

MINNEAPOLIS PLANNING DEPARTMENT REPORT
LRT STATION AREA MASTER PLAN

DATE: December 11th, 2001

PROJECT NAME: 46th & Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan

SUBMITTED BY: Planning Department

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WARD: 12

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS:

- Longfellow Community Council
- Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association (SENA)
- Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA)

MINNEAPOLIS PLAN DESIGNATIONS:

- LRT Station Study Area
- Minnehaha Avenue *Community Corridor* (South from 45th Street)
- Minnehaha Avenue *Major Housing Site*
- 34th Avenue *Community Corridor*
- 50th Street & 34th Avenue South *Neighborhood Commercial Node*

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The 46th & Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan is part of a series of long-range studies being completed for transit-oriented development (TOD) around Hiawatha LRT station sites. It focuses on land uses, urban design, public infrastructure, and amenities located within a 1/2-mile of the station. The purpose of the Plan is to guide changes that build upon neighborhood strengths and capitalize on opportunities that may include:

- Future mixes of new businesses, housing, and neighborhood amenities;
- Improvements to the pedestrian environment;
- Enhancement of parks and green space; and
- Improving the accessibility and fit of the station with the neighborhood.

The Plan was developed with public participation and guidance from both community and technical advisory committees. The Plan will inform City policy, guiding changes to the City's Comprehensive Plan, zoning regulations, redevelopment activity, and capital improvement plans.

FUTURE RELATED ACTIONS:

Proposed amendments to the Minneapolis Plan, necessary to support implementation activities, are being developed for future consideration.

Following or concurrent with amendments to the Minneapolis Plan, the Planning Department will develop proposed text amendments and zoning map changes for a new station area overlay district (Rail Transit Overlay District, or RTOD). This district will be based upon general Minneapolis Plan policies for station area transit oriented development (TOD), in addition to the specific planning objectives that have emerged from City-wide station area planning. The primary goals of this effort will be to prevent the expansion or introduction of inappropriate uses and to ensure appropriate regulation of new development in station areas.

Further MCDA redevelopment planning and implementation activities will occur, and may include amendments to redevelopment TIF districts and plans, such as the modification of district boundaries and/or budgets.

Specific development approvals, whether privately or publicly sponsored, will likely require review by the Planning Commission, and may include subdivision, rezoning, site plan review, and conditional use permits.

46th & Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan

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Purpose/Authors/Acknowledgements

The 46th & Hiawatha Station Area planning process was funded through a grant from the Federal Transit Administration, which was managed by Hennepin County Transit & Community Works in cooperation with the City of Minneapolis. The area of this Plan includes Longfellow, Standish-Ericsson, and Nokomis East. A Community Steering Committee (CSC) included neighborhood representatives and appointed persons, and met ten times throughout the process. A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), representing numerous public agencies, also provided input at no less than four meetings. The Appendix includes a listing of the consulting team as well as the members and meeting dates of the TAC and CSC. Additional public presentations are also identified in the Appendix.

In December of 1998, the City Council approved a resolution stating its goals for the Hiawatha Corridor. Among these goals was a commitment to prepare plans for station areas that incorporated neighborhood planning with TOD planning principles, to maximize the benefits provided by new transit investment in the Hiawatha corridor. Language in the Minneapolis Plan (approved in March 2000) also stated the city's commitment to station area planning in the Hiawatha Corridor (Chapter 8.0 Movement, policy 8.8).

Process

The formal planning process began of September of 2000 and ended in April 2001. Activities since then have included consultant preparation of drafts and revised drafts, agency and public review of drafts, and the reproduction and distribution of the final draft to the public. The Plan became available on the City's web site on October 31st, 2001, and distributed to various stakeholders shortly thereafter. The formal review process ends December 15th, 2001, with tentative action by the City Planning Commission on December 11th and by the Zoning and Planning Committee of the Minneapolis City Council on December 18th.

There were many opportunities for formal neighborhood and technical input as well as general participation at five public workshops. A consulting team provided the key land use, urban design, and market research expertise, as well as conducted the public workshops. Documentation of the results of each workshop were presented in a newsletter, which has been previously distributed and is available to review on the Planning Department's web site.

Background /Context/Market Analysis

Existing Land Use

The character of the station area as viewed from Hiawatha Avenue varies a great deal. The grain elevators to the north of the LRT station are landmarks that remind travelers of historic industrial activity. Aside from this, the route is lined with one-story light industrial buildings on the east and single-family homes behind sound walls on the west.

Minnehaha Creek, Minnehaha Park, Hiawatha Avenue, and the rail corridor are the primary interruptions to a traditional urban grid street pattern in the station area. Most of the 1/2-mile planning area consists of detached single-family homes. Over 90 percent of the housing units in the 46th Street Study Area are single-family detached units or duplexes, and three-quarters of

housing are owner-occupied. Garages in the back and relatively small lot sizes contribute to the urban feel of the neighborhood.

The street system in the area has different layers of form and function. Most residential streets are 32' feet wide with building faces about 106' feet apart, creating a sense of enclosure and protection. The approach from the east along 46th Street brings one through the quiet neighborhoods of Standish and Ericcson. The views are of the Minnehaha Creek, it's surrounding parkland, and traditional Minneapolis bungalows.

In contrast, Hiawatha Avenue (Trunk Highway 55) and 46th Street (County Road 46 east of Hiawatha) carry larger volumes of traffic at higher speeds. A combination of a wide a right-of-way and industrial building forms result in a typical highway-oriented character on Hiawatha. Forty-Sixth Street east of Hiawatha is designated as a (four-lane) arterial roadway, connecting Hiawatha with Saint Paul via the Ford Parkway Bridge.

There is a contrast of existing commercial uses in the station area. Some "mom and pop" shops and restaurants are located on the corners along Minnehaha Avenue as well as on other sites throughout the area. These structures are typically built to the street, some are multi-story, and few provide more than minimal off-street parking. In contrast, more suburban-style buildings line the Hiawatha right-of-way. These businesses include (north to south) Walgreens, a Conoco station Burger King, and the Parkway Plaza strip mall. Large paved areas, including parking and drive aisles, surround all of these uses. Their sites also include large freestanding signs targeting motorists on Hiawatha.

Like much of the Hiawatha corridor, a large part of the station area includes a distinct industrial district. North of 46th Street, and between Hiawatha and the rail corridor, most of the uses are light industrial. These structures are typically one-story with ample parking immediately adjacent. While these businesses are generally successful and have been a part of the neighborhood for some time, the buildings lack architectural quality.

There is very little physical or functional synergy among the land uses in the Study Area. Much of the land in the station area is underutilized or occupied by land uses that do not require the locational attributes of the station area. The commercial mix indicates that there are few multi-purpose trips occurring in the commercial area. The commercial area is not conducive to walking or biking. The commercial and residential development density is suburban in character and not transit-oriented.

Finally, Minnehaha Park is an important asset in the station area. Approximately two blocks south of 46th Street near the Park, Hiawatha Avenue passes underneath a newly constructed land bridge, which allows Minnehaha Parkway to pass over Hiawatha Avenue, better connecting neighborhoods to the west with the park. The 46th Street Station is within easy walking distance to Minnehaha Park and Minnehaha Falls. From this location, bicyclists can access Lake Nokomis and Lake Harriet via the Minnehaha Parkway and Minnehaha Creek Trail. These recreational amenities are regional destinations, which contribute to the Study Area's attractiveness as a place to live, work and play.

TOD Market Potential

The station area has the potential to become a mixed-use transit-oriented neighborhood. It capacity to support retail, residential, and office development. Location, accessibility, visibility, and amenities will make it attractive to investors. The power line and rail uses through the area do present barriers to development. While housing development can occur near these power lines, it would be preferable for these lines to be, consolidated, moved or placed underground.

Demographic information also indicates a healthy investment environment. The population within a half-mile of the 46th Street Station has remained relatively stable. The Study Area's median age of 38.9 is high when compared to the City (34.8) and the metro area (34.9), but this is typical of an established urban neighborhood. Households are doing relatively well economically as over 70 percent of the households in the Study Area have incomes between \$35,000 and \$100,000.

Retail Market Analysis

A typical "Neighborhood Shopping Center" provides convenience-shopping opportunities for the local neighborhood. As compared to the average tenant mix of a neighborhood shopping center, the 46th Street Station Area does not offer a full complement of neighborhood-serving retail. The density of development surrounding the 46th Street station and the traffic and visibility of the location do, however, make neighborhood serving retail a potential land use. Some competition may occur with the existing retail node in Nokomis East, depending on the mix and draw of new establishments.

"Community Shopping Centers" are larger than neighborhood shopping centers they tend to have an anchor (like Target) and/or a full-service supermarket. Nearby Centers include Highland Village, Lake & Hiawatha/Minnehaha, and the Hub Shopping Center in Richfield. These types of centers draw from at least a three-mile radius, and their competition makes development of this nature an unlikely scenario.

ZHA projects that a total of approximately 100,000 to 150,000 square feet of retail/service space are supportable in the Study Area. There is a significant retail market generated by the traffic on Hiawatha, and will grow with traffic volumes. From the airport, 46th Street is the first commercial node on the way to the Central Business District. The market is favorable to automobile-oriented uses as fast food restaurants, so development regulations must ensure that retailers meet design standards consistent with the station area plan.

The Study Area will not support this increased level of development if retail is developed incrementally, store by store. A full complement of retail must come on line at once to establish the 46th Street Station Area as a destination. Such a project will require significant land assembly. Long-term retail absorption assumes that the existing suburban-style retail in the Study Area is redeveloped.

Parking for retail uses must be handled carefully with appropriate regulation. The market is dependent on closely proximate household spending and automobile traffic. LRT riders will

benefit from, but not create the retail market. Investors may propose parking that closely approximates suburban standards.

Office Market Analysis

The Station Area's access, visibility, and existing land use make it a prime location for Class-B office space. Class-B supply has been commanding relatively high rental rates, which support new construction. Like retail, office will demand corner sites and sites along Hiawatha. ZHA concludes that the Study Area can support approximately 100,000 square feet of Class-B office. Because the office market is projected to soften, ZHA projects the first phase of office development would occur between 2005 and 2010, after LRT is operational.

To meet market specifications, the buildings will likely be four stories or less. ZHA indicates that rents will not support the capital cost associated with structured parking, unless subsidies are provided. Office investors will likely accept lower parking ratios, however, as a result of the bus and rail availability in the 46th Street Station Area.

Residential Market Analysis

In a December, 1999 study, ZHA worked with Zimmerman Volk Associates (in association with the Parsons Corporation) to determine the potential for housing development along the Hiawatha Corridor. Approximately two-thirds of the new housing market for the 38th Street, 46th Street and VA Medical Center station areas includes professional singles and couples moving from the suburbs. A mix of senior households also represents a significant market share (29%). A limited number of families will make up the remaining market share.

The optimum mix of housing types to support this transit-oriented housing market includes:

- a) Rental Apartments (one- and two-story apartments in mansion, courtyard, low- to mid-rise buildings, accessory buildings or mixed-use buildings);
- b) For-sale apartments (lofts and one- and two-story apartments in mansion, courtyard, or low- to mid-rise buildings);
- c) For-sale attached housing (duplexes, townhouses, and live-work units);
- d) For-sale small lot, single family detached housing.

To maximize the opportunities for transit-oriented development over the long term (2020), ZHA determined the potential market for the 46th Street Station Area to be:

- 100 Rental Units over Retail;
- 525 Rental Apartments;
- 250 For-Sale Mansion Apartments; and
- 125 Live-Work Townhouses;
- 1,000 Total Units

TOD design principles

The following design guidelines for pedestrian amenities are recommended in the Plan for all new development in the station area:

Sense of enclosure along street

At the final public workshop, breakout groups expressed a preference for maximum building heights from three to five stories. When pressed regarding the feasibility of senior housing, most groups consented to maximum heights of five or six stories for this use. The Consensus Plan programs a majority of mixed-use and office buildings at three or four stories. The Plan also recommends permitting senior housing buildings with four-story bases, and two setback residential floors above.

Appropriate sidewalk width

The Plan recommends the following sidewalk widths (from curb to building), to accommodate uses such as sidewalk cafes, landscaping and street furniture where appropriate:

- Town Square buildings: 20 to 25 feet
- Neighborhood retail streets: 12 feet
- Residential streets: 5 to 6 feet plus boulevard

Pedestrian-scale lighting

The Plan recommends lighting guidelines or standards in the station area that accomplish a number of goals, including accenting architectural features, preventing glare into upper story residential units, preventing light "pollution" into Minnehaha Park, and encouraging (but preventing excessive) commercial signage lighting.

Attractive signage and window displays

The Plan recommends 75% of a storefront should be used for window displays, and that a sign ordinance should regulate the size, materials, and maintenance of any signage.

On-street parking

The Plan recommends that all streets in the station area (except for Hiawatha and parts of 46th Street) include on-street parking, whether parallel, diagonal, or perpendicular. On-street parking supports storefront businesses and buffers pedestrians from moving vehicles.

Attractive sight lines

The Plan recommends that key views, such as street termini or key intersections, be dedicated to buildings with particularly notable architectural features. Such focal points may include viewpoints from Hiawatha, to capture the interest of the traveling public.

Appropriate street furniture

The Plan recommends the provision of important pedestrian amenities, such as *planters, garbage receptacles, bike racks, newspaper racks, but* without cluttering or obstructing pedestrian ways.

Recommended Zoning Controls

The Plan, in Chapter 4, recommends the following particular zoning standards to enforce transit-oriented development principals:

- a) Allow different uses to exist within the same building, taking advantage of shared parking.
- b) Require that new buildings, except single-family, be built no more than ten feet from the back of the public sidewalk.
- c) Establish minimum building heights of two to three stores, as well as complementary FAR levels, that vary based on building form context.
- d) Establish maximum buildings heights at about four stories, allowing senior housing to be five or six stories (with, perhaps, setback upper levels).
- e) Prohibit drive-through buildings types, except in Sub Area V.
- f) Allow homeowners to construct coachhouse units or "granny flats" above their garages.
- g) Establish some level of density bonus in exchange for public benefit (e.g., public plazas, green building standards, participating in car sharing programs, concealing power lines, etc.)

Land Use Implications

Most of the potential opportunities for land use change lie to the east of Hiawatha Avenue. Identification of areas where land use changes would be encouraged or supported occurred at the second public workshop. This area generally excludes single-family areas and is dominated by low-rise commercial and industrial uses. The exception to this is the inclusion of three single-family homes at the northeast corner of 46th Street and Snelling Avenue that would be designated as future mixed-use development. This fills a gap of planned continuous street frontage of mixed-use development the north side of 46th Street between Minnehaha and the LRT station.

Residential

Based on a variety of factors, including community input during the planning process, the Consensus Plan (and the results of the market analysis) supports the following residential "program":

- 400 Apartments/Condominiums
- 91 Townhouses
- 48 Senior Housing Apartments
- 8 Single-Family Homes
- undetermined number of "carriage homes"
- 537+ Total Units

The absorption of these units will largely depend upon the availability of land. Although unlikely, if land was immediately available, ZHA estimates that these units could be absorbed within the next five years. Senior housing is best sited in locations with various modes of transportation available, a range of services close-by, and amenities. The 46th Street Station Area is planned to possess all of these attributes, and the existing supply is achieving strong rent and/or sales value. ZHA further concludes that additional residential development and density could be supported in the Station Area.

Retail

Planned retail space, which is exclusively on the first floor of multi-story, multi-use buildings, allows for approximately 145,000 square feet of retail space. This includes a proposed 30,000 square foot anchor grocery store. The Plan suggests an entry arcade facing 46th Street, allowing access to both shared on-street parking, as well as a proposed parking lot behind the building to the east.

Office/Convertible Space

Proposed office/convertible space exceeds the anticipated market for office space. Much of this is identified in the Consensus Plan along Hiawatha, west of the rail corridor in Sub Area III. As a result, this land use category incorporates other appropriate mixes of uses that could make use of modular space, such as galleries, storage, loft-style housing, or growth in office space that exceeds market estimates.

The final station site plan differs from the station site plan illustrated on **Figure 8.1: Consensus Plan**. The station site includes the LRT station platform, bus hub, kiss-and-ride facility, and other station elements. Due to the more limited developable land at the western edge of the station site, staff will recommend that this area be identified for future mixed-use structures exclusively, forgoing the townhouses indicated in the **Figure 8.1**.

Sub Area I: 46th to Nawadaha

Sub Area I includes the existing suburban-style Parkway Plaza and other automobile oriented commercial uses (e.g., Conoco and Burger King). It likely represents the best opportunities for new housing types and pedestrian oriented mixed-use buildings that capitalize on immediate proximity to both the LRT station and the park. This Sub Area includes a "Town Square" feature, a central green space "framed" by parking.

Sub Area II: LRT Station Area

The Plan calls development at the periphery of the LRT station and/or fronting 46th Street. This includes mixed-use, multi-storied buildings. This creates a sense of enclosure for transit-users and will provide some protection from harsh elements such as high winds. These uses also may also include on-site retail convenient to transit patrons. The increased human activity and informal surveillance near the station site will contribute to the safety of the transit user.

Sub Area III: Hiawatha/Minnehaha Corridor

Sub Area III is primarily industrial in nature and includes all uses between Hiawatha and the powerline/rail corridor north of 46th Street and south of 43rd Street. This area also includes City-owned Public Works land as well as other industrial development that has encroached east of the rail corridor. The Plan creates a greater distinction between a future office/convertible space district west of the rail corridor, and a residential district to the east. The Plan proposes higher density residential uses immediately east of the rail corridor that includes mansion apartments and townhouses. Single-family uses are proposed on the west side of Snelling Avenue, where industrial uses currently create gaps in the row of single-family uses. New green space is also proposed in this area.

Sub Area IV: 46th & Minnehaha

No specific change is proposed for the northeast and southeast corners of this intersection. The northwest corner of this intersection is part of proposed mixed-use development along 46th Street that forms a continuous "street wall".

Sub Area V: North Area

This area is furthest away from the transit-oriented uses planned for the station area. The Plan designates this area for automobile-related service uses.

Public Infrastructure

The primary transportation planning issue in the 46th Street station area is the creation of a pedestrian-friendly environment in the midst of two important traffic corridors and a major bus hub. This is critical to create and support transit-oriented development. Questions regarding modification of roadway design involve a number of different jurisdictions and departments, including City Public Works, Hennepin County, and the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

46th Street

Forty-sixth Street is another important transportation corridor in the station area. It will play a large role in bringing commuters from St. Paul to the light rail station. East of Hiawatha, it is a County Road. It separates the large northern part of the redevelopment area from the proposed Town Square area. Anticipated increases in traffic at its intersection with Hiawatha have prompted proposals for additional capacity. The City and County have discussed the potential for an additional left turn lane from westbound 46th Street to southbound Hiawatha. This turning movement is experiencing poor levels of service because of long queues. Accommodating an extra turning lane would require acquisition of land on the north side of the 46th Street adjacent to Walgreens. Such changes in roadway design and width should be carefully considered, so that the pedestrian environment and safety is not further compromised.

Station Entrance

There is particular concern over maintaining the ability of buses to easily enter the station from the east. The final design of the station site plan includes sufficient right-of-way to accommodate a right turning lane into the station. With such a turning lane, buses would less likely be part of queues backed up from the west.

Snelling Avenue/Sub Area I

The extension of Snelling Avenue (a local street) into Sub Area I would ameliorate traffic circulation problems within the strip commercial development. A signalized intersection would more easily accommodate westbound left turns from the Town Square area. Currently, drivers make difficult unsignalized left turns much closer to the intersection with Hiawatha Avenue, a more dangerous maneuver. At other locations, the Plan suggests a pair of right-in/right-out options into the Town Square area from Hiawatha.

Sub Area I: 46th to Nawadaha

Street extensions through this area would provide improved internal circulation, as well as improved pedestrian and bicycle access between the station and Minnehaha Park/Parkway. The rail and power line corridors through these area present challenges for implementation.

The quality of the pedestrian environment as one crosses Hiawatha is an issue throughout the corridor, and is of particular importance for the 46th Street station area. The ability to integrate the station with evolving land uses to the east of the station is challenged by roadway width and geometry. Two approaches are being explored, including a pedestrian/bicycle underpass and traffic calming measures on Hiawatha. A technical and cost feasibility study is in the works for a possible underpass, and the consulting team and project Technical Advisory Committee are exploring the possibility of intersection changes. These include lane narrowing as one approaches 46th Street, removal of shoulders, elimination of “free right turns” and median landscaping. Many of these strategies are outside of the scope of the Hiawatha LRT project and face challenges in terms of roadway design standards, traffic operations, cost, and maintenance.

Hiawatha Avenue

The geometric design of Hiawatha Avenue and its designation and function as a State Trunk Highway present the greatest barriers to pedestrian access to/from the east, as well as physically and psychologically integrating the station with the neighborhoods to the east. The 46th Street Plan makes various recommendations to improve the ability to access the station from the east by pedestrians and bicyclists. Recommendations involve either changes to the roadway or mitigation of the same. These include:

- ◆ Construct an underpass beneath Hiawatha immediately north of 46th Street
Analysis indicates that the required depth and length of approach would make this an unattractive alternative in terms of cost, urban design, and pedestrian/bicyclist convenience. Staff recommend that alternatives to at-grade crossing at 46th Street be explored while pursuing improvements to pedestrian crossings at-grade. Urban design principals of any underpass alternative should be consistent with that described in the Plan.
- ◆ Use of variable or textured paving for pedestrian crosswalks
Use of durable markings or contrasting materials will alert drivers to changing expectations about driver behavior. Staff recommendation cooperation with Mn/DOT in developing new standards for at-grade crossing throughout the corridor where pedestrians cross at-grade, particularly at station locations. This will require cooperation with the County and Mn/DOT.
- ◆ Gradual narrowing of Hiawatha traffic lanes to 11 feet to slow traffic
Hiawatha is designed to move large amounts of traffic at relatively high speeds, with wide travel lanes and no parking, in contrast to its posted speed of 35mph and efforts to improve pedestrian safety. Mn/DOT may support such a change if safety concerns are addressed and if they are permitted to vary design standards under which the roadway was built and funded. They would be unlikely to support a project at 46th Street without consideration of the entire corridor.

- ◆ Fully landscaped medians that extend through the crosswalk, creating a more comfortable refuge
Landscaping improves the aesthetic conditions of wide rights-of-way, reduces wind speed, and lessens the impact of urban heat islands. Although Hiawatha has a median, this portion of the right-of-way is used as left turning lanes at intersections. Extending the median would lengthen the distance that a pedestrian would need to travel before they cleared all travel lanes. It would also complicate snow removal. Many pedestrians may be unable to cross Hiawatha in one signal cycle. In this case, such an approach would be warranted and pursued.

- ◆ Eliminate "free right turns" and texturize the turning lane
Hiawatha's oblique angle reduces the turning radius for southbound left-turns and northbound right-turns. A larger radius is created through the use of a sweeping turning lane or "slip lane". Although "Yield" signs are placed here, vehicles often do not stop. Cars may not pay attention to pedestrians wishing to cross with the signal. The Plan recommends that changes be pursued that encourage vehicles to slow and stop for pedestrians.

- ◆ Elimination of breakdown lane at station
Hiawatha Avenue includes striped pavement on either side of the travel lanes. This is often referred to as the "breakdown" lane, where stalled vehicles can get out of the movement of traffic. At intersections, this portion of the right-of-way is used for right-turning lanes. Emergency vehicles can use this lane to bypass congestion in the regular travel lanes. The Plan suggests converting the lane to a vegetated drainage "bioswale". This would improve the environmental quality of the station area as well as create additional side friction, potentially slowing vehicles as described above.

Rail/Powerline Corridor

One of the principal constraints for the Plan is the presence of a rail/powerline corridor. The Plan indicates setback areas where no development is permitted. Further study is needed as to the full extent of opportunities for mitigating their presence.

Relationship Comprehensive Plan to Station Area Plan

The Master Plan for the 46th Street station area is a framework document focusing on three key elements: transformation of certain land uses, the necessary public infrastructure to support these efforts, and direction regarding the intensity and design of potential development projects. It establishes parameters and targets, and prescribes some thresholds for development and design as general criteria. It is a type of comprehensive plan for the subject areas, but as an approved document, it does not have the same legal standing as the City's Comprehensive Plan or Zoning Ordinance. The modifications of the latter will be guided by this station area plan.

The Minneapolis Plan currently designates a general area around the 46th Street station as a "study area" in anticipation of LRT station area planning. The Movement Chapter (8.0) refers to the City's general policy of directing growth to areas well served by transit. The area surrounding the LRT station at 46th Street is not otherwise specifically recognized as a focal point for growth and new development as defined in the Minneapolis Plan.

Other land use policy designations in the area include features on 34th Avenue and Minnehaha Avenue. On the City's Land Use Policy Map, 34th Avenue (south of 46th Street) is designated as a "Community Corridor". The commercial node at 34th Avenue and 50th Street is specifically called out as a "Neighborhood Commercial Node". This is the only designated node of this sort in the station area, and it is at the edge of the 1/2-mile planning area. This impact on this node of new station area retail uses is discussed herein.

Minnehaha Avenue north of 46th Street is also designed as a Community Corridor, but no Neighborhood Commercial Node lies within the station area. The portion of this Community Corridor that lies within the station area is also identified on the Land Use Policy Map as a Major Housing Site. This designation, though very general, reflects conventional understanding that new housing opportunities are ripe in this corridor. It is likely that staff will replace this designation in the Minneapolis Plan with one that incorporates a more specific vision for development in the 46th & Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan.

The Minneapolis Plan should be amended to reflect that there is significant investment potential as well as public objectives for the 46th Street station area. It is unlikely that the growth projected for this location would ever warrant a designation of Growth Center, as defined in the Minneapolis Plan. At some point in the future, it may prompt designation as an Activity Center, according to Minneapolis Plan definitions. An immediate potential change would recognize the 1/2 mile radius around this station area, along with others, as a 'Rail Transit Station Planning Areas', to indicate public objectives and urban development and design criteria for these specific locations. A review of existing ordinances and the establishment of a Rail Transit Overlay (zoning) District (RTOD) should immediately follow this Minneapolis Plan amendment.

Planning Department Recommendations

1. Adopt 46th & Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan, identifying as guidelines its recommendations for land uses, density, public infrastructure and design. The following stipulations are made:
 - Townhouse development to the west of the LRT station site will be more constrained than is indicated in the Consensus Plan map. The "Release for Construction" station site plan is attached to illustrate this. Development opportunities to the west of the station proper should be limited to a mixed-use, multiple floor building(s) consistent with Transit Oriented Development (TOD) principals in the Plan. Design should be particularly sensitive to context at this location, due to its adjacency to single family homes. Use of air rights over portions of the station should be explored to accommodate designs and densities that are supported by the Plan.
 - The placement of buildings on the Consensus Plan is illustrated for conceptual reasons, and does not represent a specific development plan. The City will support creative proposals that build upon neighborhood strengths, consider the relationship of existing development with new development, and meet the density and urban design goals addressed in the Plan.

2. Direct staff to submit amendments to the Minneapolis Plan to reflect the 1/2-mile radius station area as a “Rail Transit Planning Area (RTPA)”. These amendments shall articulate and summarize general TOD planning principals, but also identify specific objectives for the 46th Street Station Area.
3. Direct staff to develop a regulatory implementation plan for the station area to develop statutory consistency between the Comprehensive Plan and land use controls. Principally, this shall include the adoption of a Rail Transit Overlay District (RTOD). These provisions should govern factors related to allowable land uses; minimum and maximum FAR's, minimum and maximum heights; building placement, orientation, and design; and limits on parking ratios.
4. Direct staff to complete an analysis of underlying zoning for the 46th Street RTPA, including forwarding recommendations for changes, if any.
5. Adopt, as guidelines, recommended changes, additions, or standards related to streets, sidewalks, bicycle facilities and pedestrian ways. Direct City staff to work with implementation partners, to program long-range capital improvements. These include, but are not limited to, the following recommended infrastructure projects:
 - Extension of Snelling Avenue through Sub Area I, including signalized intersection at 46th Street
 - Other public rights-of-way through Sub Area I, addressing access control and the provision of on-street parking (e.g., diagonal on-street parking).
 - Public easements or rights-of-way to facilitate continuous vehicle travel along the western side of the rail corridor north of 46th Street, serving the proposed office/convertible space district.
 - Acquisition of land for Town Square, if not part of public right-of-way acquisition.
 - Use-rights for or acquisition of rail and power line corridor easements
 - Public parks or open space features consistent with the Plan's open space analysis.
6. Direct City staff to work with Xcel Energy and other partners (e.g., Mn/DOT, Met Council) to identify feasibility, costs, funding sources, and potential timeframe for consolidation or movement of power transmission and distribution lines in station area.
7. Direct staff to work with partners (e.g., Metropolitan Council, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, DNR, Park Board, private utilities, railroads, private landowners, etc.) on the following initiatives:
 - Creation of a stormwater/bioswale/environmental features where new land uses are constrained by the presence of the rail/power line corridor.
 - Identification of ownership and/or responsibilities for maintenance of public spaces and environmental features.
 - Address stormwater management issues throughout the station area, including interim and long-range strategies to meet the density and design goals of the master plan, including the station site.

8. Direct staff to work on inter-agency team (e.g., Mn/DOT, Hennepin County, Minneapolis Public Works, Minneapolis Planning) to improve pedestrian comfort, safety, and convenience while crossing Hiawatha, including the following:
 - Continued evaluation of alternatives to at-grade crossing of Hiawatha (e.g., overpasses/underpasses)
 - Further evaluation of traffic calming alternatives (as indicated in the Plan) for Trunk Highway 55 in the station area, particularly at its intersection with 46th Street.

9. Direct City Planning and MCDA staff to develop strategies for redevelopment efforts, including the following:
 - Identification of immediate development opportunities consistent with the Plan, but less encumbered by issues of land assembly or infrastructure. This may include publicly owned land such as the Public Works site and the station site.
 - Identification of redevelopment priorities based on criteria such as economies of scale, available funding sources, magnitude of public benefit, magnitude of impediments to station area plan implementation, and community support.

Appendix A: Key Participants

Consulting Team

- Farr Associates
- Parsons Transportation Group
- ZHA, Inc.

Community Steering Committee

- Barb Taylor, Representing City Council Member Sandy Colvin Roy
- Beverly Conerton, Representing County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin
- Brian Alger, Longfellow Community Council (LCC) Representative
- Brian Larson, Copy Express, Representing County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin
- Greg Bastien, Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA) Representative
- Jack Morrissey, Hiawatha Conoco, Representing County Commissioner Peter McLaughlin/neighborhood businesses
- Jim Alderete, Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association (SENA) Representative
- Kathy Nelson, Nelson Electric, Representing Council Member Sandy Colvin Roy/neighborhood businesses
- Philip Behrend, SENA Representative
- Robin Markowitz, Longfellow Community Council (LCC) Representative

Technical Advisory Committee

- Jon Wertjes & Bob Morgan, City of Minneapolis Public Works
- Larry Blackstad, Gary Erickson & Carol Lezotte, Hennepin County Transit and Community Works
- Valerie Svensson, Mn/DOT
- John Dillery, Metro Transit
- Mark Garner & Bill Koncak, Minneapolis Community Development Agency
- Jim Hafner, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District
- Mike Schadauer, Bob Vockrodt & Frank Loetterle, Hiawatha Project Office (HPO)
- Karen Lyons, Greg Pates, Metro Council
- Warren Porter & Gary Erickson, Hennepin County
- Larry Peterson, Minneapolis Park Board
- Mike Larson, City of Minneapolis Planning Department

Appendix B: Meeting Dates

Community Steering Committee

September 6th, 2000
October 23rd, 2000
November 13th, 2000
November 27th, 2000
January 22nd, 2001
January 29th, 2001
March 20th, 2001
March 26th, 2001
June 18th, 2001
November 27th, 2001

Technical Advisory Committee

September 26th, 2000
November 14th, 2000
December 21st, 2000
March 27th, 2001

Public Workshops

September 25th, 2000
September 26th, 2000
November 14th, 2000
January 30th, 2001
March 27th, 2001

City Planning Commission

February 1st, 2001
June 7th, 2001
August 23rd, 2001
September 25th, 2001
November 20th, 2001
December 11th, 2001 (public hearing)

Zoning and Planning Committee

November 27th, 2001 (cont. to 12/18/01)
December 18th, 2001 (future public hearing)

NENA General Membership Meeting

June 14th, 2001

Longfellow Business Association

September 14th, 2000
June 14th, 2001

Elected Officials Briefings w/ Consultant Team

September 27th, 2000
November 15th, 2000
January 31, 2001
March 26th, 2001
March 28th, 2001

Presentation to Development Community

March 27th, 2001