



**Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Community Planning  
& Economic Development – Planning Division**

Date: May 13, 2008  
To: Council Member Gary Schiff, Chair of Zoning and Planning Committee  
Referral to: Zoning and Planning Committee  
**Subject:** Referral from the May 12, 2008 City Planning Commission Meeting  
**Recommendation:** See report from the City Planning Commission

**Prepared by:** Lisa Baldwin, Planning Commission Committee Clerk (612-673-3710)

**Approved by:** Jason Wittenberg, Supervisor, CPED Planning-Development Services

**Presenter in Committee:**

9. Central Avenue Small Area Plan, Haila Maze, Sr Planner, x2098

**Community Impact (use any categories that apply)**

Other: See staff report(s) from the City Planning Commission

**Background/Supporting Information Attached**

The attached report summarizes the actions taken at the City Planning Commission meeting held on May 12, 2008. The findings and recommendations are respectfully submitted for the consideration of your Committee.

**REPORT  
of the  
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
of the City of Minneapolis**

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The Minneapolis City Planning Commission, at its meeting on May 12, 2008 took action to **submit the attached comment** on the following items:

**9. Central Avenue Small Area Plan (Ward: 1 and 3), ([Haila Maze](#)). This item was continued from the April 14, 2008 meeting.**

**A. Plan:** Considering adoption of the *Central Avenue Plan Update* document

**Action:** The City Planning Commission recommended that the City Council **approve** the Central Avenue Small Area Plan document, including the change on page 105, under Bicyclists, to incorporate bike parking into street furniture configurations at regular intervals convenient to service and business destinations and **amend** the policy guidance for the area into the City's comprehensive plan.

**Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division**  
Central Avenue Small Area Plan

**Date:** May 12, 2008

**Project Name:** Central Avenue Small Area Plan

**Planning Staff and Phone:** Haila Maze, (612) 673-2098

**Ward:** 1, 3

**Neighborhood Organizations:** Columbia Park Neighborhood Association, Waite Park Community Council, Audubon Neighborhood Association, Holland Neighborhood Improvement Association, Shoreham Area Advisory Committee, Logan Park Neighborhood Association, Windom Park Neighborhood Association, Beltrami Neighborhood Council, St. Anthony East Neighborhood Association, Northeast Park Neighborhood Association, Nicollet Island East Bank Neighborhood Association, Marcy Holmes Neighborhood Association

**Existing Minneapolis Plan Designations:**

- **Central & Lowry is an Activity Center; Central Avenue, Lowry Avenue and Broadway Street NE are Community Corridors; Central Avenue is a Commercial Corridor; and Shoreham Yards is an Industrial Employment District**

**Plan Proposes to Add the Following New Designations:**

- **Neighborhood Commercial Node at 37<sup>th</sup> & Central**
- **Extend Commercial Corridor on Central Avenue up to 31<sup>st</sup>**

**Zoning Plate Numbers:** 6, 10, 15, 14

**Background and Public Process**

In 1997, the Northeast neighborhoods adjacent to Central Avenue and the Northeast Economic Development Council put together a plan for Central Avenue NE entitled “Making Central Avenue Great”. The original plan covered retail and housing needs as well as design guidelines, but was not officially adopted by the City Planning Commission and City Council. Since ten years had passed since the development of the original plan and the City was in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan, an update for the Making Central Avenue Great plan was needed.

The process began informally on January 23, 2007 with a public meeting in which policy makers and City staff engaged Northeast neighborhoods and residents in a conversation about how an update would take place. Neighborhood residents were most concerned with how the steering committee would be chosen, what the makeup of the steering committee would be with regards to business and neighborhood representation and the roles and responsibilities.

Neighborhood organizations were asked to appoint one (1) representative and one alternate to serve on the Steering Committee and to nominate neighborhood businesses that may have an interest in serving as well. In addition to neighborhood business nominations, the council members for Ward 1 and Ward 3 were asked to appoint businesses as well to serve. The period for completing the appointments and nominations were done within a 45-day period starting January 29, 2007 and ending March 15, 2007. The steering committee was set with 53 individuals, including all alternates.

The steering committee met on March 28, 2007 to get acquainted and begin to discuss the work of selecting a land use planning consultant for the process by reviewing the Request for Proposals. The steering committee met on June 28, 2007 to review and score the proposals received. A subset of the steering committee interviewed potential candidates. Cuningham Group was chosen to lead the process.

Cuningham Group took over leading the steering committee from City staff on August 30, 2007. From that point on, steering committees were held prior to each of the large public meetings on September 27, 2007, October 23, 2007, November 27, 2007, and January 24, 2008. The purpose of this was to allow the steering committee to preview material that would be presented at the large public meetings.

Public meetings were held on October 2, 2007, October 25, 2007, December 1, 2007 and February 7, 2008. The first meeting kicked off the process and gathered community input on what they thought geographic strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities were along the Avenue. The second meeting centered around small group discussion on the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities but attendance was light. As a result, a subcommittee of steering committee members graciously conducted a concerted outreach effort for the remainder of the meetings. The third meeting included small group discussion, a visual preference exercise and presentation of common goals for land use along Central Avenue: 1) reinforcing a identifiable center at Central and Lowry 2) redefining the commercial area 3) making appropriate residential-commercial transitions 4) generating employment opportunities 5) leveraging the arts and 6) creating strong gateways. The final meeting presented the draft document to the community for review and feedback.

The document was made available to neighborhoods, organizations, residents and City departments via e-mail and the CPED Planning Division website on February 19, 2008 for 45-day review through April 3, 2008.

## **Overview**

The study area for the Central Avenue Small Area Plan is Central Avenue from 7<sup>th</sup> Street SE to 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE with one block on either side of the Avenue. With such a long corridor, the plan document divides it into three sections: 1) the north segment from 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE; 2) the central segment from 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE; and 3) the south segment from 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to 7<sup>th</sup> Street SE.

### ***North Segment***

The plan calls for the bulk of the north segment of Central Avenue NE to remain residential in character with commercial uses focused south of 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue. A new designated Neighborhood Commercial Node is proposed at 37<sup>th</sup> & Central. Housing land uses are to remain mostly low density but more housing intensity is called for between 27<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Avenues adjacent to mixed use on the Central Avenue corridor. This is in accordance with the Audubon Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan and also helps to create a closer live-work fit with at Shoreham Yard and the more commercial street segment to the south.

The future redevelopment of the 18 acres of Shoreham Yards fronting on Central Avenue is called out as the transformative project for this segment. It calls for incorporation or retention of the Shoreham Roundhouse into future development, with a focus on high job density in the new development. Shoreham can be an anchor for the northern segment of the Avenue.

The northern segment is the greenest of the corridor with Columbia Park golf course, planted boulevards and a planted median. The plan calls for reinforcing that by creating an art trail using the existing trail that ties the existing art gateway at Columbia Parkway to the large artist concentration in the south segment. The intent is to create an urban outdoor gallery - permanent spaces along this street segment where art can be displayed on a rotating basis. Businesses or citizens can sponsor the individual installations and the art showcased is available for purchase. Pedestrian accessibility to Columbia Park Golf Course at 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> Avenues NE was noted as an issue due to the new planted roadway median. Installation of curb cuts at these intersections would rectify

the problem. The plan also calls for encouraging the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to look at locating a restaurant in or near the Columbia Park Manor, similar to Tin Fish at Lake Calhoun or Sea Salt at Minnehaha Park.

### ***Central Segment***

The plan calls for land use in this segment to remain mixed-use commercial, but to redevelop the back half of the blocks along Jackson and Polk with higher-density housing to increase the customer base for the Avenue. This segment of the Avenue is the commercial heart of Northeast and serves as its downtown. While mixed-use commercial is present all along this part of the street, the plan calls for more intensification at the Central & Lowry Activity Center and at 18<sup>th</sup> & Central.

Overall, thriving immigrant businesses need to be retained because they add to the Avenue's regional draw, but an expansion of the range of goods and services available on the Avenue needs to occur in order to draw more local, daily use of businesses by nearby residents. Building form throughout the central segment should be traditional, multi-story buildings focused toward the pedestrian. Parking for the area should be consolidated in the form of a district-wide strategy, so that people traveling to the Avenue via car know where they can park for the duration of their trip to the Avenue. Structured, underground parking for new developments is encouraged in this part of the Avenue.

The intersection of Central and Lowry, particularly the vacant southeast corner, is called out in the plan as a transformative project. Redevelopment at Central and Lowry can serve as a midpoint anchor, an identifiable center, for the Avenue.

Open space for this segment is viewed at trying to improve the pedestrian experience along the sidewalk by adding public plazas and gathering spaces with green space wherever possible when new development occurs. The plan calls for the arts trail to extend through this segment using opportunities to incorporate arts into the public realm and streetscape via bus shelters, bicycle facilities, and benches.

### ***South Segment***

The plan calls for land use to remain industrial in character for the majority of this segment in order to support the existing Northeast Arts District. The majority of policy direction for this segment is to improve pedestrian and bicycle connections from Central Avenue into the Arts District, and to improve the pedestrian environment along Central Avenue by adding landscaping, lighting and wider sidewalks.

The Northeast Arts District is called out in the plan as a transformative project. The plan calls for expanding the boundaries of the District to include the industrial area on the eastern side of Central Avenue to tie the Avenue together and create a focus and a presence for the Arts directly on Central Avenue. Older buildings in this area need to be retained and new infill development should complement the gritty, existing industrial character. The Northeast Arts District will serve as the primary anchor for the southern segment of Central Avenue.

### **Comprehensive Plan Consistency**

An analysis of how the Central Avenue Small Area Plan document relates to and is consistent with designated land use features from *The Minneapolis Plan* follows in the matrix below. Adoption of policy guidance for this area as part of the City's comprehensive plan lays the ground work for studying and possibly changing the zoning for the area to ensure that future development can occur according to the plan. Zoning changes may include an extension of the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District along Central Avenue in the Central segment.

Applicable TMP Features	Policy Proposed	TMP Consistency
<p><b>Activity Center:</b> Central &amp; Lowry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reinforce Central Avenue from 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 31<sup>st</sup> Avenue as NE's Downtown.</li> <li>● Encourage a diversity of investments along Central Avenue, ranging from small incremental investments to large transformative projects.</li> <li>● Establish physical differentiation and distinctions along the Avenue by creating higher density transit-oriented development at Lowry Avenue.</li> <li>● Work with property owners to create a coordinated approach to parking, redevelopment, business and tenant mix.</li> <li>● Consider expanding the Pedestrian-Oriented Overlay zoning district from 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE to 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue.</li> <li>● Consider rezoning to C3A at the Central and Lowry activity center.</li> <li>● Encourage ground floor retail and active uses</li> <li>● Encourage infill development on parking lots that face onto Central Avenue.</li> <li>● Encourage redevelopment and redesign of single-story buildings to improve their relationship with the Avenue and to give them new economic life.</li> <li>● Encourage new development to relate to the existing cadence of the</li> </ul>	<p><b>4.7 Minneapolis will identify and support Activity Centers by preserving the mix and intensity of land uses and enhancing the design features of each area that give it a unique and urban character.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Develop a master plan for each designated Activity Center that a) establishes boundaries for these areas; b) addresses the identity, role and design features of the Center; c) gives guidance to the mix of land uses, scale and size of development in these areas and d) identifies transportation and circulation needs for each area.</p> <p>Ensure that land use regulations support diverse commercial and residential development types which generate activity all day long and into the evening.</p> <p>Promote the incorporation of residential uses within the same structure as other commercial uses.</p> <p>Preserve traditional urban form in buildings where it currently exists, and encourage new development to relate to traditional siting and massing, where it is already established. (See description of traditional urban form in Chapter 9, City Form.)</p> <p>Discourage automobile services and drive-through facilities from locating in these designated areas.</p> <p>Develop parking facilities and management strategies that accommodate high customer demand, promote shared facilities and minimize visual impact and adverse effects on pedestrian and sidewalk traffic.</p> <p>Ensure that regulations balance the transition between high traffic land uses and adjoining residential areas.</p> <p>Require that buildings in Activity Center districts incorporate a pedestrian orientation at the street edge.</p> <p>Apply street design criteria that incorporates a pedestrian orientation and accommodates a variety of traffic (pedestrian, cyclist, transit, automobile).</p> <p><b>4.9 Minneapolis will grow by increasing its supply of housing.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Support the development of new medium- and high-density housing in appropriate locations throughout the City.</p> <p>Support the development of infill housing on vacant lots. Use partnerships and incentives to reduce city subsidy level and duration of vacancy.</p> <p>Use new and strengthened strategies and programs to preserve and maintain existing housing stock.</p> <p>Review policies and practices that determine the appropriate scale of residential development on properties that come into city ownership or request City development assistance.</p> <p>Streamline city development review, permitting and licensing to make it easier to develop property in the City of Minneapolis.</p> <p>Develop a close dialog with community participants about appropriate locations and design standards for new housing.</p> <p>Foster community dialog with community participants about appropriate locations and design standards for new housing.</p> <p>Foster community dialog about housing growth in and adjacent to city neighborhoods.</p> <p>Improve the information systems that support housing-related policy making, goal-setting, and program evaluation.</p>

	<p>street by articulating the street wall with a varied rhythm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rebuild Lowry Avenue within existing right-of-way by relocating bike lanes to parallel streets and increasing mid-block parking, and creating a dedicated left turn lane with extended “green time”</li> <li>• Southeast block: redevelop with signature mixed-use project containing an open space/plaza oriented to Central Avenue, parking structure with liner housing facing north and south and townhouses or small apartments on Polk Street NE</li> <li>• Northeast block: redevelop with a mid-block 2-level parking structure to serve a rebuilt Eastside Co-op and other retail uses on the block. Provide a passage/plaza that would connect the parking to Central Avenue and serve as a courtyard or enhanced entrance for new building. Redevelop north side of block and Polk Street NE with urban oriented housing in scale with the neighborhood.</li> <li>• Northwest block: redevelop Lowry Ave edge of block with multi-use corner building. Realign alley to separate commercial traffic from residential traffic.</li> <li>• Southwest block: consolidate and share parking (church and retail) in a mid-block lot or parking structure. Use air rights to develop mid-block</li> </ul>	<p><b>4.11 Minneapolis will improve the availability of housing options for its residents.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Increase the variety of housing styles and affordability levels available to prospective buyers and renters.</p> <p>Provide and maintain moderate and high-density residential areas.</p> <p>Provide and maintain areas that are predominantly developed with single and two family structures.</p> <p>Promote the development of housing suitable for people and households in all life stages, and that can be adapted to accommodate changing housing needs over time.</p> <p>Promote accessible housing designs to support persons with disabilities.</p> <p>Promote mixed-income housing development that offers a range of dwelling unit sizes and levels of affordability.</p> <p>Diversify the location distribution of affordable housing in order to allay the historic patterns of concentration of poverty that characterizes some neighborhoods.</p> <p>Implement city policies related to the provision of housing for homeless individuals and families.</p> <p>Support the development of housing with supportive services that help households gain stability in areas such as employment, housing retention, parenting, mental health and substance challenges.</p> <p>Encourage the rehabilitation and sensitive reuse of older or historic buildings for housing including affordable housing units.</p>
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	<p>housing that connects to Central Avenue through either existing renovated or new building. Revitalize Arcana building and other buildings on Central Avenue. Develop townhouses on Lowry Avenue.</p>	
<p><b>Industrial Employment District:</b> Shoreham Yards</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-market the site and identify potential corporate or institutional tenants.</li> <li>• Stabilize the roundhouse; explore innovative reuse options for the Roundhouse.</li> <li>• Develop a detailed master development plan for the property.</li> <li>• Redevelop with uses that provide a substantial amount of living wage jobs.</li> <li>• Create a green edge along Central Avenue connecting Columbia Park and St. Anthony Cemetery. Use this green edge for the Central Avenue Arts Trail.</li> <li>• Celebrate the Roundhouse with public access and significant public space that connects it to Central Avenue.</li> <li>• Extend neighborhood streets into the property to create urban scaled development blocks.</li> </ul>	<p><b>2.1 Minneapolis will increase its share of economic prosperity in the region.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Create a growth center concept approach to economic development, housing investment, transit service planning and investment in amenities to focus major investments in the city.</p> <p>Facilitate investments in land preparation through pollution clean up and land assembly activities.</p> <p>Continue to maintain high quality physical and information infrastructure that serves the needs of businesses and residents.</p> <p>Support efforts that build skills and connect residents to living-wage jobs.</p> <p><b>2.2 Minneapolis will support the existing economic base by providing adequate land and infrastructure to make city sites attractive to businesses willing to invest in high job density and low impact, light industrial activity.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Identify appropriate areas for the retention and expansion of existing industry and the development of new industry in specific industrial and business park opportunity areas.</p> <p>Promote light industrial uses as the preferred use of industrial land, but discourage warehouse or distribution uses in areas where truck traffic will negatively impact residential neighborhoods.</p> <p>Continue to protect a healthy physical environment that is attractive for private investment and compatible with neighborhoods.</p> <p>Engage in pollution clean up and land readying activities to be able to provide clean and competitive sites.</p> <p>Encourage federal, state and metropolitan support for pollution clean up and land readying activities.</p> <p>Allow for a limited amount of heavy industrial uses where appropriate, but minimize negative impacts on their surroundings.</p> <p>Relocate conflicting heavy industrial uses from impacted areas as more appropriate sites in the city or the region become available.</p> <p>Encourage heavy industry to locate at appropriate sites, such as those that have with immediate freeway access, are distant from natural or cultural amenities, and with no significant residential uses in the immediate vicinity.</p>
<p><b>Commercial Corridor:</b> Central Avenue NE</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support existing and new independent businesses by encouraging small-scale improvements to storefronts and signage. Support existing and new entrepreneurs that offer</li> </ul>	<p><b>4.3 Minneapolis will support development in Commercial Corridors where it enhances the street’s character, improves its ability to accommodate automobile traffic and foster pedestrian movement, and expands the range of goods and services offered.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Support a mix of uses on Commercial Corridors--such as retail sales, office,</p>

	<p>unique products and goods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide larger retail spaces for regional and national businesses that appeal to a broad cross-section of Northeast as well as to a regional market.</li> <li>• Recruit businesses (local and national) that serve the day to day needs of a local NE market.</li> <li>• Build on Central Avenue niche in the market for ethnic stores and restaurants by recruiting-related businesses from around the region.</li> </ul> <p><u>Jackson &amp; Polk Streets and the Transitions Between the Avenue and the Neighborhoods</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthen Jackson and Polk Street NE as high quality neighborhood streets with primarily medium-density housing. Eliminate commercial incursions onto these streets by redeveloping parking lots, removing commercial signs and realigning alleys and driveways.</li> <li>• Redevelop infill lots with medium-density housing.</li> <li>• Seek opportunities to assemble larger properties to redevelop with small apartments, townhouses or other medium density housing types.</li> <li>• Increase monitoring and code enforcement on Jackson and Polk Street.</li> <li>• Maintain 35' as the prevailing height of buildings on Jackson and Polk Street. Step up to taller heights toward the</li> </ul>	<p>institutional, higher density residential (including Major Housing Sites where designated), and clean low-impact light industrial--where compatible with the existing and desired character of the street.</p> <p>Ensure that commercial uses do not negatively impact nearby residential areas.</p> <p>Regulate impacts of commercial uses, and in some cases prevent some uses from locating on designated Commercial Corridors, due to their adverse impacts on the viability of nearby residential areas.</p> <p>Develop plans for the City's major Commercial Corridors which articulate the desired character of the street.</p> <p>Develop parking facilities and management strategies that balance the following goals: improved customer access, protection of sidewalk traffic; reduced visual impacts and shared use of parking facilities.</p> <p>Develop economic development incentives for the rehabilitation, re-use and revitalization of older or historic commercial buildings and districts.</p> <p>Ensure that parking structures and surface lots conform with identified design principles. (See discussion of traditional urban form in Chapter 9.)</p> <p>Reduce the impact of non-residential uses on neighboring residential areas by considering appropriate access, buffering between incompatible uses and regulating hours of operation.</p> <p>Require that street design for Commercial Corridor streets provide automobile access and parking in keeping with traditional urban form</p> <p>Require that street designs provide high quality access to Commercial Corridors for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as facilitate transit service and through passage of traffic.</p>
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	<p>middle of the block. Locate tallest buildings in the middle of the block where they will not shadow existing residential buildings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain narrow front yards as the prevailing frontage condition on Jackson and Polk Street NE.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Community Corridors:</b> Central Avenue NE, Lowry Avenue NE, Broadway Street NE</p>	<p>Between 31<sup>st</sup> and 36<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain residential character of the Avenue.</li> <li>• Set all buildings back from the sidewalk to create front yards in keeping with the prevailing patterns. Occasional corner buildings are exceptions.</li> <li>• Encourage primarily low and medium density housing neighborhood-oriented building types such as single family homes, small apartments and condominiums, and live/work units.</li> <li>• Encourage new buildings to convey a domestic and residential image with sloped roofs, balconies, front yards and gardens.</li> </ul>	<p><b>4.2 Minneapolis will coordinate land use and transportation planning on designated Community Corridors streets through attention to the mix and intensity of land uses, the pedestrian character and residential livability of the streets, and the type of transit service provided on these streets.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Strengthen the residential character of Community Corridors by developing appropriate housing types that represent variety and a range of affordability levels.</p> <p>Promote more intensive residential development along these corridors where appropriate.</p> <p>Discourage the conversion of existing residential uses to commercial uses, but encourage the development of mixed-use residential dwelling units in commercial buildings where appropriate.</p> <p>Support the continued presence of small-scale retail sales and commercial services along Community Corridors.</p> <p>Ensure that commercial uses do not negatively impact nearby residential areas.</p>
<p><b>Neighborhood Commercial Nodes:</b> New node proposed at 37<sup>th</sup> &amp; Central</p>	<p><u>37<sup>th</sup> Avenue</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designate 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and Central Avenue as a Neighborhood Commercial Node.</li> <li>• Encourage urban-oriented building types such as townhouses, small apartments, and mixed-use buildings</li> <li>• Require all new buildings to have urban-oriented frontages such as storefronts, stoops, courtyards or narrow porch yards.</li> </ul>	<p><b>4.5 Minneapolis will identify Neighborhood Commercial Nodes that provide a shopping environment of small-scale retail sales and commercial services and are compatible with adjacent residential areas.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Support the continued presence of small-scale retail sales and commercial services in Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.</p> <p>Direct other uses that act as neighborhood focal points (institutional, cultural or social) to locate at Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.</p> <p>Restrict auto-oriented, industrial or manufacturing activities that generate significant vehicular traffic, noise or air-borne impacts on residential neighbors.</p> <p>Promote medium density residential development around Neighborhood Commercial Nodes (see also Community Corridors policy in this chapter).</p> <p>Limit the territorial expansion of Neighborhood Commercial Nodes, but encourage rehabilitation and reinvestment in existing buildings.</p> <p>Ensure that commercial uses do not negatively impact nearby residential</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve surface parking lots with additional trees, low hedges or walls along the edge of the sidewalk.</li> </ul>	<p>areas.</p> <p>Facilitate the redevelopment of underutilized commercial areas and promote their reuse as infill development, such as office or housing, while maintaining neighborhood compatibility.</p> <p>Promote traditional urban form in terms of building siting and massing when undertaking new development in Neighborhood Commercial Nodes. (See discussion of traditional urban form in Chapter 9.)</p> <p>Preserve traditional commercial storefronts at Neighborhood Commercial Nodes wherever possible.</p> <p>Develop parking facilities and management strategies that balance the following goals: improved customer access, protection of sidewalk traffic; reduced visual impacts, mitigated impacts on neighboring uses and shared use of parking facilities.</p> <p>Promote transit stops and bicycle parking and storage in Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.</p>
<p><b>Other Comprehensive Plan Policies</b></p>	<p><u>Columbia Park</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore the possibility of locating a trailhead, bike rental, bike repair, or restaurant in or adjacent to the Columbia Golf Course Club House.</li> <li>• Investigate options for improving access to Columbia Park with more clearly striped crosswalks, additional traffic signals, etc.</li> </ul> <p><u>Central Avenue Art Trail</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create an outdoor urban gallery showcasing local arts and local culture. In the North Segment the trail can be located along the edge of Columbia Park and in front of the Shoreham Yards redevelopment.</li> </ul> <p><u>Open Space – Central Segment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a series of small parks and plazas that enhance the quality of the sidewalk for pedestrians.</li> <li>• Develop passages between parking areas and Central Avenue.</li> <li>• Encourage new development that articulates the ground floor by setting</li> </ul>	<p><b>6.2 Minneapolis will develop and support a system of urban parks and 'greenway' connections throughout the City.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Invest in the greening of boulevards and landscaping along existing parkways and other streets that connect into and supplement the regional parks system.</p> <p>Preserve former transportation corridors that are intact or largely intact and use them to connect neighborhoods to each other and to major amenities.</p> <p>Seek and enforce greater financial participation from people who use the regional parks system.</p> <p>Support reducing reliance on property taxes by seeking out other state resources to support parks and recreational programming.</p> <p><b>6.3 Minneapolis will offer a diverse range of programming and recreational facilities for resident use.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Diversify the recreational facilities offered by the city to respond to the wide range of resident interests.</p> <p>Collaborate and coordinate space sharing maintenance agreements and programming among public agencies.</p> <p>Encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of historic park buildings.</p> <p>Provide sports facilities that are comparable to suburban complexes for the use of teenage sports programming and activities.</p> <p><b>6.4 Minneapolis will make parks secure, attractive places and ensure that these facilities are accessible, enjoyable and safe.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Use design features that promote safety and security when constructing or renovating park spaces.</p> <p>Ensure that adjacent land uses contribute to the safety and ambiance of the park.</p> <p>Provide safe pedestrian crossings at streets adjacent to parks and reduce the speed of traffic and street width where possible.</p> <p>Maintain public roads and circulation systems to link parks with neighborhood surroundings and provide visual links to passing traffic.</p> <p>Locate lighting grids in city parks based on standards for safety, aesthetic improvements, capital costs and energy efficiency.</p>

	<p>the building back from the property line 8’; to create space for dining display of goods.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build curb extensions at intersections and mid-block to improve pedestrian crossing conditions and to create additional opportunities for seating, landscaping, transit facilities, etc.</li> </ul> <p><u>Art on the Avenue</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the Central Avenue Arts Trail along both sides of the street. Use wider sidewalks as well as private property to house pedestals for the Art Trail.</li> <li>• Explore and encourage additional opportunities for art on the Avenue: signage, streetscaping, murals and lighting, vacant buildings as temporary galleries, events and parades.</li> </ul>	<p>Bring all public buildings into compliance with fire and ADA codes.</p> <p>Remove environmental concerns and update general building infrastructure needs (roofs, windows, electric systems, telephones).</p>
	<p><u>Pedestrians &amp; Bicyclists – Central Segment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restripe Central Avenue between 27<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Avenues NE to create bike lanes. Consider inboard bike lanes located between parked cars and the sidewalk.</li> <li>• Create parallel bike lanes on Fillmore and Monroe Streets for bikers who seek alternative routes to Central Avenue.</li> <li>• Create east-west bike lanes on 22<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NE, 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE in accordance with the City’s Bike Master Plan.</li> <li>• Locate centralized bike</li> </ul>	<p><b>8.3 Minneapolis will continue to build, maintain and require a pedestrian system which recognizes the importance of a network of private and public sidewalks which achieve the highest standards of connectivity and amenity.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Continue to coordinate roadway improvement projects with utility and flood control capital projects to minimize neighborhood disruption and costly roadway surface repairs due to poor project coordination.</p> <p>Program, plan, design, survey, coordinate and provide construction assistance for city, Park Board, County and MnDOT road projects.</p> <p>Program, plan, design, inspect, coordinate and provide construction management for all City bridge projects.</p> <p>Provide repair and maintenance of city streets and alleys.</p> <p>Continue to develop and maintain city-wide pavement management for all coordination and prioritization of street replacement and repair.</p> <p>Inspect and repair sidewalks as needed to maintain a safe environment for pedestrians and to minimize liability claims against the city.</p> <p>Construct, operate, and maintain all traffic control devices and facilities such as signs, signals, pavement markings, bus lanes, bike lanes, etc.</p> <p>Prepare plans, specifications and estimates for signal and lighting modifications/improvements at intersections, special projects, spot locations and paving programs related to residential streets, municipal state aid, county state aid, trunk highways or MCDA projects.</p>

	<p>corrals where east-west bike routes cross Central Avenue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage new developments to install bike racks.</li> </ul> <p><u>South Segment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create and improve alternative routes for pedestrians, such as sidewalks on streets within the Arts Wedge.</li> <li>• Create sidewalks and crossings across central Avenue and Broadway Street NE where streets do not connect.</li> <li>• Establish bicycle connections from north to south and east to west through the industrial areas.</li> <li>• Improve signage and provide wayfinding assistance for pedestrians and cyclists.</li> </ul>	<p>Investigate fatal and severe traffic accidents and hit and run cases including accident reconstruction as needed and transmit information to the Departments of Planning and Public Works to inform their activities.</p> <p><b>8.11 Minneapolis will continue to enhance the opportunities for cyclist movement.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Make it safer, easier and more convenient to cycle in the city by expanding and maintaining lanes, paths, trails, and parking facilities for cyclists.</p> <p>Design and improve streets to be pleasant for bicyclists by using best available design widths for slow vehicle speeds, wide sidewalks, and a great variety of trees.</p> <p>Continue to plan for and develop a coordinated system of commuter and recreational bikeways that utilize collectors, local streets, and greenways.</p> <p>Integrate bike amenity requirements, such as bike lockers and showers for cyclist employees, into the zoning code.</p>
	<p><u>Transit</u> <u>Central Segment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve bus waiting facilities at 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE and Lowry Avenue. New curb extensions and moderate building setbacks can increase the area available for waiting.</li> <li>• Support development of a streetcar by offering a site for a maintenance facility, increasing residential densities and economic activity along all parts of Central Avenue.</li> </ul> <p><u>South Segment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve conditions of transit stops in the area.</li> <li>• Incorporate the arts into transit stops.</li> </ul>	<p><b>8.6 Minneapolis will follow a policy of “Transit First” in order to build a more balanced transportation system than the current one.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Build partnerships with state and metropolitan agencies and other local government units to advance transit strategies and programs of mutual benefit.</p> <p>Focus transit services and development growth along transit corridors.</p> <p>Give public transit priority in development planning and on the Minneapolis street system.</p> <p>Secure a reliable and growing funding source to effectively support public transit.</p> <p><b>8.7 Minneapolis will direct its share of regional growth to areas well served by transit, to existing and potential growth centers and along transit corridors.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Require that future growth centers be well served by reliable and convenient transit service.</p> <p>Require that all major new developments located within the city facilitate transit access and service.</p> <p>Develop components of site plan review and environmental review manuals which can be used in land use and environmental processes to secure more transit friendly developments.</p> <p>Allow costs of driving in peak rush hour traffic to reflect the true costs of congestion and sprawl.</p>

		<p>Prohibit construction of new freeways in Minneapolis.</p> <p>Allow limited expansion and improved capacity of existing freeways in order to reduce traffic spillover onto primarily residential arterial roads when mitigation of impacts is determined to be acceptable to the city.</p> <p>Encourage employers to provide incentives for ride-sharing, car or van pooling and bicycling and other alternatives of getting to work.</p>
	<p><u>Automobiles &amp; Parking Central Segment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve rear parking areas with landscaping and signage.</li> <li>• Create mid-block passages between parking areas and Central Avenue.</li> <li>• Create centralized parking lots/structures at the nodes.</li> <li>• Improve directional signage and wayfinding to parking areas.</li> </ul> <p><u>South Segment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish a long-term vision for structured parking in the destination-oriented arts area.</li> <li>• Improve street conditions in industrial areas.</li> <li>• Rebuild the portion of Central Avenue that passes through the south segment to include on-street bike lanes, pedestrian amenities and narrower drive lanes.</li> </ul>	<p><b>9.12 Minneapolis will promote design solutions for automobile parking facilities that reflect principles of traditional urban form.</b></p> <p><b>Implementation Steps</b></p> <p>Require the landscaping of parking lots.</p> <p>Encourage parking strategies that reduce the need for parking in order to avoid spillover into neighboring residential areas, including residential parking permits and the joint use of available parking in mixed-use areas.</p> <p>Offer incentives so that new parking structures built in high activity areas (e.g. Growth Centers and Activity Centers) are designed to include a mix of uses through the presence of active street-level uses such as general retail or commercial services.</p> <p>Establish reduced minimum and new maximum parking standards to discourage auto over-reliance.</p> <p>Locate parking lots behind buildings or in the interior of a block to reduce the visual impact of the automobile in mixed-use areas.</p> <p>Provide sufficient parking enforcement in critical parking areas so those residents who need the parking have it available.</p> <p>Implement parking solutions based on shared parking facilities and critical parking permits for residential districts</p>

**Public Comments**

A number of comments were received during the 45-day comment period from individuals, community organizations, and businesses. There were few substantive changes as a result of these comments. However, a number of edits were made to the plan to clarify descriptions of community resources and constraints, and to better articulate policy direction. A summary of the comments and the responses to them is attached.

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, PLANNING DIVISION:**

**Recommended Motion:** The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission and City Council **approve** the *Central Avenue Small Area Plan* document and **amend** the policy guidance for the area into the City’s comprehensive plan.

Attachments:

- Central Avenue Small Area Plan document
- Comments received to date
- Summary of comments and responses

**Excerpt from the  
CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
MINUTES**

**Minneapolis Community Planning & Economic Development (CPED)  
Planning Division**

250 South Fourth Street, Room 300  
Minneapolis, MN 55415-1385  
(612) 673-2597 Phone  
(612) 673-2526 Fax  
(612) 673-2157 TDD

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**MEMORANDUM**

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DATE: May 14, 2008

TO: Steve Poor, Planning Supervisor – Zoning Administrator, Community Planning & Economic Development - Planning Division

FROM: Jason Wittenberg, Supervisor, Community Planning & Economic Development - Planning Division, Development Services

CC: Barbara Sporlein, Director, Community Planning & Economic Development Planning Division

SUBJECT: Planning Commission decisions of May 12, 2008

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The following actions were taken by the Planning Commission on May 12, 2008. As you know, the Planning Commission's decisions on items other than rezonings, text amendments, vacations, 40 Acre studies and comprehensive plan amendments are final subject to a ten calendar day appeal period before permits can be issued:

Commissioners present: President Motzenbecker, Huynh, LaShomb, Nordyke, Norkus-Crampton, Schiff, and Tucker – 7

Not present: Williams (excused)

Committee Clerk: Lisa Baldwin (612) 673-3710

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**9. Central Avenue Small Area Plan (Ward: 1 and 3), ([Haila Maze](#)). This item was continued from the April 14, 2008 meeting.**

**A. Plan:** Considering adoption of the *Central Avenue Plan Update* document

**Action:** The City Planning Commission recommended that the City Council **approve** the Central Avenue Small Area Plan document, including the change on page 105, under

Bicyclists, to incorporate bike parking into street furniture configurations at regular intervals convenient to service and business destinations and **amend** the policy guidance for the area into the City's comprehensive plan.

Staff Maze presented the staff report.

President Motzenbecker opened the public hearing.

CM Ostrow: I have reviewed the plan and I'm really glad that we're at this stage of the process. I need to mention that Margo Ashmore was involved before I was on the City Council in something we call the Central Avenue Breakfast Club which is the only regularly scheduled meeting I've ever known that began at 6:00 a.m. Margo really kept the dream alive and there was the plan that was, in large part, the creation of that group, working with City staff, but it did not become a part of the Comprehensive Plan at that point. It's gratifying that we're now in front of you with a plan for approval that will become part of the City's Comprehensive Plan. We have big visions for Central Ave. It's really a unique corridor in many ways. The architecture of Central Ave in some ways is preserved more than some of our other corridors in terms of the unique character that it has. It clearly is the main street of northeast Minneapolis. We have seen tremendous progress in some areas and some areas that still need a lot of work. I didn't want to come to you tonight and speak to the community process, which I think was an outstanding one that gets us to this point. We are in front of you for this approval. We will have future discussions; one of them I want to point out is the Shoreham Yards which is an incredible opportunity not just for northeast but for the entire city. There's not just a historic roundhouse at that site, about 18 acres of land immediately adjacent to a major commercial corridor with other transportation advantages. The Lowry-Central intersection as well is critically important. We suffered a very tragic fire there a couple years ago. I think this particular plan really speaks to those particular areas as significant growth areas. The part of the plan that speaks to how we integrate art into the community is also extremely important. I would certainly take any questions you might have, but I just wanted to come here tonight to thank you for your attention to this. I wasn't able to be at some of the other discussions but it was reported back to me that you had quite a bit of discussion and questions when this first came up and I appreciate that. I appreciate your enthusiasm and wanted you to know that I share it. Thank you so much.

Margo Ashmore (1300 6<sup>th</sup> St NE) [not on sign-in sheet]: I own the Northeast newspaper. I just want to echo what Paul said. It's good to finally be official. I'd like to echo the attention paid to telling the county that we don't necessarily want to blast out the buildings at the Lowry corner and that it's important to keep those there and to keep that more narrow, walkable appearance. I think what the county did on the north side was an opportunity there to take out a lot of bad stuff. We have good stuff that we need to keep so I would want to be strong on that argument. Regarding the 18<sup>th</sup> and Central question that just came up, there are not that many homes in that little area that she pointed out on the map. It's a very industrial feeling and backs up to some industrial property and not too far from there is the northeast athletic fields. It may be one of those things where the greater public good is served by the increased density and giving people a place to shop.

CM Hofstede: I wanted to thank everyone for their good work, especially Haila and all the members of the community who spent countless hours in Barb's office in various public meetings and it's truly a labor of love. I think it not only articulates not only the newness and importance

of Central Ave as we form and articulate the development of the city along the river and through Central Ave, but it also is a celebration of its heritage. The existing buildings will hopefully be able to convey that excitement that was there when our immigrants first came to the area and settled it. That certainly was a place that my family and I grew up along Central Ave and it wasn't unusual for us to walk a mile to the neighborhood theatre or to do grocery shopping. It's good to know that that kind of environment is going to be continued. It truly is an opportunity for all of us and so I thank you for your participation in all of this and particularly our staff who has worked really hard and community members and Council Member Ostrow who has really done most of the heavy lifting.

President Motzenbecker closed the public hearing.

Commissioner LaShomb: I'm going to move that this be approved. We did see this in Committee of the Whole and I was very impressed with both the reports about northeast Minneapolis. Having seen a lot of these reports come through in my time, the challenge starts today, it doesn't end today. There are a lot of things that need to get done, but the staff work on both projects that we saw at Committee of the Whole suggested to me that the blueprint is a good blueprint. Generally speaking, when citizens don't come to public hearings that means they're happy so that gives us all the more reason.

Commissioner Norkus-Crampton: I'd like to second the motion. I feel really privileged to be serving on the Commission when we're doing so many of these small area plans because you're trying to implement a sense of place and I think that a good plan accomplishes that. It gives you a pathway forward but it respects the good things of what you got and you're trying to mitigate some of the other challenges. I'd like to compliment the Cunningham Group because these guys have done great work in other parts of town and I think it's a great example. The one thing that I would like to make a slight amendment addition on is the, and we talked about this at Committee of the Whole, there is a lot of infrastructure being suggested as far as encouraging biking, bike lanes, bike use, making these corridors multi-modal and I think that if you talk to people and it was the same thing and you talk to people who actually do biking and use them for their day to day errands, one of the things that sells biking is sort of door to door service. You leave your house with your bike, you park your bike where you're going to be getting your groceries or your milk or the newspaper and so I think that there is a place for the bike corrals but I think to sell biking and what I've seen with the smoking ban more alfresco dining and then bike parking near where that is...all of the sudden people start making the connection that they can go out and park here, eat here, have fun like these people are and you start moving bicycling more from just a recreational thing but also tying it more into transportation. The addition I'd like to make, under the bicyclists section, under the implementation part on page 105, would be to incorporate bike parking into the street furniture configurations at regular intervals convenient to service and business destinations. I think we just need to make it part of the normal fabric of life. Individual proposals can add their own parking, but we've seen in other parts of town where you have like on Lake St where you have the benches, the lighting, the places for the reading material and you have the bike parking and it's very predictable so people don't have to worry about if it's going to be a hassle. I think that predictability will help sell bicycling. I think it's a great plan and I'm very excited to see this move forward.

President Motzenbecker: I also want to compliment staff consultants. I thought it was a very well thought out plan, well researched, a very difficult challenge to address because you have such a diversity of uses up and down that corridor and how do you enhance them and balance

them out and do it in a thoughtful and engaging way that helps the vitality of those different kind of constituencies along there. I love the fact that you're adding kind of that arts focus up there; I think that's a great little plan. One piece we saw from the previous plan as well with the kind of arts map, which I thought was great. I really think it's great and I hope to see more.

Commissioner Huynh: I second that comment. I used to live in northeast in two different neighborhoods when I was in school. What's nice to see about this neighborhood is that there is this connection with the Central Ave arts trail and having something that's more winterized that you can go to the neighborhoods, regardless of if you have an Art-A-Whirl event going on or if there is an exhibit or gallery going on. It's nice to be able to bring more of the public into a neighborhood that's very vital and embraces art such as this and gives them uses that are year round and gives people from out of town a destination to experience. I think of the small area plan like an art piece itself such as the pieces that are being displayed. It creates events and moments in time and I'm looking forward to the small area plan being implemented over time; it's very motivating. Thank you.

President Motzenbecker: All those in favor of sending this on with the recommendation and with the amendment amending it into the Comprehensive Plan with the small amendment to the bicyclists by Commissioner Norkus-Crampton? Opposed?

The motion carried 5-0 (Schiff not present for the vote).