



Request for City Council Committee Action from the Departments of City Coordinator, Community Planning and Economic Development and Public Works

Date: January 29, 2013

To: Lisa Goodman, Chair, Community Development Committee

Subject: Plan-It Hennepin

Recommendations: Endorse the plan, recognize the District, collaborate with the District Alliance and provide staff directions, all as outlined herein.

Previous Directives:

On April 29, 2011, the City Council approved a \$50,000 Great Street Business District Support grant to Hennepin Theatre Trust to fund work related to the Plan-It process.

On February 25, 2011, the City Council approved supporting the submission by Hennepin Theatre Trust of a Statement of Interest to the National Endowment for the Arts *Our Town* initiative seeking funding for the Hennepin Avenue Cultural Corridor planning process.

Department Information

Prepared by: Gulgun Kayim, Director of Arts, Culture and Creative Economy

Approved by: Paul Aasen, City Coordinator _____

Jeremy Hanson Willis, Director CPED _____

Steve Kotke, Director, Public Works _____

Presenters in Committee: Gulgun Kayim, Olga Viso, Tom Borrup and Tom Hoch

Financial Impact: None

Community Impact

- **Neighborhood Notification:** The affected neighborhood organizations (Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association, North Loop Neighborhood Association, Lowry Hill Neighborhood Association and Citizens for a Loring Park Community) were involved in the Plan-It process and have been notified of this report.
- **City Goals:** The vision outlined in Plan-It Hennepin will help achieve several of the strategic directions in the Jobs and Economic Vitality and the Livable Communities, Healthy Lives goals.

- Comprehensive Plan: Plan-It Hennepin implementation will achieve the following priorities: 4.9 (Focus economic development efforts in strategic locations for continued growth and sustained vitality); 4.16 (Strengthen Downtown's position as a regional cultural, entertainment and commercial center that serves Downtown employees, visitors and residents: and 9.1 (Integrate and utilize arts and culture as a resource for economic development).
- Zoning Code: Not applicable
- Other

Supporting Information:

In late Spring, 2011, Hennepin Theatre Trust, with support from the City of Minneapolis, applied for and secured an "Our Town" grant from the National Endowment for the Arts. The purpose of this grant was to lead a planning process involving and engaging arts, business, philanthropy, education, religious and public sectors in a reinvention of Hennepin Avenue as a nationally acclaimed, year-round cultural destination. This 'corridor', which was transformed to a 'district' as part of the planning process, was envisioned as physically and programmatically connecting the Mississippi Riverfront, the Caesar Pelli-designed library, restored Cowles Center, historic Pantages, State and Orpheum Theatres and the Herzog and de Meuron-designed Walker Art Center and Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. With the aid of a City-approved \$50,000 Great Streets Business District Support grant to Hennepin Theatre Trust, the project was further aimed at converting vacant and underdeveloped public and private spaces along the Avenue to uses that connect and inspire an arts-centered community cultural experience and cross-programming among affected entities while fostering economic vitality. The project was further intended to complement the Downtown Council's 2025 Plan.

Led by a consortium of creative-sector organizations, a year-long planning process, known as *Plan-It Hennepin*, brought together hundreds of artists, businesses, churches, City officials and staff, developers, educational institutions, nonprofit organizations, philanthropists, residents, students, youth and other stakeholders in unprecedented ways to create a collective vision for the Hennepin Cultural District.

City of Minneapolis participants in the Plan-It Hennepin process included Council Member Goodman as a member of the Advisory Committee and a staff technical advisory committee comprised of Mary Altman (CPED), Cecilia Bolognesi (CPED), Ann Calvert (CPED), Beth Elliott (CPED), Steven Hay (Public Works), Gülgün Kayim (Coordinators Office), Erika Prosser (Mayor's Office), Patrick Sadler (7th Ward Council Member's Office) and Jeff Schneider (CPED). A full list of planning process participants is included at the end of this report.

The plan may be viewed in its entirety at <http://www.hennepintheatretrust.org/plan-it-hennepin>.

As outlined in the plan, the Hennepin Cultural District Alliance seeks formal recognition as an entity from the Minneapolis City Council and general endorsement of the plan's short-term actions and long-term goals while recognizing that some actions and recommendations and any City commitment of financial resources will need further consideration. In the near term, the District Alliance will be housed within Hennepin Theatre Trust, with the possibility of it becoming a separate entity at some time in the future.

Formal endorsement of the plan by the City of Minneapolis is proposed to accompany agreement to work with and support Cultural District leadership to: 1) facilitate fast and efficient permitting, 2) enhance greening, 3) stimulate culturally related development, 4) bring creative design to streetscaping, and 5) explore ways of moving people throughout the District.

Recommendations for Plan-It Hennepin

The Plan-It Hennepin document recommends that the City:

i) Endorse the plan:

- Endorse the plan created by the Plan-It Hennepin process, while recognizing that some of the specific actions and recommendations made by the Plan and City commitment of financial resources will need further consideration.

ii) Recognize the District:

- Recognize the Hennepin Cultural District, an area following Hennepin Avenue from the Walker Art Center to the Mississippi River and encompassing parallel streets including Nicollet, Harmon and First Avenues (the triple spine with Hennepin Avenue as the central artery) as well as connecting streets. This area mirrors the combined boundaries of the City's Downtown Hennepin and Lyndale Commercial Corridors areas. The four connected zones comprise the District, each with distinct streetscape designs and unifying elements, including directional and informational signage:
 - Hennepin-Lyndale Gateway: Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church and Walker Art Center to the Basilica and Dunwoody College, characterized by spiritual and educational institutions, museum and green space focused on social interaction.
 - Hennepin-Harmon District: the Basilica to 10th Street, characterized as an urban residential area with educational institutions and local retail.
 - Hennepin Theatre District: Tenth Street to 5th Street, characterized by an active urban environment with historic theatres, entertainment, bright signage, sports venues and restaurants.
 - Riverfront Gateway: Fifth Street to Nicollet Island, characterized by the Central Library, residential, retail, civic institutions and green spaces focused on recreation. (see attached District map)

iii) Collaborate with the District Alliance:

- Collaborate with District leadership to facilitate development that is consistent with and complementary to the District; programming vacant storefronts throughout Downtown and encouraging new development that favors cultural uses and complementary commercial uses including galleries, a diverse mix of restaurants and unique, locally-owned retail.
- Reserve a seat for the City on the District Alliance executive board and authorize the Mayor and Council President to appoint a City representative to fill that seat.
- Authorize the City Coordinator to identify a liaison to the City's special projects committee to work cooperatively with a liaison of the Alliance in identifying and/or facilitating required approvals and assisting with regulatory and permitting needs for projects and initiatives proposed by the Alliance, with the goal of identifying improved processes that can be replicated elsewhere in the City.

iv) Provide directions for City Staff

- Direct staff to undertake the following and to return to the city Council when appropriate for consideration of additional actions:
 - **Community Planning and Economic Development, Department of Health and Regulatory Services staff to:**
 - enforce existing surface parking landscaping and screening guidelines from the zoning code as the most desirable option for improving the aesthetics of parking lots along Hennepin, with the first priority being the establishment of the green buffer space along sidewalks. The District Alliance will work with the City to determine the most timely and effective path to implementation of parking lot greening on properties within the defined project area;
 - explore strategies to make existing permitting and regulations easier to understand and access, and further the City's cooperative and creative approach to regulations, permitting and support for events, food options,

- building permits and business development;
 - re-examine regulations related to murals and expand permissions if needed to foster a more visually stimulating environment;
 - identify opportunities for artist involvement in planning and installing public art now and in the future;
 - consider initiatives that encourage property uses by owners and tenants for arts and cultural purposes and encourage arts-related economic development projects to consider the District for their location;
 - support arts and cultural development within the District, with the recommendation that all first-floor spaces be visible and open to the public at street level;
 - expedite processing pop-up storefront requests in the District;
 - evaluate revisions to existing signage provisions to activate buildings and walls through artistic lighting that improve overall lighting and safety;
 - explore delegating authority for all street pole banners throughout the district to the District Alliance; and
 - in consultation with Public Works right of way division explore possible changes to City policy (including the zoning ordinance) related to sponsorship recognition on signage, banners and other event signage.
- **Public Works Department staff to explore ways for the District to be involved in the following public realm improvements within the District's geography:**
 - establish improved pedestrian markings at intersections along Hennepin and cross streets;
 - enhance bicycle travel;
 - explore lighting improvements to the underside of the skyway located at Hennepin and 9th street to improve safety;
 - coordinate with MnDOT to devise long-term lighting and physical improvements to the I-94 underpass between the Basilica and Dunwoody College (See Appendix 'Public Art Site Considerations');
 - collaborate with the Alliance, Metro Transit and Downtown leadership to address Downtown transit circulation to better serve residents, visitors to and employees and facilitate movement between cultural institutions and businesses; and
 - examine current policies and practices for stakeholder and community engagement in the design and operations of public infrastructure, identify barriers that need to be addressed and discuss with the appropriate public entities.
- **Community Planning Research and City Coordinator's Office staff to:**
 - provide data monitored and gathered through the Creative Vitality Index and CPED Research with *Track It Hennepin*, the assessment and reporting tool of the District around indicators identified within the District's geography that monitor changes in the creative economy, business establishments, employment, local option sales tax and estimated market values.
- **Intergovernmental Relations Staff to:**
 - explore and help secure state policy support of incentives for cultural and creative districts.

Participants in Planning Process

The following list represents the staff and consultants of the planning effort:

Project Partners

Thomas L. Hoch – President/CEO, Hennepin Theatre Trust

L. Kelley Lindquist – President, Artspace Projects

Olga Viso – Executive Director, Walker Art Center

Steering Committee

Syd Beane – Professor, Community Development, Indigenous Studies, Minneapolis Community and Technical College

Karin Birkeland – Community Volunteer

Phil Eckhert – Director of Housing, Community Works and Transit, Hennepin County

Sarah Harris – Chief Operating Officer, Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District

Wing Young Huie – Artist

Gülgün Kayim – Director, Arts, Culture and Creative Economy, City of Minneapolis

Aparna Ramaswamy – Choreographer, Co-Artistic Director, Ragamala Dance

Ignacio San Martin – Professor, Director, Metro Design Center, University of Minnesota

Ben Shardlow – Urban Planner and Designer

City of Minneapolis Staff – Technical Advisory Committee

Mary Altman – Public Arts Administrator

Cecilia Bolognesi – Principal Planner/Research

Ann Calvert – Principal Project Coordinator

Beth Elliott – Principal City Planner

Steven Hay – Transportation Planner

Gülgün Kayim – Director, Arts, Culture and Creative Economy

Erika Prosser – Office of Mayor R.T. Rybak

Patrick Sadler – Policy Aide, 7th Ward Council Member's Office

Jeff Schneider – Manager, Research and Special Projects

Advisory Committee

Dorothy Bridges – Senior VP, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis

Ralph Burnet – RWB Development/Chambers Hotel

Jay Cowles – President, Unity Avenue Associates

John Erwin – President, Minneapolis Park Board

Lisa Goodman – Minneapolis City Council, 7th Ward

Seitu Jones – Visual Artist

Cora McCorvey – Executive Director, Minneapolis Public Housing Authority

Bill McGuire – Philanthropist

Speaker Series Advisory Committee

Syd Beane – Professor, Community Development, Indigenous Studies, Minneapolis Community and Technical College

Andrew Blauvelt – Design Director and Curator, Walker Art Center

Jay Coogan – President, Minneapolis College of Art and Design

Caren Dewar – Executive Director, Urban Land Institute Minnesota

Steve Dietz – Director, President and Artistic Director, Northern Lights.mn

Sarah Harris – Director, Downtown Improvement District

Gülgün Kayim – Director of Arts, Culture and Creative Economy, City of Minneapolis

Melissa Koch – Director of Education and Community Engagement, Hennepin Theatre Trust

Ignacio San Martin – Professor, Director, Metro Design Center, University of Minnesota

Sarah Schultz – Director of Education and Curator of Public Practice, Walker Art Center

Ben Shardlow – Urban Planner and Designer

Development Advisors

Colleen Carey – President, Cornerstone Group
Caren Dewar – Executive Director, Urban Land Institute Minnesota
David Frauenshuh – Founding Director, Frauenshuh, Inc.
Roger Halverson – President, Matrix Resourcing
Heidi Kurtze – VP Property Development, Artspace
Bob Lux – Principal, Alatus
Bob Parr – Director of Development, Ryan Companies US, Inc.
David Shea – Shea, Inc.
David Sternberg – Senior VP / General Manager, Brookfield Properties Corporation

Youth Projects Facilitation Team

Ann Marie Arndt – Media arts teacher, FAIR School – Downtown
Shá Cage – Interdisciplinary Artist
Katherine Dunbar – Arts for Academic Achievement, Minneapolis Public Schools
Michael Elston – Director of Partnerships, FAIR School – Downtown
Colin Harris – Project Engineer, Community Design Group
Michael Hay – Youth Program Director, Intermedia Arts
Robert Hayles – Automation Programmer, KBEM – FM
Jeff Hnilicka – Executive Director, Kulture Klub Collaborative
Melissa Koch – Director of Education and Community Engagement, Hennepin Theatre Trust
Adriana Rimpel – Teen Arts Council Coordinator, Walker Art Center
Antonio Rosell – Founder and Director, Community Design Group
Dudley Voigt – Critical Views Coordinator, Hennepin Theatre Trust

Project Staff and Consultants

AECOM, Inc.

Bob Close – Landscape Architect
Josh Bergeron – Designer II
Mic Johnson – Principal Design Director
Jillian Mans - Designer I
Nicolas Ramirez – Designer III

American Indian Community Development Corporation

Tom McElveen – Real Estate Research

Artist Team –Workshop Facilitation

Harry Waters Jr. – Theater artist, Macalester College professor
Leah Nelson – Independent choreographer and educator
Ta-coumba Aiken – Independent visual artist, educator
Mankwe Ndosì – Independent vocalist, educator

Creative Community Builders – Consultants to Hennepin Theatre Trust

Tom Borrup – Principal, Plan-It Hennepin Project Manager
Andrew Leitch – Historical Research
Linda Picone – Plan Editor
Heidi Wagner – Research

Forecast Public Art

Jack Becker – Executive Director, Public Art Planning

Metris Arts Consulting

Anne Gadwa-Nicodemus – Indicators Research and Planning