

Figure 7.13 Springboard Project G: Illustrative Drawing

### **Springboard Project G:**

West Hennepin: Downtown Gateway Development Project

One of the development challenges for the City is to promote development that fills in the gaps of the Warehouse District particularly along Washington Avenue North. As noted above, the key development opportunities in the West Hennepin Precinct are for high-quality, infill projects that mix commercial and residential uses on relatively small building lots. One such site - Block NL-5 - is noteworthy because it fronts both Washington Avenue North and a freeway off-ramp from Interstate 394. This site also shares the block with existing historic buildings. Furthermore, this block is an ideal candidate for demonstrating how a building can also be thought of as an important gateway marking an important entrance to Downtown.

#### Block NL-5

Site Description: This springboard site is located at the "head" of and immediately adjacent to Interstate 394. The block is bounded by Washington Avenue North, Second Avenue North, the existing viaduct that serves as an on-ramp to Interstate 94, and the northern most freeway ramp to/from Interstate 394. The western-most portion of block is currently under-developed and faces the curving Interstate 394. The remainder of the site is occupied by buildings that are designated as preservation sites. This building site is divided into two major components. The south portion of the site is wider and fronts both freeway ramps, thus, it is more suitable for office use. The north portion of the site faces Washington Avenue and I-394. From an urban design perspective, the location where the I-394 off-ramp rises to meet Washington Avenue is presently quite harsh.

Project Description: The proposed building aims to clean up this tricky site by incorporating recommended uses within two building towers that are unified by a single base structure. The four-story base includes two components. The south portion of the base could consist of 4-story parking structure and/or office/commer-

cial space. At-grade retail does not appear to be a viable option on the southern portion of this site. On the northern half of the block, ground-level spaces along Washington Avenue side of the project are to be designed in such a way that they can be easily changed over the years (from office to retail space) according to the demands of the marketplace. The remaining floors of the base structure should be given over to commercial office space.

Above the base, the site could be used to develop two towers. The south tower would accommodate residential development. It rises an additional five floors above the project's 4-story base for a total of 9 floors. The north tower would also rise an additional five floors above the project's 4-story base and accommodate office/commercial uses. Both towers are set back from the base.

## **Development Considerations:**

- A maximum FAR of 8 is recommended
- Developer to provide usable public open space. In this case, a plaza with a potential zone for a sidewalk café could be developed at a curved building entry;
- Developer required to provide gateway through expression in building architecture or by contributing funds to the City for construction of a freestanding gateway.

#### Please note:

- Increased FARs are proposed specifically to jump start development on difficult sites (in locations where incentive bonuses may not yield the sort of densities sought in this master plan for the realization of Complete Communities).
- As noted in Chapter Six, it is recommended that the City, the
  development community, and neighborhood representatives
  embark on a cooperative process of developing Built Form Controls
  that set the parameters for physical design of new projects in the
  Downtown East and North Loop portions of the Project Area.

**CHAPTER 4** 

CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER 3

# DOWNTOWN EAST / NORTH LOOP MASTER PLAN



Springboard Project G		
Development Precinct Block Location Land Use Classification Intensity / Height Classification Current Zoning District Recommended Zoning District	West Hennepin NL-5 Mixed Use District / Office (MU-0) Medium Intensity (5-13 Floors) B4C-2: Downtown Commercial District B4M-2: Downtown Mixed Use District	CHAPTER 2 CHAPTER 1
Gross Site Area Current FAR Maximum Allowable SF(1)	31000 8 248000	CHAPTER 3
Density Increase Maximum Allowable SF(2)	0 0	CHAP
Recommended FAR Total Maximum Allowable SF	8 248000	CHAPTER 4
Springboard Illustrative Drawing Shows:		2
Building Footprint Public Open Space	28600 2400	CHAPTER 5
Gross Site Area	31000	
Floor Plate (Floors 1-4) Floor Plate (Floors 5-13) Floor Plate (Floors 14-plus)	114400 80000 0	CHAPTER 6
Total Building Area	194400	<
Required Parking Stalls	147	HAPTER 7
	6.27	-