

**Community Planning and Economic Development Planning Division Report
SMALL AREA PLAN**

DATE: September 18th, 2006

PROJECT NAME: 38th Street Station Area Plan

SUBMITTED BY: Planning Division

CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE: Mike Larson, Principal Planner, 673-2423

WARDS: 9, 12

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS:

- Longfellow Community Council
- Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association (SENA)

MINNEAPOLIS PLAN DESIGNATIONS:

Transit Station Area: 38th Street Station

Community Corridors: Minnehaha Avenue, 38th Street

Neighborhood Commercial Nodes: 38th Street and 23rd Avenue; 38th Street and Minnehaha Avenue

BACKGROUND:

The 38th Street Station Area Plan is a proposed policy framework for the future of the station area. It identifies opportunities and preferences for redevelopment as well as enhancements to the character and identity of the area. It identifies locations, priorities and guidelines for new development and public infrastructure as well as creating a "sense of place." As such, it serves as the primary guide for Planning Commission review, zoning changes, capital investment, and housing and commercial development activities in this part of the city.

Ongoing and extensive planning efforts have occurred around the 38th Street light rail station off and on since the summer of 2003. Planning complexity, emerging opportunities, and extensive public involvement have delayed the official adoption of this small area plan for the 38th Street Transit Station Area. Through various forums, staff and the public have addressed issues that include the economics of anticipated redevelopment of the grain mills, the size and orientation of parcels, the challenge of incorporating extensive redevelopment into an existing neighborhood, associated transportation and urban design challenges, and implementation challenges associated with the freight rail corridor.

The formal planning process that began in 2003 was guided by a steering committee, consisting of City and agency staff, neighborhood residents, and business owners. Staff and consultants supported the work of both the steering committee as well as activities at public workshops. This committee met periodically to provide input into the public process as well as review and provide direction on plan elements related to land use, public infrastructure, and urban design.

These meetings were open to the public. On November 14th, 2005, the City Planning Commission held a public hearing and recommended adoption of the 38th Street Plan.

The Zoning & Planning Committee concurred with the Planning Commission's original recommendation, but the full City Council referred the plan back to staff for additional work. This delay in plan adoption was used to take advantage of the opportunity for the City and neighborhood to work closely with a prospective developer of the Purina Mill and surrounding industrial property at 38th & Hiawatha. A principal objective was to reconsider and/or more explicitly articulate goals and policies for a four-block area bounded by the following streets: E. 35th Street, E. 39th Street, Hiawatha Avenue and Dight Avenue.

Numerous meetings were held with a neighborhood task force as well as the general public to discuss the developer's ideas as well as clarify community objectives, principles of transit oriented development, and issues related to land use, urban design, and building form. Planning staff were involved in this process and led the effort to suggest appropriate changes to the plan based on this work. These changes, which are attached, were endorsed by the task force as well as the Longfellow Community Council. Supplemental changes recommended by staff and which do not impact the work of the task force are also attached.

Highlights of the 38th Street Station Area Plan include the following:

- Orientation, background and history of the Standish and Howe neighborhoods.
- A list of vision statements and detailed plan policies regarding land uses, urban design, and large-scale redevelopment, as well as other issues related to the creation of transit oriented development.
- Support for preservation of existing character and/or infill development of neighborhood scale commercial/mixed-use nodes at five locations along 38th Street and Minnehaha Avenue.
- A scenario involving high density mixed-use redevelopment of the mills to the north and south of 38th Street, including the vacation of the rail corridor.
- Support for planned industrial redevelopment along Hiawatha in the northern part of the plan area, buffered by an edge of higher density residential redevelopment along Snelling Avenue, in order to create a more consistent land use pattern.
- An implementation section that identifies broad roles and responsibilities for plan implementation, as well as key implementation steps such as roadway and streetscape planning along 38th Street.

FUTURE RELATED ACTIONS:

City Council action

Following action by the City Planning Commission, staff will again forward this small area plan to the Zoning and Planning Committee of the City Council for review and action.

Comprehensive Plan Update / Metropolitan Council Review

The Minneapolis Plan is the principal planning document for the City of Minneapolis (the City's "Comprehensive Plan", as defined by State statute). It is used to guide and evaluate City

activities and ordinances (including capital improvements, redevelopment, and regulatory tools like the zoning code). Amending this document has been an important task in providing a clearer path for development, redevelopment and public infrastructure along the Hiawatha LRT line.

The adoption of this small area plan will build upon comprehensive plan amendments that occurred in 2002. At that time the City adopted a comprehensive plan amendment related to *Transit Station Areas*. This included both policy language and references to adopted small area plans that articulated these policies. The plan amendments submitted to the Metropolitan Council included detailed land use information and forecasts to identify impacts on regional systems, including wastewater treatment, regional highways, and transit. Information was derived from the City's adopted station area plans (Franklin-Cedar/Riverside, Lake Street/Midtown, and 46th Street). Relevant information from the 38th Street Station Area Plan will be submitted for Metropolitan Council as part of the overall update to the Minneapolis Plan that is occurring through 2008.

Regulatory alignment

According to State statute, regulatory controls must come into alignment with proposed changes to land use as identified in the comprehensive plan. Planning Division staff are analyzing current zoning against proposed long-term land uses in station area plans. A Pedestrian Oriented Overlay Zoning District was enacted for areas around the Cedar-Riverside, Franklin Avenue, Lake Street/Midtown, 38th Street, and 46th Street Station areas. A primary district rezoning study was completed for the Lake Street/Midtown station area, and changes to primary zoning districts have been adopted by the City Council. Such a study is planned for all of the neighborhood station areas, including 38th Street.

During the course of the neighborhood station area rezoning study, staff will recommend changes to zoning in the 38th Street station area where primary zoning designations are inconsistent with what is identified in the plan. Staff may propose immediate zoning changes when redevelopment is anticipated in the near future as a result of private and/or public activities; recommend greater development rights where higher density or other types of uses may be desired; or leave zoning changes for future implementation if changes in land use are neither critical to meet the general goals of the plan or are not expected for some time. The City may also propose changes to zoning to prevent the expansion or intensification of uses that are not consistent with long-range plans.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

The Community Planning and Economic Development - Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission and City Council adopt the 38th Street Station Area Plan as amended by the documents entitled "Recommended Changes to the 38th Street Station Area Plan" and "38th Street Station Area Plan supplemental changes", dated July 8th and September 18th, 2006, respectively.

Reference Materials / Attachments:

- 38th Street Station Area Plan (dated September 2005)
- Recommended Changes to the 38th Street Station Area Plan (dated 7/6/06)
- Supplemental Recommended Changes to the 38th Street Station Area Plan (dated 9/18/06)
- Longfellow Community Council (LCC) letter (dated 7/24/06) including:
 - LCC Resolution in support of plan changes
 - List of 38th Street Station / Purina Task Force Members
 - List of Partners & Guest Speakers
 - 38th Street Station / Purina Task Force Charge
 - Community Benefits Agreement Timeline