

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division
Small Area Plan/Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Date: January 28, 2008

Project Name: West Broadway Alive

Submitted By: CPED Community Planning Division

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Wards: 3, 4, and 5

Neighborhood Organizations:

- Northside Residents Redevelopment Council
- Jordan Area Community Council
- Hawthorne Area Community Council

Current Minneapolis Plan Designations:

- Commercial Corridor—West Broadway from the Mississippi River to 26th Avenue
- Community Corridor—West Broadway from 26th Avenue to City Limits
- Auto-Oriented Shopping Center—West Broadway and Lyndale Avenue
- Neighborhood Commercial Node—West Broadway and Penn Avenue

Background

West Broadway is the commercial main street of North Minneapolis, but by many measures it has fallen on hard times. At one time it was a destination shopping district for north Minneapolis and beyond. But today it serves primarily as a convenience district for residents in the adjacent neighborhoods. Loitering, shoplifting and other criminal activity dampens interest in the corridor and makes it more difficult for businesses to thrive. With “modern” developments and large surface parking lots replacing traditional storefronts at different times over the last several decades, and little in the streetscape that has aesthetic character, the visual landscape is somewhat chaotic and forbidding. It is against this backdrop that the West Broadway Alive planning effort was launched.

In early 2006, at the encouragement of the West Broadway Area Coalition, and with financial support from the Northside Residents Redevelopment Council, the CPED Planning Division began work on the West Broadway Alive Plan. The idea was to create a plan that would focus attention and resources on making the corridor work better from a business perspective, making it more attractive to new development, and make it more aesthetically cohesive and welcoming from a design perspective.

From the beginning of 2006 through the Fall of 2007, City staff and the project consultants worked with a community-based Steering Committee made up of representatives from the neighborhood organizations, the West Broadway Business Association and West Broadway Area Coalition (since

merged), other area institutions, and committee members appointed by City Council members and Mayor RT Rybak. This committee served in a consultative role to the staff and consultants, and met monthly throughout the process. Five community-wide meetings were held to gather community input on plan direction and strategies. These had an average attendance of around 130 people. Information was also gathered from the community through:

- Street interviews
- A shopping survey
- Stakeholder meetings with business owners, property owners, and developers
- Meetings with 11 north Minneapolis neighborhood organizations, and 4 sub-neighborhood groups

Other outreach included radio spots, advertisements in neighborhood newspapers, full-sized poster boards at local businesses, door-to-door flyers, e-mail distribution, communication through local churches, a project website, and the identification of specific Hmong and Somali partners to spread the word in those ethnic communities.

The plan document was completed at the end of November, 2007. The 45-day public review period began on December 1, 2007 and ended on January 15, 2007.

Purpose of Plan

The West Broadway Alive plan has two purposes. The first is to provide more current and detailed policy direction for land use and development in the West Broadway corridor. The desired character of different parts of West Broadway is described, including appropriate land uses, and levels of density. Design guidelines are provided so that new development and improvements to existing development will build toward a more unified and attractive appearance. The second purpose of the plan is to outline a revitalization action agenda. This set of proactive steps is intended to foster change, and improve the market for existing businesses and new development.

Public Comments

Five comments were received during the 45-day public comment period. They contained some well-considered suggestions for refinements to the plan. In addition to these, the City Planning Commission discussed the West Broadway Alive plan at its January 17 Committee of the Whole meeting. That yielded additional direction aimed at strengthening parts of the plan. Although the West Broadway Alive plan has been scheduled for public hearing at the January 28, 2008, City Planning Commission meeting, additional time is needed in order to make plan modifications in response to these suggestions and present the City Planning Commission with a revised draft.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – PLANNING DIVISION:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission **continue** this item to the February 11th City Planning Commission meeting.