NICOLLET ISLAND-EAST BANK NEIGHBORHOOD SMALL AREA PLAN

Nicollet Island East Bank Neighborhood Association

Executive Summary

September 2014

Acknowledgments

We acknowledge and thank all the residents, business owners, and other interested parties who participated in the development of this Small Area Plan. Altogether, over 200 people participated in the process in one way of another. Their commitment to making this wonderful neighborhood the best that it can be has been inspiring.

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a people-centered, asset-based approach to urban planning, policy and design
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WSB & Associates, Inc.

Executive Summary

This Small Area Plan (Plan) describes the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood, its past, its present, and its future. The intended audiences for this Plan are city officials, city staff, other governmental agencies, neighborhood volunteers, developers, and residents. The Plan mandates key changes that will increase the neighborhood's population and expand its economy by varying and enlivening land uses and the economic base and by intensifying development of currently underutilized properties. The Plan spells out steps to achieve the neighborhood's vision by implementing its goals.

On the banks of the Mississippi River across from downtown Minneapolis, the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood is a crossroads linking Downtown, the University of Minnesota, and the Northeast Arts District. It is poised to capture significant growth during the current wave of development in the City. Originally called St. Anthony, the area was recognized by the Minnesota Territorial Legislature as a Town in 1855. Today, the neighborhood is the smallest and one of the oldest in Minneapolis [along with Marcy-Holmes and St. Anthony East, which were also parts of the original town of St. Anthony]. Nicollet Island-East Bank includes the City's only residential island.

It is a neighborhood of contrasts. Nicollet Island provides the setting for 19th Century homes near the River's edge and for Nicollet Island Park with its commanding views of the river, Downtown and the Stone Arch Bridge. The East Bank – with its eclectic mix of low-rise historic storefronts and modern residential high-rises – reminds visitors of both the East Bank's early days as the City's first commercial district and then its first re-birth with major industrial compounds.

Nicollet Island-East Bank includes one of the most heavily used park districts in the Metropolitan Area: The Mississippi Riverfront. This Plan preserves and protects the parks while building better, more attractive connections among the neighborhood's parks, commercial districts, and residential areas.

Today, the East Bank is once again on the cusp of significant change. Increasingly, unique shops and restaurants are opening in this now-trendy neighborhood, while the last of the remaining industrial sites has closed. Major "opportunity sites" are ripe for redevelopment and could become home to scores of additional businesses and at least hundreds of new residents.

At the same time, the first modern streetcar line in Minneapolis is planned to traverse Nicollet Island-East Bank. That will strengthen the neighborhood's role as a crossroads for public transportation in Minneapolis. It will also spur substantial growth, both in population and economic activity, leveraging the increasing popularity of inner-city convenience and sustainable patterns of development. In this small neighborhood straddling the boundary between northeast and southeast Minneapolis, each major roadway – East Hennepin, Central, University, and 1st Avenues as well as 4th Street – is already a major transportation corridor and a vital commercial and residential street.

The neighborhood of the future will have safe and bustling streets and sidewalks where people can be found walking at all hours of the day and night. In a compact neighborhood teeming with people, tall buildings will comfortably face shorter neighbors; and no two buildings will look exactly alike. The community will be transit oriented and people friendly. It will include the full spectrum of housing, business and other options that will attract and support residents and visitors from across the region and beyond.

The Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood Association invites the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, and the Metropolitan Council to join it in this journey, pursuing an even brighter future for this already vibrant neighborhood.

VISION

The Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood will achieve significant growth in both residential and business population and tax base during the next 20 years. When fully developed, the neighborhood will be a culturally diverse home to at least hundreds more people and scores of thriving new businesses. A vital urban neighborhood in its own right, Nicollet Island-East Bank also functions as a major crossroads for the City and as a destination for the region.

With new housing built to universal design standards along easy-to-navigate sidewalks and streets, the neighborhood will serve as an urban laboratory where innovations take place within the public realm. The eclectic neighborhood will be known for its public art, walkability and bikability, access to great public transportation, welcoming plazas and innovative parklets, environmental sensitivity, and careful blending of the new with the old.

Visitors from across the region will have numerous reasons to seek out Nicollet Island-East Bank as a place to shop, dine, or simply enjoy access to the riverfront. Buildings both small and tall will anchor and enliven busy, bustling streets. The sustainable and environmentally-sound neighborhood will offer such a wide variety of housing, commercial, and cultural choices that residents will never *have* to leave the neighborhood.

MAJOR STRATEGIC GOALS

1. Strengthen the neighborhood's role in the regional economy, with emphasis on businesses that are unique, in part by restoring East Hennepin to its historic commercial roots.
2. Guide infill development while increasing density, cultivating mixed-use corridors, and increasing communal green space.
3. Attract a rich mix of residents, cultural experiences, businesses and other institutions, building types and styles, and employment opportunities.
4. Adapt to contemporary use the historical character, unique architecture, and regional and neighborhood parks – in cooperation with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and in compliance with the historic district guidelines of the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Zone and the Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan.
5. Expand and improve pedestrian, bicycling, and transit infrastructure throughout the neighborhood.
6. Provide an exceptional urban pedestrian experience for people of all ages.
7. Act as stewards of the environment, valuing sustainability, energy conservation, minimal surface water run-off, and re-use/reduce/recycle economies.
8. Enhance public safety through maximum use of "eyes-on-the-street" building designs.

TOP PRIORITIES

1. Restore one-way streets to two-way operations.
2. Expand the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District to include the entire neighborhood.
3. Attract high quality development to underutilized areas.
4. Increase emphasis on the pedestrian with amenities such as artwork, wider sidewalks, trees, parklets, enhanced lighting, street "furniture" (benches, tables, etc.), and transparent building facades.
5. Eliminate overhead utilities.
6. Support improved transit services and infrastructure including the Nicollet-Central Streetcar implementation, real time transit information signage and otherwise.
7. Improve connections to the riverfront parkland and to bicycle and pedestrian trails.

ACTION HIGHLIGHTS

Chapter One: Introduction

Nicollet Island-East Bank is the smallest and one of the oldest neighborhoods in Minneapolis. On the Mississippi River just east of Downtown, the neighborhood includes Nicollet Island (the only residential island in Minneapolis) and the East Bank, a triangle formed by the River, Central Avenue, and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad line.

An estimated one-third to one-half of the property in the East Bank portion of the neighborhood is ready for redevelopment. It is ready for significant population growth that re-use would enable. Now is the time to focus on redevelopment efforts here, while new households are forming at a rapid pace and the viability of the urban core is rising.

Once fully developed, the East Bank will be even more vibrant than it is today. It will be home to scores of businesses, both old and new. It will be a sustainable and culturally-diverse community where people live, work, shop, dine, and play. Together, both Nicollet Island and the East Bank will treasure their natural and built environments and ensure the strength of their property tax base for the long term.

Chapter One designates the Small Area Plan as the official document that guides the neighborhood's land use.

Chapter Two: Land Use & Housing

> ***Re-zone the entire East Bank as C3A Community Activity Center District and expand the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District to encompass the entire neighborhood.***

Although residential towers constructed in the last 30 years command a presence in the skyline, small scale commercial buildings tend to dominate the East Bank. Industrial businesses have ceased operation and the neighborhood no longer functions as an industrial area.

High density mixed uses including housing, retail, and offices – with extensive ground floor commercial spaces – can be expected as the norm for future development. Consistent with City goals of making this a high pedestrian and transit oriented area, these uses will also support existing small businesses and enhance transit ridership.

NIEBNA seeks to maximize development of taller, architecturally distinguished, mixed use structures that will accommodate significant increases in population and employment on the East Bank, while recognizing that smaller structures may be needed in certain locations.

Chapter Three: Transportation

Restore one-way streets to two-way operations.

This Plan's top priority is to restore Hennepin and 1st Avenues and 4th Street within the neighborhood to two-way operations. That work is essential for maximizing the redevelopment potential of major opportunity sites, especially for retail uses. Transportation agencies should employ "smart street" technologies as part of the two-way street restoration work. Emphasizing pedestrian safety and ease of movement, those technologies result in considerably shorter travel times, as recently demonstrated in downtown Minneapolis.

Enhance the pedestrian and bicyclist experience.

NIEBNA encourages the City to consider the neighborhood an "urban laboratory" for testing new approaches to incent walking, bicycling and transit as preferred modes of travel. The City could try out new types of lighting, signage, streetscape and sidewalk improvements, traffic management, street furniture, and other features for use in street rights-of-way. "All Walk" intersections, which reduce conflicts between cars and pedestrians, are an example of a strategy that could be tested.

Provide modern streetcars that reflect a common sense plan.

NIEBNA supports installation of modern streetcars on East Hennepin Avenue and 1st Avenue Northeast in a way that leverages the redevelopment potential of the neighborhood. Most major development opportunity sites in the neighborhood would have frontage on the streetcar line.

The neighborhood asks, however, that the City ***not*** split its smallest neighborhood into two parts by curtailing the streetcar "starter line" at 5th Street Northeast, as proposed in the "starter streetcar line" plan adopted by the City Council in 2013. Fifth Street is not a "common sense" terminus for the line; the streetcar line should extend at least to 8th Street Northeast and should not interfere with the restorations of East Hennepin and 1st Avenues to two-way operations.

The neighborhood supports the streetcar in the context of its full implementation up to 41st Avenue Northeast.

Chapter Four: Urban Design

Enhance the standards of the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District.

Future development of the East Bank presents a rare opportunity to make dramatic changes to the character of the neighborhood. With several major improvement sites located in close proximity of each other, this overlay district ensures that each new building is designed with pedestrians in mind. Street level façades should be transparent and visually interesting. Streetscapes in front of new buildings should incorporate vegetation, street furniture, signage and other amenities that make each storefront distinct. By varying upper level building stepbacks from streets, taller buildings can maximize sunlight below and create a more interesting skyline while enhancing the pedestrian experience. NIEBNA encourages a variety of architectural styles and is opposed to "cookie cutter" designs. The expanded Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District will include requirements for developments to achieve these characteristics. With this approach, the neighborhood itself will serve as a regional attraction and as a laboratory for urban design.

Strengthen the neighborhood's identity.

A stronger neighborhood identity would entice visitors to return to the neighborhood more often. Unifying strategies like pedestrian-scale lighting and "street jewelry" such as banners and planters would aid this effort. At the same time, the neighborhood and its businesses should savor their eccentricities with individualized storefronts and street features like benches, umbrellas, and landscaping that give the neighborhood character and reflect its personality.

Chapter Five: Economic Development

Increase the population of the East Bank.

This Plan calls for increasing the population of the East Bank through the development of higher density rental and owner occupied housing that serves all income levels and ethnicities.

Expand employment and economic activity

NIEBNA intends to strengthen the neighborhood's role in the regional economy through increased retail (business to consumer) and non-retail (business-to-business) activity, including professional services and technology firms. A key strategy is that all major developments be mixed-use, to increase the amount of commercial and office space available in the neighborhood.

Attract bold, creative, and highly integrated residential and commercial development.

NIEBNA expects the neighborhood to attract highly-qualified private developers to construct mixed-use buildings that generate both daytime and nighttime uses. This will be particularly important for major opportunity sites, especially sites that front the proposed streetcar line.

Mixed-use buildings should offer retail-oriented commercial space on ground floors, with residential or office uses on upper floors.

Chapter Six: Arts, Culture & Heritage Preservation

Enliven the neighborhood with art and entertainment at key locations.

Iconic artwork should strengthen the unity of purpose and the connections between the River and the arts district of Northeast Minneapolis. For example, works of art might be installed in the following general locations: on the west side of Main Street, between Hennepin and 1st Avenues; near the northeast corner of Hennepin and University Avenues; in the vicinity of the junction of Hennepin and Central Avenues; and in the proposed micro park near 1st Avenue and 5th Street.

As properties on Hennepin and 1st Avenues are improved, developers should be encouraged to add works of art to their buildings, creating still more reasons for people to experience the neighborhood's sidewalks.

Chapter Seven: Parks and Open Space

Build a micro, urban park/open space in the northeast section of the neighborhood.

Although it is the smallest neighborhood in Minneapolis, Nicollet Island-East Bank contains extensive public parkland managed by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB). Those public spaces include much of Nicollet Island with its charming pavilion, amphitheater, and trails; the entire length of Mississippi riverfront in the neighborhood, which is mostly parks and trails; and the recently-refurbished Chute Square Park that is home to the historic Ard Godfrey House, the oldest existing wood-frame house in Minneapolis.

Great cities have great public spaces. Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood Association calls for the City and/or MPRB to create a great urban space in the northeast section of the neighborhood. That space will launch a new era for Minneapolis that will attract at least hundreds of new residents and scores of new businesses to this end of town, resulting in a dramatic expansion of the City's property tax base. This relatively modest investment in the East Bank would maximize the neighborhood's development potential.

This Plan envisions a small but highly-visible and active public plaza that would serve as a community gathering and performance space. Intended to be *the* place in the neighborhood to see and be seen, the plaza would provide an intense, artistic, and eclectic venue that would set the tone for future development in the neighborhood.

Provide youth friendly and pet friendly amenities in the neighborhood.

NIEBNA asks the MPRB to include youth-friendly and pet-friendly amenities on Nicollet Island and along the east bank of the River.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood is one of 81 officially recognized neighborhoods in the City of Minneapolis While it is the smallest neighborhood in Minneapolis in terms of size, it includes many significant natural, cultural, historic, economic and unique elements of the City's past, present and future. The complexity and diversity of the neighborhood provide a firm foundation for planning and creating a vibrant and exceptional urban experience.

The Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood includes Nicollet Island on the Mississippi River just east of Downtown, and the portion of the eastern riverbank located in the triangle between Central Avenue and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad tracks. It is the location of the original town of St. Anthony, where lumber mills made it the City's first industrial district. Nicollet Island represents about half of the area of the neighborhood. Characterized by its diverse land uses and eclectic urban feel, the East Bank represents the other half of the neighborhood and has been an established commercial, retail, and industrial district for many years.

Portions of the East Bank have been intensely redeveloped in the past 30 years, resulting in a transition from industrial to more high density residential and retail uses. Today, vibrant shops and restaurants are located throughout the neighborhood, attracting visitors from all over the region. Other areas within the neighborhood consist of a mix of early 20th Century commercial

spaces and manufacturing facilities, some of which are no longer used. The unused former industrial sites in particular present major redevelopment opportunities.

In recent years, the neighborhood has achieved a good mix of quality medium to high density housing, allowing the population to increase substantially since the year 2000. The area's desirability is enhanced by its proximity to downtown Minneapolis, the Mississippi River, and the University of Minnesota, as well as by its park spaces, trails, and vibrant small businesses. During the next 20 years, the East Bank will become more dense and more pedestrian, bicycle, and transit oriented. This Plan gives high priority to future growth that respects the character of the area and reflects its high standards, while recognizing that more housing and density will help further the goals of the Plan.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

In 2013, the Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood Association (NIEBNA) Board of Directors decided that a Small Area Plan was necessary to define the community's vision for development during the next 20 years. In recent decades, the neighborhood has transitioned from its industrial roots to a more residential, retail, and entertainment focused location. Today, the area is starting to experience increasing development pressure although no detailed planning had previously been performed to supplement the high-level vision of the Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan. Now, with knowledge of the interests of residents and businesses and a clear sense of the future needs of the area, NIEBNA will find it easier to assess development proposals.

This Plan will allow the community to move from a development-by-development reactive approach, to a more comprehensive, proactive stance to address future development. NIEBNA's intent is that this Plan meet the requirements necessary for adoption by the City of Minneapolis in order to become an official policy document.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A strong and effective community engagement process was conducted by the NIEBNA Planning Steering Committee (Committee) of seventeen people representing a broad cross-section of stakeholders in the area. Working with its consultant team, the Committee held three well attended neighborhood-wide meetings, compiled an online business survey and project website, gathered input at National Night Out and Neighborhood Fest, and held focus groups with businesses and representatives of the development community.

In total, over 200 residents, business people, and other stakeholders – almost 20% of the neighborhood's population and representing a wide array of thoughts, opinions, and perspectives – participated in the planning process.

In addition, the Committee met numerous times to coordinate the planning effort, summarize input from the community, and prepare this Plan document.

HISTORY

Prior to settlement by Europeans, the area surrounding St. Anthony Falls was inhabited by many Dakota, Ojibwa, and other native Americans and was considered sacred ground for its natural beauty and resources. The River itself served as an important mechanism for travel and transporting goods. Nicollet Island was also used by the Dakota as a camping location for fishing and tapping sugar maple trees.

In 1680, Father Louis Hennepin, a French Catholic friar, became the first European to report seeing the Falls; he named them after Saint Anthony of Padua. Although the rights to the lands on either side of the Mississippi River were claimed at various times by England, France, Spain and the United States, the area remained mostly inhabited by the Mdewakanton Dakota until 1838, when land east of the Mississippi was opened to private ownership by white settlers by a series of treaties. One of the first settlers to claim land was Franklin Steele, a former store keeper at Fort Snelling, who eventually built one of the first sawmills in St. Anthony.

The neighborhood was first platted in 1849 as part of the town of St. Anthony and joined the City of Minneapolis in 1872 when St. Anthony and Minneapolis merged.

Many industrialists from New York and New England arrived in the 1850s to take advantage of the power of the Falls and build saw and flour mills on both the East and West banks. The 50-foot drop in elevation at the Falls provided the energy needed to power the saw and flour mills, which brought numerous people to the area seeking work. Sawmilling peaked in 1899 and for six years, Minneapolis boasted the most productive sawmilling location in the country. By 1910, however, many of the forests had been depleted and almost all of the sawmills had closed.

The prominence of flour milling in Minneapolis spanned a much longer time. By 1880, Minneapolis had become the flour milling capital of the U.S., a title it held for approximately 50 years. By 1930, new technologies, shipping costs, and tariffs led many of the milling companies to move their operations out of Minneapolis. The last flour mill at the Falls closed in 1995.

For a century or more, Minneapolis – the City of Lakes – turned its back on the River in general, and the area around the Falls and on Nicollet Island in particular. As industry and population left, the area fell into decay and abandonment. By the early 1970's, the outlook for the area was bleak.

The effort to revive the riverfront surrounding the Falls began in the 1970s with the designation of the area as a historic district. In 1972, the City of Minneapolis published the *Mississippi/ Minneapolis Plan*, which cast a vision for the area and specifically addressed the East Bank and Nicollet Island. Although the *Mississippi/Minneapolis Plan* itself no longer influences development activities, it sparked significant reinvestment, including the removal of unused rail tracks and the cleanup of polluted sites for much of the new construction that exists in the neighborhood today. Many of the historic homes on Nicollet Island were also renovated during this time. More recent waves of development, including housing, shopping, restaurants and bars,

have made the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood one of the most exciting and vibrant locations in the City of Minneapolis.

The Nicollet Island East Bank neighborhood is near the geographic center of the cultural, economic and social history of Minneapolis; and many efforts have been made to preserve these roots. Several iconic buildings remain, including Our Lady of Lourdes Church (the oldest continually used place of worship in Minneapolis). The efforts taken to preserve the area's history can be discerned by strolling along East Hennepin Avenue.

[The preceding paragraphs are largely derived from St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board. See http://www.mnhs.org/places/safhb/history.shtml.]

OTHER PLANNING EFFORTS AFFECTING THE NICOLLET ISLAND-EAST BANK NEIGHBORHOOD

While this planning process represents the first Small Area Plan completed for the neighborhood, several previous planning efforts have helped shape the area.

The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth (2009)

Adopted by the City in 2009, the Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth (the "Comprehensive Plan" or "Comp Plan") provides a framework for the future growth and continued development of the City. The Comp Plan aims to make Minneapolis a more livable and sustainable city by addressing land use, transportation, housing, economic development, public services and facilities, environment, open space and parks, heritage preservation, arts and culture, urban design, and implementation. The City's plan forecasts a 2030 population of 435,000 and identifies increasing population and housing densities in key areas as a priority. [See http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/planning/plans/cped_comp_plan_update_draft_plan.]

Of necessity and by design, the Comp Plan is a "high level" view of the city that does not address neighborhood level details. It is the role of neighborhood level plans to fill in details in ways that are consistent with the overall Comprehensive Plan. This NIEBNA Small Area Plan addresses these issues, especially in the key areas of sustainability, population growth and promoting development that makes maximum use of the investments by the City and other levels of government in transportation, parks and other public infrastructure.

This Plan also visualizes the neighborhood as a transit-oriented, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly place that is fully compatible with *ACCESS* Minneapolis, including the Pedestrian Master Plan and the Bicycle Master Plan. [See http://www.minneapolismn.gov/publicworks/transplan .]

Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (Revised 2014)

The Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan, originally completed in 1983, looked at park space adjacent to the banks along the Mississippi River from Plymouth Avenue to Interstate 35W. In 2013, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) began the process of updating that plan. The updated plan makes recommendations for park development; improved access to parks and the River; cultural resource interpretation; environmental stewardship; programming and events; operations and maintenance strategies; and phasing and implementation priorities. Parks in this plan include Boom Island, B.F. Nelson, Nicollet Island, Father Hennepin Bluffs, Lucy Wilder Morris, Mill Ruins, and First Bridge. The plan also addresses historic features of early Minneapolis such as Main Street and the Stone Arch Bridge.

Since all of Nicollet Island and much of the East Bank are in or adjacent to the Regional Park, the neighborhood association pays close attention to park affairs. NIEBNA has actively participated in the Citizen Advisory Committee for the Master Plan update. The NIEBNA Small Area Plan does not address specific park issues since these are already well handled elsewhere. Rather, this Plan calls for increased pedestrian and bicycle connections to and from the more urban East Bank area of the neighborhood to the Regional Park. [See http://www.minneapolisparks.org/default.asp?PageID=1396.]

Power of the Falls: Renewing the Vision for St. Anthony Falls Heritage Zone, St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board (2006), update currently under way

Led by the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board, this plan addresses both banks along the Mississippi River between Plymouth Avenue to the north and I-35W to the south. The first interpretive plan for the Heritage Zone was completed in 1990. With all of the Zone's cultural and historic resources, the 1990 plan aimed to preserve and interpret these features, while revitalizing the area as a destination that people could enjoy. Opening up the riverfront through the development of a heritage trail system and broadening recreational opportunities were also priorities. While many of the goals from the 1990 plan have been accomplished, the Heritage Board decided in 2006 that the plan needed to be updated with an emphasis on implementation. The new plan, with a vision focused on creating a memorable destination for visitors and residents, outlines strategic goals, strategies and action steps for implementation. Currently, another update of this plan is underway.

The seven goals stated in the approved 2006 plan include the following:

- Create a stronger identity and sense of place
- Build and broaden the audience
- Re-energize interpretive programming in the Heritage Zone
- Meet the fundamental needs of the audience
- Identify and tap sources of financial support
- Strengthen organizational infrastructure and capacity

- Preserve and maintain the Heritage Zone's existing assets

The plan identifies the East Bank area within the neighborhood as a critical hub in the Heritage Zone. It calls for improved streetscape character along East Hennepin Avenue and better connections to the River's edge. The plan calls for way-finding signage, extending the Heritage Trail, and renovating facilities at Nicollet Island Park. Strengthening the Zone's connections with the East Bank, the University of Minnesota, downtown Minneapolis, and other areas will help increase its utilization. Stronger connections can be provided through enhanced walkways, bikeways, streetscapes and landscaping, as well as by developing clear and welcoming portals and gateways to the Zone. Family programming will also lead a broader audience to experience the Zone. NIEBNA Board members and residents are active in the plan's update discussions. [See http://www.mnhs.org/places/safhb/about_plan.shtml.]

Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan

The 2011 Minneapolis Bicycle Plan includes a number of recommendations for future improvements that will directly affect the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood. These recommended improvements include the installation of bike lanes on 1st Avenue Northeast, East Hennepin Avenue, and 4th Street Southeast. In addition, the Father Hennepin Bluffs Trail would continue farther to the north. The plan also proposes that right-of-way along the currently active freight rail line crossing Nicollet Island be converted to trail, and that the Main Street railroad bridge be converted to a pedestrian/bicycle bridge. NIEBNA is cooperating with a bike trail expansion task force formed by the Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Association. [See http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/bicycles/projects/plan.]

Minneapolis Streetcar Feasibility Study and Nicollet Island Transit Alternatives Study

The City of Minneapolis's 2007 *Streetcar Feasibility Study* recommends a Nicollet Avenue-Central Avenue streetcar route. The vision for transit service throughout the 9.2 mile corridor is to have the route extend from the 46th Street/I-35W Transit Station and Nicollet Avenue on the south, through Nicollet Mall in downtown Minneapolis, and to the Columbia Heights Transit Center on the north via Central Avenue. [See http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@publicworks/documents/webcontent/convert_270445.pdf.]

More recently, the Minneapolis City Council approved a locally preferred alignment for the streetcar using the Hennepin Avenue Bridge as the River crossing, and using Hennepin Avenue as the northbound route and 1st Avenue Northeast as the southbound route. This has played a major role in the development of the transportation improvements discussed in Chapter Three of this Plan.

NIEBNA is on record as supporting both the streetcar plan and the routing scheme. [See http://www.minneapolismn.gov/nicollet-central/.]

CURRENT DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the 2010 Census, the 1,309 people living in the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood represented just 0.3% of Minneapolis' total population of 382,578 at that time.

The neighborhood's population has increased substantially during the past two decades, from 666 in 1990 to 828 in 2000 (a 24 percent increase). By 2010, the population jumped to 1,309, a 59 percent increase since 2000. The population is primarily middle aged, with approximately 77 percent of residents between 25 and 64 years of age. The neighborhood has few children, with less than 5 percent of the population under the age of 17. Similarly, just 13.5 percent of the population is over the age of 65, although this is expected to increase in the coming decades as baby boomers age and given the available housing types developed in recent years. The plan for housing density increases the focus on strong social connections and generally concentrates on areas that are walkable and offer a variety of housing options.

Compared to the rest of Minneapolis, the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood is substantially less diverse in terms of ethnicity. In 2010, approximately 84 percent of residents reported "White" as their race or ethnicity, compared to 60 percent for all of Minneapolis. "Black or African American" comprised 5.3 percent of neighborhood residents; "Asian or Pacific Islander" 4.2 percent; "Two or more races" 2.3 percent; and "Hispanic or Latino" 3.7 percent.

The population of the neighborhood is well-educated, with 82.9 percent of residents having a Bachelor's degree or higher. This compares to 43.3 percent for Minneapolis as a whole. Approximately 43 percent of residents hold some type of graduate or professional degree, compared to 16 percent for all of Minneapolis. With its proximity to the University of Minnesota, the area presents an appealing location for young professionals, staff and faculty of the University of Minnesota, and empty nesters looking for proximity to the breadth of activities the University offers.

The median household income in the neighborhood is more than double that of the entire City of Minneapolis: $97,083 compared to $45,625. Poverty statistics for the neighborhood were not available as part of the 2010 Minnesota Compass data.

This Plan strongly supports increased economic and ethnic diversity within the neighborhood.

The median rent in 2009 dollars was $1,292 for the 2010 census, compared to $761 for the entire city.

Approximately 31.3 percent of the housing stock in the neighborhood was built between 2000 and 2010, while 18.9 percent was built in 1939 or earlier. The neighborhood continues to be a hot spot for development of new high density housing.

At the time of the 2010 Census, there were 915 housing units in the neighborhood. This was a substantial increase in housing since 1990, a year in which the Census indicated only 415 dwelling units. This Plan anticipates that trend continuing, especially given the Metropolitan Council's recent projections of over 100,000 new residents Minneapolis-wide. The household tenure has changed dramatically during the past 20 years, going from 27 percent owner occupied in 1990, to 40 percent owner occupied in 2000, to 69 percent owner occupied in 2010.

Additional information appears in Appendix One: Current Demographics.

CHAPTER TWO: LAND USE & HOUSING

VISION

The Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood will be a vibrant pedestrian, bicycle and transit oriented neighborhood with a variety of land uses that draw people to the area at all times of the day. The addition of several new, high-density residential developments with ground floor commercial uses will substantially increase the population while enhancing the area as a thriving commercial district.

GOALS

1. Enhance the urban lifestyle of the neighborhood.
2. Increase the opportunities for additional local shops and small scale retail.
3. Increase the number and diversity of people living in the neighborhood by encouraging a variety of age ranges and income levels.
4. Plan and guide development for mixed use and greater height allowances on the former Superior Plating site and other opportunity sites.
5. Maintain the existing neighborhood fabric and historic characteristics of the neighborhood.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

1. Zone all property on the East Bank portion of the neighborhood C3A to make zoning consistent with the Activity Center designation (see Figure 2-1).
2. Increase the footprint of the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District to include the entire East Bank portion of the neighborhood. Grandfather existing nonconforming uses.
3. Support increases in building heights and floor area ratios for buildings providing exceptional streetscapes and site designs. The more exceptional the streetscape and site design, the taller the building and the higher the floor area ratio NIEBNA will support.
4. Amend the standards for the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District specific to the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood to include land use controls similar to a Transit Oriented Overlay.
5. Amend the City's Future Land Use map so that the two blocks on both sides of 7th Street Northeast within the neighborhood are guided for "Mixed Use" instead of "Transitional Industrial."
6. In all new developments, encourage first floor commercial spaces for retail, restaurant or other uses that generate pedestrian traffic and put more "eyes on the street."
7. Encourage new residential developments to provide a full range of affordability levels to meet the needs of all residents.
8. Regularly monitor various funding sources for redevelopment and brownfield clean-up and work with property owners to seek those funding opportunities.

Figure 2-1
Current Land Uses

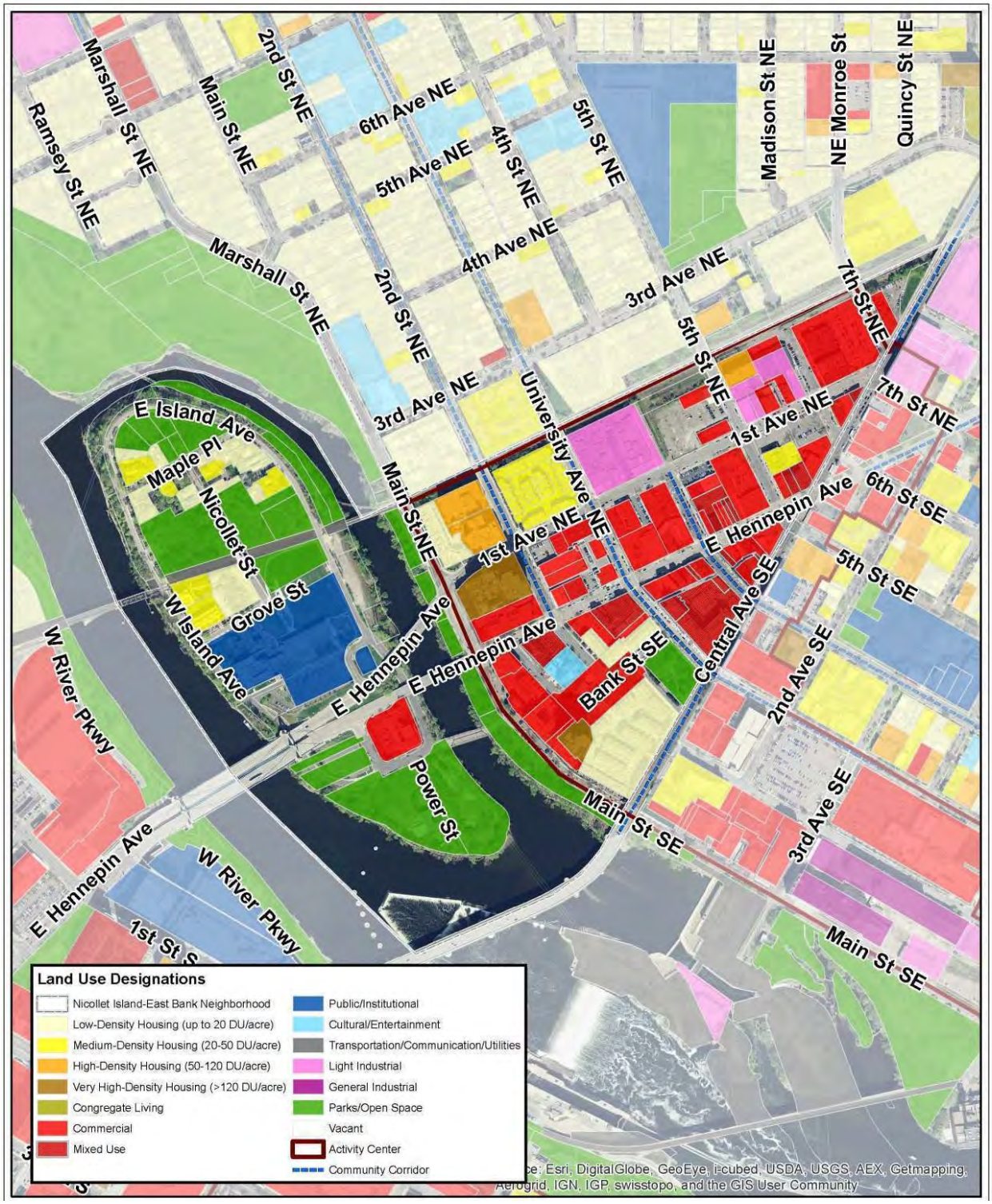
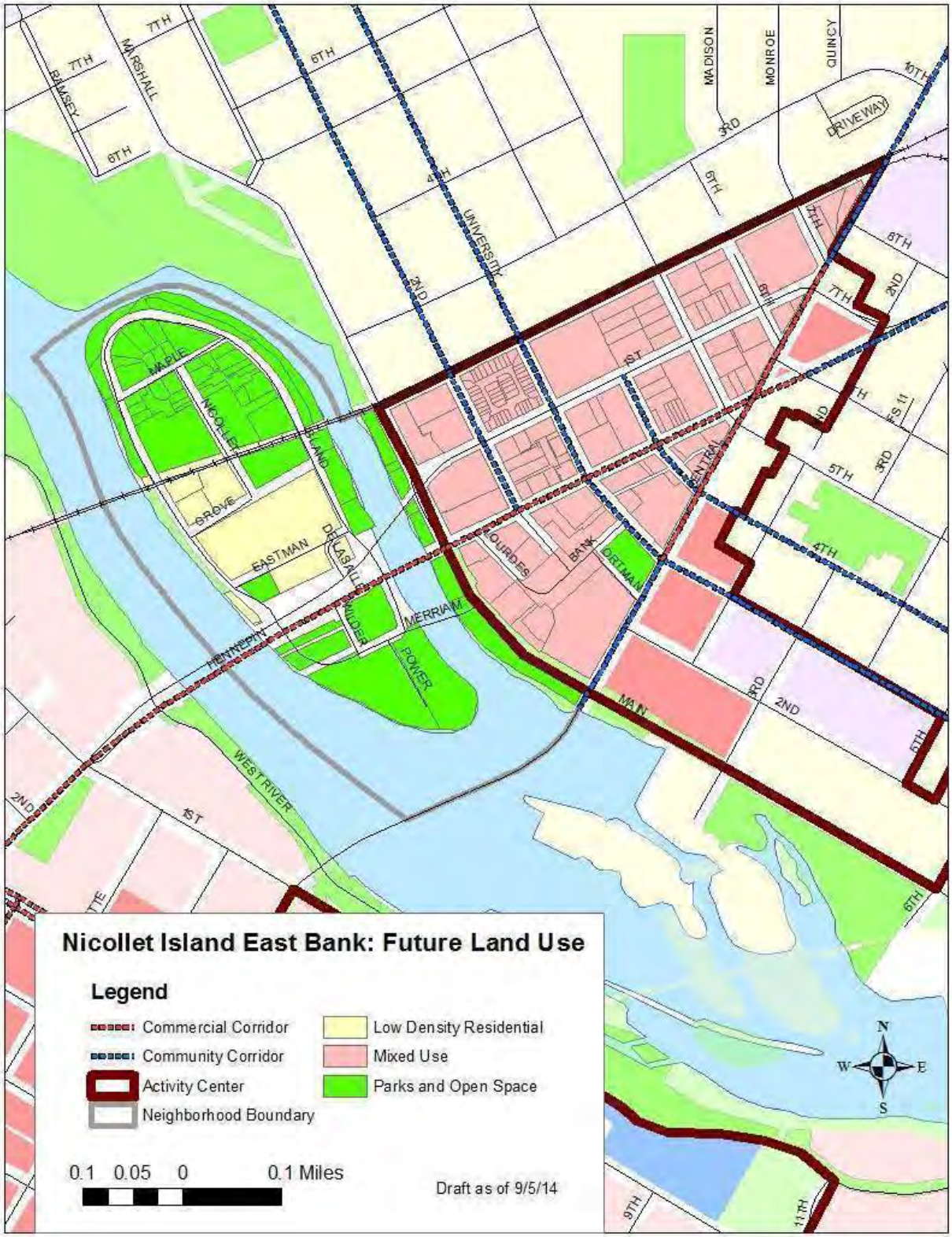


Figure 2-2
Future Land Use Plan, Proposed



SUPPORTING RATIONALE

Existing Land Use and Housing

The Existing Land Use Map for the City of Minneapolis shows a wide variety of uses in the neighborhood, including commercial, industrial, parks/open space, cultural/entertainment, public/institutional, mixed use, and several types of residential uses of varying densities.

Commercial is the most dominant land use category in the neighborhood. Commercial properties dominate much of the main thoroughfares including East Hennepin Avenue, 1st Avenue Northeast, Central Avenue and University Avenue. These commercial uses include shops, restaurants, bars, banks, and offices among others. Despite the industrial roots of the area, a limited number of industrial properties remain in the neighborhood; these remaining properties are located between 1st Avenue Northeast and the railroad tracks, east of University Avenue.

The neighborhood is unique in the wide variety of housing types it offers. The only single family homes in the neighborhood are found on Nicollet Island. On the East Bank, residential properties include low, medium, high, and very high densities and encompass townhomes, apartments and condominiums.

Despite being one of the oldest neighborhoods in the City of Minneapolis, housing in the neighborhood is generally newer than in the rest of Minneapolis. Approximately 31.3 percent of the neighborhood's housing units were constructed between 2000 and 2010; looking at Minneapolis as a whole, just 5.5 percent of the City's housing was built during that time. The new housing in the neighborhood has largely been in the form of townhomes and high density apartments and condos. Just 173 housing units (18.9 percent) of the neighborhood's total housing units were built before 1940 compared to 50.5 percent of all housing units in Minneapolis.

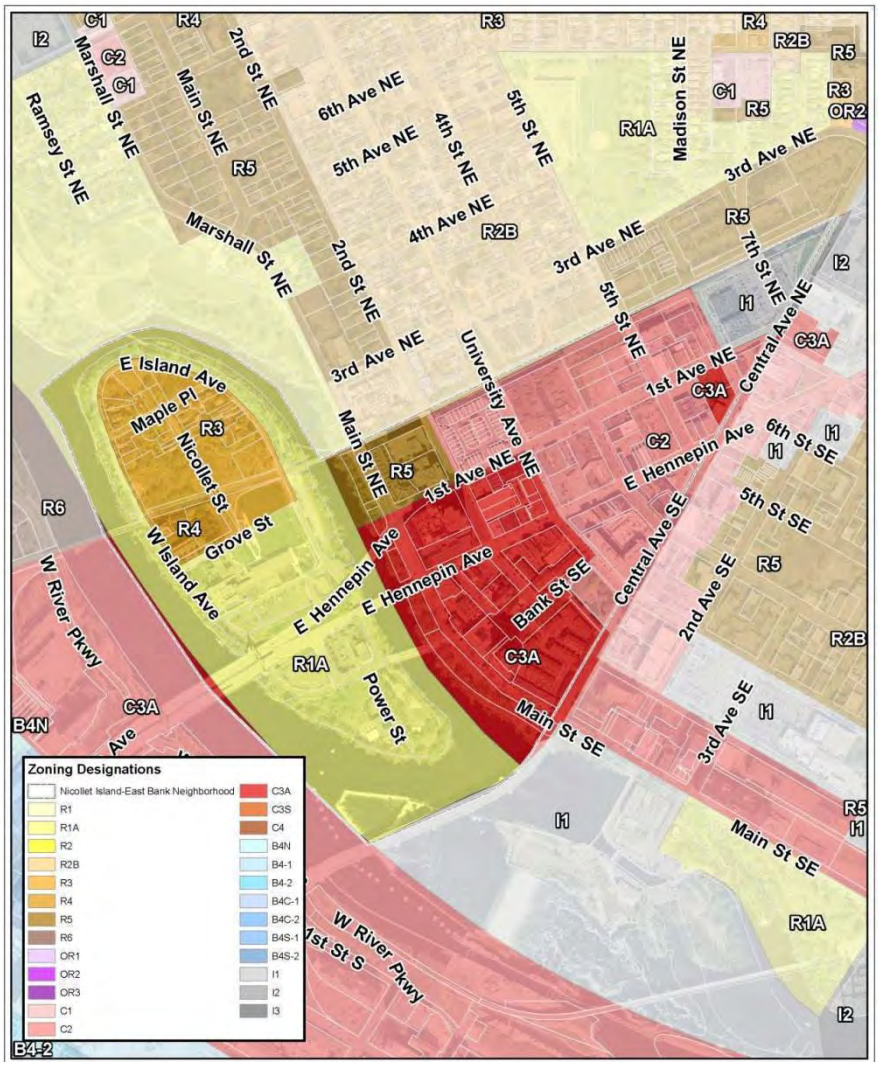
The cost of housing in the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood is substantially higher than in other parts of Minneapolis. The median rent in 2009 dollars was $1,292 compared to $761 for all of Minneapolis.

The neighborhood currently has an exceptionally high rate of homeownership given the type of housing in the neighborhood. Whether or not future housing will be owner or renter occupied will largely be determined by market forces.

Zoning

Land Use Guidance and Zoning categories and standards establish general principles developers must consider in their designs, including permitted uses, architectural standards, site design, massing and density, setbacks, and other factors. As shown below, the neighborhood currently has a variety of zoning districts, although most of the developable area is zoned C2.

Figure 2-3
Current Zoning (2014)



Three specialized overlay districts – the St. Anthony Falls Historic District (Figure 2-4A), the Mississippi River Critical Area Shore Land Overlay (Figure 2-4B), and Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District (Figure 2-5) – apply to parts of the neighborhood. In addition, Nicollet Island and the more-westerly lands in the East Bank lie within the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area (Figure 2-4C); National Park Service regulations pertain to those lands within the area that are owned by the National Park Service/Department of Interior.

Figure 2-4A

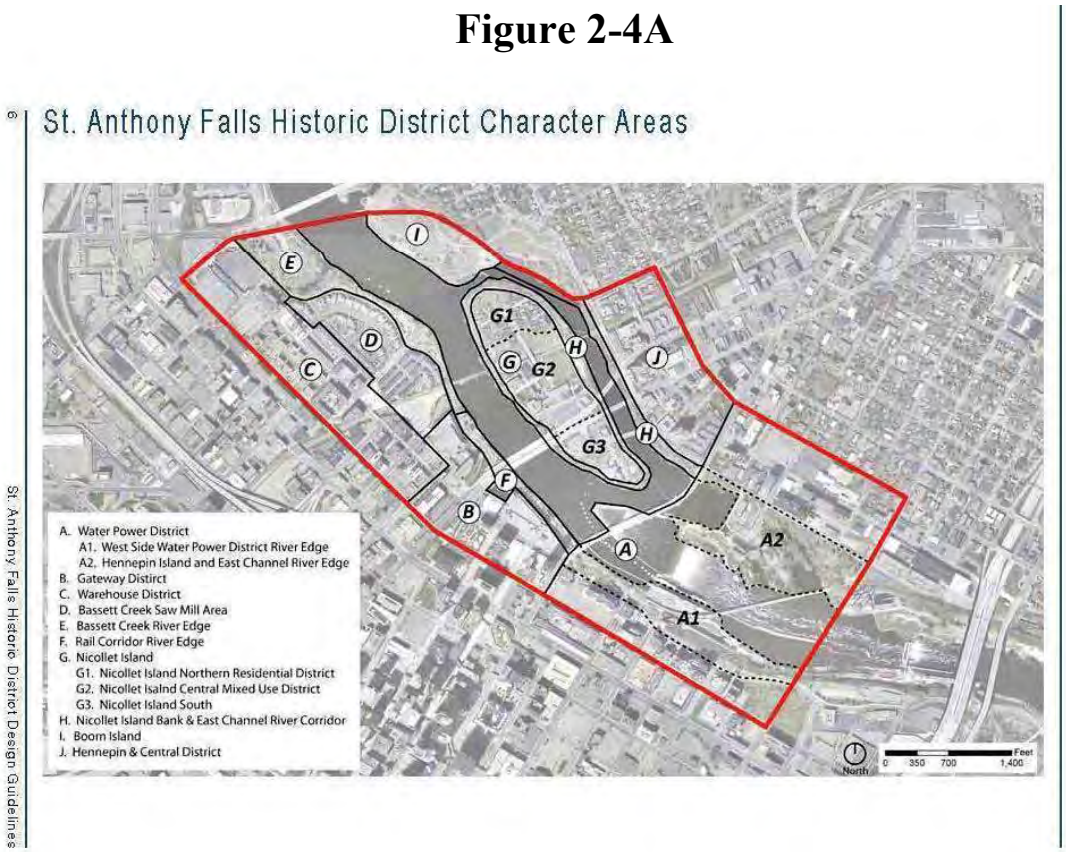


Figure 2-4B
Mississippi River Critical Area Shore Land Overlay

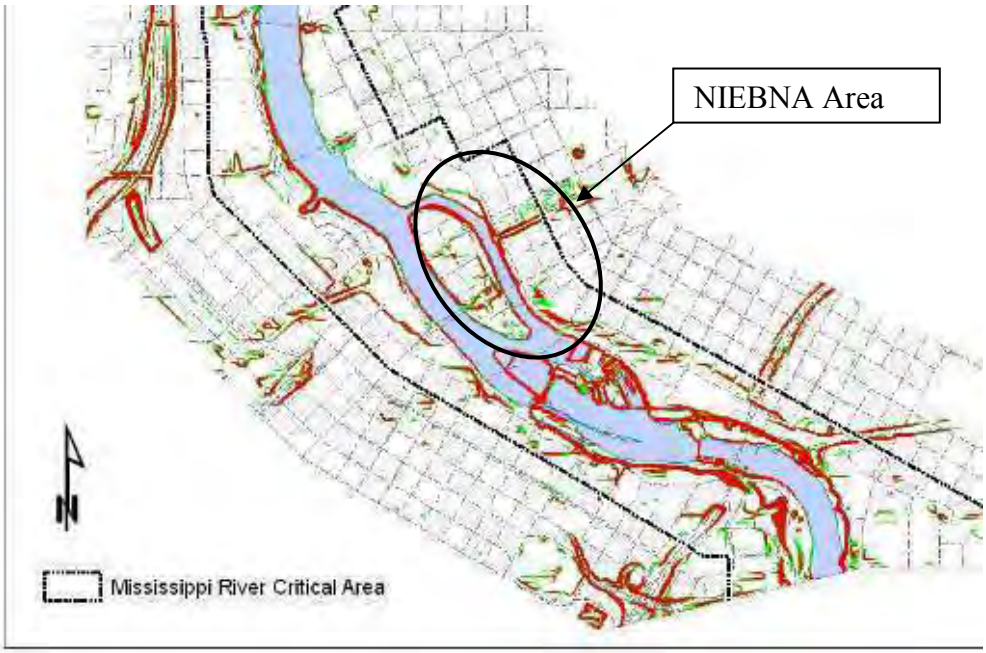
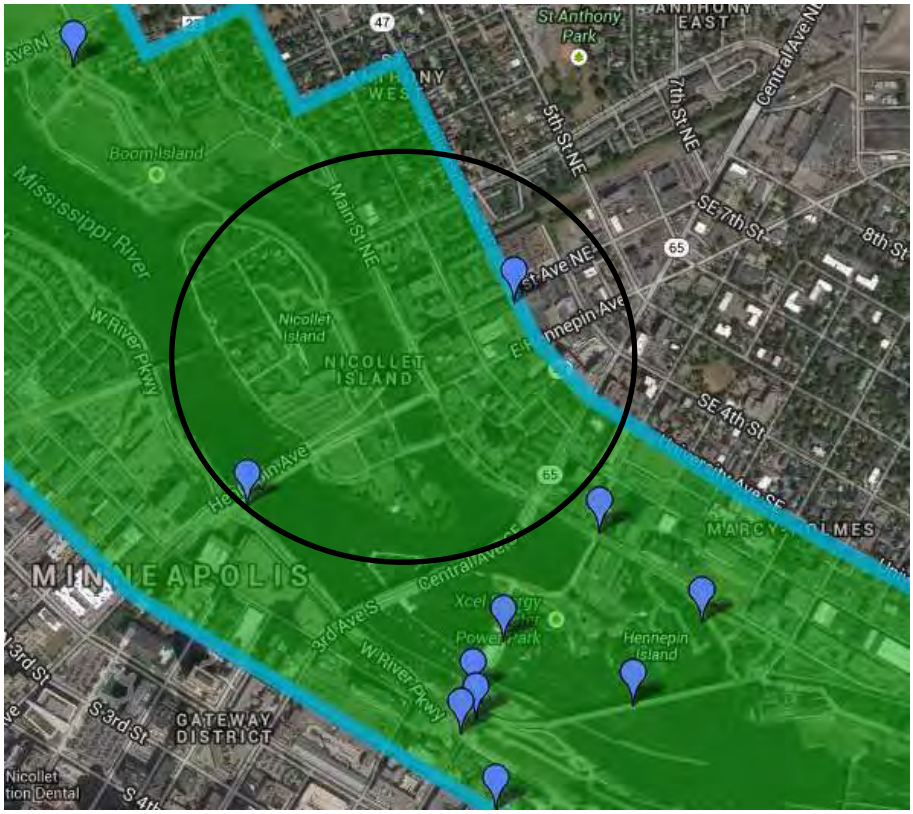


Figure 2-4C
NIEBNA in the
Mississippi National River and Recreation Area



It can be challenging to determine the effective zoning and other districts that apply to a specific development site. One of the goals of this Plan is to bring more clarity and direction to the development possibilities of specific sites.

The Plan envisions no changes to zoning or other land use controls on Nicollet Island during the 20 year time horizon. The MPRB owns most of the land on the Island. Most of the Island's remaining land is held by De La Salle High School or is owner-occupied housing in historic buildings. In addition, with multiple overlapping special districts applicable to this part of the neighborhood, there is little possibility of material change in the pattern of development on the Island.

The East Bank, especially the area east of University Avenue, is a different matter. The entire East Bank has been designated as an Activity Center in the Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan, a designation this Plan supports. An Activity Center is characterized by higher density and more intense development, with an emphasis on a coordinated mix of housing, pedestrian and transit oriented commercial, retail, service, restaurant and entertainment activity, and an active and enlivened street scene throughout the day and into the evening. This is a fair description of the current situation in the East Bank.

This Plan calls for the following changes to the zoning and land use designations for the East Bank:

a) Rezone the entire East Bank C3A (Activity Center), from the current mostly C2 (Commercial Corridor) zoning. A uniform C3A designation is more appropriate and clear with regard to the desired pattern of future development than the current mix of commercial, industrial and residential zoning codes.

b) Extend the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District to cover the entire NIEBNA East Bank and immediately adjacent areas of the Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood.

c) Expand the definition of the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District to include the architectural design standards described later in this chapter.

This Plan does not call for any change in the boundaries of the other special overlay districts that cover parts of the East Bank.

Collectively, the changes proposed above will make the expectations for new development on the East Bank both clear and consistent. The changes will facilitate innovative designs that meet the needs of developers, the neighborhood, and the City even though development will likely occur as separate projects that may be widely spaced in time and location.

The development pattern called for in this Plan is compatible with the guidelines for future land use shown in the Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan.

Figure 2-5
Existing and Proposed Pedestrian Overlay District

East Bank Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District Design Standards

The Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District is intended to promote an active street life and highly walkable environment through the regulation of building orientation, design, and accessory parking facilities. Certain land uses that generate high auto traffic may be prohibited from these areas. This district is crucial for the neighborhood. It sets standards and regulations for building designs and streetscapes that are intended to enhance the pedestrian environment. This district is directly linked to maintaining and enhancing the urban characteristics within the neighborhood. Standards should be established specific to the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood, as has been done for several other areas throughout the City.

These standards allow for trade-offs when working with developers. Specifically, greater heights and floor area ratios may be permitted without requiring a variance, if certain streetscape improvements and other amenities are included in development proposals. [See the "Trade-offs Criteria" section at the end of this chapter for details.] Within the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood, the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay should have specific standards that allow the district to function in a fashion similar to a Transit Oriented Overlay District by promoting greater population densities. Standards should establish residential density minimums in order to boost population and make the most of transit investments in the area. The St. Anthony Falls Historic District, while not technically an independent zoning district, calls for design guidelines for development within the boundaries of the historic district.

This Plan supports the following concepts within the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood, including any needed amendments to the City zoning code required to support these standards:

1. Pedestrian Focus – The needs and requirements of pedestrians (including those with mobility challenges) should be the first consideration in the design and operation of existing and new buildings and of public facilities in the area. This includes:

    a. Physical safety and convenience – In sidewalks and street crosswalks, there should be no barriers or other impediments to the free flow of pedestrians. Non-pedestrian uses of the sidewalk space (transit shelters and stops, outdoor restaurant seating and sales areas, bike racks, street lights, signage poles, etc.) should not interfere with bi-directional pedestrian flow on sidewalks.

    At all controlled intersections, "walk" cycles should always be provided, eliminating the need for any "push to cross" buttons. In the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District, preference should be given to pedestrian traffic over vehicular traffic.

    On-street parking should separate sidewalks from active traffic lanes to provide a buffer of safety between people and vehicular traffic.

    b. Public safety – Building designs and operations should maximize use of "eyes on the street" design concepts. There should be no extensive blank walls

immediately facing any sidewalk; and all building service facilities (loading docks, trash receptacles, etc.) are to be located in alleys or behind buildings.

c. Lighting – Street lighting shall be of a design that minimizes vertical light pollution to the sky and second floor windows and shall provide uniform ground coverage with no dark spots. Further, the light standards, poles and other fixtures are to be of an approved design that promotes a distinct neighborhood identification and character.

d. Vehicle/pedestrian conflicts – Conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians are to be avoided wherever possible. Curb cuts are not to be implemented without specific justification of the necessity. Where vehicles cross a sidewalk, appropriate means should be implemented to warn both drivers and pedestrians of possible conflicts. All pedestrian crosswalks should be marked with signage and pavement markings.

e. Transparent ground level building façades – For commercial spaces, the ground level façades should be transparent. It should be possible to clearly see into the building from across the street as well as directly adjacent to the building.

   For new construction, transparent ground floor façades should be maximized. Except for load bearing structural elements, the façade should be transparent. For existing buildings, non-transparent façade elements should be made transparent wherever possible consistent with the overall design of the building.

f. Active façade features – To encourage walking, building designs should incorporate visually interesting and distinctive features, including public art, intriguing window displays, awnings, staggered store entryways, and other architectural details that enhance and encourage the pedestrian experience.

g. Pedestrian amenities – Streetscape amenities should engage pedestrians. Examples include benches, decorative trash receptacles, boulevard plantings, bike racks, parklets [see Chapter Seven], animated and static information kiosks, clocks, outdoor sales areas, way-finding signage of a distinct neighborhood character, etc.

h. Vehicle parking – Wherever possible, vehicle parking should be hidden from sidewalk view. Access to parking should not be to/from main thoroughfares.

2. Streetscapes – The East Bank is one of the great historic neighborhood retail and commercial districts in Minneapolis. A major goal of the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District is to enhance, and to some extent, revive this historic commercial district in modern terms and dress. At the pedestrian level, the district should project the scale of a series of relatively small and distinct store fronts, providing visual variation as one walks down the block.

3. Building Massing – NIEBNA expects the East Bank to be a high density, residential, commercial and retail area. The goal is to achieve high density while preserving and reinforcing the pedestrian oriented values of the overlay district. To achieve this balance, building massing should be as follows:

    a. Building design should preserve a human scale and detail at the ground level. The apparent height of the building to a pedestrian on the sidewalk (called Tier 1 here) should be no taller than the effective width of the street. Building height above Tier 1 (called Tier 2 here) should be set back from the façade of Tier 1.

       The effective width of the street is defined as the horizontal distance at ground level between the proposed building's façade and the façade of the building across the street; if public open space is across the street (e.g., a park), then Tier 1 can be taller than if a building were across the street.

    b. The Tier 2 façade plane should be set back from the Tier 1 façade plane.

    c. No maximum height for Tier 2 is specified. In order to achieve the desired density of the neighborhood, taller slender buildings with smaller footprints are preferred to shorter maximum footprint structures.

    d. All faces of the building should be active with windows, balconies and other active elements. In particular, for Tier 2 there should be no large expanses of blank walls.

    This approach to building massing accommodates high densities while also enhancing the pedestrian's experience. It prevents "fortress designs" of earlier times in which buildings turned inward – shutting the community out by presenting large blank walls with little relief; diminishing the sense of public safety by putting no "eyes on the street;" and, in turn, discouraging people from walking on adjacent sidewalks.

4. Creative Design -- This Plan encourages creativity and boldness in architectural design.

Specific Development Opportunity Sites

Several parcels within the East Bank were identified as opportunity sites for development that will increase population and commercial activity. Each of these parcels is discussed separately, taking into account varying opinions about height, density, and historic preservation. The neighborhood encourages increased height within identified design parameters to obtain maximum density along with an active street life. The purpose of this land use discussion is not to encourage or facilitate redevelopment of land now occupied by existing businesses, but to provide the neighborhood's perspective and desires should these property owners decide to redevelop their properties in the future.

Figure 2-6A
University Avenue & 4th St NE – East Hennepin & 1st Ave NE

Due to the underutilization of this block, future redevelopment seems likely. Future redevelopment should provide mixed use buildings, with commercial uses on at least the first floor of each building.

Figure 2-6B
University Avenue & 5th St NE –1st Ave NE & RR Tracks
(Former Superior Plating Site)

In former times, the entire neighborhood was a significant center for manufacturing and other industrial activities. These uses waned over recent decades. Eventually, Superior Plating (which had occupied this site from 1954 to 2011) became the last industrial operation in the area.

For many years, Superior Plating had wanted to move to a more industrial setting but needed to sell this site to do that. In 2006, NIEBNA and Superior Plating, working together with ESG Architects, other professionals and a wide range of other stakeholders, agreed to a design for the redevelopment of this site with high-density mixed-use housing, retail and commercial buildings that incorporated many of the design elements of this Plan: Tall buildings, green spaces, inviting streetscapes, and high architectural design values. Unfortunately, the development did not proceed due to market conditions at that time. The ideas of that 2006 design concept, however, remain valid today. Indeed, the foundation of this Plan was laid in that collaboration.

Figure 2- 6C
Neighborhood Approved Design Concept
(ESG Architects)

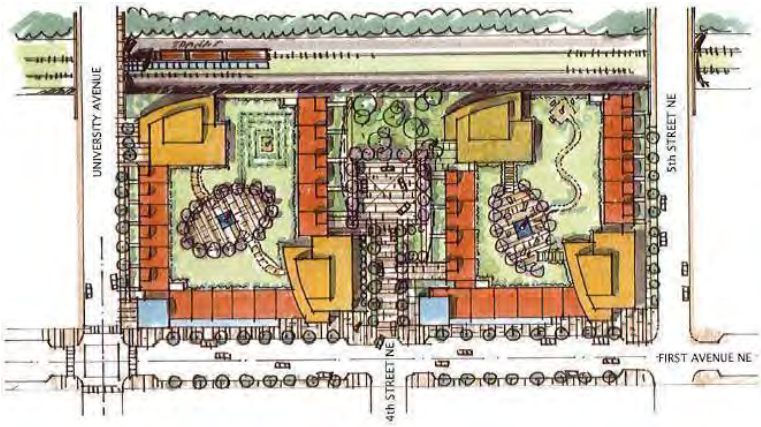


Figure 2-6D
East Hennepin & 1st Ave NE, 4th St NE and 5th St NE

There are several buildings on this block with historical value. Development here should enhance and respect historical character and neighborhood ambiance, while offering scope for modern design for residential density and commercial activity. All development on this block is envisioned as mixed use with active street level commercial components.

Trade-offs Criteria

The Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood Association encourages new development, while enhancing the existing urban fabric that is prominent in the area. Several actions outlined in this Plan seek to achieve that purpose.

NIEBNA supports greater building heights to accomplish multiple goals related to housing and urban fabric and will use the following criteria to evaluate increased height and density:

1. The proposed development reflects a high level of consideration for the pedestrian realm. Proposals that include more of the desired elements outlined in the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District section above, including pedestrian amenities and active façade features, will be given greater support.*

2. The building massing follows the criteria proposed above in the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District description – to provide greater opportunity for access to light and air through step-backs with taller buildings. Massing, step-backs, and designs of buildings should be distinct from surrounding buildings and reflect a variety of architectural styles.

3. The development promotes a highly pedestrian and transit oriented environment.

4. The proposal incorporates public/green space.

5. The design of new buildings considers and respects surrounding historic buildings.

6. The development incorporates public art into the pedestrian realm. The developer has explored opportunities to partner with local artists.

7. The design incorporates green building techniques, and the developer has considered opportunities such as green roofs and/or vegetation on higher floors.

8. The design incorporates elements that enhance public safety near the building ("eyes-on-the-street" design).

9. The design incorporates universal design principles in both the public and private areas of buildings.

* *Additional streetscape enhancements will require a long-term maintenance plan in order to be palatable to the City of Minneapolis. The formation of a special services district is one example of a way to maintain additional streetscape features.*

CHAPTER THREE: TRANSPORTATION

VISION

The Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood will be a vibrant pedestrian and transit oriented neighborhood where walking, biking and riding transit are safe, comfortable, convenient and inviting. Buses and streetcars will conveniently connect residents and visitors to the larger fabric of Minneapolis and the Twin Cities region. Two-way streets will support improved access to businesses and enhanced economic activity while calming motor-vehicle traffic and making travel along and across streets safer and easier for users of all modes. Parking will be conveniently accessible for residents and visitors who choose to travel by car. The quality of the urban realm and of the pedestrian experience in the neighborhood will be a key contributor to business accessibility and prosperity and a prominent draw for visitors and residents alike.

GOALS

1. Connect pedestrian, bicycle, and transit infrastructure to the River and to adjacent neighborhoods and districts, including downtown Minneapolis, the University of Minnesota, Dinkytown and the Northeast Arts District.
2. Provide an exceptional urban pedestrian experience for people of all ages.
3. Enhance the urban lifestyle of the neighborhood.
4. Achieve a better balance between pedestrian, bicycle, transit and automobile travel modes.
5. Improve multi-modal connections with existing transportation networks to improve access to and from destinations throughout Minneapolis and beyond.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

1. Seek the traffic and other studies needed to inform discussions regarding the possible restoration of East Hennepin Avenue and 1st Avenue Northeast to two-way traffic operation as well as 4th Street within the neighborhood.
2. Implement streetcar transit service serving the entire neighborhood.
3. Improve the pedestrian experience and streetscape.
4. Provide for year-round maintenance of the pedestrian realm.
5. Expand the area of the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District to include the entire neighborhood as described in Chapter 2: Land Use and Housing.
6. Implement measures to make efficient use of existing parking resources.
7. Improve pedestrian and bicyclist safety and comfort.
8. Support technology upgrades that enhance the pedestrian experience. In a Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District, pedestrians should always have priority over vehicles.
9. Work with landowners and the St. Anthony West Neighborhood to determine the desirability of restoring the sidewalk grid by building a pedestrian and bicycle bridge spanning the railroad tracks between University and 5th St NE.

SUPPORTING RATIONALE

Transportation-What's here now?

In many places, the neighborhood currently offers good conditions for pedestrian travel, with sidewalks on virtually every block, and an array of higher density residential buildings, popular commercial and entertainment destinations, and a mix of businesses serving daily needs. In addition, many places and streets in the neighborhood provide attractive and inviting places to walk. However, some barriers and negative conditions (including high speed/high volume motor traffic on East Hennepin Avenue and First Avenue Northeast, confusing intersections, intersection-blocking by cars waiting at traffic signals, and gaps in the sidewalk grid) make pedestrian travel uncomfortable and potentially unsafe in some areas.

A Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District, established to promote and encourage the pedestrian character of commercial areas and to enhance street life and activity, covers a portion of the neighborhood. This Plan calls for expanding the overlay district to cover the entire neighborhood, as described in Chapter 2: Land Use and Housing, and for exploring the restoration of two-way traffic to East Hennepin Avenue, 1st Avenue Northeast, and 4th Street within the neighborhood to improve pedestrian safety and comfort.

Several major bicycle routes terminate at the edges of the neighborhood, providing the possibility of convenient bicycle access to points within the neighborhood and to Downtown, Dinkytown, and other parts of Northeast Minneapolis. However, comfortable bicycle facilities are not currently provided to connect other areas to the neighborhood's main commercial corridors or from within the neighborhood to Downtown and other adjoining districts. Three bikeshare stations for Nice Ride Minnesota are located within the neighborhood.

The neighborhood is well served by Metro Transit bus service, with 18 different routes traveling through the neighborhood. The Minneapolis City Council's recent approval of the Nicollet-Central streetcar line through the neighborhood will further enhance transit service. This Plan strongly supports implementation of the streetcar and calls for providing streetcar service to at least Central Avenue, preferably farther north, as part of the starter system.

First Avenue Northeast and East Hennepin Avenue provide one-way access into and out of downtown Minneapolis. Central Avenue provides two-way access to and from Downtown as well. However, high volumes of motor-vehicle traffic *through* the neighborhood, particularly during morning and afternoon rush hour periods, create difficult conditions for pedestrians at several intersections. In addition, one-way traffic flows hinder business access and desirability of locations along the neighborhood's commercial corridors.

If East Hennepin Avenue and 1st Avenue Northeast are converted to two-way operation, the two-block stretch of 4th Street within the neighborhood should also be converted to a two-way configuration to avoid driver confusion.

There are multiple options for parking in the neighborhood, including on-street public parking, public surface parking lots, public structured parking ramps, and privately owned facilities dedicated to specific businesses.

Plan for Transportation

Restore East Hennepin Avenue, 1st Avenue Northeast, and 4th Street within the neighborhood to two-way traffic

While restoration of all one-way streets in the East Bank to two-way operations is the neighborhood's highest priority, the studies necessary to confirm the wisdom of doing so in the East Bank have not yet been performed.

Two-way streets are at least as effective in handling traffic flow as one-way streets and are far superior for other purposes, including traffic calming, access to local storefront retail businesses, creating more pleasant and comfortable conditions for pedestrians and other non-vehicular users, and public safety. This has been shown to be true in progressive cities including Austin, Texas; Cincinnati, Ohio; Berkeley, California; Seattle, Washington; Tampa, Florida; and, perhaps most importantly, in downtown Minneapolis. See Table 3-1 below for information on studies of similar conversions in Savannah, Georgia; Vancouver, Washington; Palo Alto, California; Louisville, Kentucky; and Kalamazoo, Michigan.

The restoration of 1st Avenue North and Hennepin Avenue to two-way operation in downtown Minneapolis has shown the way locally. First identified as a priority in the 2007 Access Minneapolis Downtown Action Plan, Minneapolis implemented restoration of two-way circulation on these streets for the entire length of downtown Minneapolis in 2009. The 2010 "Hennepin Avenue and 1st Avenue Two-Way Conversion Evaluation Report" noted improvement in motor-vehicle access and circulation, stable parking meter collections, reduction in crashes involving bicyclists, and increased numbers of bicyclists. This conversion is a success and supports extension of the conversion to other areas of the City – East Hennepin and 1st Avenue Northeast in particular.

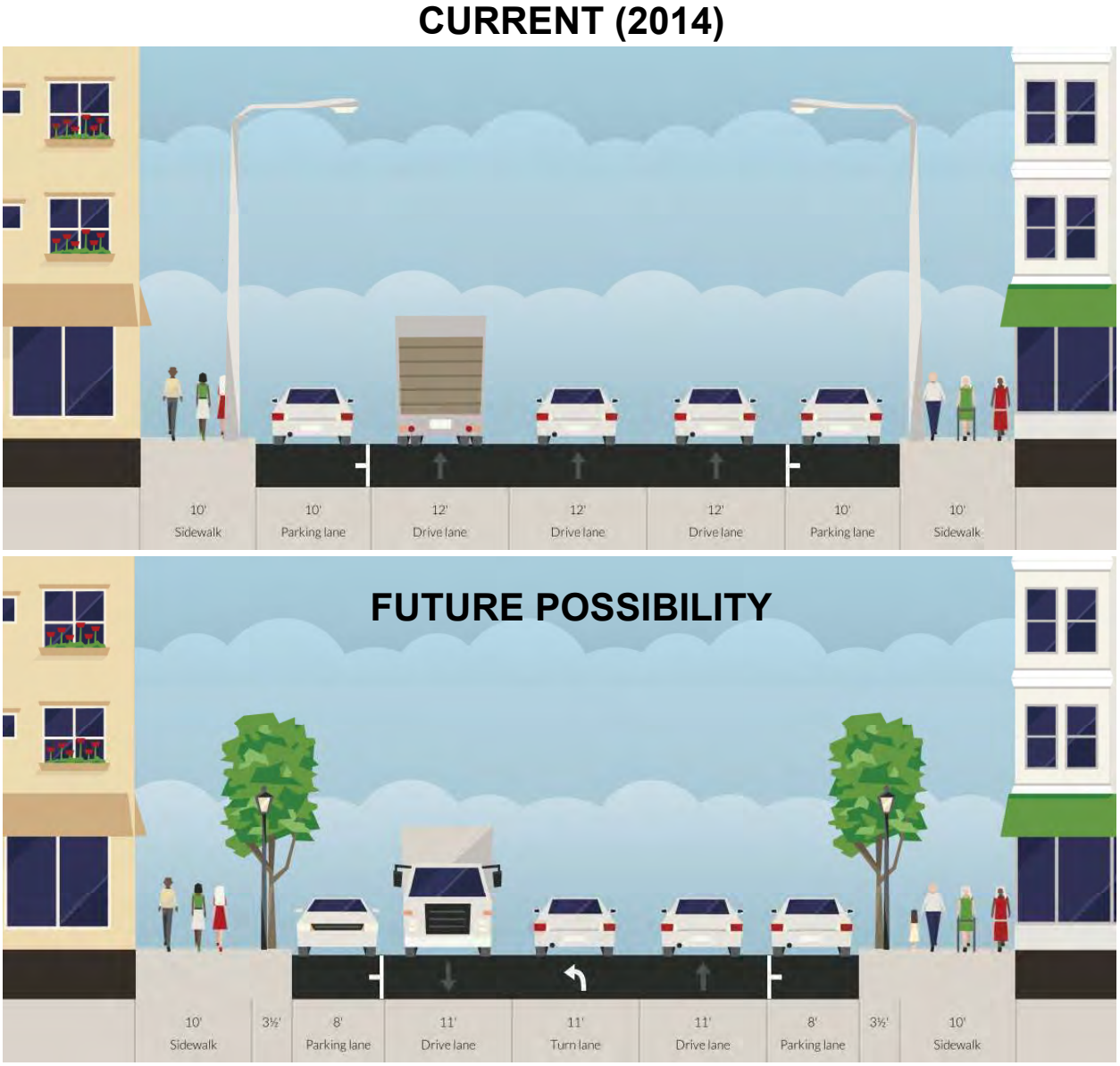
NIEBNA looks forward to working closely with Hennepin County and the City's Public Works Department as necessary traffic, engineering and other studies are performed prior to restoration of any one-way street to two-way operation.

Table 3-1
Studies in North America of
One-way to two-way Traffic Flow Conversions

City to Convert One-Ways to Two-Ways	Year	Effects of Conversion
Savannah, Georgia	2007 and on-going	Savannah has turned several of its streets from one-way to two-way traffic. One study found that on East Broad Street, "active" (as defined by taxpaying) addresses increased by 50 percent since the 2007 conversion. (cited from Jeff Speck's book *Walkable City)*
Vancouver, Washington	2008	In 2008, Vancouver converted three streets downtown to two-ways and the local business community touted improved pedestrian and vehicular traffic flows, resulting in an increase in business. For more information, see http://www.governing.com/topics/transportation-infrastructure/The-Return-of-the.html
Palo Alto, California	Sept. 2013	The proposed project would convert a two block portion of High Street between Forest Avenue and Channing Avenue from one-way to two-way operations. It was concluded that the conversion was feasible provided the City worked with local businesses to ensure loading zones did not block through traffic. http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/civicax/filebank/documents/35856
Louisville, Kentucky	Oct. 2009	Study initiated to evaluate the feasibility of converting one-way streets in downtown Louisville to two-way operations. The study focused on nearly all of Louisville's downtown street system. Findings concluded that the conversion was feasible provided minor adjustments were provided to a few intersections to accommodate two-way traffic. http://nacto.org/docs/usdg/downtown-louisville_entran.pdf
Kalamazoo, Michigan	June 2005	The proposed initiative of converting the downtown street grid of Kalamazoo from one-way to two-way operations was enacted in the hope of providing a catalyst for downtown revitalization. The study found that the conversions were feasible and would not negatively affect the current level of service. However, as traffic volumes increased, it was suggested that restriping of the roadways take place to provide dedicated turning lanes which could begin to affect the level of service provided. http://www.downtownkalamazoo.org/DKI/media/dki/Documents/Kalamazoo-2-Way-Traffic-Conversion-060805-Doc.pdf

The figure shown below is an example of how 1st Avenue Northeast could be reconfigured for two-way traffic. Currently, traffic lanes are 12' wide – similar to interstate highways designed to carry high speed mixed traffic including large trucks – while curbside parking lanes are 10' wide. For slower speed urban traffic, this is both unnecessary and dangerous since it subconsciously encourages higher speeds. The current layout reflects street design ideas from the 1960s that are obsolete by contemporary standards. Narrower lanes are safer, promote lower speeds, and allow reallocation of scarce space in the right-of-way for more appropriate urban uses like bicycle lanes and wider sidewalks.

Figure 3-1
Two-way Conversion of 1st Ave Northeast



Implement streetcar transit service serving the entire neighborhood

The locally preferred transit alternative for the Nicollet-Central Streetcar line runs through the entire Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood. Northbound from Downtown, the route crosses Nicollet Island and extends through the entire neighborhood on East Hennepin Avenue before continuing north on Central Avenue. Southbound, the route is via Central Avenue and 1st Avenue Northeast through the neighborhood, then across Nicollet Island and on into Downtown (see Map). This Plan strongly supports this routing.

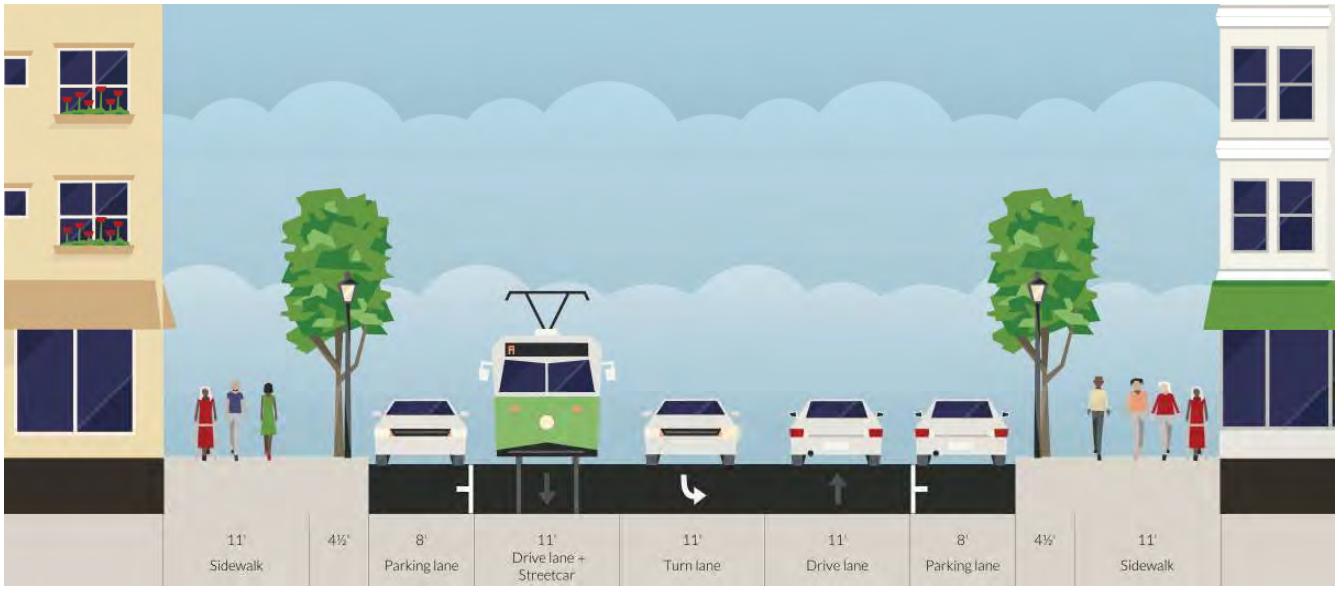
Implementation of streetcar service will stimulate additional transit-oriented development and bring new jobs, residents and visitors to the area. Streetcar service will also provide an important new travel option to and from the neighborhood, will link the commercial and retail corridors of Northeast Minneapolis with Downtown and south Minneapolis, and will enhance neighborhood attractiveness and livability. This Plan anticipates that the neighborhood will be pedestrian, transit and bicycle friendly; accordingly, the East Bank is not an appropriate location for the streetcar barn.

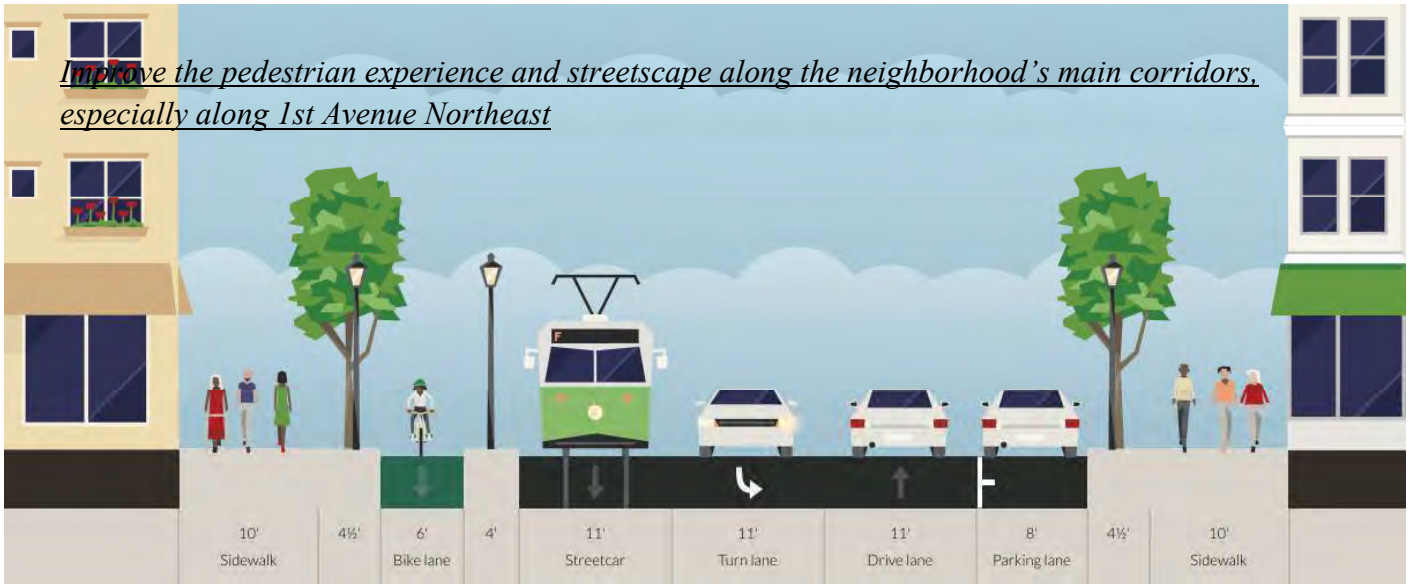
The first phase of implementation should reach to at least Central Avenue at 7th Street, to serve neighborhood parcels with high redevelopment potential, minimize disruption to the heart of the neighborhood's commercial district during construction, and maximize the transit-oriented development potential of this sizable transit investment.

Figure 3-2
Planned Streetcar Routes

The design of the streetcar line should consider the possibility of the restoration of two-way operations on East Hennepin Avenue, 1st Avenue Northeast, and 4th Street within the neighborhood. As shown in the figure below, even East Hennepin at its narrowest width could accommodate both streetcars and two-way traffic. NIEBNA looks forward to participating in the traffic and other studies needed to inform the discussion of the possible location and configuration of the streetcar line within the neighborhood.

Figure 3-3
Potential configurations for East Hennepin Avenue, looking south toward Downtown.





Improve the pedestrian experience and streetscape along the neighborhood's main corridors, especially along 1st Avenue Northeast

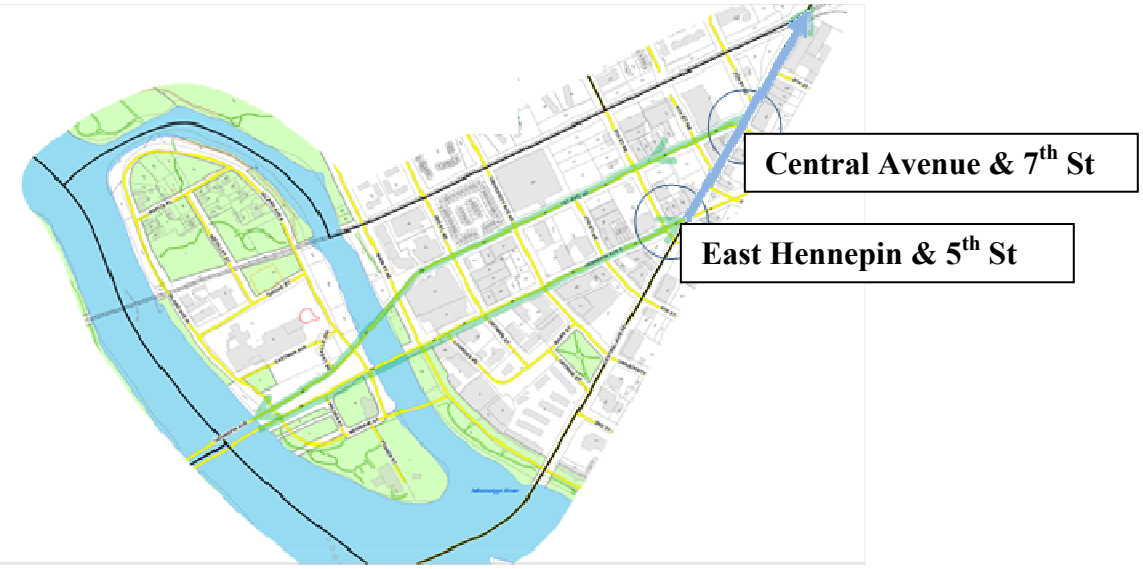
New development occurring and planned along the 1st Avenue corridor offers an opportunity to re-imagine and redesign the streetscape to make it more attractive, walkable, and human-scale. Expanding the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District will provide guidance for improvement of the pedestrian realm for the entire neighborhood. New development in the neighborhood should include replacing and widening sidewalks, where necessary. Specifically, improvement of the pedestrian crossing of University Avenue Southeast at Bank Street Southeast should provide safer access to Lund's grocery store. Residents living in the area around Chute Square Park regularly cross University Avenue Southeast to access Lund's at this location, rather than at Central Avenue Southeast or East Hennepin Avenue. Treatment options include a median with high visibility crosswalks, decorative paving, curb extensions, reduction in the number of through lanes at University Avenue, and/or the addition of pedestrian-activated signal treatments.

Address problematic intersections in the neighborhood

Two of the most dangerous and confusing intersections in the neighborhood are located at Central Avenue/East Hennepin at 5th Street and Central Avenue/1st Avenue Northeast at 7th Street. The streets at these intersections are not perpendicular to each other. The intersections are confusing and challenging to navigate, both for drivers and for pedestrians. The design of the current configurations of these intersections created small, irregularly shaped islands of land that are not now used productively. Traffic and other studies are needed to inform potential improvements to these intersections.

With the potential conversion of Hennepin and 1st Avenues to two-way traffic and the coming of the streetcar, a detailed analysis of changes in the street pattern will be needed. Possible changes include closure of 5th street between Central and East Hennepin (approximately 30' of roadway), installation of public art in the "X" formed by East Hennepin and Central Avenues, and improved pedestrian crosswalks.

Figure 3-5
Problematic Intersections on the East Bank



Implement year-round maintenance to improve business access and neighborhood walkability

Maintaining safety and access for pedestrians year-round and in all weather conditions is an essential characteristic of a high-quality, walkable and livable community. This includes ensuring that sidewalks throughout the neighborhood's commercial district are free of snow and litter year-round. This Plan supports the establishment of a method to fund year-round maintenance of the neighborhood, including snow and litter removal. NIEBNA will pursue additional discussions with responsible parties to determine roles and mechanisms for enhancing maintenance activities.

Make efficient use of existing parking resources

Available and conveniently accessible automobile parking is an important consideration for destination businesses that draw visitors who may arrive by car. A significant supply of parking currently exists in and around the neighborhood. See Table 3-2 at the end of this chapter.

In addition, all streets in the neighborhood have metered parking using smart meter technology which allows for detailed management that can make best use of on-street parking.

It is important to note, however, that a significant part of the surface lots now used for parking may – and probably will – disappear when new developments are realized. This Plan calls for new developments to provide on-site parking resources to satisfy all of their requirements. In addition, this Plan encourages developers to include in new buildings some parking that could be available to the public on a fee basis.

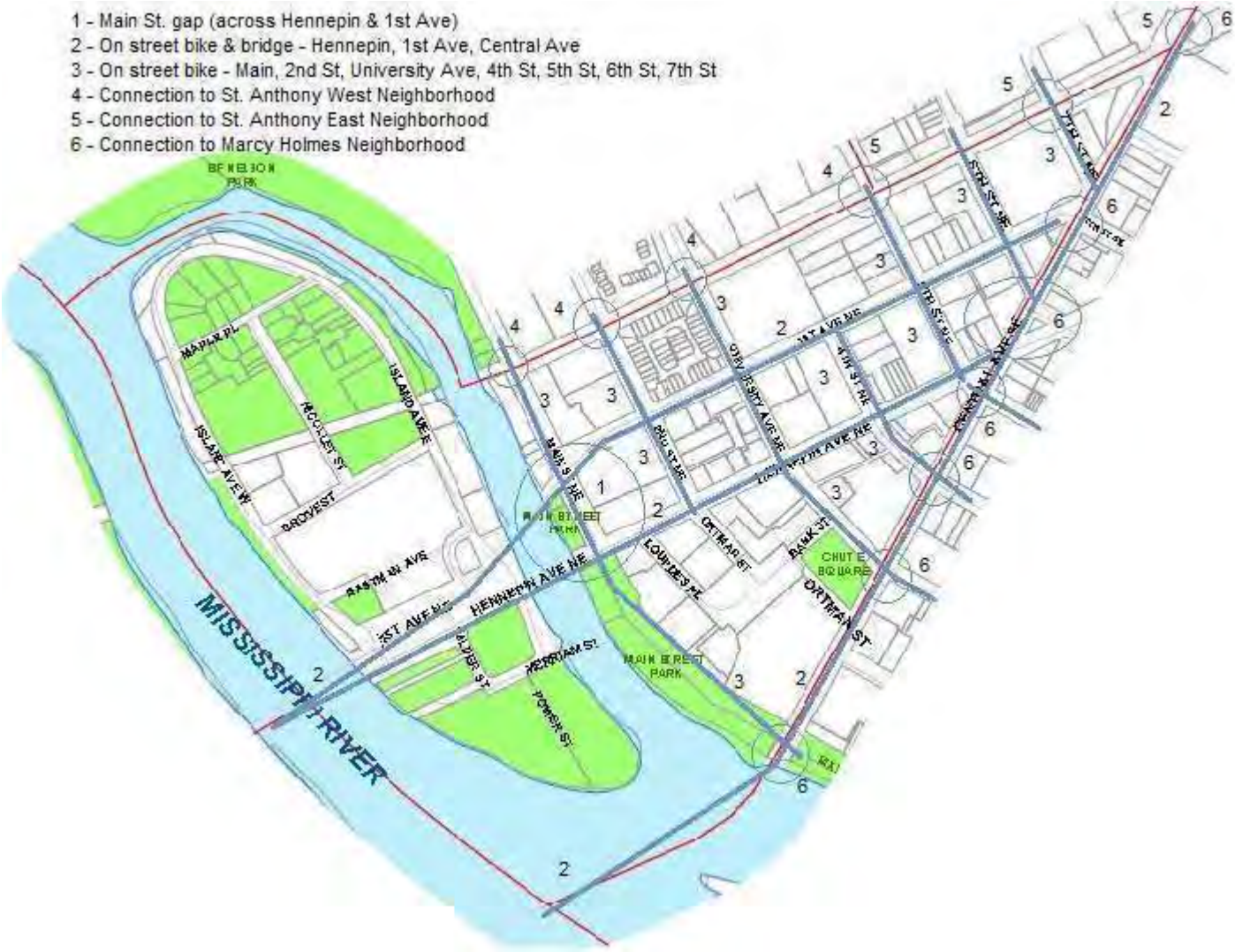
Parking priorities should encourage full utilization of all available parking resources at all hours of the day and night.

Improve bicyclist safety and comfort

Several safety and comfort improvements for pedestrian and bicyclist travel have been identified. Some of these improvements address potentially hazardous conditions that currently exist. Restoring two-way traffic to neighborhood commercial corridors and streets would reduce traffic speeds and would likely increase overall safety, as well as access and convenience.

There are several opportunities to address connectivity gaps, improve corridors, and expand bicycle access to destinations in and out of the neighborhood. As a general principle, marking the conflict zones, aiding in cyclist positioning, and increasing cyclist visibility will enhance safety and comfort for all users. Extending the bicycling lanes on 4th Street and University Avenue will assist in accommodating a relatively high volume of bicyclists in the area.

Figure 3-6
Recommended Bicycle Facilities



When this Plan has been fully implemented, NIEBNA anticipates marked bike lanes and connectors in the following streets:

<u>1st Avenue</u>: Marked bike lanes on both sides of the two-way street from Central to Main.

<u>Central Avenue</u>: Marked bike lanes on both sides of the two-way street from Columbia Heights to Downtown.

<u>Main Street</u>: Marked bike lanes on both sides of the two-way street until the lanes meet with the off-road bike paths along the River.

University Avenue: Marked bike lanes on both sides of the two-way street.

4th Street: Marked bike lanes on both sides of the two-way street plus a possible bike/pedestrian bridge across the railroad tracks.

5th Street: Marked bike lane connectors to the 5th Street Bikeway.

Hennepin Avenue Bridge: Marked bike lanes north on the Hennepin side, south on the 1st Avenue side.

Historic Hennepin Avenue (between Main and Central): No bikes, to allow for streetcar, parking, and pedestrian friendly sidewalks in a narrow corridor.

Enhance transit information

"Real time" information at transit stops would improve riders' experiences and let them decide whether to wait at the stop or make a quick trip into a nearby shop. NIEBNA encourages the Metropolitan Council to install real time arrival signage at all transit stops in the neighborhood.

Table 3-2
Current Parking Resources

Current Parking Resources -- excludes dedicated residential (condo) uses

Item	Name	Location	Type	Available to Public	Available Long Term
a	Pavilion	Merrian St Wilder St	Surface	No	Yes
b	De La Salle	East Hennepin East Island Ave	Surface	No*	Yes
c	Nicollet Island Inn	Wilder Street	Surface	No	Yes
D	BDC - Marquette	E Hennepin & 2nd St SE	Surface	Yes - metered	Yes
		University Ave SE	Surface	Yes - metered	Yes
E	Nye's	E Hennepin & 2nd St SE	Surface	No	?
F	Kramarczuk's	E Hennepin	Surface	No* - Fee	?
G	Surdyk's	E Hennepin & University	Surface	No	No
H	West Photo	University NE & 1st Ave NE	Surface	No**	No
I	US Bank	1st Ave NE & 4th St NE	Surface	No**	No
J	Wells Fargo 1	1st Ave NE & 5th St NE	Surface	No	No
	Wells Fargo 2	1st Ave NE & 5th St NE	Surface	No	No
K	Ghorka Palace	1st Ave NE & 5th St NE	Surface	No	?
L	HDMG 1	1st Ave NE & 6th St	Surface	No	?
	HDMG 2	6th St NE & near RR Tracks	Surface	No	?
M	Red Stag / Key North	1st Ave NE & 6th St NE	Surface	No	?
N	Banks Building	1st Ave NE & 7th St NE	Surface	No*	?
1	Lunds	Central Ave & 4th St SE	Ramp	No	Yes
2	Riverlace Ramp	2nd St SE & Bank St	Underground	Yes -- Fee	Yes
3	Pinnacle/Falls	2nd St NE	Ramp	Yes -- Fee	Yes
4	Hunt Group	2nd St NE	Ramp	Yes -- Fee	Yes
	West Photo	2ns St NE --Top Level	Ramp	Yes	Yes
5	St Anthony Ramp	2nd St SE & 2nd Ave SE	Ramp	Yes -- Fee	Yes

Available to Public:

- No Dedicated to private use
- No* Dedicated to private use during business hours, may be available to public after business hours
- No** Dedicated to private use during business hours, leased for private use after business hours
- Yes Available to public on routine basis

Available Long term

- Yes No plans to change use for parking
- No Likely to disappear in current form; equivalent space likely part of new development however
- ? Uncertain -- but not likely to change

CHAPTER FOUR: URBAN DESIGN

VISION

The Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood is an area of contrasts, with an eclectic mix of low-rise historic storefronts and modern residential high-rises. This Plan anticipates a dynamic mix of exceptionally designed buildings. New buildings will engage pedestrians with transparent storefronts and active façade details. As one of the oldest neighborhoods in Minneapolis, historic character will continue to stand out even as new development is mixed in.

GOALS

1. Provide an aesthetically pleasing, welcoming environment in which to live, work, play and visit.
2. Attract new developments that offer:
   - High quality construction and innovative architectural designs;
   - Scales and forms appropriate for a highly pedestrian- and transit-oriented environment; and
   - Respect for the historic character of the neighborhood while providing buildings that meet contemporary residential, retail and commercial standards.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

1. Work for the adoption of the proposed changes to the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District, which provide additional architectural standards for promoting and engaging the pedestrian environment.

2. Pursue a financial and management structure for ongoing maintenance of streetscape features.

3. Include the following as parts of street reconstruction and other major infrastructure projects:

   - Decorative pedestrian-oriented street lighting utilizing LED technology;
   - Wide sidewalks that accommodate both sidewalk commercial activities and unimpeded pedestrian flow;
   - Boulevard trees and other plantings;
   - Utilities located below grade (and removal of existing utility poles);
   - Elimination of all barriers to mobility;
   - Technology upgrades to enhance and promote transit usage
   - Technology upgrades that enhance the pedestrian experience

4. Support building designs that include greater height while maintaining a light and porous skyline.

5. Employ community development activities and promotions to create an image for the neighborhood as a vital activity center and a crossroads between Downtown, the University of Minnesota, and the Northeast Arts District.

SUPPORTING RATIONALE

Urban design principles in the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood are intended to encourage building density appropriate for a crossroads neighborhood near Downtown, the University of Minnesota, and the Northeast Arts District. Increased density will bring more residents, more retail, and proportionately less automobile traffic to the neighborhood.

NIEBNA regards the following ideas as hallmarks of a great urban neighborhood:

1. *The East Bank will provide a continuous and "active" streetfront wall.* Variation in façades is central and will strengthen the neighborhood's appearance and identity. Ground floors of new buildings will attract people to the district. Large storefront windows will encourage meaningful interactions between the interiors and the exteriors of buildings. Façade diversity and narrow storefronts should allow pedestrians to see something new every few seconds as they pass by. Taller buildings will bring more people to the area while preserving better streetscapes.

2. *New development will be larger in scale than historical development.* Large scale developments are planned to be the norm as the East Bank continues its transition from primarily an industrial area to a dense, mixed use, urban environment. A principal challenge for major new developments may be to determine how to achieve the overall density envisioned while preserving and enhancing the street level pedestrian oriented environment required by this Plan.

   The Metropolitan Council expects a significant population increase in Minneapolis during the next few decades. With very limited amounts of land, the only way the East Bank can contribute in any meaningful way to that population increase is through high density development. With substantial investments already having been made in transit that traverses the East Bank, this part of the City's smallest neighborhood presents a significant opportunity to leverage those investments by maximizing the population that that transit can serve.

   In addition, large scale new developments will readily complement existing buildings with high densities such as LaRive, The Falls & Pinnacle, and Village Lofts. In turn, the increased population those new developments will bring will help support the additional restaurant, retail and other uses the neighborhood seeks. The major difference between future major buildings and those just mentioned (which were completed 10 to 30 years ago) is that NIEBNA now expects new buildings to have significant street-level retail as well as dense high-rise housing components.

3. *The heart of great urban design is a vibrant street life.* NIEBNA envisions neighborhood businesses that provide sufficient services, goods, and entertainment to allow residents to satisfy their routine needs within easy walking distance of their residences or workplaces. With less reliance on cars, a more dynamic sidewalk life will occur.

The sidewalk connects pedestrians to everything – stores, parking, public transportation, parks and trails, and their residences. It is also a place to enjoy in its own right for exercise, dog walking, meeting and talking with friends, giving directions to visitors, and other "just walking around" activities. The objective is design on a human scale.

This vision has two distinct areas within a broader design: (1) The architecture of buildings adjacent to the sidewalk that constitutes the pedestrian zone, usually three to four stories in height; and (2) The façade that rises above that level. While walking adjacent to storefronts, a person generally perceives only the lower floors of a building. This two-part distinction suggests that architecture above the pedestrian zone might be different than architecture within the pedestrian zone. For example, while a continuous "wall" of three or four story buildings along the street may be acceptable and feel welcoming, extending that wall straight up for many more floors may feel oppressive and uninviting.

One desirable architectural characteristic within the neighborhood now is the look of older building with a transparent first floor store-front and one, two, or three stories of detailed brick above. New developments will follow the tiered design and other criteria outlined in Chapter Two: Land Use to preserve this this classic shopping district look even while the building is much taller and more massive.

4. *Parking will be handled strategically.* This complicated issue is discussed more fully in Chapter 3: Transportation, but note the following:

   a) Structures and large surface parking lots bordering on sidewalks are antithetical to the vision of generating vital urban sidewalk life in the neighborhood. Over time, most surface parking lots will be replaced by new buildings. In the meantime, all surface parking lots should be screened from view.

   b) For new development, parking requirements must be accounted for as a basic design requirement and integrated into each new building in a way that minimizes vehicular interaction with pedestrians.

   c) To the extent that current parking demand is met with surface lots, alternate ways of meeting that demand may have to be found at some point in the future. Possibilities include more intense use of on-street metered parking and more use of existing off-street and structured public parking resources in the area.

   d) This Plan envisions no new City financed or operated parking structure in the East Bank. NIEBNA encourages developers to consider including some parking in their buildings that would be available to the general public.

Future development within the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood will contribute to an area that is alive with sidewalk life. Ultimately, the design of every element – buildings, landscaping, signage, streets, street furniture, streetlights, sidewalks, and amenities – will reflect the standards and hallmarks expressed above and in other chapters of this Plan.

CHAPTER FIVE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

VISION

The Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood will strengthen its place in the regional economy by encouraging dense development that will result in additional residents, office uses, retail and restaurants – all of which will help the City expand its job base. Significant new development will be concentrated on brownfields and underutilized parcels in the area. New mixed use development will enhance the current mix of daytime and nighttime activities.

GOALS

1. Increase residential population as one result of more dense development.
2. Emphasize locally owned retail and restaurant development.
3. Support the City's Nicollet-Central Streetcar Plan to improve access to the neighborhood.
4. Encourage development that will result in a balanced mix of daytime and nighttime uses.
5. Enhance the Nicollet Island-East Bank's strength as a destination neighborhood.
6. Encourage street level designs that promote public safety.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

1. Work with developers on high density, high quality, mixed use projects as discussed in Chapter 2: Land Use and Housing.
2. Continue to cooperate with the St Anthony East and Marcy-Holmes neighborhoods to ensure the full extension of the streetcar line along Central Avenue.
3. Attract developers to opportunity sites in the neighborhood that are ideal for bold, creative, and dense projects that integrate residential and commercial options in the area.
4. Enhance the crossroads features of the neighborhood through street and sidewalk improvements, intersection improvements, and streetscape/façade improvements.
5. Advocate projects that result in upgraded communications infrastructure vital to 21st Century business operations, including high-speed Internet connectivity. This will be a key factor in attracting or retaining non-retail high-tech business in the area.
6. Cooperate with area business associations to ensure that new development is seamlessly integrated into the neighborhood.
7. Continue working with arts and cultural groups to bring more activities to the neighborhood.

SUPPORTING RATIONALE

A strong business community is the cornerstone of a vibrant urban neighborhood. This Plan provides guidance for the neighborhood to work together with policy makers, local business owners, developers and residents to provide a framework for making choices about the future commercial development of the neighborhood.

The Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood has a thriving commercial community that includes many retail stores, restaurants, personal services, professional and medical services, business-to-business operations, offices, and prominent institutions such as the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB), Our Lady of Lourdes Church and De La Salle High School (see Table 5-1). This analysis covers the commercial community in the East Bank as well as the lower part of Nicollet Island (Nicollet Island Inn, the Pavilion and the Amphitheater).

Both the commercial and residential communities are crucial to the long term success of the neighborhood. Having successful and varied commercial activity within easy walking distance is one of the characteristics that make the neighborhood such a great place to live. The commercial community also provides a major employment base that includes many high value jobs in technology, finance and professional services. Growing this employment base is essential for the neighborhood in particular and for the City as a whole.

This Plan does not favor a specific type, ownership or size of business or service. Under the Minneapolis Zoning Code for commercial districts, "commercial" is a general concept. There is no provision requiring a specific kind of store, prohibiting a proposed store because a similar store is already present (except in special cases like liquor stores), or requiring a broad mix of stores in a local area.

In short, the East Bank commercial district is not a mall to be managed and controlled to meet specific business objectives. Instead, this Plan relies on market forces to determine which types of businesses will become parts of the local commercial landscape.

The East Bank is identified as an Activity Center in the Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan. Among other characteristics, an Activity Center is a destination for commercial activity that draws customers from a wider area than would typically be served by a neighborhood-based business. As a result, the standard analysis of the nearby "local customer base" is not particularly useful for most businesses located in the East Bank. NIEBNA expects the neighborhood's strength as an Activity Center to continue to grow, enabling the neighborhood to attract new customers from an even larger area.

In addition, the trails and open space along the Mississippi River bring numerous people to the neighborhood for recreational opportunities. Planned improvements to the parks and riverfront in the neighborhood and enhanced connectivity of streets and trails will further help support an even better economic climate. Drawing more visitors to neighborhood businesses from these areas represents a significant economic opportunity.

Table 5-1
NIEBNA Area Business Summary

esri

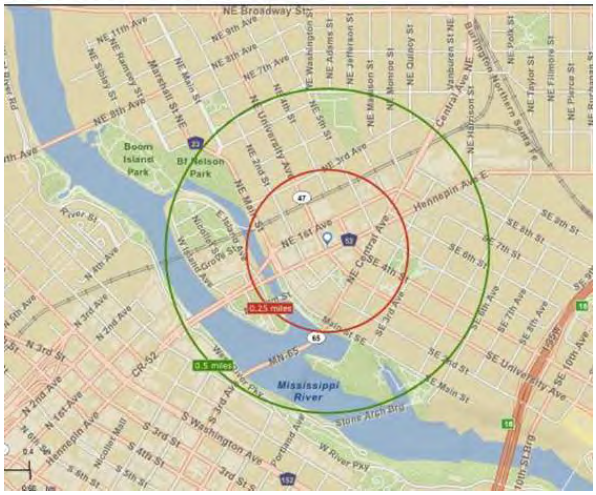
Business Summary

208 Hennepin Ave E, Minneapolis
Rings: 0.25, 0.5 mile radii

Data for all businesses in area	0.25 miles	0.5 miles
Total Businesses:	339	463
Total Employees:	2,331	3,446
Total Residential Population:	1,899	5,189
Employee/Residential Population Ratio:	1.23	0.66

	Businesses		Employees		Businesses		Employees	
by SIC Codes	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agriculture & Mining	2	0.6%	3	0.1%	4	0.8%	7	0.2%
Construction	10	2.8%	40	1.7%	15	3.2%	78	2.3%
Manufacturing	11	3.2%	101	4.3%	15	3.3%	286	8.3%
Transportation	4	1.0%	8	0.3%	7	1.4%	14	0.4%
Communication	3	0.8%	4	0.2%	3	0.7%	6	0.2%
Utility	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Wholesale Trade	14	4.0%	57	2.5%	20	4.3%	72	2.1%
Retail Trade Summary	47	14.0%	553	23.7%	66	14.2%	785	22.8%
Home Improvement	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
General Merchandise Stores	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Food Stores	5	1.4%	51	2.2%	7	1.5%	66	1.9%
Auto Dealers, Gas Stations, Auto	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Apparel & Accessory Stores	6	1.7%	14	0.6%	7	1.5%	18	0.5%
Furniture & Home Furnishings	3	0.8%	12	0.5%	4	0.8%	15	0.4%
Eating & Drinking Places	21	6.3%	304	13.1%	28	6.1%	384	11.1%
Miscellaneous Retail	13	3.8%	170	7.3%	20	4.3%	302	8.8%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate Summary	46	13.6%	361	15.5%	59	12.8%	435	12.6%
Banks, Savings & Lending Institutions	6	1.7%	69	3.0%	8	1.6%	84	2.4%
Securities Brokers	5	1.6%	106	4.5%	6	1.3%	119	3.5%
Insurance Carriers & Agents	6	1.6%	28	1.2%	7	1.5%	33	1.0%
Real Estate, Holding, Other Investment	30	8.7%	158	6.8%	39	8.4%	200	5.8%
Services Summary	202	59.6%	1,204	51.6%	273	58.9%	1,760	51.1%
Hotels & Lodging	1	0.4%	2	0.1%	2	0.5%	4	0.1%
Automotive Services	3	0.9%	8	0.3%	5	1.1%	19	0.6%
Motion Pictures & Amusements	15	4.4%	75	3.2%	20	4.3%	93	2.7%
Health Services	14	4.2%	55	2.4%	19	4.0%	94	2.7%
Legal Services	9	2.8%	21	0.9%	11	2.4%	26	0.7%
Education Institutions & Libraries	5	1.4%	128	5.5%	7	1.5%	215	6.2%
Other Services	154	45.4%	915	39.3%	209	45.1%	1,309	38.0%
Government	1	0.4%	1	0.1%	2	0.4%	3	0.1%
Totals	339	100%	2,331	100%	463	100%	3,446	100%

Source: Copyright 2012 Dun & Bradstreet, Inc. All rights reserved. Esri Total Residential Population forecasts for 2012.



Activity Centers are also areas of higher density residential development. This larger residential base will support increased small-scale commercial development that will, in turn, draw business customers from outside the neighborhood. In addition, clusters of unique businesses will further attract customers from an even wider area.

Economic Development Strategies

This Plan promotes growth of the commercial community, both retail and non-retail, by considering two fundamental questions – "What are the factors that would attract to the neighborhood business investment in new or expanded stores, restaurants, services, and business-to-business operations?" and "What can be done in this Plan to enhance these factors?"

The principal objective of this Plan is to set the stage for the neighborhood as a contemporary urban environment attractive to a wide range of retail, restaurant, office, and business-to-business operations. There is ample evidence that this kind of environment, already partially in place in the neighborhood, is attractive to many businesses and to many individuals including young professionals, retired people and others as a place to live, work and play. This Plan builds on that existing foundation.

Major ways the Plan fosters continued economic development include:

a) Neighborhood Ambiance – The Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood already provides a lively, pedestrian-oriented, urban neighborhood ambiance that brings residents, workers, and visitors to this locale on a daily basis. The Plan intends to strengthen that ambiance so that the neighborhood is even more attractive to people in all their life roles – resident and visitor, employer and employee, merchant and customer, restaurateur and diner, entertainer and audience member, professional and client, doctor and patient, runner and bicyclist – among other roles.

   For example, one of the reasons that HDMG, Inc. moved its high-tech video post processing facility from Eden Prairie to the neighborhood was that its employees, mostly skilled professionals, regarded the East Bank as a particularly congenial place to live and work.

   Specific steps for strengthening and maintaining the neighborhood's ambiance are discussed in Chapter 2: Land Use and Housing and in Chapter 4: Urban Design.

b) Capacity – Commercial activity needs facilities in which to operate. This Plan emphasizes mixed use developments that offer both commercial and residential components for major new developments. The commercial components may include stores, restaurants, offices, production, computer and other facilities. All major new developments should consider the full range of possible uses as a primary design requirement.

   For smaller and in-fill development sites, single-use purpose-built buildings designed as stores, offices, restaurants, or other uses may be appropriate. However, the design of such buildings, especially at street level, must enhance the overall neighborhood ambiance.

c) Public Safety – Public safety within the urban environment ensures a healthy experience for everyone: residents, visitors, and businesses alike. The Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood enjoys one of the lowest crime rates in the City. Keeping that rate low is of prime importance. One facet of assuring public safety is maintaining a good level of police presence in the area.

Architecture also has a role to play. An important concept of this Plan is the promotion of public safety through design features of new developments.

1) Streetscape Design – Major safety strategies include street lighting with unobstructed sight lines and no dark spots.

2) Building Design and Operation – Other safety strategies include emphasizing "eyes-on-the-street" design (especially on the ground level and lower floors); transparent street level building façades; prohibiting signage or other materials that block sight lines through windows; and store layouts that provide sight lines from and into the stores. As necessary, building operations matters will be specified and enforced via Conditional Use Permits.

d) Residential Density – As discussed above, NIEBNA expects most commercial operations, retail stores and restaurants in particular, to serve clienteles drawn from well beyond the immediate area. Even so, a large customer base within easy walking distance – in some cases a mere elevator ride away – can become a significant clientele itself. Increased residential density will also foster small businesses that can prosper with "the locals" as the primary customer base. This will further contribute to the distinctiveness of the neighborhood ambiance.

Another benefit of residential density is to provide options for people who work in the neighborhood to also live within easy walking distance of work. This taps into a growing trend, especially among younger people, to forego cars in favor of public transit, biking and walking as primary ways of getting around.

As discussed in Chapter 2: Land Use and Housing, residential density also offers many other benefits to the neighborhood as a whole.

e) Transportation Infrastructure – As discussed in Chapter 3: Transportation, this Plan calls for improvements in transportation and parking that will benefit commercial activity:

1) Traffic Flow – Restoration of two-way street operations on East Hennepin, 1st Avenue Northeast, and 4th Street within the neighborhood will improve the area's walkability, enhance the pedestrian experience, and bring more high-quality foot traffic to the neighborhood's commercial spaces.

As noted in Chapter 3, two-way streets provide better support to ground level retail operations than do one-way streets, especially in neighborhood scale retail districts.

2) Parking – This Plan recognizes parking as an important issue, especially for retail uses. Some surface parking lots now used to meet parking requirements are likely to be replaced with new development.

   The Plan calls for each major new development to:

   (a) include adequate parking on-site for all components of the development;

   (b) consider providing additional parking available (on a fee basis) to the public.

   The Plan also calls for maximum and creative use of on-street parking using the capabilities of the "smart meters" now installed in the neighborhood to best support commercial uses throughout the day.

   The Plan does *not* call for new City owned or operated district parking structures, although privately owned and operated structured parking could be accommodated if it is designed in a fashion that does not detract from the walkability or ambiance of the neighborhood.

Market Conclusions

Today, although numerous day-to-day residential needs can be satisfied within easy walking distance, many residents leave the neighborhood to obtain various commercial goods and services. As the neighborhood continues to grow in population and strengthen its ambiance, this should result in an increase in commercial opportunities.

It is recognized that certain goods and services (such as motor vehicle dealers and gas stations) are not suitable for the neighborhood given its highly pedestrian oriented, urban environment.

This Plan supports an increase in non auto-related industries such as clothing and clothing accessory stores; hardware, sporting goods, hobby, book and music stores; and general merchandise stores. Considering that demand exceeds supply for most industry subsectors, the neighborhood is well suited to attract additional commercial uses.

CHAPTER SIX: ARTS, CULTURE & HERITAGE PRESERVATION

VISION

Iconic artwork adds to the uniqueness of any neighborhood and can help strengthen connections to an area's historic roots. The Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood is a cultural crossroads for the region and offers many forms of art and entertainment.

GOALS

1. Enliven the neighborhood with more visual and performing art activities at key locations.
2. Continue to serve as a host site for cultural events and festivals throughout the year.
3. Preserve historic resources that contribute to the neighborhood's character.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

1. Add to existing works of art throughout the neighborhood.

2. Support cultural events and festivals by working with local businesses and by promoting events through various publications.

3. Seek out leaders in the local arts community and invite them to neighborhood meetings to explore ways the arts can have a greater role in the neighborhood.

4. Support private funding initiatives dedicated to enhancing the arts in the local community.

5. Encourage and support opportunities for more art in the public realm.

6. Attract a small-scale performing arts/concert venue to the neighborhood.

7. Work with developers to negotiate public art installations as parts of development projects.

8. Publicize arts initiatives, events and exhibits, when appropriate, in newsletters and other marketing materials.

9. For new developments, consider a design criterion that respects the appearance and scale of any adjacent historic buildings.

SUPPORTING RATIONALE

Arts and Culture

Entertainment and cultural opportunities within the neighborhood are plentiful. The neighborhood is a crossroads between Downtown, the University of Minnesota, and the Northeast Arts District. Given existing demographics in terms of age, income and education, the "typical" resident of the neighborhood is generally active and engaged in a variety of entertainment and cultural events. Within the neighborhood itself, there are already numerous festivals that bring together members of the community and people from the surrounding area.

The University provides sporting events, performing arts, and galleries, and attracts renowned public speakers. Having the University nearby offers the neighborhood an unusual cultural identity within a stimulating environment.

The Northeast Arts District is the premiere arts district in the Twin Cities. During the last 30 years, the arts community has revitalized what was once a declining industrial area. Today, there are more than 400 galleries, studios, and artist-filled buildings that attract visitors on a regular basis. Studies have shown that the arts have had positive impacts on economic development in the Northeast Minneapolis area, including increases in the numbers of trendy shops and restaurants.

The Pillsbury "A Mill," a federally-certified historic structure located on the riverfront barely two blocks from the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood, is currently undergoing conversion into artist studio housing.

Close proximity to Downtown also provides neighborhood residents and workers with numerous entertainment venues such as the Guthrie Theater, the State Theatre, the Orpheum Theatre, the Mill City Museum, the Walker Arts Center, and a number of major league sports facilities.

Such proximity is part of what makes the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood so attractive. This Plan anticipates that, in the future, the neighborhood will have more such amenities within its own boundaries, such as performing arts venues, concert venues, and greater displays of public art. These types of uses will create a wider draw and further enhance the neighborhood as a regional destination.

Historic Preservation

As one of the oldest neighborhoods in the City of Minneapolis, the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood has a rich history. The area has long been a thriving hub for industry and commerce due to its proximity to St. Anthony Falls. Many buildings that were used for the milling industry still stand today and have found new uses. In addition, many of the homes and buildings on Nicollet Island are historic in nature. These buildings tell a story of the neighborhood's past and give the neighborhood its unique charm and character.

A portion of the neighborhood is included in the St. Anthony Falls Historic District. This district, which encompasses areas outside the neighborhood as well, includes all of Nicollet Island and the entire width of the East Bank within the neighborhood from the River to University Avenue. The district's official historic designation was granted in 1971. While milling operations had essentially ceased by that time, there was a desire to recognize the importance of milling as a part of local history. The district has official design guidelines for new development and for rehabilitation of existing buildings within the district.

The City's *St. Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines* apply to any new development within Nicollet Island or within the portion of the East Bank that lies between the River and University Avenue.

Figure 6-1
St Anthony Falls Historic District

The Northeast Business Association sponsors an East Hennepin historical walking tour and has sponsored a detailed report analyzing historic resources in the area. Much of the data herein comes from that report.

Our Lady of Lourdes Church

One of the oldest buildings in the City of Minneapolis is Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church. The Church was constructed in 1857 and is the oldest continually used place of worship in the City. Built in 1857 as a Congregational Church, the original building was in a rather severe classic Greek style. Shortly after it was completed, the building was sold, becoming a Roman Catholic church that initially served the local French Canadian community. Over the years, the building has been extensively remodeled to resemble more of a traditional French country church.

1857 – Source: MN Historical society

2013

Nye's Polonaise Room – 112 East Hennepin Avenue

Another landmark in the neighborhood is Nye's Polonaise Room located at 112 East Hennepin Avenue. Two of its three buildings date back to the early 1900s. The bar/restaurant itself opened in 1950 and displays the eastern European roots of northeast Minneapolis. It was twice named "Best Bar in America" by Esquire Magazine.

East Hennepin Avenue

Several buildings in the 200 block of East Hennepin date to the early 1900s including The Marquette Block, which includes five buildings currently occupied by contemporary restaurants. Another important block along East Hennepin where several of the original buildings remain is the Melzer Block (the south east side of Hennepin, between University Avenue and 4th Street). The building at 330 East Hennepin is one of the oldest buildings on the block. It was constructed in 1893 as the home of the St. Anthony Falls Bank. Several other buildings also date back to around 1900.

Originally constructed as the home of the St. Anthony Falls Bank, 330 East Hennepin Avenue was constructed in 1893 and is one of the oldest buildings on the block.

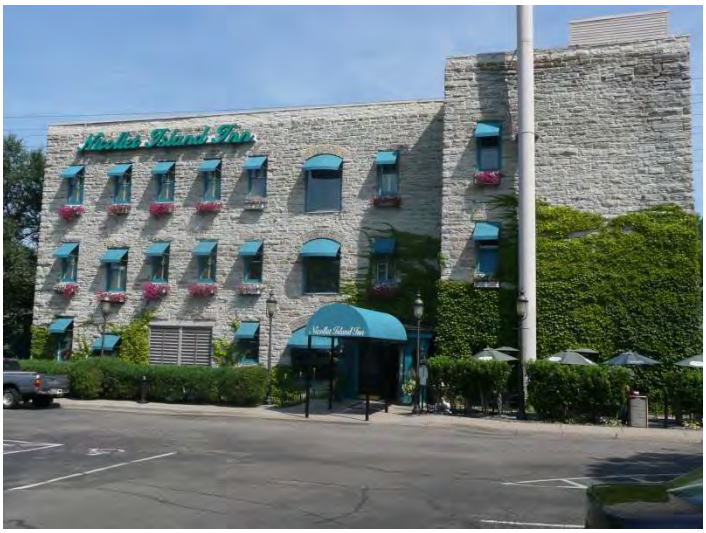
Ard Godfrey House

The Ard Godfrey House in Chute Square Park is believed to be the oldest house still standing in the City. Originally located at Main Street and 2nd Street Southeast, the house was relocated to the park in 1909. The home was constructed in 1849 for the man who built the first sawmill at the Falls.

The Ard Godfrey House located in Chute Square Park

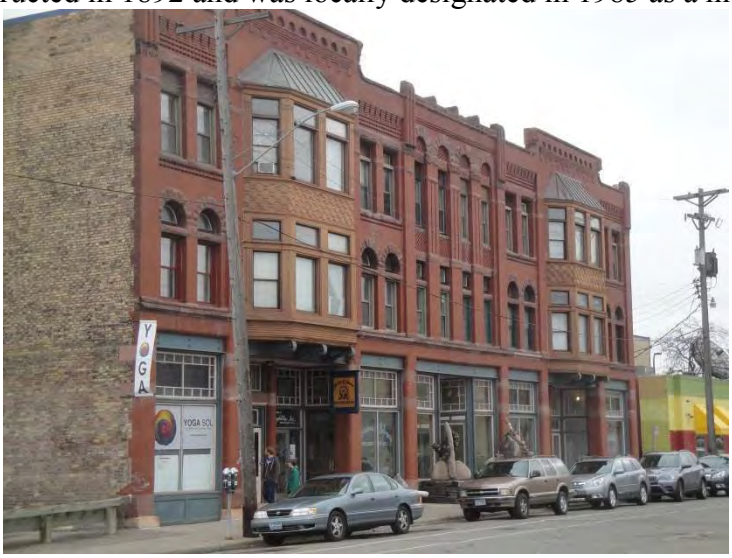
Nicollet Island Inn

The Nicollet Island Inn (95 Merriam Street) was constructed in 1893 for the Island Sash & Door Company. The building later served other businesses in the flour and milling industry before serving as a men's shelter for the Salvation Army for much of the 20th Century. In the 1970s, the building was purchased by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Under lease, the building has been converted into the Nicollet Island Inn.



Other historic structures

Other significant buildings in the neighborhood include 400 East Hennepin Avenue (constructed in 1904) and the St. Anthony Place Building at 17 Fourth Street Southeast and 405 Central Avenue Southeast (constructed in 1923). The Melrose Flats building at 13-23 Fifth Street Northeast was constructed in 1892 and was locally designated in 1985 as a historic landmark.



The Melrose Flats building, constructed in 1892, was locally designated in 1985 as a historic landmark.

Residents and visitors alike can often be found strolling Nicollet Island to see some of Minneapolis' most historic homes.

The numerous historic structures in the neighborhood contribute to the charm and character of the area and represent part of the City's culture and past.

Since the land in the neighborhood that is most likely to be developed or redeveloped lacks structures of historic value, NIEBNA does not plan to use this document to re-visit the boundaries of the historic district.

In addition, it should be noted that a past survey had identified a potential historic district covering the East Hennepin commercial district. NIEBNA has determined not to address the potential historic district in this Plan but acknowledges that the potential district may require further study.

CHAPTER SEVEN: PARKS & OPEN SPACE

VISION

This Small Area Plan proposes to establish an abundance of urban public spaces spread throughout the neighborhood. These are welcoming spaces where residents and visitors enjoy spending time outdoors. The Mississippi riverfront will be maximized to its full potential as a recreational and natural asset. Design practices will allow the neighborhood to function as a sustainable urban environment. NIEBNA will strive to take advantage of the Park Board's new park dedication fee requirement for new developments.

GOALS

1. Increase the neighborhood's appeal as an inviting location for many people to live, work, and play.
2. Make the River and its recreational amenities the focal point of the neighborhood.
3. Create small privately owned parklets as green pet- and youth-friendly spaces for both residents and visitors to enjoy.
4. Take advantage of underutilized sites, identifying areas for passive recreational opportunities.
5. Consider streets and sidewalks as important public spaces in the neighborhood and improve that pedestrian realm through streetscape enhancements.
6. Encourage the development of energy efficient buildings and infrastructure that are environmentally friendly and support a sustainable way of life.

STRATEGIC ACTIONS

1. Pursue a micro urban park/open space in the northeast section of the neighborhood**.**
2. Seek groupings of benches or chess tables in parks and other open spaces to promote interaction among neighbors and visitors.
3. Develop funding for public space improvements (such as parklets and other streetscape amenities) as parts of new developments, utilizing the trade-offs criteria discussed in this Plan. This is a particular priority along East Hennepin Avenue, Central Avenue, 1st Avenue Northeast, and University Avenue.
4. Working with MPRB, explore the possible use of park dedication fees generated by new developments within the neighborhood. Investigate using those fees for MPRB's long-term, strategic investments within the neighborhood.
5. Maintain and repair all existing sidewalks as needed.
6. Encourage reuse of existing buildings and retrofit them for energy efficiency where feasible.
7. Promote green roofs and vegetation on buildings.
8. Utilize the San Francisco Parklet Manual as a resource for parklet implementation and operation maintenance. (See http://sfpavementtoparks.sfplanning.org/docs/SF_P2P_Parklet_Manual_1.0_FULL.pdf.)

SUPPORTING RATIONALE

Parks and Open Space - What's here now

The amount of public open space or green space in an area is a major factor contributing to the overall quality of life. Public spaces provide people with opportunities for active recreation or for simple relaxation and socializing, and offer great locations for public events. Adjacent to the Mississippi River, the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood contains many quality public open spaces that provide abundant opportunities not available in most parts of the City. In addition to park land, the streets themselves serve as public spaces.

(To view a map of parks within the neighborhood and the surrounding area, visit the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board website at http://www.minneapolisparks.org/home.asp.)

Nicollet Island

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) owns much of the land on Nicollet Island. MPRB's amenities include an outdoor amphitheater (used for movies, concerts and other events) as well as the Nicollet Island Pavilion, a facility available for rent for private events. When not rented out, much of the area surrounding the pavilion – including a plaza along the riverfront with picnic tables and seating – is used by the general public. Other amenities on the Island include extensive green space, outdoor seating, walking trails, and interpretive signage. Residents and visitors also stroll the Island to see some of Minneapolis' most historic homes and dramatic views of Downtown and the riverfront from the Island's western edge.

East Bank

The St. Anthony Main riverfront area attracts visitors from all over the world. It serves as a destination location for the neighborhood and is an iconic area within the City of Minneapolis. The pedestrian-scaled brick paved street and sidewalk give a historic feel appropriate for one of the oldest streets in the City. On one side of the street are restaurants and entertainment venues that bring pedestrians to the area. The other side is mostly green space with walking/biking trails, and outstanding views of Downtown and the River. One of the landmarks along Main Street is Riverplace, with a large plaza providing opportunities for public and private use.

The square block sized Chute Square Park, at the corner of the busy Central and University Avenues, is a wonderful bit of natural green space in the midst of dense housing and commercial buildings. The Park is home to the Ard Godfrey house, the oldest wood frame house in Minneapolis. The Park was recently revitalized with new benches and picnic tables, increased lighting, new sidewalks and other amenities, all privately paid for through fundraising by the Friends of Chute Park. The Park is a gathering space for community events like National Night Out, for quiet contemplation, or for neighborhood dogs to chase dog-wise local squirrels.

In dense urban environments, streets should be treated as public spaces. This means that streets are not just for getting from Point A to Point B. Instead, welcoming public streets encourage people to stay, spending time on the sidewalks, wandering the neighborhood for the sake of enjoyment, and experiencing local establishments.

The East Bank portion of the neighborhood has a significant amount of sidewalk space that facilitates a strong pedestrian environment. Wider sidewalks help create more inviting streets in a variety of ways. They give pedestrians plenty of space to move about in highly trafficked areas and allow room for more streetscape amenities such as plantings, benches, waste bins, bicycle parking, and sandwich board signage for businesses. Having more space devoted to pedestrians allows for parklets – small pedestrian spaces extending from sidewalks into on-street parking spaces that offer seating, public art, and other amenities.

Open green space for the public's use is encouraged in the design of all new developments – for example, a small plaza with benches, public art, a garden, a fountain, and/or a firepit.

Plan for Parks and Open Space

One of the biggest themes arising from the community engagement process was that the River is a tremendous asset that is not being fully utilized. Residents want greater access to the River and more coordinated riverfront development in the form of restaurants, retail stores, and water-related recreation. People want to get closer to the River via trails and biking paths and want priority to be given to maximizing the use of the riverfront year round. Now in the early stages of development by the MPRB, the Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan will ultimately determine future park amenities and improved access to the River.

Given its dense urban nature, the neighborhood is not likely to see the addition of significant public space within its boundaries. Instead, this Plan gives priority to the preservation and enhancement of existing open/green space and the creation of micro or pocket parks, parklets, privately-owned open space, and the streets/sidewalks themselves. NIEBNA envisions the neighborhood as a highly pedestrian oriented environment. Therefore, the streets should serve as a continual network of public space that is attractive and comfortable, with places provided for people to rest or socialize. At a minimum, this Plan anticipates improved maintenance of existing sidewalks and trails, as well as filling in gaps in those systems.

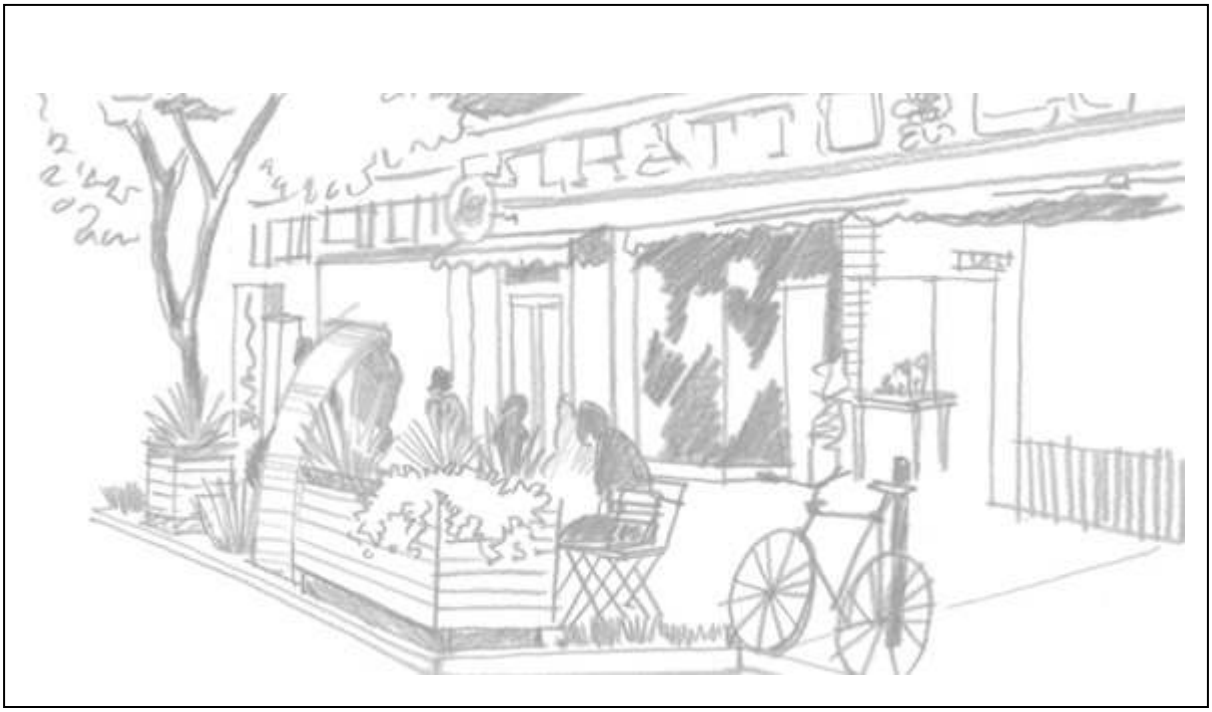
On Nicollet Island, NIEBNA supports maintenance and improvement of *existing* bicycle and walking paths. By contrast, NIEBNA would oppose development of additional paths on the Island or the paving of any of the Island's existing unpaved paths.

Residents also want more trees and vegetation at sidewalks, public art, small park areas with seating, and buildings set back to accommodate wider sidewalks and outdoor dining areas. These improvements can be negotiated with developers when reviewing development proposals. This will mean negotiating an attractive storefront at ground level *and* (where appropriate) implementation and ongoing maintenance of a parklet or other outdoor amenity.

Parklets could be viable along almost any street in the neighborhood, with their implementation and maintenance negotiated with potential developers. In particular, consideration of parklets should be a priority along Hennepin Avenue, 1st Avenue, Central Avenue, University Avenue, and Main Street.

Figure 7-1 is an example of a parklet design that would encourage people to interact:

Figure 7-1
Concept Sketch for Movable Parklet



As detailed in Chapter Three: Transportation, some intersections along Hennepin Avenue, Central Avenue, and 5th Street present challenges for pedestrians – and opportunities to convert unused "remnant" parcels to visually-appealing open spaces.

A welcoming pedestrian environment will result in a place where people want to gather, enhancing the neighborhood as a destination and increasing support for the business community. As the residential population increases, it will be important to develop recreational opportunities for families, including a playground area. In order to attract a diversity of people to the area, amenities for children and dog parks or runs could be important to the neighborhood's future.

The Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood Association encourages the City and/or MPRB to create a micro park in the northeast section of the neighborhood (perhaps near the corner of 1st Avenue and 5th Street). This relatively modest investment in the East Bank would maximize the neighborhood's development potential.

This Plan envisions a small but highly-visible and active public plaza that would serve as a community gathering and performance space. Intended to be *the* place in the neighborhood, the plaza would provide an intense, artistic, and eclectic venue that would set the tone for future development in the neighborhood.

Environment and Sustainability

Sustainable components have been included indirectly throughout this Plan. Sustainability is a broad topic, one that can be addressed in a variety of ways while planning urban development.

First and foremost, this Plan envisions a neighborhood that prioritizes walking, bicycling, and the use of transit over automobile trips. NIEBNA calls for specific infrastructure improvements that encourage people to walk, ride bikes, or take public transportation. Mixed use developments will increase both residents and commercial businesses in the area, allowing more residents to meet more of their day-to-day needs within the neighborhood. Implementation of the proposed streetcar line would further enhance the environment by encouraging more neighborhood residents to reach areas outside the neighborhood without cars while also bringing people to the neighborhood without requiring additional parking.

Increased density also makes transit more viable and reduces the transit investment cost per capita. Higher density and mixed use residential and commercial developments increase the proximity of residents to a wider range of retail and other services, encouraging modes of transportation other than driving. If more people can reach a business without having to drive, less parking is necessary. How people get around is an important component of sustainability that has enormous impacts on the environment.

Substantial amounts of energy are consumed to heat, cool, light and operate buildings. New technologies are leading to reductions in electricity demand and in the amounts of energy needed for heating and cooling. The Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood has many older buildings, which tend to be energy inefficient. Despite this fact, reuse of existing buildings can be more sustainable than tearing them down. Finding ways to retrofit existing buildings should be explored whenever possible, including green roofs and vegetation higher up on buildings. These approaches were identified through the public process as desirable features that can also reduce heating and cooling costs.

Land use also has implications for sustainability. This Plan calls for increased residential and commercial density. Dense development is generally more sustainable because it reduces the amount of land needed to accommodate a given number of people and activities. Using land at the Metropolitan Area's core more efficiently will result in preservation of land for agricultural and natural uses at the region's outer edges.

Appendix One:

Current Demographics

Total Population and Share of City's Population (2010)				
	NI-EB Neighborhood		Minneapolis	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
	1,309	0.3%	382,578	100%
SEX AND AGE				
Male	685	52.3%	192,421	50.3%
Female	624	47.7%	190,157	49.7%
Under 5 years	42	3.2%	26,453	6.9%
5-9 years	12	0.9%	21,635	5.7%
10-14 years	11	0.8%	18,136	4.7%
15-17 years	s	s	10,980	2.9%
18-24 years	60	4.6%	57,979	15.2%
25-34 years	334	25.5%	80,531	21.0%
35-44 years	185	14.1%	52,527	13.7%
45-54 years	182	13.9%	46,748	12.2%
55-64 years	298	22.8%	37,078	9.7%
65-74 years	136	10.4%	16,325	4.3%
75-85 years	38	2.9%	9,136	2.4%
85 years and older	s	s	5,050	1.3%
17 years and younger	73	5.6%	77,204	20.2%
18 years and older	1,236	94.4%	305,374	79.8%
65 years and older	177	13.5%	30,511	8.0%

RACE AND ETHNICITY* (2010)				
	Nicollet Island-East Bank		Minneapolis	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White	1,099	84.0%	230,650	60.3%
Black or African American	69	5.3%	69,971	18.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native	s	s	6,351	1.7%
Asian or Pacific Islander	55	4.2%	21,567	5.6%
Other race	s	s	962	0.3%
Two or more races	30	2.3%	13,004	3.4%
Hispanic or Latino	48	3.7%	40,073	10.5%

** People who ethnically identify as Hispanic may be of any race, but are represented only as "Hispanic or Latino" in the table above. All race categories are non-Hispanic.*

***S** indicates that data were suppressed. Data have been suppressed when there are fewer than 10 people or units in a category, or the error margins were greater than +/- 10 percentage points or the error margins were greater than 25 percent of the estimate of a numeric value. Large error margins make the data unreliable.*

Appendix Two:

Development Proposal Review

Development Proposal Review

The basic standards and guidelines to be followed in designing new and rehabilitated buildings in the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood are defined in the NIEBNA Small Area Plan ("Plan"). This list provides a convenient summary of the material presented in the Plan that will be used by the NIEBNA Board in reviewing development proposals.

Urban Design

- The design significantly engages pedestrians at street level and incorporates active façade features such as intriguing window displays, awnings, staggered store entryways, and other unique architectural façade details.
- Ground level façades are mostly transparent. [Guideline: Except for load bearing structural elements, the façade is transparent.] Any conditional use permit will require that signage, equipment, and product cases *not* block views into or out of the building.
- The proposal includes streetscape amenities such as benches, decorative trash receptacles, boulevard plantings, bike racks, public art, green space and parklets, transit information kiosks, fountains, clocks, and outdoor seating and sales areas where appropriate. The amenities must not block or interfere with pedestrian use of the sidewalk (Guideline: a continuous clear path at least 6' wide must be maintained).
- At the pedestrian level, the building gives the impression of a series of relatively small and distinct store fronts or residential units, providing variation in the rhythm of the streetscape.
- Way-finding, informational and commercial signage should be of a distinct neighborhood character.
- The proposed development is of a high quality, distinctive and varied architectural and engineering design that is compatible with – but distinct from – other buildings in the neighborhood.
- The development promotes a highly pedestrian and transit oriented environment.
- Universal design principals have been applied in both the public and private areas of the building.

Building Massing

- Building massing should provide for high density while maintaining a human scale at the street and lower floors of the building.

    - The building is designed in tiers – Tier 1 (at ground level) and Tier 2 (above Tier 1).
        - The façade of Tier 1 should be no taller than the effective width of the street. The effective width of the street is defined as the distance at ground level between the proposed building's façade and the façade of the building across the street; if public open space is across the street (e,g., a park), then Tier 1 can be taller than if a building were across the street.
        - The Tier 2 façade plane should be set back from the Tier 1 façade plane.
        - No maximum height for Tier 2 is specified. In order to achieve the desired density of the neighborhood, taller slender buildings with smaller footprints are preferred to shorter, maximum footprint structures.
        - All faces of the building should be active with windows, balconies and other active elements. In particular, for Tier 2 there should be no large expanses of blank walls.

Density

- The proposal makes efficient use of the site by providing densities that contribute to enhancing the neighborhood as an activity center.

Historic Preservation

- Consideration and respect for surrounding historic buildings have been given in the design for new developments.

Public Art

- The development incorporates art into the pedestrian realm. Opportunities to partner with local artists have been explored.

Sustainability

- Green building techniques have been incorporated as part of the design.

- Opportunities to incorporate green roofs and/or vegetation on higher floors of the building have been explored.