

Approval Criteria and Process

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APPROVAL CRITERIA AND PROCESS

Larsen Design investigated the formal process required by the various entities that may have to approve this Master Plan, approve permit applications, approve installation, and fund the project.

Not surprisingly, approval for this project overlaps many jurisdictions, property owners, businesses and neighborhoods. Potential paths of approval are dependent on a variety of circumstances. To gain insight and to avoid problems, we employed an informal review process with each potential organization.

STATE OF MINNESOTA

Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT)

Brian Kamnikar

Mn/DOT Metro Signing Engineer

Metro District Traffic Engineering

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1500 West County Road B2

Roseville, MN 55113

The Minnesota Department of Transportation is the authority that governs roadways and signage on Interstate highways within the state and on state highways.

- Jurisdiction over signs placed in right-of-way on state roadways, and influence over county and city roadway standards.
- Concern over content issues/setting a precedent.
- Strict adherence to Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) sign standards.
- Concerned with enforcement and safety issues.

Currently there is no accommodation for historic district signage, although historic site signs are permitted. MnDOT has turned to the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for help in defining these guidelines. MnDOT's process is to review the request and judge it against established criteria.

MnDOT will provide Interstate signage for "major traffic generators" based on their effect on Interstate traffic. They use specific criteria when evaluating the request of an individual event center:

- Number of parking spaces (1,000 minimum)
- 10 event minimum
- 5,000 per event minimum

MnDOT uses another set criteria when evaluating the request of a multi-tenant regional shopping mall.

- 600,000 sq/ft of retail area
- minimum of two major anchor tenants

The Minneapolis Riverfront District does not fall under either of these definitions. Since exit signs are based on a presumption of traffic control, the District may need to base its case on traffic volume. Historic designation may be considered.

Signage Cost: one time fabrication and installation fee. Sign based on MnDOT provided specifications.

Owner may also be required to cover cost of maintenance. Life expectancy is 10-15 years. Permit holder must pay to replace deteriorating signs.

Variance Process

If a request is denied by MnDOT staff, the organization may appeal the decision to the Variance Board. This board is comprised of business owners and other private citizens that meet three to four times a year. The requesting organization must convince the board of the importance and need for signage.

Summary

- > Submit master plan to MnDOT for review
- > MnDOT will either accept or deny request for signs
- > If denied, request variance before the Variance Board
- > If approval is granted, an agreement is set up between MnDOT and the sign owner

APPROVAL CRITERIA AND PROCESS

State of Minnesota

State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)

Dennis Gimmetad

651-296-5462

Review and Compliance Section

Minnesota History Center

345 Kellogg Boulevard West

St. Paul, Minnesota 55102

The State Historic Preservation Office reviews federal undertakings under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and projects of state agencies under the Minnesota Historic Sites Act and the Minnesota Field Archaeology Act.

Federal projects reviewed under Section 106 are those carried out by a federal agency, those where a federal agency provides funds, and those which require a federal permit, license, or approval. Generally the federal agency is responsible for completing the review with SHPO; for some programs, other parties are specially authorized to initiate the process.

Projects of state agencies that might affect properties listed on the National or State Registers of Historic Places, or which might affect known or predicted archaeological sites, are submitted by the agency to SHPO for review.

These reviews consider effects on historic properties. For the federal process, this includes properties and districts listed on or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. For the state process, this includes properties and districts listed on the National or State Registers of Historic Places.

In all cases, the intent is to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate any adverse effects to historic properties or districts. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, including the Guidelines for Preserving, Rehabilitating, Restoring and Reconstructing Historic Buildings and the Guidelines for the Treatment of Cultural Landscapes, are used in assessing a project's impacts.

Summary

- > Federal or state agency, or authorized representative, initiates review with SHPO.
- > Historic properties are identified and potential effects are assessed.
- > Through consultation, attempts are made to avoid, reduce, or minimize any adverse effect.

HENNEPIN COUNTY

Larry Blackstad

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Hennepin County

417 N. 5th Street

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Minneapolis, MN 55401

- Jurisdiction over signs placed in the right-of-way on county roads such as Washington and Hennepin Avenues
- Concern over content issues
- Follow approved MUTCD sign standards

Since county roads are also city streets in the downtown area, Hennepin County has indicated they will defer judgement to City of Minneapolis staff and will follow their recommendations unless it is determined that the plan far exceeds initial expectation. Hennepin County's concerns are similar to Minneapolis Public Works: safety, maintenance, permitting, and insurance.

The most critical issue regarding Hennepin County and this project are signs proposed to be installed on the Hennepin Avenue Bridge. All requests for signs must go through the county staff for approval.

Hennepin County must be provided plans for review.

Summary

- > Send master plan to County for review
- > County will raise any unusual concerns with City
- > Discrepancies and details will be worked out with City

MINNEAPOLIS PARK AND RECREATION BOARD

Rachel Ramadhyani

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board

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Approval by the MPRB will be required for installation of plan components on parkland or parkways. This approval will be informed by the Board's policy of ensuring that the visual continuity and integrity of the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway system is maintained and that the introduction of other signage elements does not confuse or dilute this identity. Areas where Park Board approval will be needed include West River Parkway, the MPRB portion of Main Street, and all parkland along the Riverfront.

Approval Criteria

- Consonance with existing Park Board signage and plans, particularly the Grand Rounds Scenic Byways Master Plan
- Consonance with historical and aesthetic character of the area
- Durability and maintenance of signs
- Sign approval would be contingent upon another entity assuming costs of installation and maintenance, unless signs are installed by Park Board

Recommended Approval Process

The Park Board has suggested a two-step approval process:

1. Approval of the wayfinding plan. Once the wayfinding plan has been drafted, copies should be provided for review by selected Park Board staff and by the commissioners. The plan should be presented to selected Park Board staff at a staff advisory committee meeting. The wayfinding plan would then go to the Planning Committee of the Board for approval, followed by approval by the full Board.

2. Approval of installation of specific signs. Wayfinding signs in the Riverfront District could either be installed by the Park Board as part of a park or parkway project or by other groups. Approval in the former case is straightforward. Signs conforming to the wayfinding plan guidelines could be included in construction packages when appropriate. These signs would receive Board approval as part of the overall design approval for those projects. Approval of signs to be installed by other entities on Park Board land would be more complex. Each installation would need explicit approval by the Board. After review by Park Board staff, this would require presentation of a proposal to the Board. The proposal would need to address:

- Need for installation
- Conformance with approved plans, including the wayfinding plan
- Provision of funding for design and installation
- Responsibility for sign maintenance and replacement by an entity other than the Park Board.

Summary

Step One

- > Informal staff review of Master Plan
- > Incorporate suggestions and recommendations of staff
- > Formal review of plan by staff
- > Review by planning committee
- > Present to board with staff recommendation for approval of Master Plan

Step Two

- > Staff review of installation plan
- > Determination of installation, funding and ongoing maintenance details

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS

Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC)

Greg Mathis
 Suite 210
 350 South 5th Street
 Minneapolis, MN 55401
 612-673-2439

Jurisdiction

The Heritage Preservation Commission is responsible for the preservation of historically significant buildings, sites, neighborhoods, and districts. All development activity or enhancements on any designated site must comply with HPC regulations. These regulations apply to any and all new construction and rehabilitation of existing buildings and structures within the St. Anthony Falls Historic District.

They are intended to:

- Preserve the memory of past events
- Encourage sympathetic new development
- Encourage and enable access to the river
- Foster a viable community geared to the pedestrian.

Within their guidelines, the HPC has taken special consideration for the St. Anthony Falls Historic District (SAFHD), acknowledging the varied types of structures and time periods in which they were built. The HPC provides architectural control and maintenance of the District by promulgating regulations governing construction and rehabilitation.

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SAFHD Sign Criteria

The Heritage Preservation Commission is primarily concerned with preserving character and quality of historically significant buildings and areas. New installations that are not sensitive to the architecture and history of an area can jeopardize the value of a historic area. The HPC will:

- Review the signage plan for compliance with HPC approved plans and guidelines
- Review materials, construction methods, and color to make sure they are compatible with the era of the District, and make sure signs do not distract from historical architecture or features
- Make sure signs enhance the historic quality of area

Recommended approval process:

Draft Design Plan

To create familiarity and provide opportunity for review and comment, HPC staff liaison will provide the draft design plan to the HPC board. Staff liaison will provide Commission comments back to the Riverfront core committee for modifications.

Final Plan

The finalized plan will go back through the Commission for formal adoption and acceptance. Upon approval, the plan will be filed at HPC for use in future reviews of ongoing projects. Any variance request must be presented to the HPC Board of Review for acceptance. Individual signs may require additional approvals.

Summary

- > Informal review of Master Plan by staff
- > Incorporate suggestions and recommendations of staff
- > Formal review of Master Plan by the Commission
- > Accept Plan or present Plan to review board if variance is requested
- > Once approved, city permits can be approved and Plan remains on file as reference

APPROVAL CRITERIA AND PROCESS

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS

Public Works

Dennis Morris, Jon Wertjes
203 City Hall
309 Second Avenue South
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612-673-3607

Jurisdiction

Public Right-of-Way: any permanent or temporary signs or displays on or over any street, boulevard, sidewalk, easements or other public property.

Ownership of the signs is a critical issue for Public Works. The “owner” must apply and pay for encroachment permits, agree to maintain signs in the future, and carry liability insurance of \$500,000 for the the signs.

Approval Criteria

- Concerned with content and placement of signs. Sign content, shape, structure and placement (location and/or attachment)
- Concerned with sign maintenance and public safety issues. Public Works will review sign applications to determine that the sign will not create any vehicle or pedestrian hazards, interfere with any traffic control devices, signage and lighting. If Public Works is expected to maintain the signs, ease of maintenance and ability to complete this work must be evaluated by staff.
- Approval of signs in the public right-of-way is contingent on signs being largely directional in nature, with no logos or clearly commercial sponsorships. (Names or identities of private entities generally are not included, but there are exceptions. Signs for the Minneapolis Institute of Arts would be an example. Non-profit status does not change considerations.) Public entities or amenities can be included on directional signs. Examples of directional sign content that could easily be approved would be

theater, hotel, restaurant, and so on.

- Special input on kiosks or other larger type of signage displays: If there is a map that includes all entities within the District, it could be considered directional or purely informational. Public Works recommends plans that stay away from kiosks that allow posting of promotional events or advertising as a source of revenue to fund the signage.
- Need to obtain a permit (\$75 for first, \$5 for each additional placement/application). Public Works reviews permits to ensure they will not create any vehicle or pedestrian hazards or interfere with traffic control devices, signage, or lighting. Method of sign/banner attachment is reviewed as is conformance to all City ordinances. Permit owner must be specified.

Recommended Approval Process

Draft Design Plan

- Provide plan to staff liaison at Zoning Department for review and comment
- Provide plan to staff liaison at Public Works for review and comment
- Staff liaison provides comments to project steering committee for any modifications or adjustments
- Schedule reviews with appropriate City Council Members and with neighborhoods
- Informational presentation to City Council Committee of Transportation and Public Works

Master Plan

- Provide Master Plan to staff at Public Works
- Public Works reviews and forwards with recommendations to City Council Committee, Transportation and Public Works
- Once approved, Public Works issues the encroachment permit

NOTE: If the implementation plan includes Public Works maintaining the signs, the City Council must budget for this work. Should Public Works own and maintain the signs, a variation on this process will be followed.

Summary

- > Informal review of Master Plan by staff
- > Incorporate recommendation of staff
- > Formal review of finalized Master Plan
- > Application of permit required by owner
- > Agreement approved regarding insurance, budget and ongoing maintenance of signs
- > Plan forwarded to Council ward representative
- > Granting of permit to owner

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS

Zoning Department

Steve Poor
Zoning Specialist
Rm 210
350 South 5th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55415

The Zoning Department has jurisdiction over signs on public or private property. This authority corresponds with city planning and development and is intended to regulate sign structures and content. The Zoning Department criteria is focused on the number and type of signs permitted, and the size and height of each sign proposed for each particular lot. These specifications vary by zoning district, type of business, and size of the lot, based on the signage code set forth by the city.

- Concerned over content issues and setting new precedent
- Deals primarily with building signage, primary and secondary identification signs, and large directional signs

Summary

- > Informal review of Master Plan by staff
- > Incorporate recommendation of staff
- > Formal review of Master Plan
- > Zoning will raise any issues regarding individual signs

Implementation phase

- > Application of permit required by land owner
- > If denied, variance applied for through Zoning Department staff
- > Granting of permit to land owner

APPROVAL CRITERIA AND PROCESS

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development

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Approval Criteria

Wayfinding and signage plan would be reviewed against the comprehensive land-use plan for the Riverfront District.

At this time, the Planning Department has determined that this is not a land-use plan and does not need to formally approve this plan.

Recommended Approval Process (if needed)

Draft Design Plan

- Provide conceptual design plan to staff liaison
- Staff liaison will provide to Planning Commission staff to create familiarity, provide opportunity for review and comment
- Staff liaison provides Commission comments back to Riverfront core committee for any modifications

Final Plan

- Final plan does not need approval by CPED.
- If the plan is modified significantly it may need to be reviewed and ultimately approved by CPED.

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS City Council Mayor

The City Council and the Office of the Mayor will be asked to approve the Master Plan.

Prior to formal consideration of the Master Plan, appropriate Council Members may receive briefings on the plan to familiarize them with its goals, scope, wayfinding recommendations, and stakeholder input/feedback. These informal briefings may include Council Members who represent portions of the Minneapolis Riverfront District and the chair(s) of appropriate City Council committees. During this timeframe, various city staff members will report back to the Council Members on any issues requiring further consideration.

Following the informal briefings and review, the Minneapolis Riverfront District steering and implementation committee will draft a report to the appropriate City Council committee(s) requesting approval of the Master Plan. Committees that may be requested to approve the plan include the following: Transportation and Public Works, Community Development, and Zoning and Planning. These committees will be asked to review and approve the report and Master Plan, taking into consideration staff recommendations, neighborhood input, and HPC and Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board approvals. Following approval by one or more committees, the Master Plan will then be forwarded to the City Council for overall approval, followed by approval and signature from the Mayor.

It is during this final formal approval process that any policy changes or variances that are needed for plan implementation may be requested, should there be any questions regarding signage that fall outside of City standards. Following plan approval by the City Council and sign-off by the Mayor, Public Works will be advised of plan adoption, and depending on funding sources, may be directed to participate in the implementation of the plan.

If the District steering and implementation committee has secured outside funding for implementation, insurance and maintenance of signs, the permitting and implementation process may then begin within the context of the approved Master Plan.

One or more separate additional future approvals would be required if City funds were to be requested for signage implementation and maintenance or if other City actions were proposed, e.g., direction to Public Works to assist with plan implementation and ongoing maintenance.

APPROVAL CRITERIA AND PROCESS PROCESS SUMMARY

	Multi-Agency Steering Committee	City of Minneapolis				Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	State of Minnesota		
		Public Works issues encroachment permits for all signs on city right-of-way	HPC reviews projects within designated historic areas. Approval required for permits	Zoning Department issues permits for all signs	Planning Commission reviews projects related to community development land use	City Council and Mayor must approve Master Plan and any variances before implementation	Park Board develops and maintains Park Board signs, and issues permits for encroachments on park property	MnDOT issues permits for all signs on Interstate and state highway right-of-way	SHPO reviews projects that receive grants from government agencies. Approval required for issuance of grant
MASTER PLAN	Steering Committee Guide development of Master Plan Conduct stakeholder reviews Finalize details and review of Master Plan	Public Works Informal review of Master Plan Review prototype	HPC Informal review of Master Plan Review prototype	Zoning Informal review of Master Plan Review prototype	Planning Commission Informal review of Master Plan Review prototype	City Council Informal review of Master Plan by Ward representatives	Park Board Informal review of Master Plan Review prototype	MnDOT Informal review of Master Plan	SHPO Informal review of Master Plan
	Approval of Master Plan by St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board	Review of Master Plan by staff Forward to Committee for Transportation and Public Works	Review of Master Plan by staff Forward to Commission Approval of Master Plan by Commission	No formal approval of Master Plan necessary	No formal approval of Master Plan necessary	Staff departments report to Council Sub-committees Forward to full City Council Approval of Master Plan Signature by Mayor	Review of Master Plan by staff Forward to Board Master Plan approved by Board		Review of Master Plan by staff
IMPLEMENTATION	Determine funding sources Determine ownership, insurance and maintenance Fabrication / installation RFP Award contract	Review of installation plan Verify ownership, insurance, maintenance issues	Review of installation plan Variance process, if required	Review installation plan Variance process, if required		Variations may need review by Council	Review of implementation plan Determine funding / maintenance plan if Park Board-owned	Review implementation plan Variance request, if necessary Variance approval board	Review of implementation plan
	Apply for permits Fabrication of signs Installation of signs	Issue encroachment permits*	Approve for permits	Issue permits			Approval of installation on park property if not owned by Park Board	Issue permits	Approval by SHPO staff
		* If Public Works owns the signs, permits are not issued							