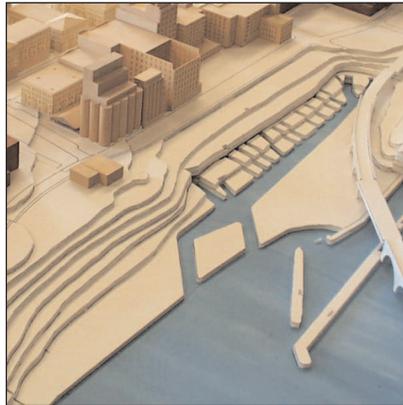


Update to the Historic Mills District Master Plan



Prepared for
Minneapolis Community Development Agency

by
Urban Design Associates

with
SRF Consulting Group, Inc.

Approved September 2001

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

I	Guthrie Development Alternative	2
	1. Introduction	
	2. The Guthrie Alternative	
II	Mills District Design Guidelines	20
	1. Design Principles for Guthrie Theater Complex	
	2. Additional Prototype Blocks	
	3. Streetscape & Landscape Guidelines	
	4. Stormwater Management	
III	Executive Summary of Technical Reports	32
	1. Executive Summary of Traffic and Parking Technical Report	

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Mayor

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City Council

Paul Ostrow

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Barbara A. Johnson

Jackie Cherryhomes, President

Jim Niland

Lisa R. Goodman

Kathy Thurber

Lisa McDonald

Dore Mead

Sandra Colvin Roy

Barret Lane

Hennepin County Commissioners

Mark Andrew

Randy Johnson, Chair

Peter McLaughlin

Mike Opat

Penny Steele

Mark Stenglein

Mary Tambornino

MCDA

Steve Cramer, Executive Director,
MCDA

City Planning

Chuck Ballentine, Planning
Department Director

Staff Advisory Committee

Scott Anfinson, SHPO

Larry Blackstad, Hennepin County

Jack Byers, Planning Department

Kristine Brogan, Mayor's Office

Ann Calvert, MCDA

Dennis Gimmestad, SHPO

Tom Daniel, MCDA

Elisabeth Doermann, St. Anthony
Falls Heritage Board

Greg Finstad, Public Works

Patricia Kelly, Council Member's
Board

Greg Mathis, Planner, Heritage
Preservation Commission

Fred Neet, Planning Department

Rachel Ramadhyani, Park and
Recreation Board

Richard Victor, MCDA

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I GUTHRIE DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVE



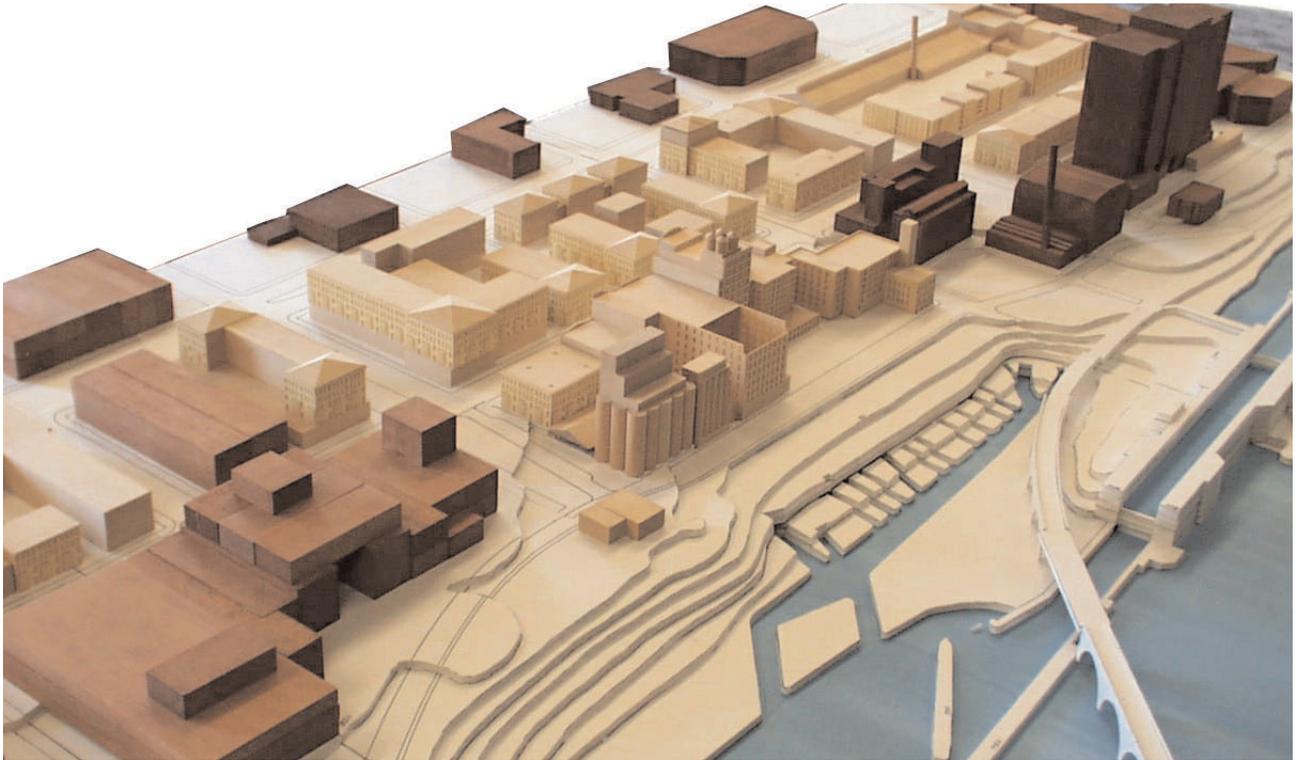


Figure 1 A transformed Historic Mills District will invite Minneapolis residents back to the central riverfront.

1 Introduction

Background

The Historic Mills District Master Plan was published in June 1998 and was the product of a public participation planning process which featured stakeholder focus groups, meetings with the adjacent neighborhoods, a three day design charrette, and two public meetings. The final Master Plan included an urban design plan and design guidelines for each block of the District. In addition, the Master Plan established seven overall urban design concepts to inform the redevelopment of the District. These concepts can be summarized as follows:

- Complete the riverfront park, trail and parkway system, connecting them to downtown
- Extend the downtown street grid to the river
- Provide improved pedestrian access across Washington Avenue
- Preserve and celebrate the riverfront historic sites and buildings
- Link new residential, cultural and recreational development to the downtown and the riverfront
- Create centrally located multi-purpose parking
- Build a transitway to link the Airport, neighborhoods and parking with downtown and the central riverfront

The Minneapolis Community Development Agency (MCDA) established three goals for redevelopment of the Historic Mills District, once known as Industry Square:

- Create new downtown housing
- Attract and retain business
- Respect the historic integrity of the district

The Historic Mills District area includes numerous historically-significant structures and sites. Given the importance of this historic fabric in the planning process, redevelopment in the area should address the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties* when appropriate.

The 1998 Historic Mills District Master Plan had two alternatives: the Residential Development Alternative; and the Stadium Development Alternative. These two differed in the use of land east of Chicago Avenue, one showing residential development, and the other showing a new baseball ballpark for the Minnesota Twins. The City is continuing to explore alternative ballpark sites, including a site south of Washington Avenue and fronting on Portland Avenue.

In the two years since publication of the plan, a significant number of projects have been undertaken or announced in conformance with the urban design plan and the design guidelines including the Tailrace Phase of Mill Ruins Park, two hotels, renovations to the Milwaukee Road Depot, conversion of the Train Shed to an indoor ice skating facility, conversion of the North Star, Stone Arch, and Utility Buildings into residential lofts, and new residential apartments on Parcel D. The Minnesota Historical Society has also proceeded with its plans to put a Mill City Museum in the Washburn Crosby Building in partnership with a developer who will be converting part of the building into professional offices. In addition, the Open Book Center has opened along Washington Avenue.

This project was not specifically anticipated by the 1998 plan but achieves the basic goals identified in the plan.

Early in 2000, MCDA determined that the Historic Mills District Master Plan would need to be updated to deal with three new conditions:

- Selection of a riverfront location by the Guthrie Theater for its new three-playhouse facility on the site previously designated as the potential ballpark site
- Decision to locate the Light Rail Transit (LRT) line along South 5th Street and not in the median of Washington Avenue as proposed in the June 1998 plan
- The need to develop a coherent parking strategy for the Historic Mills District

The Historic Mills District Master Plan Update Planning Process

An Historic Mills District Master Plan Update planning task force, chaired by MCDA, was formed to include City, County, State agencies, and other major stakeholders. Funding for the update plan was by MCDA and the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board.

Urban Design Associates was selected, along with SRF Consulting Group, Inc., to conduct a three month planning process which would re-engage the District stakeholders and the public to produce a revision to the Historic Mills District Master Plan. The revision focused primarily on the area bounded by the Mississippi River, Washington, 3rd, and 11th Avenues.

The first steps were to gather data on all the new development projects underway, including the Milwaukee Road Depot, the Brighton Development projects, and the Mill City Museum, and to meet with the Guthrie Theater to discuss their plans for the riverfront site. Stakeholder meetings with property owners, developers, and agencies were held in April 2000.

A two day design charrette was conducted at the offices of MCDA in May 2000, culminating in a public meeting on 25 May 2000 at City Hall to present the results of the charrette.

A draft Update plan was prepared in June 2000. The final Update Plan was revised later in 2000 and will become an amendment to the Historic Mills District Master Plan in 2001.



Figure 2 View of the Mills District from the northwest

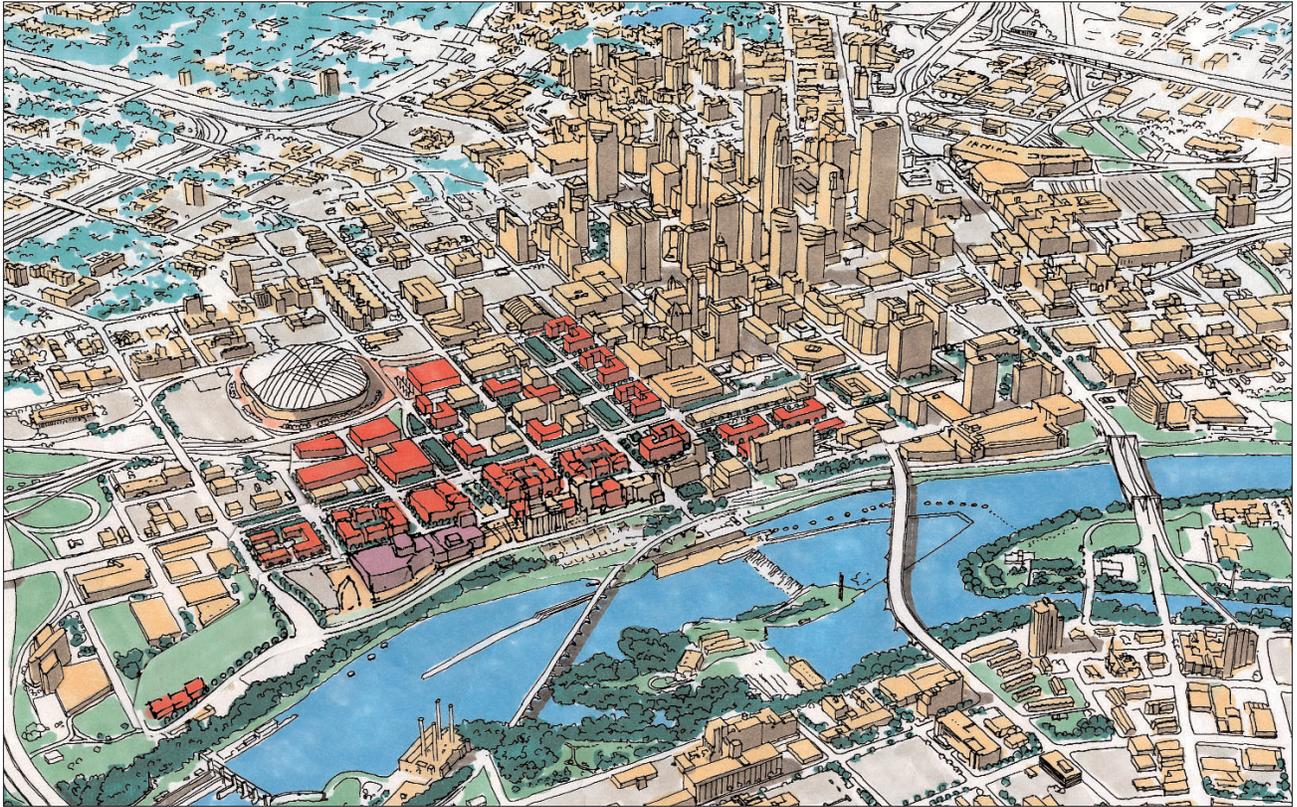


Figure 3 Aerial view of the Guthrie Alternative

2 The Guthrie Alternative

The Guthrie Alternative, illustrated above and on the following pages, amends the Historic Mills District Master Plan to accommodate the future construction of the Guthrie Theater on a site east of Chicago Avenue and north of 2nd Street. Plan revisions proposed for amendment as part of the Guthrie Alternative are limited to the area illustrated in Figure 5. Plan elements shown for other portions of the Historic Mills District are either: a) illustrations of elements included in the previously approved Mills District Plan that were not reconsidered as part of this planning phase, or b) options being proposed for further future consideration (e.g., potential parking options south of

Washington Avenue). Important issues that are addressed in the Guthrie Alternative include:

- A refined design for Chicago Avenue
- Site plan and architectural guidelines for the future Guthrie Theater
- A new residential prototype block to supplement the five prototype blocks in the June 1998 Historic Mills Master Plan
- A revised streetscape treatment for Washington Avenue and streetscape design guidelines for the district
- A parking strategy for the Historic Mills District

HISTORIC MILLS DISTRICT UPDATE

I Guthrie Development Alternative

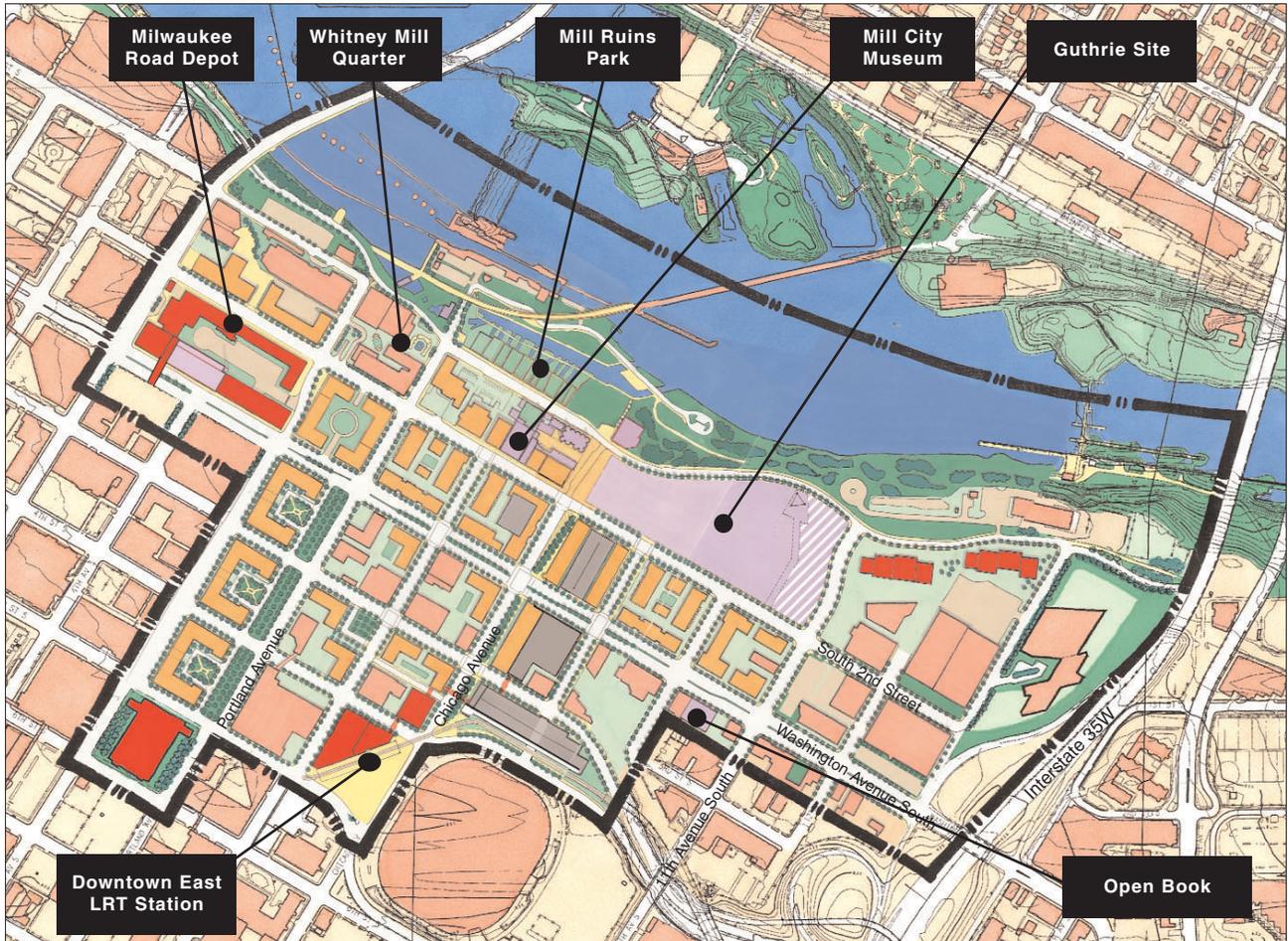


Figure 4 Vacant industrial sites will be transformed into a downtown cultural and residential district

Legend	
	Parks & Open Space
	Mixed-Use Development
	Commercial Development
	Cultural/Recreation/Entertainment
	Guthrie Expansion
	Structured Parking
	Existing Buildings
	Plaza

The issue of massing was also addressed. Participants felt the massing plan should not diminish the prominence of historic buildings and agreed that an eight- or nine-story height was appropriate for the area south of Washington Avenue. In addition, participants agreed that Parcels 'A' and 'B' should be limited to four or five stories. For Parcels 'C', 'D' and 'E', participants agreed that the general height limit would be four to five stories. Occasional taller heights would be allowed (up to a maximum of eight stories) if

needed for functional reasons, to add architectural variety, to increase density, to maintain marketability, or to preserve view corridors.

West of Chicago Avenue

Most of the urban design plan west of Chicago Avenue has remained intact, including the street framework, open space plan, parking plan, phasing plan, and building heights. The key changes to the plans have been to illustrate the actual building foot-

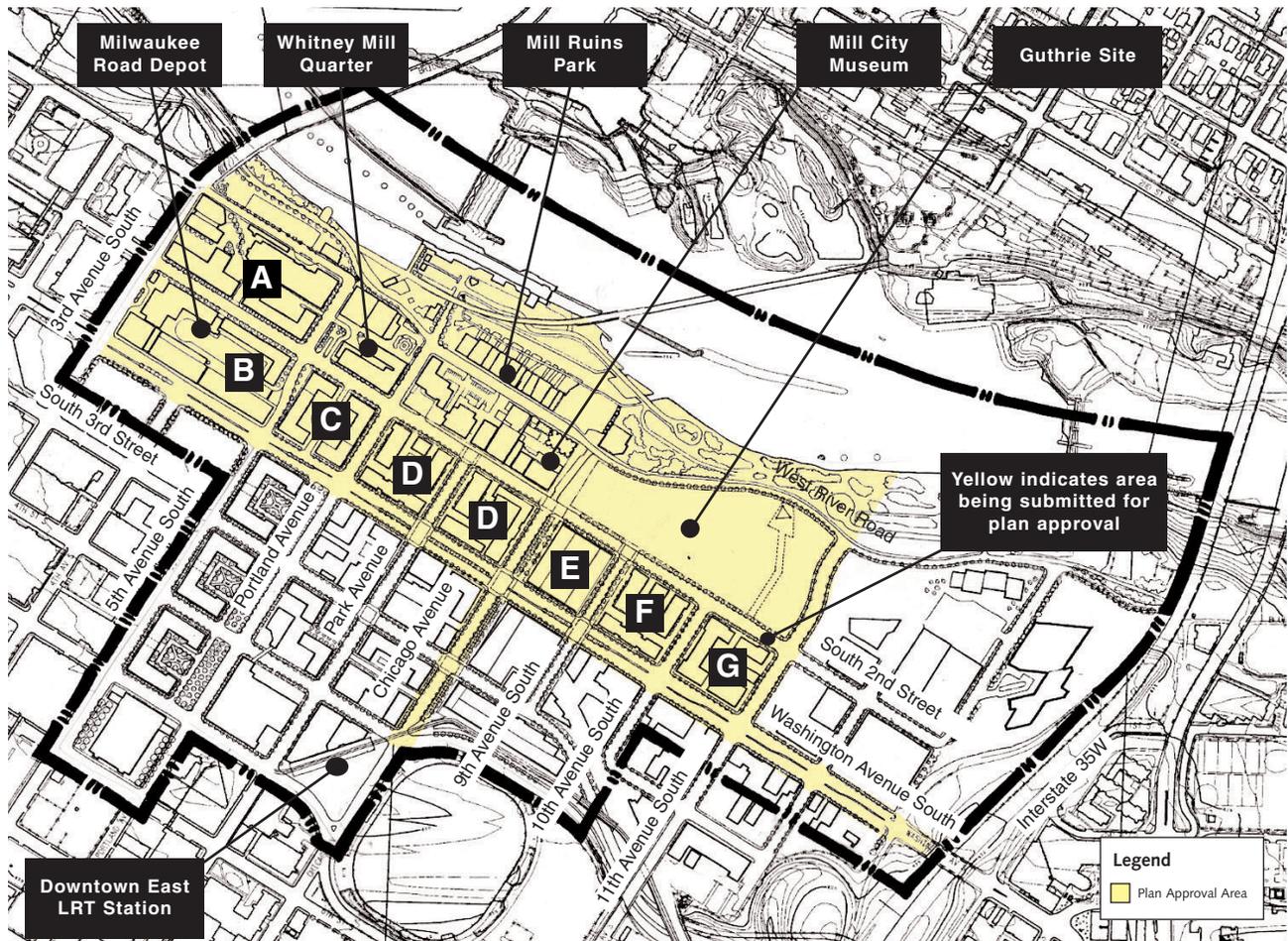


Figure 5 Parcel Designation Plan

prints of the Milwaukee Road and Brighton Developments and the two proposed residential projects along 2nd Street south of the RiverWest apartment building. The approved skyway connection across Washington Avenue at the Depot project is also illustrated in the Master Plan.

East of Chicago Avenue

The Guthrie Theater site is smaller than the proposed ballpark site. It is bounded by Chicago Avenue on the west, 11th Avenue on the east, the West River Parkway on the North,

and 2nd Street on the south. This permits the development blocks south of 2nd Street to be residential with ground floor retail. Ground floor retail is necessary at Chicago Avenue and Washington Avenues, and is strongly encouraged along 2nd Street, especially at corners. An on-street parking test should be conducted on Washington Avenue since short-term parking is important to retail success. An electrical substation for Xcel Energy will have to be accommodated in or near the development area, and discussions with Xcel Energy to identify a substation

location that complements the proposed Mills District development have been started.

Chicago Avenue

Chicago Avenue should receive special treatment to create a high-quality, pedestrian-friendly connection from the Downtown East LRT station/Metrodome to the riverfront.

The planning process revealed that the design of Chicago Avenue between 2nd Street and the West River Parkway is a critical issue. There were two differing approaches:

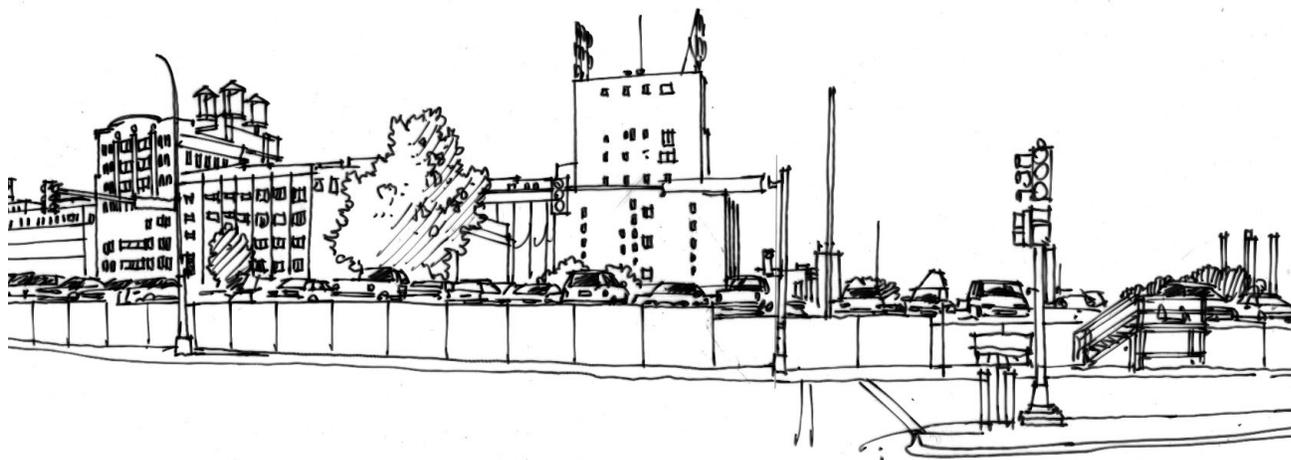


Figure 6 Existing view from Chicago Avenue towards the river

connect Chicago Avenue to West River Parkway as proposed in the June 1998 plan; or create a cul-de-sac or plaza with no vehicular connection to West River Parkway. Discussions with stakeholders resulted in agreement that a cul-de-sac was unworkable and a plaza with no vehicular connection (except for emergency vehicles) was the preferred alternative between 2nd Street and West River Parkway. A pedestrian and bicycle connection to West River Parkway will be created, and a driveway off of 2nd Street will provide access to the Mill City Museum and Humboldt complex.

The remaining public right-of-way between 2nd Street and West River Parkway will be open space. The design of the open space will be determined in the future in a separate process that needs to be inclusive of stakeholders. The design will need to consider the plaza's relationship to the environment including the river, historic district, Guthrie,

retail, and residential development. Consideration also needs to be given to plaza safety and programming. The plaza must be a special and exciting public place. The plaza design should allow for a future vehicular connection between 2nd Street and West River Parkway. This vehicular connection could be implemented in the event that the Guthrie Theater decides to site the theater complex in a manner that does not embrace and support a plaza. Thus, instead of a full public plaza, an intermittent street where vehicular access is limited, or a full vehicular access street could be developed. The bus staging area for the Mill City Museum will be along 2nd Street downriver from the driveway.

From 2nd Street to Washington Avenue, Chicago Avenue will be a two-way, non-divided street with a wider sidewalk on the east side. Suggested improvements are included on page 25.

Washington Avenue

The planning process reiterated the participants' desire to transform Washington Avenue into a pedestrian/retail-friendly urban boulevard. Suggested improvements are included on page 27. Creating an environment that supports ground floor retail uses in existing and newly built structures remains a primary objective. An on-street parking test should be conducted on Washington Avenue since short-term parking is vital to retail uses.

Retail Development

As the new residential neighborhood develops, it will one day be necessary to have neighborhood service retail. It will be important for spin-off retail (especially eating and drinking establishments) to locate near the cluster of entertainment, recreational, and cultural uses that are proposed. The hope is that one day

Washington Avenue will be less of a barrier and the neighborhoods north and south of Washington will feel like they are more of a consistent whole. In such a case, 2nd Street South would not be the focal center of the area. Instead, Washington would be the center of a new neighborhood that would extend south from the river. Streets that connect from Elliot Park and Downtown East to the river (Chicago and Portland), would be of a higher order than those that do not connect (Park, 9th, and 10th). The intersections of high priority streets are the first places to encourage retail uses. Once retail is established at a select group of major intersections, retail could infill in the center of the blocks along the high priority streets. Building designs that allow for conversion of street-level space to retail uses should be considered. The location of retail should occur according to the following list of priorities ranked in order:

- 1 Intersection of Washington and Chicago
- 2 Intersection of 2nd and Chicago
- 3 Infill in interior of block along Chicago between Washington and 2nd Street South
- 4 Intersection of Washington and Portland / intersection of 11th and Washington / intersection of Washington and 5th
- 5 Intersection of 2nd and Portland
- 6 Infill in interior of blocks along Washington
- 7 Infill in interior of blocks along Chicago, south of Washington

Transit and Parking

The construction of the Downtown East LRT station will provide a new transit choice for the Mills District (see Figure 20). In order to further enhance transit access to and from the Mills District, the Guthrie Alternative recommends extension of a Metro Transit route (tentatively No.18) from the Nicollet Mall downtown, through the Mills District on 2nd Street, to the Downtown East LRT station. This route will need a turnaround/layover location, tentatively proposed for inclusion in parking to be built south of Washington.

In addition to vehicular parking needs, several uses will need locations for bus parking. These include school and tour buses for the Heritage Center, Guthrie and Metrodome. In the short-term, these could be accommodated in the ground floor of the Gateway parking facility. In the longer-term, bus parking also could be included in parking facilities to be built south of Washington.

The Guthrie Alternative proposes a plan to meet the parking needs for developments north of Washington, which is described in more detail in Part III of this report. The parking approach from the June 1998 plan remains in effect: all parking should to the maximum extent possible be below-grade. Where there is above-grade parking, buildings should line all or most of the exterior of the parking deck. Such 'liner' buildings should include actively programmed residential, commercial, or cultural uses. Parking for residential uses is

proposed to be included in the residential developments. The Milwaukee Depot project will include sufficient parking to meet its needs. Parking facilities on Parcels A and C will be sized to also support the parking needs for the Whitney Mill Quarter and Mill Place. Three additional public parking facilities are proposed to serve other new non-residential developments north of Washington. A 390-space ramp on Parcel D (lined on four sides by residential development) will provide the primary parking supply for the Mill City Museum and the office tenants above it. A parking facility of about 500 spaces is proposed under the Guthrie complex and will be used by Guthrie guests and other uses in the area. Another 500-space facility on Parcel E (lined on two sides by residential development) will meet overflow Guthrie needs, plus help support the parking needs for other non-residential uses in the area.

The proposed development in the Historic Mills District will displace about 2,900 existing surface parking spaces. Users of these existing spaces include the developments north of Washington, many buildings south of Washington that do not have their own dedicated parking, downtown commuters, and Metrodome and other special events. The parking plan described above will meet the needs of existing and new developments north of Washington but will not address the remaining displaced parking needs for the area south of Washington or downtown commuters.

In addition to encouraging enhanced transit options, the Guthrie alternative outlines two options for addressing these remaining displaced parking needs (see Part III). As shown in Figure 15, two major parking facilities totaling about 2,000 spaces could be built between Washington and the Metrodome, east of Chicago Avenue. These facilities would serve area buildings without sufficient parking, including Thresher Square, Open Book and Valspar, as well as Metrodome events. Proximity to the Downtown East LRT station also would allow these facilities to provide some peripheral downtown parking.

An alternative way to meet displaced parking needs would involve construction of about 2,000 parking spaces in mined underground space (see Figures 16 and 17). CNA Consulting Engineers explored utilizing mined underground space (i.e., in the sandstone layer about 60 feet under the surface, rather than immediately under the surface) for parking. They concluded that this type of parking is feasible in the Mills District. In the mined space parking alternative, only a small above-grade

facility would be required south of Washington, to provide transit lay-over and bus parking and some additional parking.

Both of these parking options merit further exploration as part of additional planning in the area, but neither is proposed for approval at this time.

Proposed Pedestrian Connections

A pedestrian tunnel under 2nd Street is proposed to connect the Parcel E parking facility to the Guthrie complex. If parking needs on the south side of Washington are met by above-grade facilities, skyways connecting those parking facilities to the Downtown East LRT station are recommended. With the exception of the approved skyway connection to the Milwaukee Depot, no skyways crossing Washington Avenue or crossing streets anywhere on the north side of Washington are recommended. Strict limitations of off-grade pedestrian systems will help to cultivate a healthy, vibrant street life in this new downtown neighborhood.

Plan Implementation

The Historic Mills District Master Plan establishes a framework to guide future land uses in the greater Mills District. This Plan Amendment is limited to the sub-area represented in Figure 5. Within this sub-area, all blocks except two are zoned C3A (Community Activity Center) which allows for the proposed uses. The two blocks bounded by West River Parkway, 10th, 11th and Washington Avenues are zoned I1 (Light Industrial). In order to implement the Plan Amendment, it is recommended that these two blocks each be rezoned to C3A at the appropriate time. This document's following sections—Guthrie Design Guidelines, Streetscape and Landscape Guidelines, Recommended Parking and Transportation Strategy, and Stormwater Management—provide additional information that will be valuable as the Plan Amendment is implemented.

HISTORIC MILLS DISTRICT UPDATE

I Guthrie Development Alternative

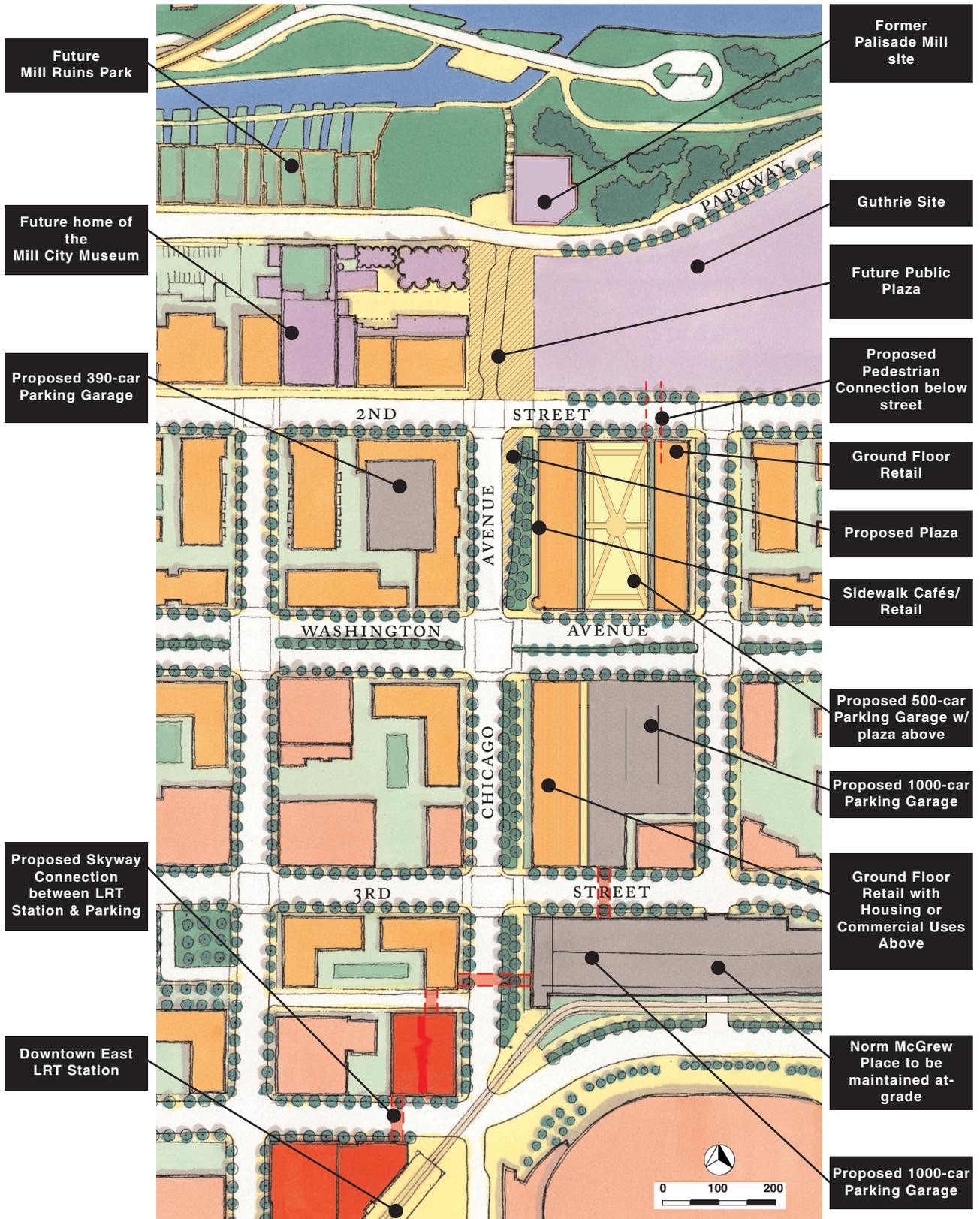


Figure 7 Chicago Avenue Preferred Alternative – Sidewalk Cafés/Retail Scheme

HISTORIC MILLS DISTRICT UPDATE

I Guthrie Development Alternative



Figure 8 Chicago Avenue Today: A parking lot from Washington Avenue to the Parkway



Figure 9 Chicago Avenue Tomorrow: The creation of a new public space will compliment the restoration of the Historic Mills Buildings, new residential development and the Guthrie Theater

HISTORIC MILLS DISTRICT UPDATE

I Guthrie Development Alternative

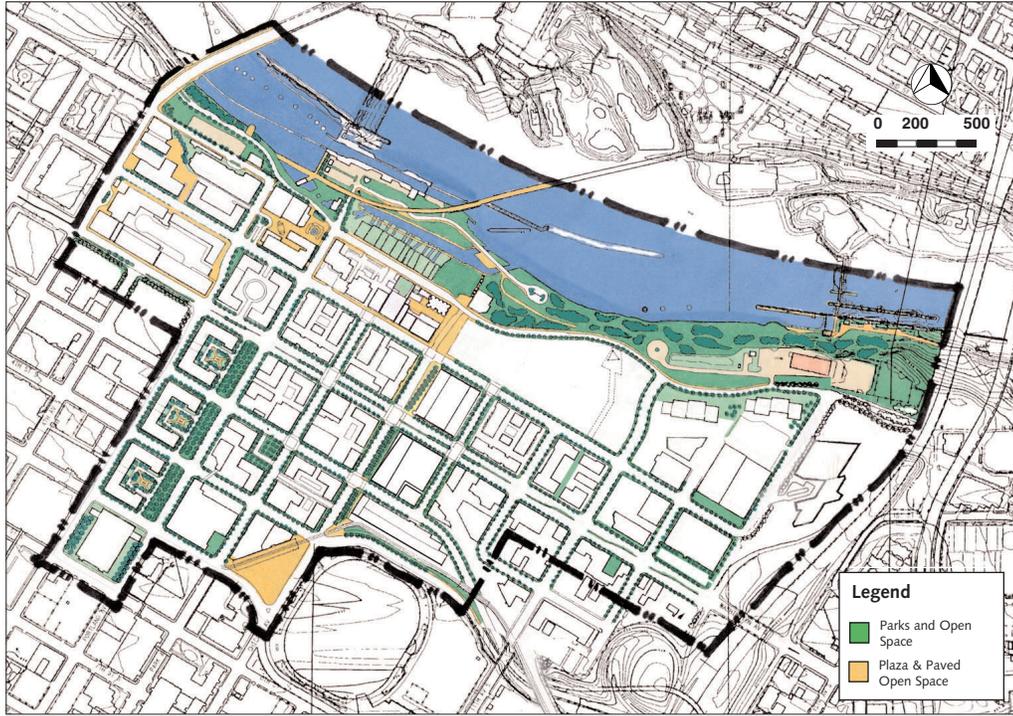


Figure 10 Streetscapes/Parks and Open Space Plan: Fingers of green space will connect the riverfront park to Downtown Note: To preserve the historically industrial character of the Mills District, new street trees are not recommended along street frontages which contain historic buildings

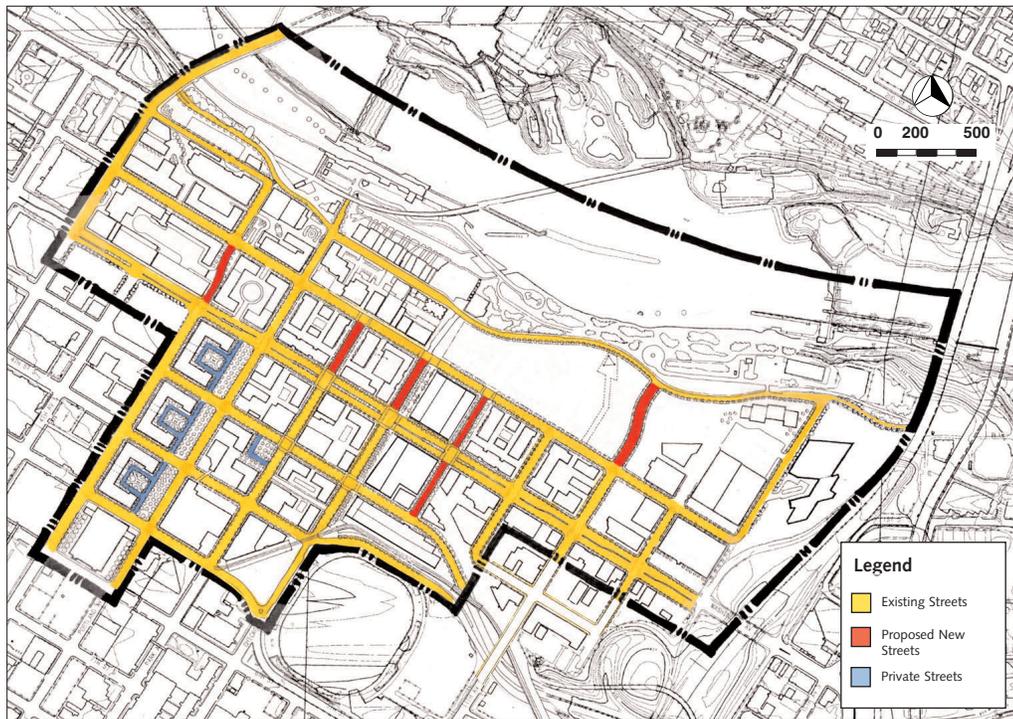


Figure 11 Public Improvements Plan: Downtown street grid will extend to the river

HISTORIC MILLS DISTRICT UPDATE

I Guthrie Development Alternative

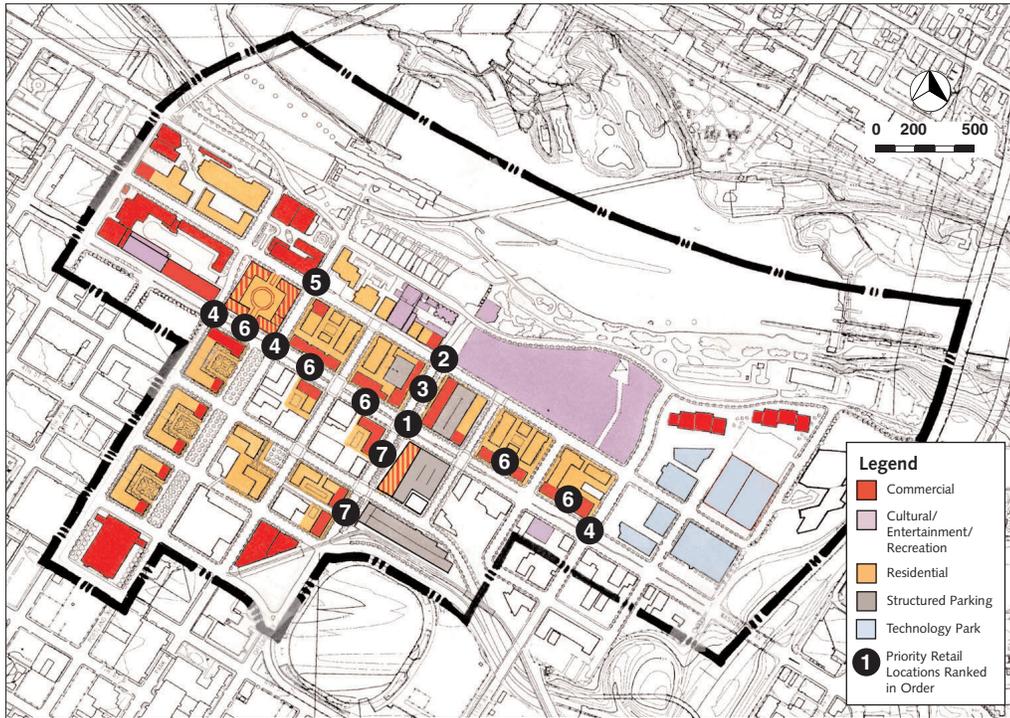


Figure 12 Ground Floor Land Use with Retail Prioritization indicated (does not include mined space parking)

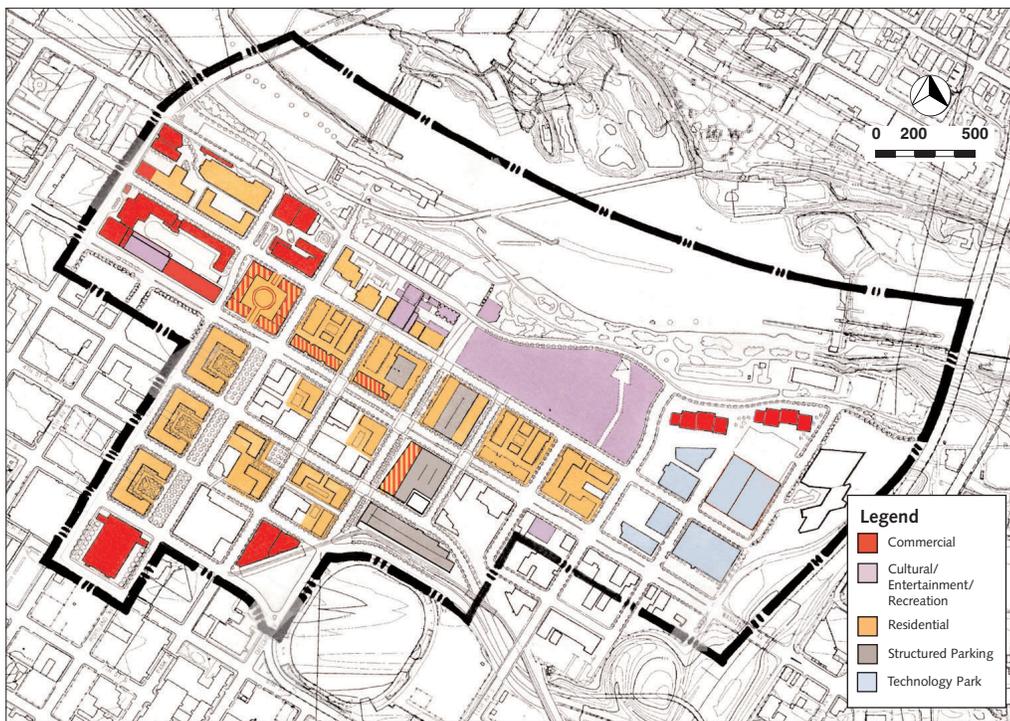


Figure 13 Land Use Second Story and Above

HISTORIC MILLS DISTRICT UPDATE

I Guthrie Development Alternative

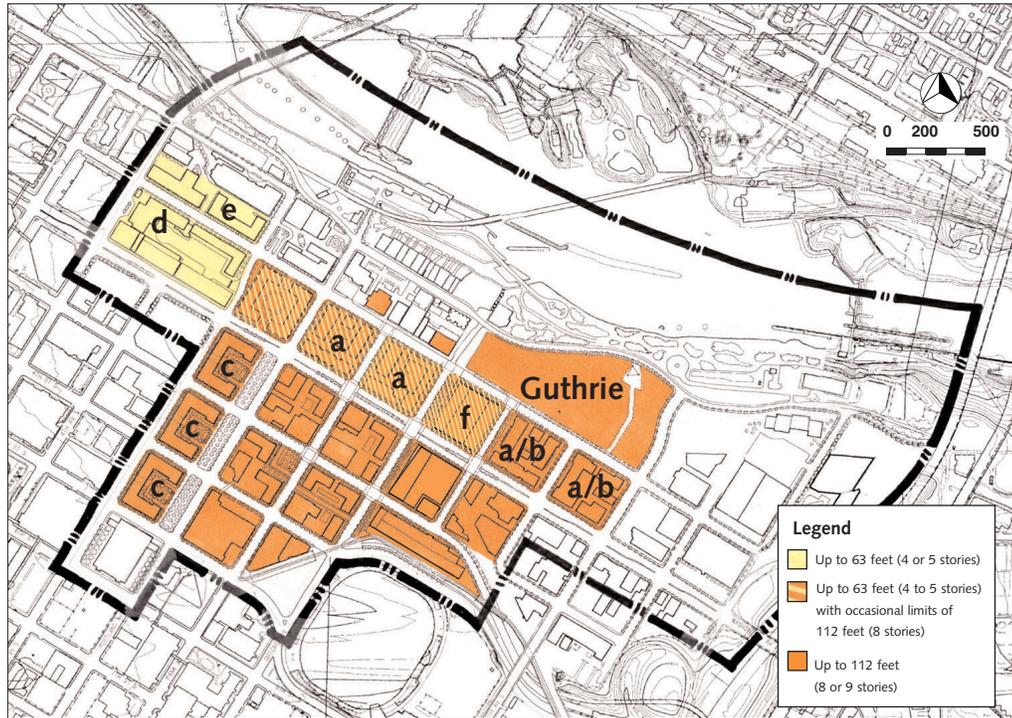


Figure 14 Proposed Building Heights (Letters reference block prototypes/illustrations)
Note: Prototypes a–e can be found in the original Historic Mills District Master Plan (published June 1998) adopted by the City Council in June 1999.

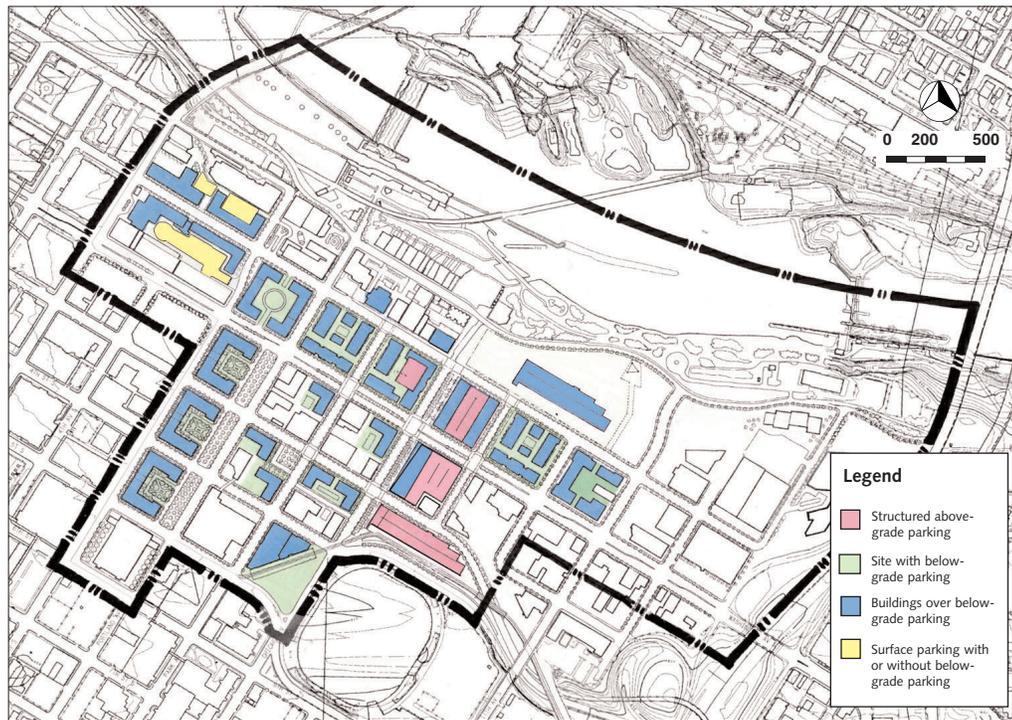


Figure 15 Parking: Each block's residential parking will be self-contained below-grade. Parking for non-residential uses will be provided in several strategically located shared parking facilities (does not include mined space parking).

HISTORIC MILLS DISTRICT UPDATE

I Guthrie Development Alternative

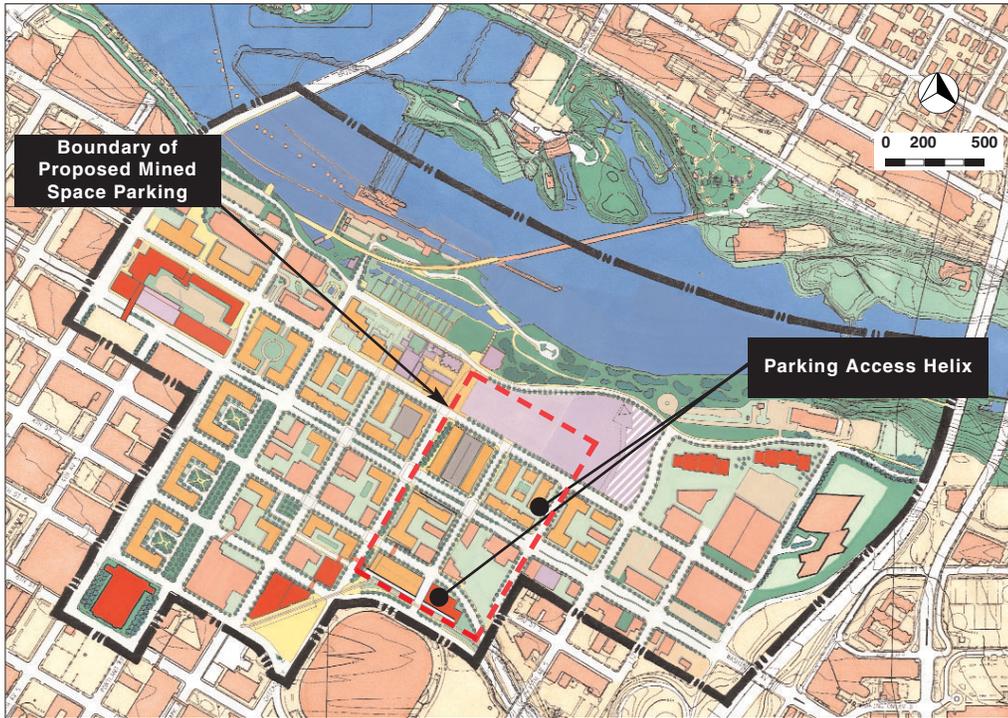


Figure 16 Mined Space Parking Master Plan

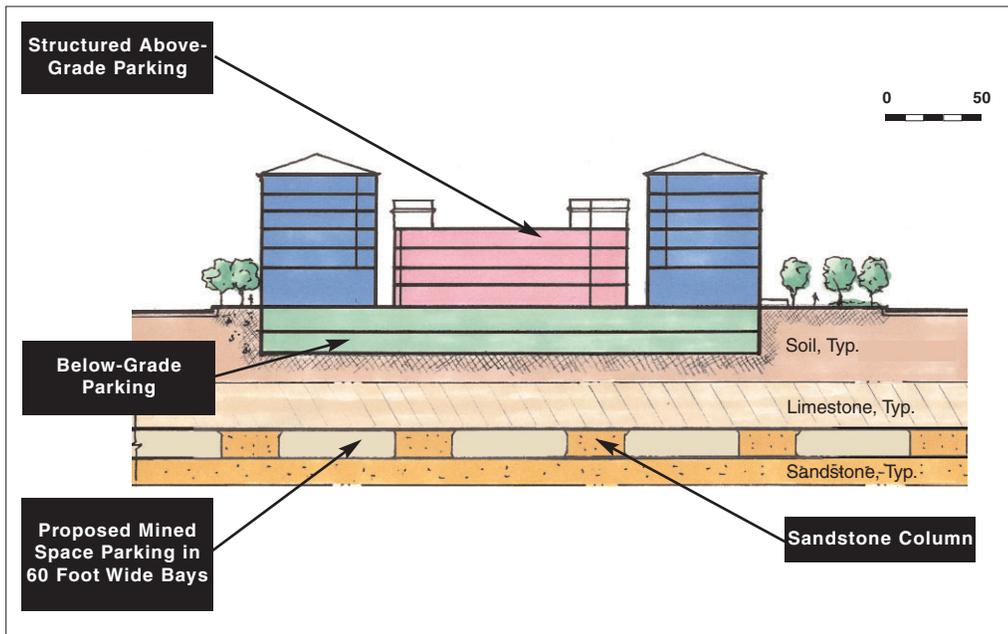


Figure 17 Cross Section illustrating structured above-grade parking, structured below-grade parking, and mined space parking within the sandstone layer.

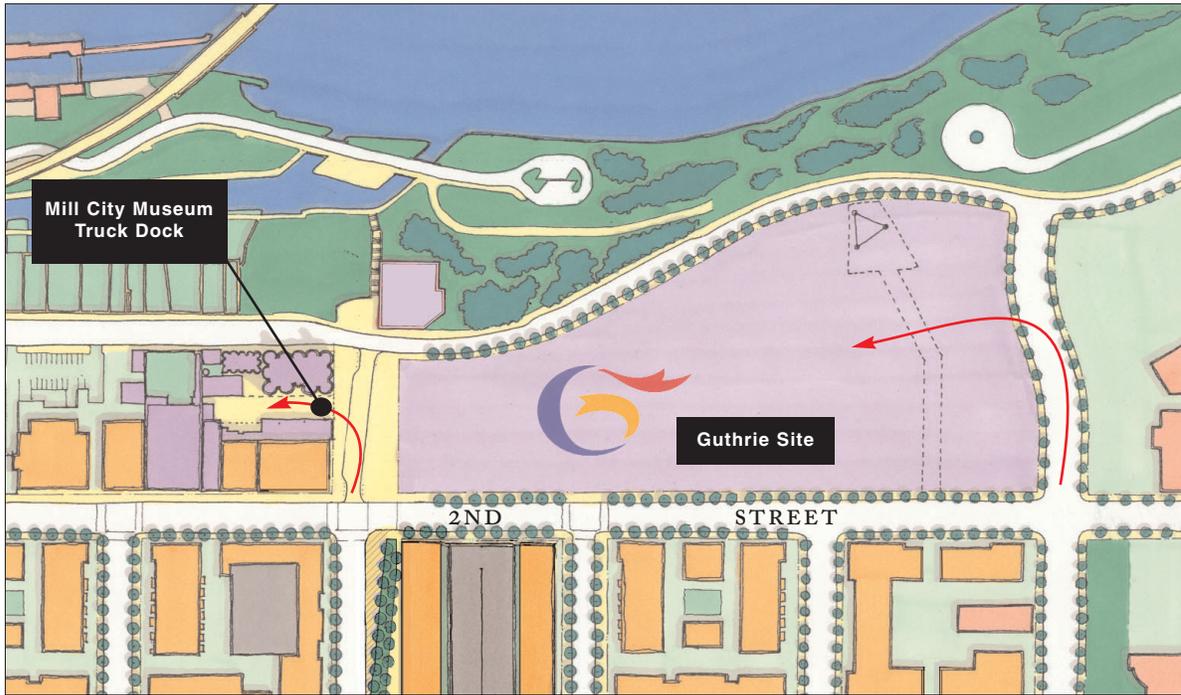


Figure 18 Proposed Truck Access: Truck access is not permitted along West River Parkway and will not be possible on the Chicago Avenue side of the building if a plaza is built. Truck access is possible on 2nd Street South if it is sited so that it does not create conflicts with pedestrian movements or increase truck traffic on primarily residential streets.



Figure 19 Proposed Bus Staging

HISTORIC MILLS DISTRICT UPDATE

I Guthrie Development Alternative

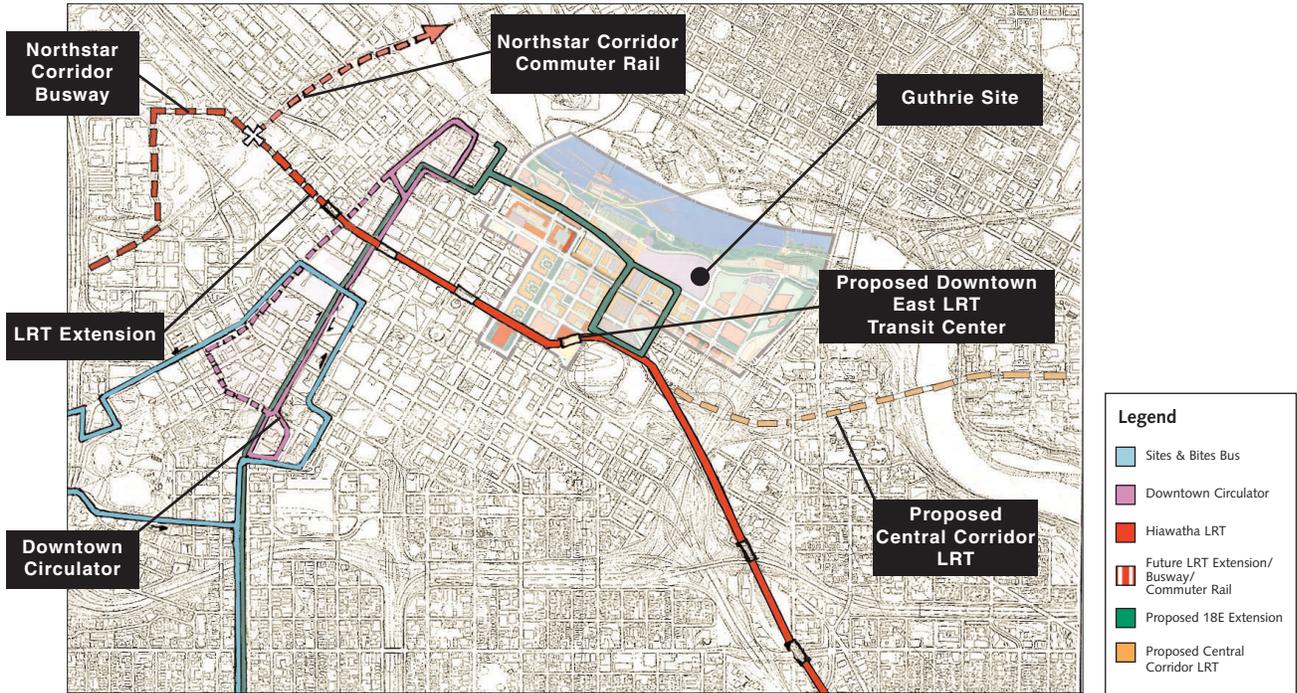


Figure 20 Major Transit Connections (Note: In addition, bus routes 7, 19 and 20 serve Washington Avenue east of 4th Avenue South; Routes 18 and 20 serve 4th Street South; and Routes 10, 17 and 25 serve the western end of the plan area along 3rd Avenue South.

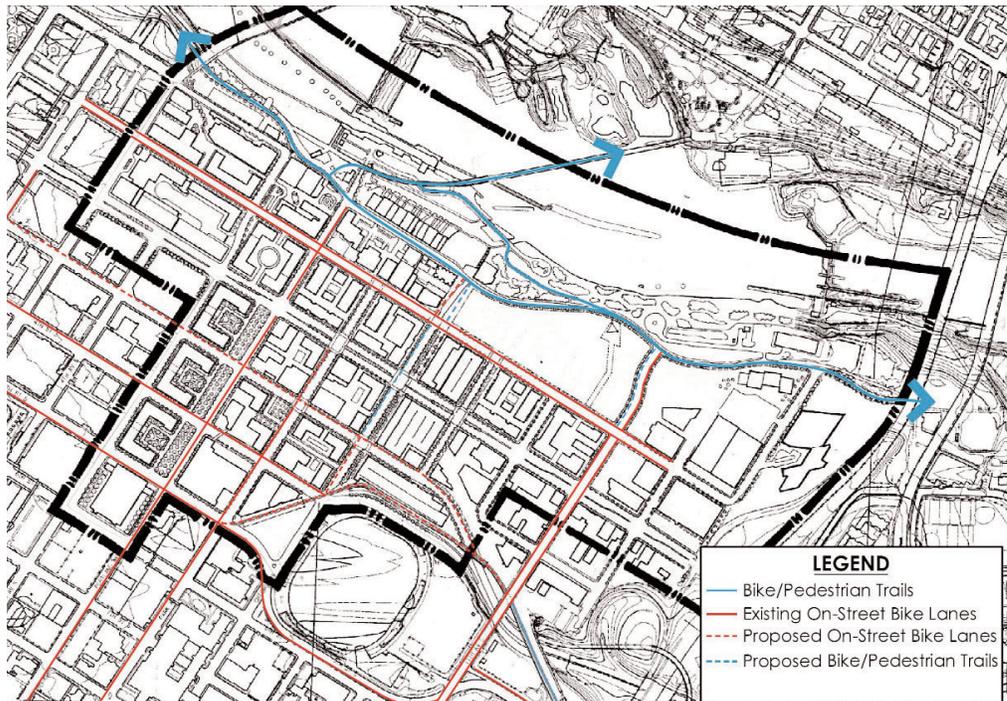


Figure 21 Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan: Creates links to existing connections

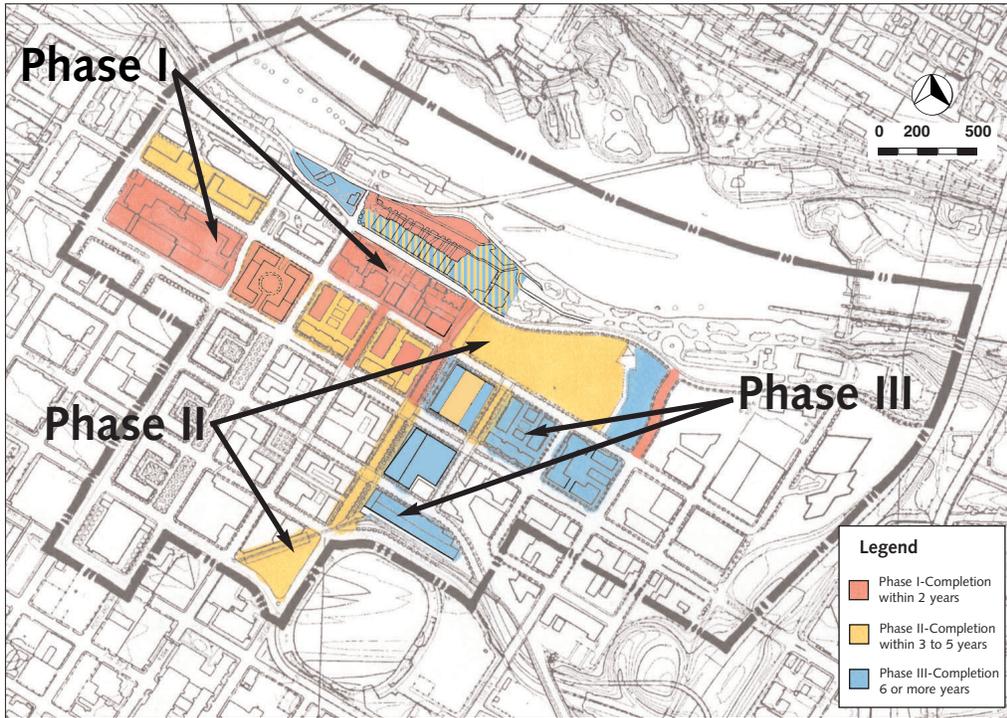


Figure 22 Phasing Plan: Build on existing strengths

II MILLS DISTRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES

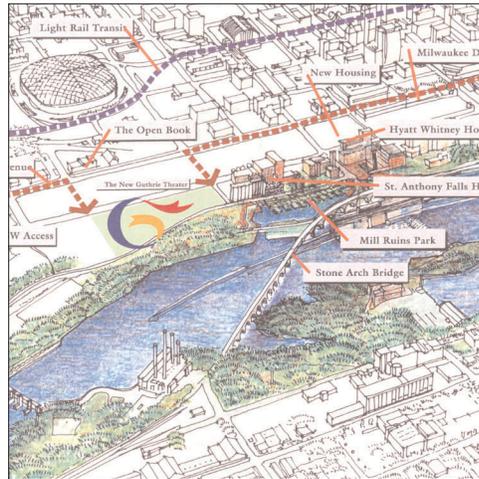


Image courtesy of the Guthrie



Figure 23 The Guthrie Site

1 Design Principles for the Guthrie Theater Complex

The site plan and architectural guidelines presented in this Plan Update are intended to guide the work of the architect to be appointed by the Guthrie Theater. The architectural style of the Guthrie is anticipated to be modern and iconic. The design guidelines therefore do not deal with architectural style, but rather with site planning issues, such as entrances, servicing, parking, setbacks, and impact on adjacent developments.

Although this plan does not include specific architectural guidelines, the Guthrie's architecture should be sensitive to its context and not have a negative impact upon the

existing or planned development on the adjacent blocks. Similarly, other developments – including Palisade Mill – must be physically and functionally compatible with the neighborhood.

The update of the Historic Mills District Plan offers an opportunity to establish design goals for how the Guthrie theater complex should fit into the context of its surroundings. Such goals are critical for two reasons. First, the theater complex will need to be well designed at different scales so that it relates well to riverfront vistas, the city skyline, and the neighborhood. Second, by nature, theaters are intended to close off their

audiences from the outside world in order to recreate a different reality on stage. Therefore, it is critical that the supporting functions of the complex are designed to create drama and activity that engages the outside world.

The Plan Update recognizes that: a) the Palisade Mill site is within a potential view corridor between the Guthrie Theater and Stone Arch Bridge / St. Anthony Falls, and b) the eastern block of Parcel 'D' is within a potential view corridor between the Guthrie Theater and the downtown skyline. As such, the Plan Update encourages the Guthrie Theater, Minneapolis Park and Recreation

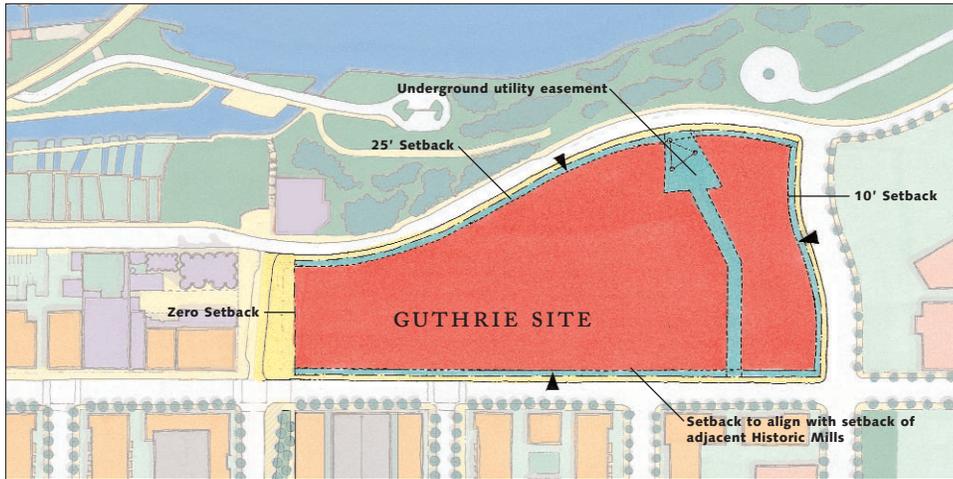


Figure 24 Minimum Required Set Backs from public right-of-way: An element of the future design, not necessarily structural, should attempt to frame the view looking up Chicago Avenue to the river. The building's west facade should define the plaza so that in conjunction with the Washburn A Mill, the view to the river is adequately framed.

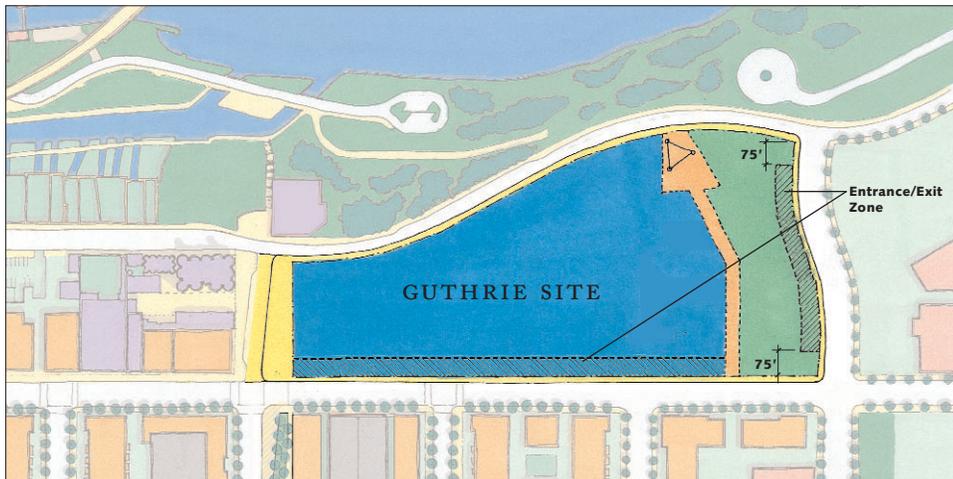


Figure 25 Parking Access – Parking access is not permitted along West River Parkway and will not be possible on the Chicago Avenue side of the building if a plaza is built. Parking access is possible on 2nd Street South but must not create conflicts with pedestrian movements or create traffic jams.

Board and Brighton Development to work cooperatively to formulate designs for their respective sites that ensure the highest possible public interest.

The south façade of the theater complex should be designed to punctuate view corridors up 9th and 10th Avenues. Transparency into or through the building and architectural flourishes are among the ways this could be achieved. It is also

worth considering opportunities to create view corridors—from the city to the river—that penetrate through the building at 9th and/or 10th Avenues.

A main goal is to avoid having the building act as a barrier between the city and the river. It should be pedestrian-friendly and approachable from all sides. There should not be long blank walls, nor should the building have a *back side*. The building should be respectful of the area

and aware of its *four addresses* (see Figure 27).

Visual and physical connections should be encouraged. Attention should be given to the view corridors up 9th and 10th Avenues. These are opportunities to continue the view to the river or to terminate it with something of visual interest. Views from across the river should also be considered.

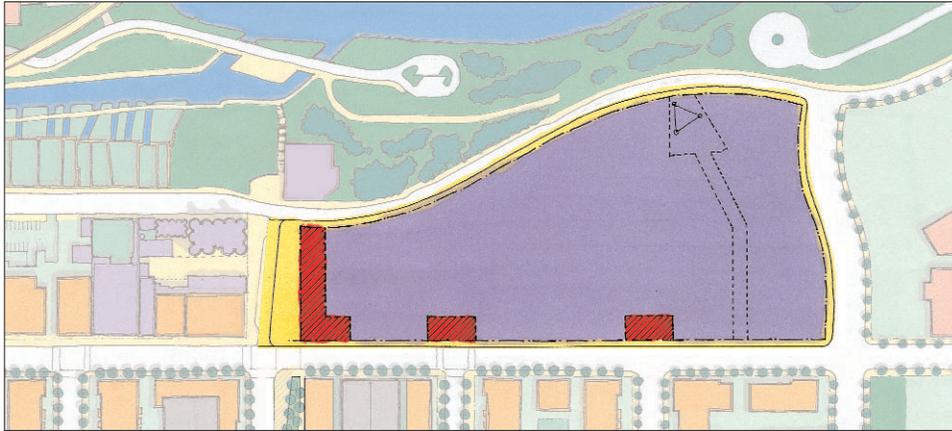


Figure 26 Primary Pedestrian Entry Points: The Plaza, 9th Avenue, and 10th Avenue. Note that additional secondary entry points elsewhere are acceptable

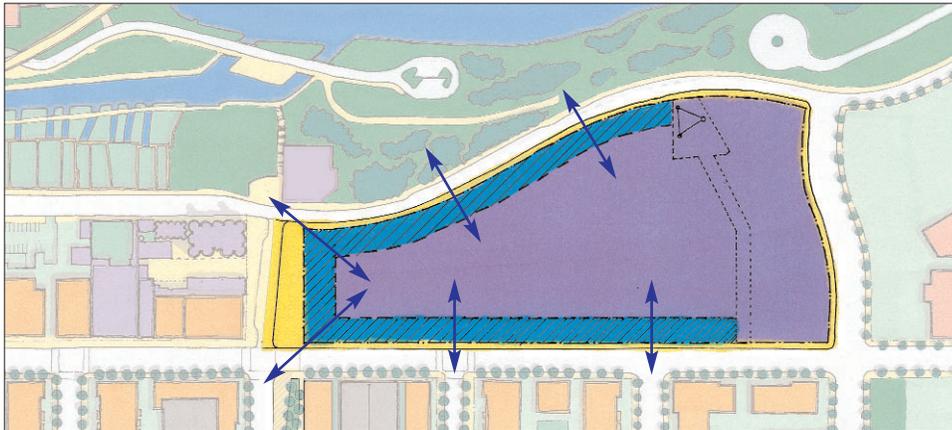


Figure 27 The site has four distinct addresses; Park (north), Urban (south), Service (east), and Plaza (west). The Park, Urban and Plaza addresses should complement adjacent uses by having active uses which are visible from the street.

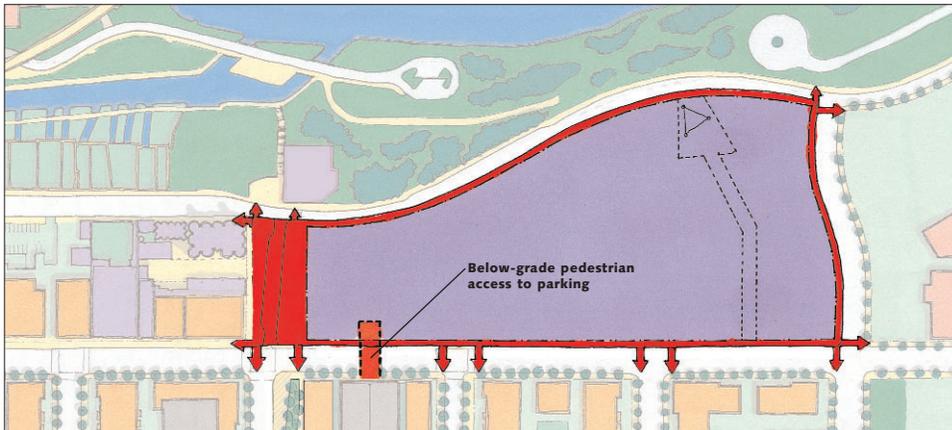


Figure 28 Pedestrian Access must be accommodated along the entire perimeter of the site.

2 Additional Prototype Blocks

Block Type f: High Density

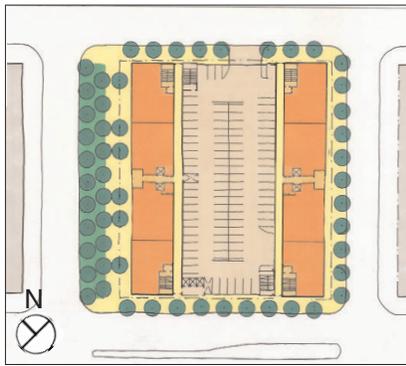


Figure 29 Ground Floor Plan

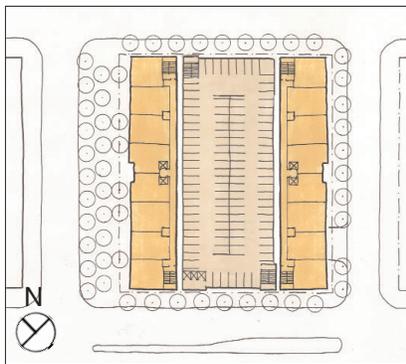


Figure 30 Typical Upper Floor Plan

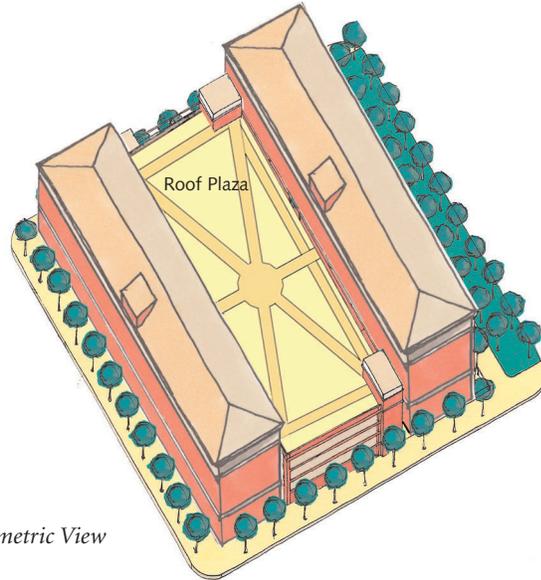


Figure 31 Axonometric View

Additional new buildings in the Mills District plan approval area upriver from Chicago Avenue should continue to be stylistically compatible with the existing commercial warehouse buildings of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Participants were split on the appropriate character for Parcels E-G. Some felt that these blocks should also reflect the district's Mill heritage while others felt that they may want to respond to the Guthrie or a more contemporary idiom. Either approach is acceptable.

Parcel E block illustration shows ground floor commercial uses with apartments or parking above. The

building heights vary in a manner similar to the existing warehouse buildings with the residential buildings extending up to eight stories. Both the residential buildings and parking garage line the streets, providing active commercial uses on the ground floor and a regular pattern of windows above. Residential parking is accommodated underground on two levels with additional parking on-street. Service loading would occur either in the central courtyard or along the curb of perimeter streets.

The 500-car parking garage will serve both the district and the Guthrie.

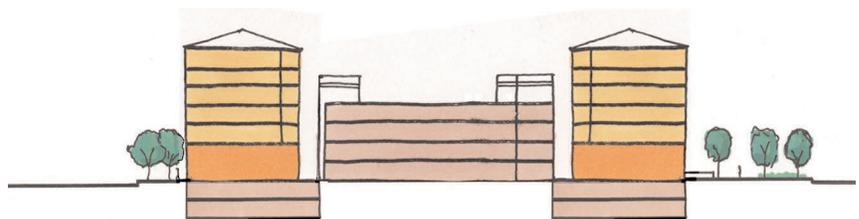


Figure 32 Site Section

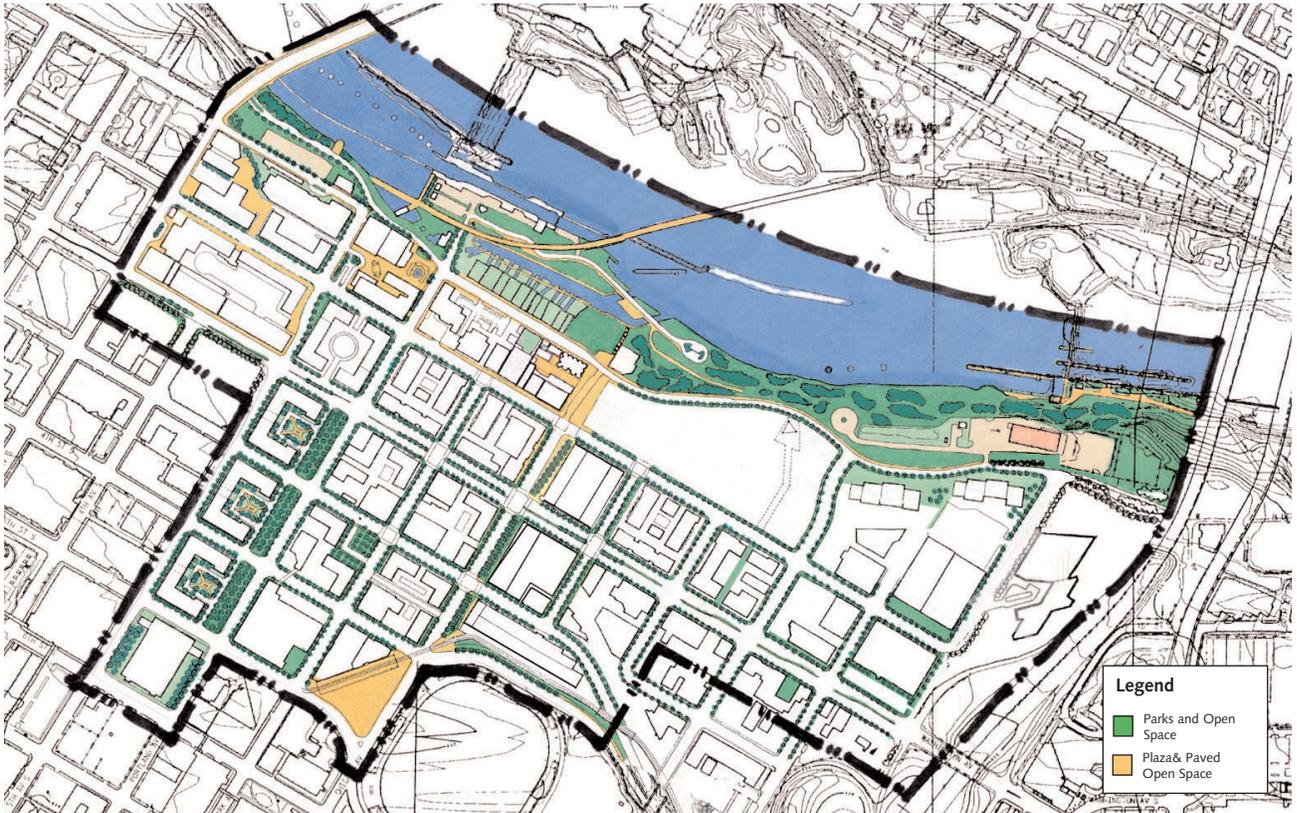


Figure 33 District-Wide Landscape Plan

3 Streetscape & Landscape Guidelines

Chicago, Washington,
9th and 10th Avenues

The following guidelines for streetscape and landscape improvements are intended to complement the original Historic Mills District Master Plan. Each street adjacent to the Guthrie is illustrated in both section and plan, and is accompanied by a list of proposed improvements.

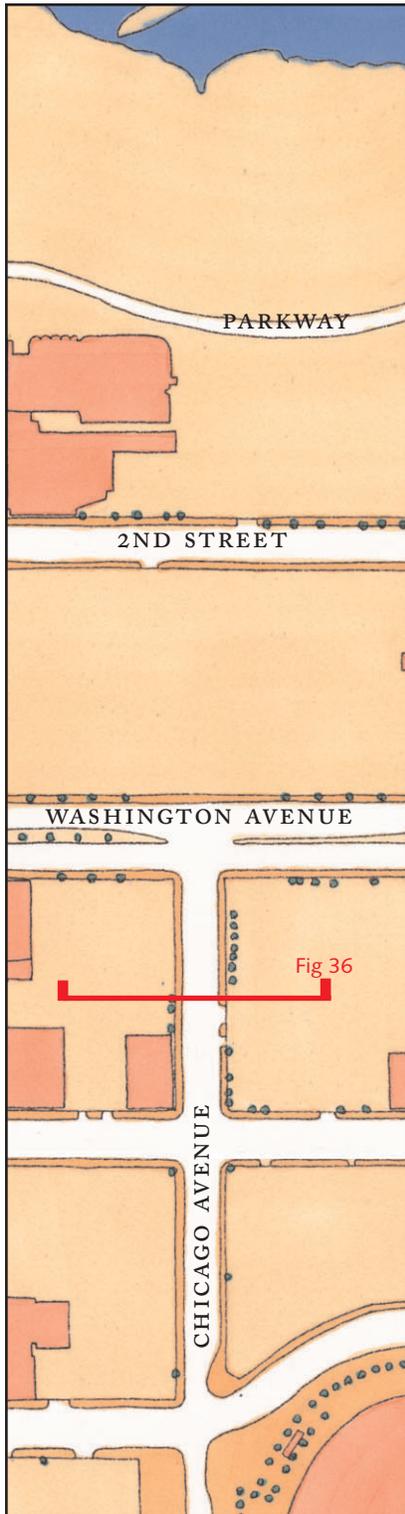


Figure 34 Chicago Today

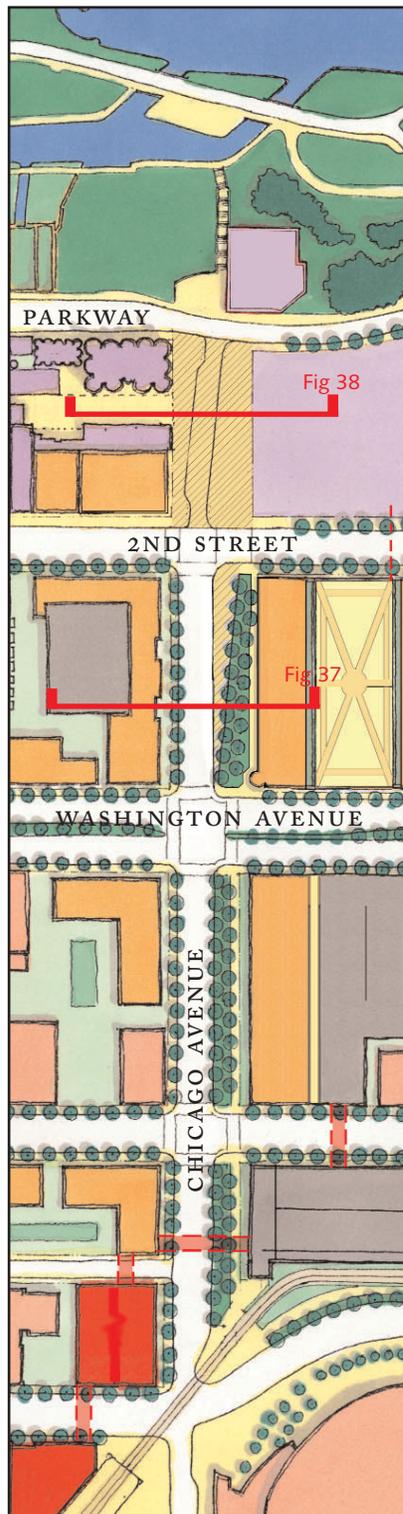


Figure 35 Preferred Chicago Avenue Alternative (to be determined)

Preferred Chicago Avenue Alternative (to be refined)

Chicago Avenue is proposed to be modified in such a way that it will pull the riverfront park into the city. Like Portland Avenue, Chicago Avenue will also act as a major pedestrian spine connecting the Metrodome area to the Historic Mills District.

Proposed improvements include:

- Four moving lanes between the Metrodome and 2nd Street, driveway access to Mill City Museum and Humboldt complex, public plaza on remainder of land between 2nd Street and the Parkway with through connection for pedestrians and bicycles.
- 20-foot wide setback adjacent to the west curb, with a 12-foot clear sidewalk area and an 8-foot verge, planted or paved with decorative paving.
- Medium-size street trees spaced at 30- to 40-foot-on-center along the sidewalk verges.
- Pedestrian-scaled street lights spaced uniformly 45-feet on center at the curb line along the street.
- Benches, monuments and other parklike features along the east curb. Pedestrian-scale street lights should be spaced 45 feet-on-center along the pathways in the plaza.
- A gradually increasing setback along the east curb from south to north. The setback increases from 40 feet between the Metrodome and Washington Avenue to 65 feet between Washington and 2nd Street.
- A hardscaped plaza between the Guthrie and the Mill City Museum.

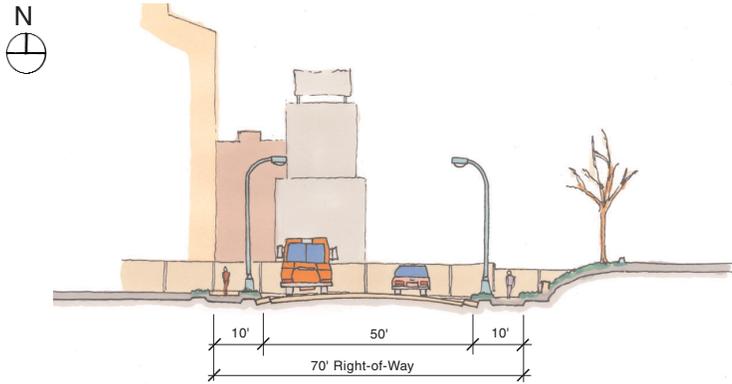


Figure 36 Existing Street Cross Section

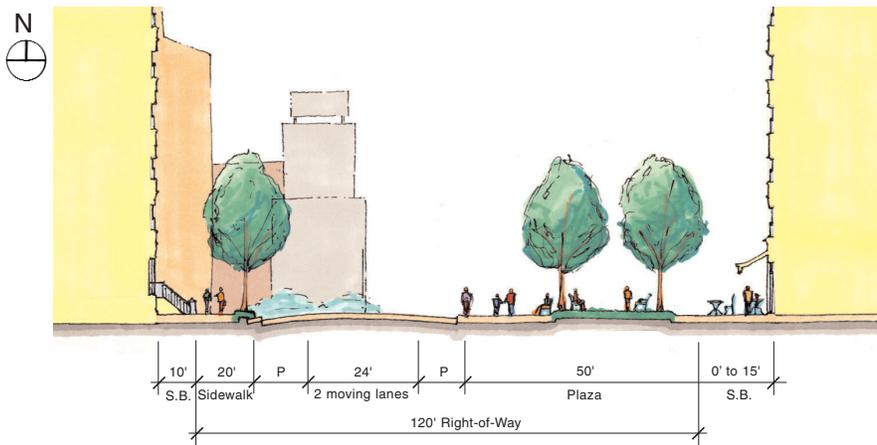


Figure 37 Cross Section of Proposed Chicago Avenue Extension

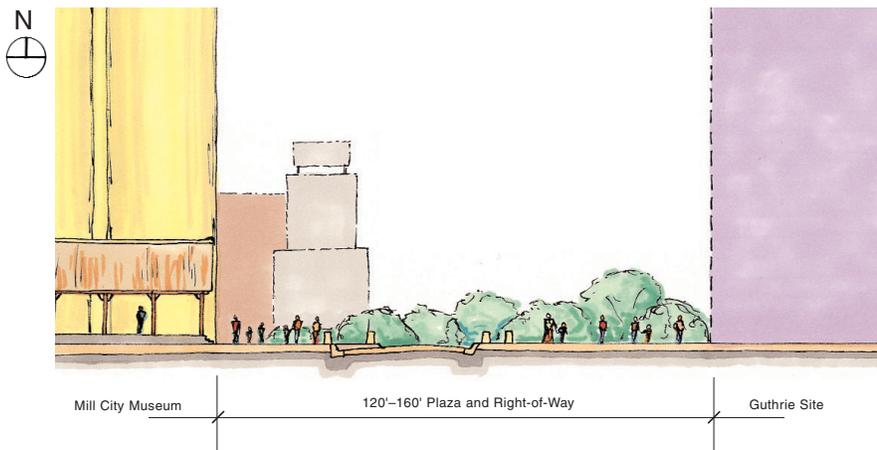


Figure 38 Cross Section through Chicago Avenue at the Guthrie

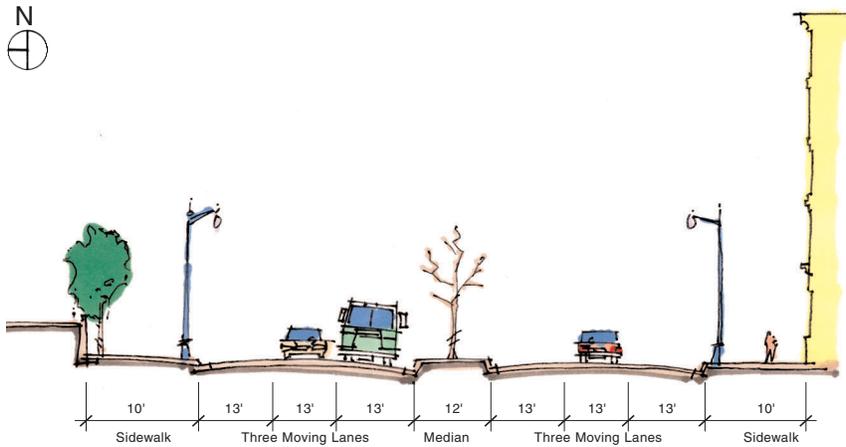


Figure 39 Existing Washington Avenue Cross Section

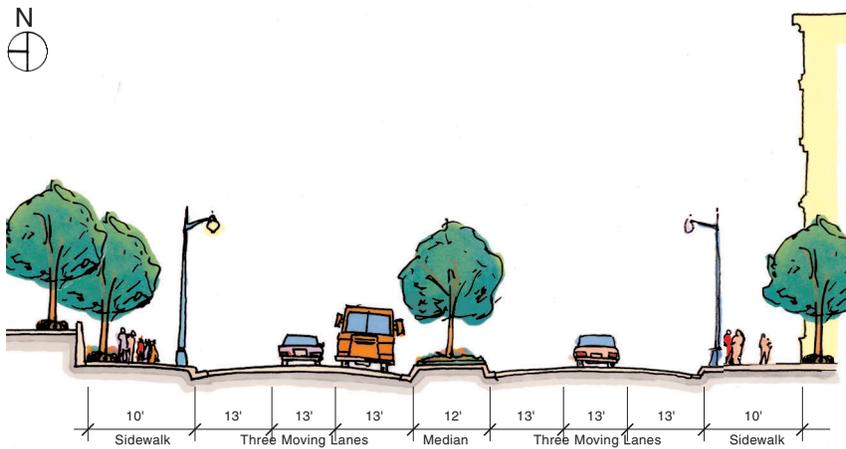


Figure 40 Interim Washington Avenue Cross Section

Washington Avenue Interim Plan

Washington Avenue is intended to be transformed from its present highway-like character into something better. A few modest improvements should be considered immediately.

Streetscape improvements should include:

- Repairs to the irrigation system in the median.
- Elevated street tree planters adjacent to the south curb.
- Large street trees spaced at 40-foot-on-center along the south curb, in the median, and above the north retaining wall. Existing large street trees should be preserved.

Note:

An On-Street Parking Test should be conducted on Washington Avenue since short-term parking is important to retail success.

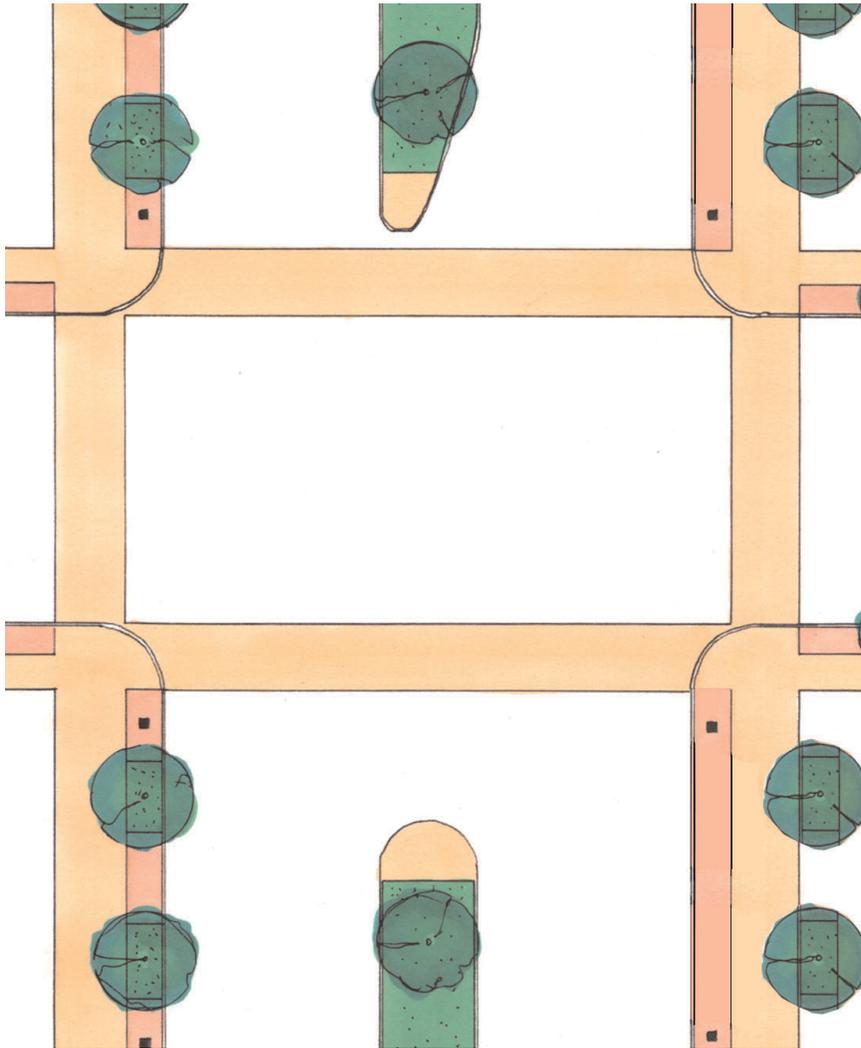


Figure 41 Proposed Plan of Washington Avenue

Washington Avenue Additional Improvements

Washington Avenue should eventually be transformed into a grand street. This image will enhance the pedestrian experience in crossing this wide thoroughfare.

Streetscape improvements include:

- With the Brighton development on Parcel D creating the new build-to line on the north side of Washington Avenue, a 13- to 17-foot-wide sidewalk adjacent to the north curb will be feasible. The new build-to line will help to preserve the westerly view corridor to the train shed.
- Historic high pole street lights along the outside curb lines at 120-foot on center, to give this street a special look.
- Pedestrian-scaled lights along both sides of the street and in the central median.
- Large shade trees planted along the north curb at 40 feet on center in elevated street tree planters or setback 8 feet from curb.
- Pedestrian bulb-outs (particularly at Chicago and side streets) and decorative crosswalks should be considered.
- Along the south curb, shade trees should be planted between buildings and south of the property line.
- Bus shelters should be accommodated wherever appropriate and feasible along Washington (and 2nd Street).

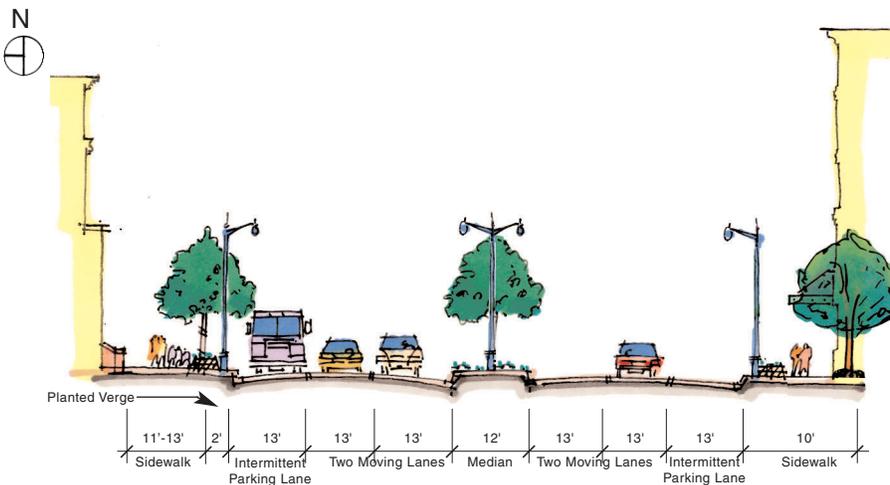


Figure 42 Proposed Cross Section of Washington Avenue

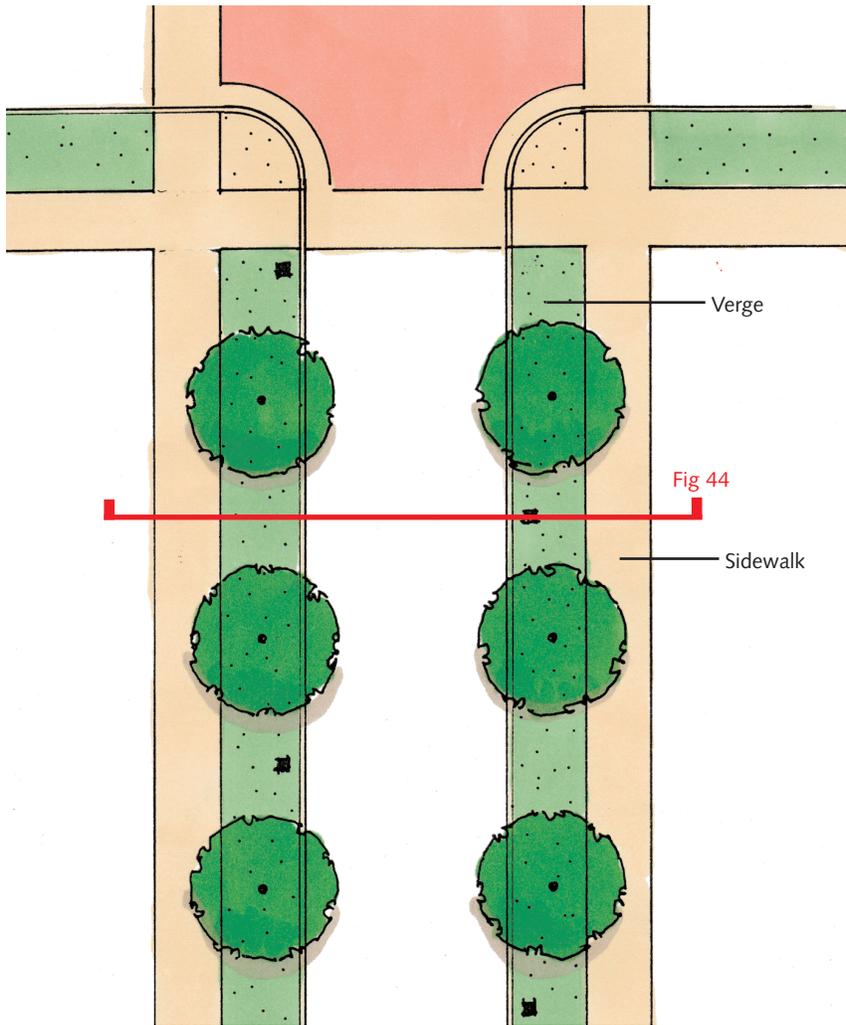


Figure 43 Plan of Proposed 9th and 10th Avenues

9th & 10th Avenues Extensions

To both frame the Guthrie and create an urban residential environment, buildings along 9th and 10th Avenues should be no more than 100 feet apart. This is the same approach that was used to frame the view of the Utility Building at the end of the Park Avenue extension.

Features will include:

- 40-foot wide street with parking on both sides.
- A pedestrian zone of 20-feet which includes a 13-foot paved or grass verge area with seven-foot sidewalks.
- Medium street trees at 30- to 40-feet on center, surrounded by perennial grasses.
- Pedestrian-scaled street lights at 45-feet on center, alternately spaced.
- A suggested 10-foot building setback to allow for a small front yard.

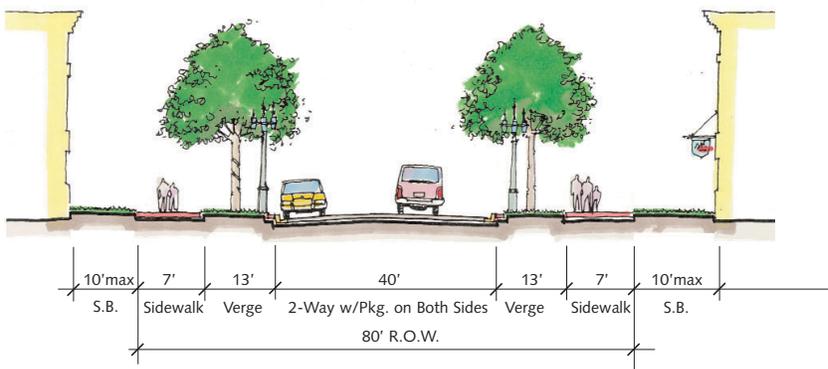


Figure 44 Cross Section of Proposed 9th and 10th Avenues

4 Stormwater Management

Surface parking lots that have not been maintained are among the worst contributors of contaminants to the stormwater runoff in an urban area. Therefore, implementation of the proposed development in the Mills District will substantially improve the quality of stormwater entering the system from the Mills District. The pollutants, (such as motor oil), litter and sediment from the existing surface parking lots are now washed into the storm system and eventually into the Mississippi River after any rain event. Replacement of these lots by structured parking and buildings will significantly improve the area's stormwater quality.

In addition, the following measures are recommended to further improve stormwater management in the Mills District:

- Private developers and the City of Minneapolis will be encouraged to avoid any parking areas that are not covered. Roof decks on top of any above-grade parking ramps would achieve this goal, as well as providing potential outdoor open space for residents.
- In accordance with the city-wide stormwater management ordinance, developers will be required to prepare and implement stormwater management plans for their projects. For the Mills District area, this is expected to be primarily focused on management practices (e.g., sweeping of walks and plazas) to reduce the amount of sediment and litter entering the

storm sewer system. The Metropolitan Council, along with Minneapolis and St. Paul, is preparing a manual of *Best Management Practices* to assist in identifying appropriate techniques. In addition, in any cases in which the roof of an existing building drains into the sanitary sewer system, developers will be required to revise the drainage to use the storm sewer instead.

- Given the urban location of the Mills District and the desire to recognize its history as an industrial area, it is not expected that there will be large areas of vegetated open space or stormwater treatment ponds. However, wherever vegetated open space is planned within private developments or the public right-of-way, private developers and the city will be encouraged to consider designing those landscaped areas to provide some level of stormwater treatment and short-term retention.
- The City of Minneapolis will continue to pursue overall improvements to enhance water quality, such as installation of grit chambers to capture sediment from the area before it enters the Mississippi River. The City and Metropolitan Council Environmental Services also will continue to seek revisions to the sanitary sewer system to resolve the odor problems associated with certain parts of the system in the Mills District.

III EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF TRAFFIC AND PARKING TECHNICAL REPORT



Executive Summary

Traffic and Parking Technical Report

As part of the process to update the Historic Mills District Plan, SRF Consulting Group, Inc. was retained to evaluate parking and traffic as they relate to the new vision for the Historic Mills District.

This report is the technical supplement to the Historic Mills District Plan Update, December 2000 on issues relating to traffic and parking. This report accomplishes the following items:

- summarizes the traffic and parking issues identified during plan update process,
- inventories parking user groups and their needs,
- details locations and conceptual designs for potential new parking facilities,
- conducts a macro-level economic evaluation for each proposed facility,
- explores the feasibility of using underground mined space for parking, and
- recommends strategies to address the identified parking and traffic problems.

Three summary tables, four financial proformas and the complete Mined Space Parking Study Report are included as Appendices to the SRF Traffic and Parking Technical Report.

The following is a summary of recommended strategies.

Traffic

- Extension of the Downtown Grid System – The extension of the downtown grid will disperse traffic volumes over multiple streets, thereby lessening the need for new arterial style roadways
- Roadway Design – Each new roadway should be designed and constructed with a minimum of one through-lane, plus turn lanes in each direction. At major generators (i.e., parking facilities) the roadway should be sized to accommodate adequate vehicular storage for both pre and post event operation, particularly for all ramps east of Portland Avenue
- Balancing Vehicular and Pedestrian Needs – Washington Avenue must be retained as a major arterial for distributing vehicular traffic. At the same time, safe pedestrian crossings must be established at all cross-streets. Improving the pedestrian crossing experience should be considered encouraged.

New Parking Facilities

To meet the needs of the proposed non-residential development, the current users in and adjacent to the area and downtown commuters, the construction of a minimum of 3,000 replacement public parking spaces is recommended. Redevelopment in the

Historic Mills District will change the parking profile of the neighborhood from one based on being an absorber of parking demand (surface parking lots) to being a generator of parking demand (high density, mixed-use development). The surface parking lots serve tenants of several area buildings (e.g., Thresher Square, McDonald Building and American Trio) that do not have a dedicated off-street parking supply. In addition, these lots are used as part of the peripheral parking supply for downtown commuters. These surface lots are fully utilized on a daily basis. The Historic Mills District will lose approximately 2,900 surface parking spaces that are currently serving the neighboring uses and downtown commuters (see Table 1 of Appendix A). In addition, there are three cultural and recreational facilities (Guthrie, Mill City Museum, Milwaukee Depot Skating Rink) and several office and retail developments proposed for the Historic Mills District that will need access to parking.

The location and massing of several parking facilities were preliminarily identified in work sessions and a design charrette (see below and Figure 3). The following facilities are recommended for consideration as a means for meeting the projected parking demand for the area north of Washington Avenue:

- All residential developments will include sufficient structured parking in or under the developments to meet the residential parking needs.
- The Milwaukee Depot project will include 560 structured parking spaces to meet its own needs, plus provide some general area parking.
- Parking facilities on Parcels A and C will be sized to also support the parking needs for the Whitney Mill Quarter and Mill Place.
- A 300-plus public parking structure should be developed between Park and Chicago avenues, Washington and Second Street. The primary user group for this ramp will be employees and visitors to the Mill City Museum and office space above.
- The Guthrie Theater site should have approximately 500 to 650 spaces developed under or adjacent to the theater complex.
- The block bound by the proposed Chicago Avenue connection (Washington Avenue to Second Street) and the proposed Ninth Avenue connection (Washington Avenue and Second Street) could accommodate an approximately 500 stall, above-grade structure.

The parking plan described above will meet the needs of existing and new developments north of Washington, but will not address the remaining displaced parking needs of the area south of Washington or downtown commuters. Two options for meeting these remaining needs are proposed for further consideration.

Option One Two above-grade parking facilities could be constructed south of Washington:

- Chicago Avenue and the proposed Ninth Avenue connection, Third Street and Washington Avenue could accommodate an approximately 1,000 stall, above-grade structure with a transit facility located on the lower level. The transit facility would serve as a layover facility for both Minneapolis Route 18 and tour/charter/school buses. (This facility is referred to as the Third Street and Ninth Avenue Ramp).
- The block bound by Chicago Avenue, Fourth Street and Third Street could accommodate an approximately 1,000 stall, above-grade structure with a transit facility that would serve tour/charter/school buses. Access to Third Street or a ramp building over Norm McGrew Place would be highly recommended. (This facility is referred to as the Fourth Street and McGrew Ramp).

Option Two Mined space parking beneath the Historic Mills District as an alternative to the Third Street and Ninth Avenue Ramp and part of the Fourth Street and McGrew Ramp (see Summary of Mined Space Parking Study and Appendix C).

Mined Space Parking

Parking built to date in Minneapolis has been located in surface spaces or in structures located immediately above-grade or underground. As described in Appendix C to the Historic Mills District parking and traffic report, the Historic Mills District

area is geologically appropriate for construction of another alternative – parking in ‘mined space’ that could be excavated from the soft sandstone layer located underneath the limestone bedrock. Conceptual plans to build 2,322 spaces under the Historic Mills District are illustrated in the mined space appendix to the parking and traffic report. These spaces would be accessed via vehicular entrance/exit helices and pedestrian elevator cores. The cost to build these spaces is projected to be at the high end of the cost range for typical underground spaces, but mined space parking offers certain long-term maintenance advantages and would add substantially to the parking capacity of the area without utilizing precious surface space. The parking/traffic report suggests that the mined space option be evaluated as an alternative to additional above-grade parking facilities south of Washington. If mined space parking is deemed feasible, the space that would have been occupied by above-grade parking could instead be developed for appropriate mixed-use development.

Bus Parking

Several proposed uses in the Historic Mills District will generate significant numbers of buses which will need layover locations until the activity in question is over. These include school, tour and charter buses attending the Mill City Museum, Guthrie Theater performances and Metrodome events. Bus layover parking cannot and should not be accommodated on city streets.

In the near-term, buses could layover in the ground level of the existing Gateway parking facility. As that facility is planned to be converted to a bus garage/maintenance facility, provision should be made for other bus layover facilities. One option that is recommended for consideration is inclusion of layover parking in the ground level of the 3rd Street and 9th Avenue Ramp and the 4th Street and McGrew Place Ramp.

Shared Parking Program

An aggressive shared parking program could minimize the total number of parking spaces needed over the 3,000 base to meet projected demand of the Mills District and surrounding area. Several opportunities for sharing parking exist in the area and should be clarified by the major generators as parking is developed. Major generators must coordinate schedules to allow shared parking to be successful.

Improved Transit

Enhancing of both fixed route and circulator operations in and around the Mills District will make transit a more viable option for certain types of trips, reducing the need for some parking.

Pedestrian Connections

The creation of well-designed, at-grade pedestrian connections throughout the Mills District, and particularly across Washington Avenue, would reduce the isolation

of remote or difficult to reach parking supplies and facilitate easier movement of people between parking and their final destinations.

Bicycle Connections

The creation of dedicated bicycle lanes in the Mills District will enhance the emerging neighborhood by creating additional connections to Downtown and the riverfront park. In addition, a functional bicycle system may reduce some trips otherwise taken by automobile, thereby reducing demand for parking.

Parking Facility Economics

Public or private parking in the Mills District area should be developed with an operational goal of economic self-sufficiency while supporting the development and needs of the community.

Parking Facility Aesthetics

Exposed facades of parking facilities should be designed to look like occupied buildings.