographic location and its responsibility to the region, the streets will continue to accommodate through traffic. However, this Plan recommends the streets be designed to encourage access and connectivity, not mobility and capacity.

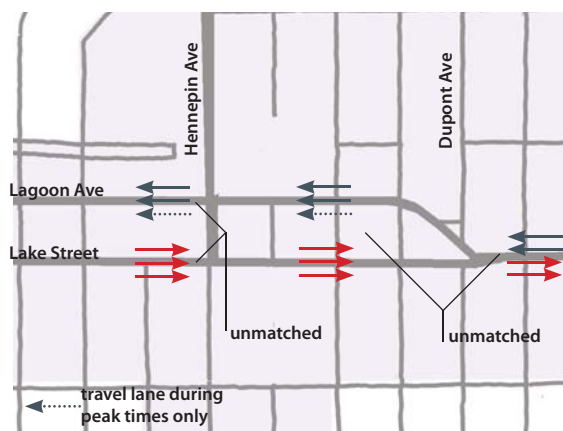
The Plan recommends improving streets,

reconnecting streets, reexamining the one way pairs and reconfiguring intersections.

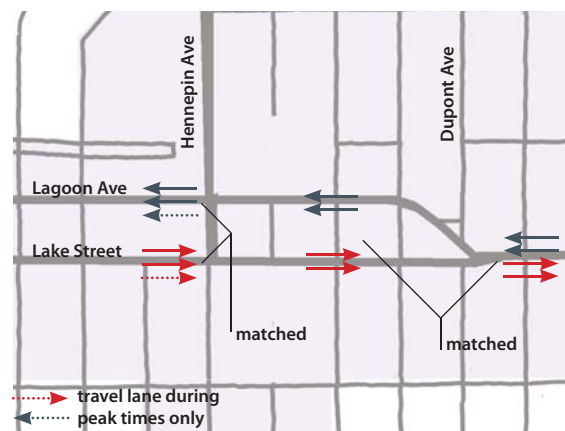
## Improved Streets

As discussed in the previous section, the Plan recommends baseline improvements to Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue as one-way streets. The Plan recommends using the benefits offered by one-way streets (no need for a dedicated left turn lane) to improve Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue for pedestrians, bicyclists, businesses, and local traffic. Improvements include narrowing lane widths (to match the East Lake Street reconstruction) and building curb extensions (curb bump outs). The end result of these changes will be equal capacity and through-put, but with slower traffic, greater storefront visibility, a better pedestrian environment, enhanced transit operations, and improved environment for development.

The prevailing direction of traffic flow in Uptown is from eastbound Lake Street to northbound Hennepin Avenue, and vice versa. The lane requirements of Lagoon Avenue and Lake Street therefore differ from east of Hennepin Avenue to west of Hennepin Avenue. East of Hennepin Avenue the Plan recommends reducing the travel way of Lake Street from three to two lanes. Reducing the travel-way to two lanes would match the eastbound portion of Lake Street from Dupont



Existing Lane Configuration



**Potential one-way lane configuration:** Eliminate a lane from Lake Street between Hennepin Avenue and Dupont Avenue. And consider peak-hour parking restrictions (note: peak-hour parking restrictions eliminate the possibility of curb extensions and should therefore be carefully considered)



Avenue to the Mississippi River, where volumes are relatively similar.

West of Hennepin Avenue, the Plan recommends modifying the travel-way of Lake Street to match its westbound pair, Lagoon Avenue. Lake Street could be modified to two full time through lanes, and one lane that was peak hours only.

### Reconnected Streets

Over the years, several streets have been vacated and eliminated from the grid. Whereas a single street vacation has a minor effect on circulation, the accumulated effects of several broken links in the grid is significant. Vacated streets result in disrupted (vehicular and pedestrian) circulation patterns, larger block sizes that are less pedestrian friendly, additional vehicular stress on the remaining streets, and less real estate frontage. The Plan therefore identifies several blocks where the street grid can be reconnected as the properties redevelop in the future: Holmes Avenue between Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue, 29th Street between Dupont Avenue and Emerson Avenue, and a new road on the north side of the Greenway between Hennepin Avenue and Fremont Avenue.

### Conversion to Two-Way Streets

Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue were converted in 1984 to one-way pairs as a response to an EPA mandate that air pollution at the intersection of Hennepin and Lake be improved. Idling cars and congestion (Level of Service below D) was cited as the primary source of air pollution; the one-way pairs significantly reduced the idling cars and the air pollution as the new system efficiently pushed cars through the intersections with less delay. Following the conversion to one-way pairs, downtown employment and western metro residential growth grew significantly. The one-way pairs partially enabled this growth as they permitted efficient commuting through Uptown.

One-way pairs enable through-traffic, minimize travel time through the area, and maximize the capacity of the roadways. Whereas one way pairs enable and maximize capacity and mobility, the negative aspects of one-way pairs are significant

and measurable, especially when the users of the streets are more broadly defined to include not just regional motorists, but local motorists, pedestrians, transit users, retail businesses, and adjacent neighborhoods. One-way streets:

- Encourage higher speeds due to lack of vehicular side friction. Slower traffic can increase visibility of signage as well as improve conditions for pedestrians.
- Can create more potential pedestrian/vehicle conflicts due to of the multiple permutations of traffic flow at any given intersection. On a given one-way intersection there are likely fewer pedestrian conflicts than at a given two-way intersection. However, at two-way intersections, pedestrians have to only encounter two possible scenarios; with the introduction of one-ways into an intersection, pedestrians have to negotiate up to 16 possible traffic scenarios. The additional permutations can create confusion for pedestrians and vehicles alike due to multiple potential turning lane scenarios.
- Can cause confusion and frustration for drivers who cannot move through an area based on intuition. In a competitive retail and development environment, user confusion can have a significant impact on economic performance.
- Cause additional vehicular miles due to restricted movements and rerouting.
- Create a less desirable retail environment because businesses get more exposure to traffic during either the AM or PM commute, but not both.
- Diminish access to parking and other destinations because of restricted movements.
- Cause increased reliance on signage because a direct path of travel is not possible and wayfinding is no longer intuitive.

- Cause transit routes to be more complex and less user friendly due to the need to split the routing around a block. Users cannot easily and intuitively know where “to get back on the same bus in the other direction.”

In the 20 years since Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue were converted to one-way pairs, several factors have emerged suggesting a conversion to two-way streets may be viable. Among them:

- Vehicles have become cleaner; the same amount of idling and congestion in 1984 causes far less air pollution today, and likely even less in the future.
- High quality pedestrian and transit experience is increasingly important in urbanizing areas such as Uptown.
- Uptown and the surrounding neighborhood’s desire to rebalance the function of Uptown streets to reflect on increased concern for walking, transit, and biking.
- Where it is possible that reverting to two-way operations will diminish levels of service at some intersections during the rush hours, Uptown residents have expressed an increasing willingness to accept lower level of vehicular service in return for more livable, walkable, developable, and transit friendly streets (yet not at the expense of air quality).
- Uptown’s desire (as expressed in this Plan) to promote employment and residential growth within Uptown as their contribution to a regional smart growth strategy. In effect, a desire to create land use and development patterns that allow individuals and employers to locate in Uptown as opposed to driving through Uptown.

This Plan encourages a thorough analysis of the impacts and implications of converting Uptown’s one-way street system to a two-way system including an air quality assessment. The Plan

acknowledges the benefits of one-way streets (greater through-put, possibly wider sidewalks, more curb extensions), but believes there are also benefits to two-way streets that may outweigh the benefits of one-way streets in Uptown.

Prior to the thorough study of converting the streets to two-way, this Plan recommends making immediate low-cost improvements to Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue. Well designed planters, restriping the lanes and curb extensions would increase pedestrian safety, comfort, and amenities. In effect, these low cost projects could replicate (on an interim or temporary basis) potential long term investments.

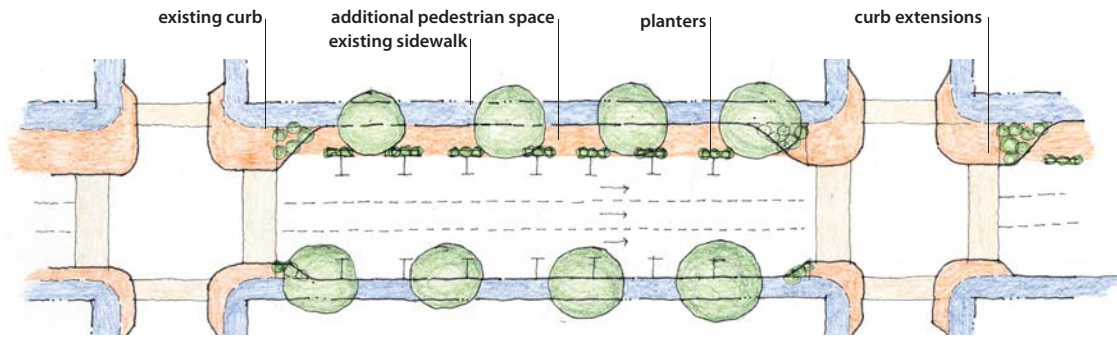
#### **Reconfigured Intersection**

The intersection at Lake Street and Dupont Avenue and Lagoon Avenue was cited in the public process as both a priority area for change as well as a significant traffic problem area. Prior to the one-way conversion, the Lagoon Avenue intersection with Dupont was a T-intersection at approximately the location of the Lehman Center driveway. As is typical with one-way pair streets, they split and reconnect, often creating undevelopable block sizes and geometries that favor vehicular traffic. This is the case on the east end of Lagoon Avenue where Lagoon Avenue splits from Lake Street at Dupont Avenue. The resulting geometry at Dupont Avenue has produced a virtually undevelopable block that has yielded a drive through fast food restaurant. The CARAG neighborhood and the City will be partnering on the “Break in Lake” which will improve the geometries of this intersection slightly, resulting in a better gateway and improved pedestrian crossings. It will not, however, change the development pattern of the compromised block.

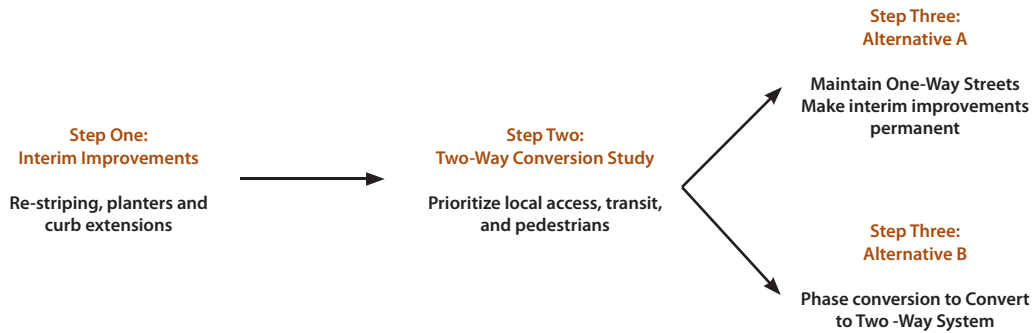
This Plan recommends a long-term solution of either further reconfiguration of the intersection to create developable blocks or an eventual conversion of the street grid to two-way.

One option for reconfiguring this intersection is to treat the intersection with two 90-degree signalized turns. Such an approach may improve pedestrian conditions and create a block that can be redeveloped. Such a solution would have to

be analyzed for its geometric and operational implications. Any intersection reconfiguration would require a coordinated redevelopment plan involving the property owners of Rainbow and the Arby's site since there would likely be a significant effect on both properties.



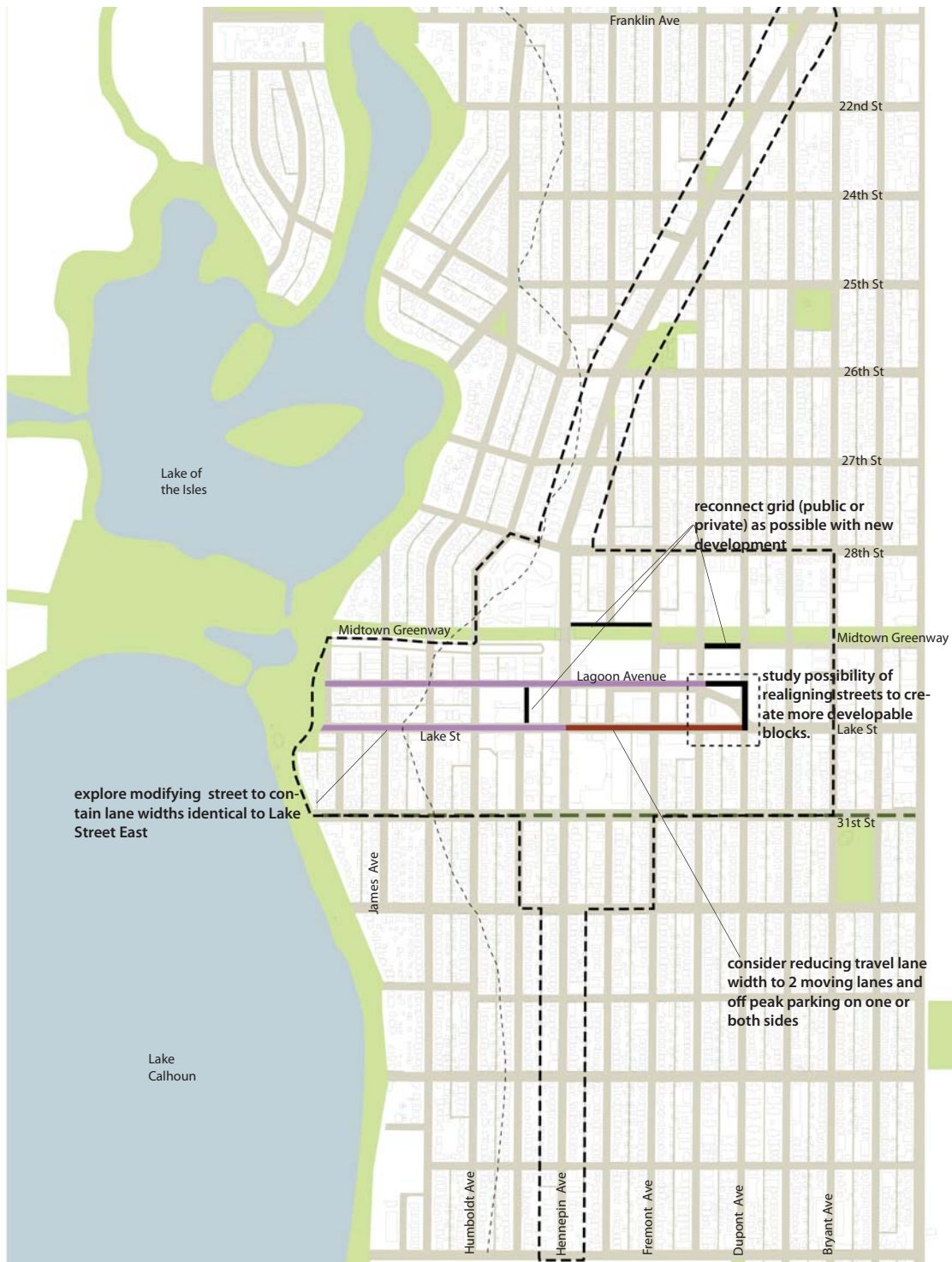
**Interim Improvements:** Short term improvements can include re-stripping the lanes, building curb extensions, installing countdown timers, and installing well-designed planters to narrow the street and create additional pedestrian space. (Note: curb extensions temporary or permanent, eliminate the possibility of peak-hour parking restrictions as well as dedicated curbside left turn lanes)



**Interim Improvements:** Steps one through three address ways to improve existing street conditions.

### Traffic Recommendations

- Establish a group of business leaders, property owners, and residents that would promote better management of existing parking resources, promote transit options, and help implement other transportation recommendations.
- Reduce lane widths on Lagoon Avenue and Lake Street to match East Lake Street reconstruction standards.
- Study design options and impacts of converting Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue into two-way streets. Key criteria in judging the feasibility should be expected traffic impacts, air quality impacts, potential loss of existing and future pedestrian space, and potential impacts on businesses.
- Consider reducing lane count on Lake Street east of Hennepin Avenue to two lanes in each direction, thereby matching the lane count on East Lake Street.
- Reconnect street grid as it becomes possible when these properties are redeveloped. Connections can be public streets or private lanes that permit public access.
- Examine possibilities for improving the Dupont Avenue/Lake Street intersection by creating developable blocks and restoring the street grid.



Traffic and Streets



---

## 9. Implementation

## Introduction

This Plan will update the Minneapolis Plan regarding land use and land use designation. Adoption of this Plan by City Council should signal the beginning of a new era for Uptown. The Plan will be implemented over the next 15 to 20 years with both private and public resources. Implementation will amount to significant changes and improvements in Uptown – changes that are both qualitative and quantitative.

Partnerships and civic cooperation are as important to the implementation of this Plan as the physical legacies. This Plan is not a blueprint for how to spend public resources. Rather, it is a document designed to raise investor confidence, form partnerships, and inspire new ideas. The ideas come from vested interests and passions of Uptown's diverse body of stakeholders. The realization of these ideas depends on continued cooperation and coordination between an active public sector, an entrepreneurial private sector, and an engaged citizenry. The result of such partnerships will be a renewed Uptown – a place that embodies the best qualities of urban living in Minneapolis.

The table on the following pages outlines initial thoughts for how the recommendations in this Plan can begin to be realized.

## Land Use Recommendations

Recommendations	Responsibilities	Time Frames	Notes
Discourage one-story commercial buildings.	CPED	Near Term	Rezoning Study: Consider minimum Floor Area Ratio for Pedestrian Oriented Overlay.
Encourage mixed-use blocks along Lake Street with the goal of improving walkability and connectivity between Uptown and Lyn/Lake	CPED	Near Term	Rezoning Study: Consider requiring retail in defined locations through an overlay district.
Encourage mixed-use blocks along Lake Street with the goal of improving walkability and connectivity between Uptown and Lyn/Lake.	CPED	Near Term	Rezoning Study: Focus on mix of uses.
Encourage office and employment uses in the Core as means of boosting daytime population.	CPED	Near Term	Rezoning Study: Focus on mix of uses
Create transitions between the Core and the neighborhoods by encouraging medium-density housing.	CPED	Near Term	Implement land use map as development occurs.
Encourage medium density housing and neighborhood retail on Hennepin Avenue, north of 28th Street.	CPED	Near Term	Implement land use map and pursue opportunities for rezoning.
Create a Live/Work district on West Lake Street.	CPED	Near Term	Evaluate zoning code to allow live/work opportunities.
Preserve the character of existing residential low-density housing in the neighborhoods.	CPED	Near Term	Implement land use map as development occurs.
Explore opportunities for encouraging additional live/work projects.	CPED	Near Term	Will likely require changes to the zoning code.



## Built Form Recommendations

Recommendations	Responsibilities	Time Frames	Notes
Concentrate density and intensity in the Core.	CPED, Development Community	Near Term	Rezoning Study: Implement land use map as development occurs
Encourage buildings in the Core to fit within a sculpted envelope that maximizes sunlight to the Greenway, Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue.	CPED, Development Community	Near Term	Follow guidance of Plan when reviewing design concepts.
Set buildings back on the north side of Lagoon and Lake Street to create broad sidewalks.	CPED, Development Community	Near Term	Follow guidance of Plan when reviewing design concepts.
Encourage buildings south of Lake Street to step down to meet the neighborhood scale.	CPED, Development Community	Near Term	Follow guidance of Plan when reviewing design concepts.
Encourage buildings on Lagoon Avenue to create a three to four story street wall.	CPED, Development Community	Near Term	Follow guidance of Plan when reviewing design concepts.
Encourage buildings west of the Activity Center to gradually step down in height to 2.5 stories at the Lake, in compliance with the Shoreland Overlay District.	CPED, Development Community	Near Term	Follow guidance of Plan when reviewing design concepts.
Encourage buildings on Hennepin Avenue, north of 28th Street to contain active fronts, and wide sidewalks.	CPED, Development Community	Near Term	Rezoning Study: Consider requiring retail in defined locations through an overlay district
New buildings throughout Uptown are encouraged to be designed as Green buildings with sustainable landscaping.	CPED, Development Community	Near Term	
Encourage all buildings on Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue, east of Hennepin Avenue, to contain storefronts.	CPED, Development Community	Near Term	

## Open Space Recommendations

Recommendations	Responsibilities	Time Frames	Notes
Create several small urban gathering spaces.	CPED, Development Community, Private property owners	Near Term	Encourage the use of tools such as PUD to negotiate for additional and improved public amenities.
Create a year round indoor/outdoor gathering space in Calhoun Square that accommodates existing and attracts new, diverse residents and customers.	Calhoun Square	Near Term	Current developers are planning improvements.
Establish upper pedestrian promenades on both the north and south sides of the Greenway.	CPED, Development Community, Property owners	As opportunities arise	Encourage and implement as development occurs.
Create Girard Meander, a narrow street with wide sidewalks connecting Mozaic to Calhoun Square. Design Girard Meander such that it can be closed to vehicular traffic as necessary during evenings and on weekends.	CPED, Development Community, Public Works	Medium Term	Consider as Mozaic and Calhoun Square plans are finalized and committed.
Where sidewalks are less than 8' wide, consider either setting back buildings five to ten feet to create wider sidewalks that can be used for outdoor seating, widening narrowing the street and widening the sidewalks to provide additional pedestrian amenities.	CPED, Development Community, Public Works	As opportunities arise	
Consider a public open space at the eastern terminus of Lagoon Avenue in front of the Lehman Building.	CPED, Development Community	Long Term	Consider as a part of redevelopment of Lehman Building.
Aggressively pursue private/public funding and operational options for the development of additional public spaces.	CPED, Development Community, MPRB	Medium Term	City and MPRB should work together to explore all options for Open Space development.
Explore options for additional greening of 31st Street east of Hennepin Avenue.	CPED, Public Works, Neighborhood.	Medium Term	Right-of-way east of Hennepin is more limited than west of Hennepin. Explore options for some form of greening/median.

## Open Space Recommendations (cont'd)

Recommendations	Responsibilities	Time Frames	Notes
Create broad promenades along the north side of Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue.	CPED, Development Community, Public Works	As opportunities arise	
Create additional small triangular urban plazas on Hennepin Avenue north of 28th Street as properties are redeveloped.	CPED, Development Community, Public Works	As opportunities arise	
Create terraces to the Greenway on development blocks that are graded down to the Greenway.	CPED, Development Community	As opportunities arise	
Encourage new development on the north side of the Greenway to animate the Greenway with active privately owned open spaces.	CPED, Development Community	As opportunities arise	

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Recommendations

Recommendations	Responsibilities	Time Frames	Notes
Shorten the walk distance for pedestrians crossing streets in Uptown by providing bump outs at signalized intersections.	Public Works, Hennepin County	Medium Term	See the Access Minneapolis Street Design Guidelines which are currently under development for additional info.
Install pedestrian count down meters at busy intersections in Uptown so pedestrians know how much time they actually have to cross the street.	Public Works, Hennepin County	Medium Term	
Reestablish practice of striping crosswalks annually rather than every two years so that markings are clearly visible to drivers and pedestrians.	Public Works, Hennepin County	Near Term	The Minneapolis Pedestrian Master Plan which is currently under development will address this and other best practices for crosswalk design and maintenance.
Where streets have been vacated, encourage new and existing development to establish sidewalks, paths, trails, or promenades to complete the pedestrian network (refer to map for specific locations).	CPED, Public Works, Developers/Property Owners	As opportunities arise	
Encourage setback for new developments in areas where the existing sidewalk is less than 12 feet wide.	CPED, Public Works, Developers/Property Owners	As opportunities arise	
Pursue placing the reconstruction of Lake and Lagoon on the Hennepin County Capital Improvements Program	CPED, Public Works	Near Term	
Develop the Girard Meander to connect the Mozaic to Calhoun Square.	CPED, Development Community, Public Works	Medium Term	Consider as Mozaic and Calhoun Square plans are finalized and committed.

## Pedestrian and Bicycle Recommendations (cont'd)

Establish upper pedestrian promenades on both the north and south sides of the Greenway In locations where buildings engage the Greenway at the lower level, efforts should be made to maintain pedestrian connectivity.	CPED, Development Community, Property Owners	As opportunities arise	Encourage and implement as development occurs
Ensure that new development (residential and commercial) provides an adequate number of bicycle parking stalls.	CPED	Near Term	Consider requiring more bicycle parking through the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay.
Encourage centralized bicycle parking (such as on-street bike parking corrals) at convenient locations for bicyclists to “park their bikes and walk” to several places in Uptown. Also explore ways to incorporate localized bike parking into street furniture configurations.	CPED, Public Works	Near Term	Coordinate with upcoming Bicycle Master Plan efforts
Work with the neighborhoods to identify inter-neighborhood bicycle routes and / or “park to park” routes.	Neighborhoods, Public Works, CPED	Near Term	Coordinate with upcoming Bicycle Master Plan efforts
Explore design options for bike lanes on 31st Street and Bryant Avenue.	Neighborhoods, Public Works, CPED	Near Term	Coordinate with upcoming Bicycle Master Plan efforts
Improve bicycle connections between the Greenway and the Core of Uptown (refer to map for specific location).	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County, Development Community	As opportunities arise	Coordinate with upcoming Bicycle Master Plan efforts
Study the narrowing of the curb-to-curb dimensions of Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue, west of Hennepin Avenue; use the additional width to create promenades on the north sides of these streets.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County		
Consider reducing the lane count on Lake Street to two lanes in each direction, thereby matching the lane count on East Lake Street. Explore interim measures for improving pedestrian comfort and safety.	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County		

## Transit Recommendations

Recommendations	Responsibilities	Time Frames	Notes
Establish a group of business leaders, property, owners, residents, that would promote better management of existing parking resources, promote transit options and help implement other transportation recommendations.	Metro Transit, CPED, Public Works	Near Term	Explore if this group could become a Transportation Management Organization (TMO).
Encourage new developments to provide transit facilities (shelters and boarding areas).	CPED, Metro Transit, Property Owners	As opportunities arise	Some incentives already exist in the code.
Implement Southwest Transit Corridor to either connect through Uptown or to extend possible future streetcar system to future West Calhoun Transit Center.	CPED, Metro Transit	Near and long term	Decisions will be made as a part of Access Minneapolis and Southwest Transit Corridor Studies.
Enhance and expand service on existing and new routes (increase frequency, hours, and non-rush hour service).	CPED, Metro Transit	Near term	
Explore a reduced rate for “Uptown Zone” riders or aggressively market and promote existing low cost fares and services.	Metro Transit		
Pursue, through public/private cooperation, a circulator along Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue connecting Uptown with the lakes and Lyndale/Lake.	CPED, Property Owners	Long Term	Concept to be further explored in Lyn/Lake Small Area Plan process. Circulator should not replace other transit initiatives.
Support the possible future development of streetcars on Hennepin Avenue.	CPED, Metro Transit	Long Term	Streetcar routes to be determined by Access Minneapolis.
Support transit by promoting land uses and development densities that create and support strong transit markets, such as high density housing, employment, and retail.	CPED, Development Community	As opportunities arise	Implement land use map as development occurs.

### Transit Recommendations (cont'd)

At the future rail transit stop at Hennepin Avenue, create a new gathering space at the Greenway level.			
Encourage employers to increase transit use by participating in existing programs that allow them to treat the costs of employee bus passes as a business expense.	CPED, Metro Transit, Employers	Near Term	
Design streets that prioritize the transit experience, including comfortable loading and waiting areas. Streets that require transit to exit traffic flow do not prioritize transit because they require busses to merge and yield back into traffic.	Public Works, Metro Transit	Medium or Long Term	
Assess bus stop locations throughout Uptown to determine most efficient locations and benefits of consolidation.			

## Parking Recommendations

Recommendations	Responsibilities	Time Frames	Notes
Establish a group of business leaders, property, owners, residents, that would promote better management of existing parking resources, promote transit options and help implement other transportation recommendations.	Metro Transit, CPED, Public Works	Near Term	Explore if this group could become a Transportation Management Organization (TMO).
Establish shared parking practices which could allow for better utility of larger lots such as Lunds and YWCA in the evenings.	CPED, Public Works, Private Property Owners	Near Term	
Encourage property owners on Hennepin Avenue (north of 28th Street) to combine parking lots in the rear of their buildings and to connect them to side streets allowing the reduction of curb cuts, the addition of on-street parking and the reduction of mid-block left turns.	CPED, Private Property Owners	Near Term	
Develop district parking facilities in the Core.	CPED, Private Property Owners, other stakeholders	Long Term	Opportunities will arise on a project by project basis over time.
Encourage shared parking practices between complimentary uses such as entertainment and offices.	CPED, Private Property Owners	Long Term	Can be encouraged by group of business leaders, property, owners, residents, responsible for promoting better parking management.
Adjust cost of parking at metered on-street parking to maintain 85% occupancy throughout the day and evening. Low occupancy is inefficient; occupancy greater than 85% discourages parkers and encourages “cruising” or “trolling.”	Public Works	Near Term	



### Parking Recommendations (cont'd)

Work with businesses to create a voucher parking program for visitors and consumers.	CPED, Private Property Owners	Near Term	Can be encouraged by group of business leaders, property, owners, residents, responsible for promoting better parking management.
Create a transportation and parking guide.	Business Associations and other stakeholders	Near Term	Can be encouraged by group of business leaders, property, owners, residents, responsible for promoting better parking management.
Promote the existing parking card (debit card to eliminate need for quarters at parking meters) similar to Downtown.	City, Business Associations and other stakeholders, Public Works	Near Term	Can be encouraged by group of business leaders, property, owners, residents, responsible for promoting better parking management.
Coordinate the criteria and processes of the Critical Area Parking System with area wide parking supply and demand.	CPED, Public Works	Near Term	
Improve signage and wayfinding (LCD screens with directional arrows to available parking spaces) to public parking area. Use “smart signs” and consistent signing practices to assist motorists in finding available parking thereby reducing cruising.	Public Works, Business Associations and other stakeholders	Medium Term	
Encourage parking garages to be on the interior of the block, minimally visible to the street. If the façade of a garage is visible from the street it should be architecturally treated as a “parking building.”	CPED	As opportunities arise	
Conduct employee surveys to determine where they live and what improvements would encourage them to use transit.	Business Associations and other stakeholders	Near Term	

## Traffic Recommendations

Recommendations	Responsibilities	Time Frames	Notes
Establish a group of business leaders, property, owners, residents, that would promote better management of existing parking resources, promote transit options and help implement other transportation recommendations.	Metro Transit, CPED, Public Works	Near Term	Explore if this group could become a Transportation Management Organization (TMO)
Explore interim measures for improving pedestrian comfort and safety.	CPED, Public Works	Near Term	Measure may include curb extensions at intersections, strategic planter placement.
Study design options and impacts of converting Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue into two-way streets. Key criteria in judging the feasibility should be expected traffic impacts, potential loss of existing and future pedestrian space, and potential impacts on businesses.	CPED, Public Works	Medium Term	Additional funds will be needed to conduct studies.
Pursue placing the reconstruction of Lake and Lagoon on the Hennepin County Capital Improvements Program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Study the narrowing of the curb-to-curb dimensions of Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue, west of Hennepin Avenue; use the additional width to create promenades on the north sides of these streets.</li> <li>- Consider reducing the lane count on Lake Street to two lanes in each direction, thereby matching the lane count on East Lake Street.</li> </ul>	CPED, Public Works, Hennepin County	Medium Term for study, Long Term for implementation	Additional funds will be needed to conduct studies.

Reconnect street grid as it becomes possible when these properties are redeveloped.	CPED, Private Property Owners	As opportunities arise	Funding and/or incentives for new streets would need to be explored
Examine possibilities for improving the Dupont Avenue/Lake Street intersection by creating developable blocks and restoring the street grid.	Public Works, CPED, Private Property Owners		Could be part of one-way/two-way study.