

Arts – large & small – abound & surround

What should be done next

The City should take on the role of arts convener and coordinator.

- Convene funders, artists and arts organizations to talk about how to coordinate the arts scene. The City should adapt the strategy New York and Denver used to pay for convener costs.
- The City could play a role as matchmaker of services or facilities to arts groups.
- Create a theater alliance that could serve many organizations.
- Find a way to coordinate event calendars.
- Implement a shared marketing and ticketing service.
- Once or twice a year, get arts groups together so they can learn from each another and build contacts. Check back with the groups that met two years ago when the State Arts Board and the Historical Society convened a conversation. Let's learn what resulted from that meeting.
- Convene a City Council study session to learn what the arts community wants policymakers to do.
- Place an artist-in-residence in the City's bureaucratic infrastructure to advocate for and assist artists and arts organizations.

Improve communications and outreach.

- Look for ways beyond Web sites to communicate about the arts scene.
- The Arts Commission should do more outreach.
- Promote arts events to local audiences, not just people from outside the Twin Cities.
- Follow up on the exposure generated by the Republican National Convention and promote Minneapolis' arts scene on a national basis.
- Help funders understand that not every program has to have a component for children. Encourage funding to develop professional artists and provide programming to adults.

Provide greater support to small and mid-sized arts organizations.

- Look for ways to support smaller organizations and minority arts groups. For example, the City could dedicate land to minority arts groups.
- View arts organizations as businesses and employers. The City should integrate support for them to ensure they exist and survive. Give them the same support that is provided to small businesses.
- Help small arts groups struggling to pay the rent with operating space.

“There isn't a venue in the city where we can talk about the arts on a regular basis. If art is a priority, then let's walk our talk and have routine meetings about it.”

- Arts association employee



Upper Mississippi planned and proceeding

What's working

There's a renewed respect for the river and a commitment to protect and enhance this resource.

- We're restoring the river and moving away from a river lined with industry.
- Comprehensive planning — Above the Falls and regional park plans, for example — is helping us move forward and obtain funding.
- Staffs are connecting multiple efforts and multiple jurisdictions. As a result, we're integrating plans.
- The Community Planning and Economic Development Department is keeping the focus on the river.
- The environment is being considered in land use decisions.

We're seeing investment along and near the riverfront.

- Coloplast, the Grain Belt Brewery project and the Pierre Bottineau Library are all examples of investment.
- The first phase of the river parkway is under way.
- Hennepin County will be reconstructing the Lowry Avenue bridge.
- Hennepin County has become more sensitive to community input. It understands the importance of bike and walking trails, and it's working with the Park and Recreation Board and Northeast residents.
- We've raised enough money to move the pioneer statue and plant 200 trees on the B.F. Nelson Park site.

What isn't working

The economic downturn and market practices are impeding development.

- Right now, it's difficult to get anything financed on the private side.
- We're competing with other high amenity areas for new development.
- The Upper River is more difficult to redevelop because we're displacing viable businesses.
- It's difficult to get the market to look farther upriver than Gold Medal Park.
- The area between Lowry Avenue and 36th Avenue North looks like no man's land. Nobody pays attention to it.
- Coloplast is concerned about its ability to move toward its vision of a medical device campus. One side of the area is beautiful, but the other side is a scrap yard.
- Although Hennepin County is going ahead with the Lowry Avenue bridge, the trail connection is not funded.

- The emerging Riverfront Corporation presents a great opportunity for partnership.

There's more resident interest and engagement about the river.

- In north and northeast Minneapolis, people are talking about the river, bike trails, parks and shoreline restoration. When the public cares, they prod elected officials and things get done.
- The *Minneapolis River Forum Current* e-mail keeps people informed about events along the river.

There are more opportunities for recreation and nature appreciation along the river.

- The Carl W. Kroening Interpretive Center is coming into its own.
- The Mississippi River Trail's connection in Minneapolis is already on the ground and will be a key segment of the 3,000-mile system that eventually will connect the Mississippi Headwaters to the Gulf of Mexico.
- In 2010, there will be a bike trail from the river to northeast Minneapolis. That project has spurred discussion about a bike trail in north Minneapolis.
- Tour boats on Boom Island are doing well.
- More people are putting boats into the river.
- People are discovering that the river is one of the most spectacular fisheries in the state.
- Minneapolis is one of the few big cities with a national park within its boundaries.

Our vision for the future and our action strategies aren't clear.

- There's no consensus on the City's policy for river development. The policy is predicated on a robust housing market upriver, but the market is uncertain.
- It's a challenge for City staff to handle the workload. Given the extensive time commitment requirements, people at every level are wondering if the City's policy is still right.
- Hennepin County isn't incorporating stormwater management and green space early enough in its planning process.
- Keeping industry along the river to retain jobs hampers plans for green space.
- Navigation on the river will change in the next 30 to 50 years, but we don't know what demands will be made on the system and how that will affect infrastructure.