

# THE MINNEAPOLIS PLAN



## Southwest Land Use Features

### "The Minneapolis Plan" brochure series

The Minneapolis Plan brochures illustrate the policies and actions that guide the City in its efforts to make Minneapolis a city that people choose – to live, work, learn, and play.

It is intended that these brochures will provide neighborhoods with:

- information about City policy
- a citywide context in which to do their planning
- ideas about the challenges and opportunities that are present in their communities
- guidance on the actions they can take to create change

There are brochures for each of the 11 communities in the city, and there are three topic specific brochures – housing, city form, and transportation.

## What does *The Minneapolis Plan* say about the Southwest Community?

### Major streets are "Community Corridors"

Penn, Lyndale, Nicollet, 38th Street, 44th Street, 50th Street and Diamond Lake Road are identified as community corridors in *The Minneapolis Plan* (see map). Community corridors are streets that connect neighborhoods, carry a moderate volume of traffic, and have a primarily residential character but support a low-intensity mix of uses at key intersections (Neighborhood Commercial Nodes).

Along Community Corridors, *The Minneapolis Plan* supports:

- consolidating commercial uses;
- promoting viable street life during the day and evening by encouraging a mix of uses at appropriate locations;
- strengthening the residential character by developing a variety of housing types; and
- enhancing the pedestrian environment.

Balancing the needs of residential and commercial areas is the principal challenge along these community corridors. Neighborhood projects that address this challenge could include consolidating and enhancing commercial uses at appropriate locations, managing the negative impacts of commercial areas, redeveloping marginal commercial areas as housing, encouraging transit use, and improving the pedestrian character.

### Southwest Land Use Features



Source: *The Minneapolis Plan*

## What is The Minneapolis Plan?

*The Minneapolis Plan* is the City of Minneapolis' comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan:

- analyzes trends in the city's population, economic growth, and neighborhood livability
- proposes a vision for the physical development of the city
- identifies steps that the city must take in order to achieve that vision

State law requires Minneapolis to develop a comprehensive plan and to ensure that the Minneapolis Zoning Code (a tool that regulates land development) is consistent with the plan. The vision of *The Minneapolis Plan* is realized when the city approves development projects that are consistent with the plan and Zoning Code.

*The Minneapolis Plan* is also implemented through the development of neighborhood and other city plans. Neighborhood experience in developing action plans in the first phase of the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP) helped to shape priorities in *The Minneapolis Plan*. As a result, *The Minneapolis Plan* can serve as a useful starting point for neighborhoods in NRP Phase II. It provides citywide context for neighborhood issues and can help bring neighborhoods together to develop shared solutions to issues that transcend neighborhood boundaries.

## Small commercial areas are "Neighborhood Commercial Nodes"

In the Southwest Community, 14 Neighborhood Commercial Nodes exist along the Community Corridors mentioned in the section above (see map). Neighborhood commercial nodes serve as focal points for the neighborhood. Commercial uses at nodes are low-intensity, small-scale retail sales and services that serve the immediate neighborhood and have minimal impact on the surrounding neighborhood.



At Neighborhood Commercial Nodes, *The Minneapolis Plan* supports:

- continuing the presence of small scale retail sales and commercial services;
- restricting the development of automobile-oriented, industrial, or manufacturing activities;
- preserving traditional commercial storefronts;
- promoting medium density residential development;
- encouraging transit usage; and
- enhancing the pedestrian environment.

Several steps will support the successful evolution of the neighborhood commercial nodes in the Southwest Community. First, commercial areas should be consolidated around successful nodes. Second, more residential units should be constructed adjacent to neighborhood commercial nodes. Residential or office redevelopment may be appropriate at currently underutilized commercial nodes. Third, the pedestrian environment should be improved not only through streetscape improvements and building facades, but also through modification of existing parking. Parking facilities should allow for customer access, but not at the expense of pedestrian safety or impact on adjacent residential uses. Large surface parking lots which front the street should be discouraged.

## 50th and France is an "Activity Center"

50th and France is designated as an Activity Center in *The Minneapolis Plan* (see map). Activity Centers are destinations such as Uptown, Lyn-Lake, the Warehouse District, and East Hennepin/Saint Anthony Main that attract visitors from around the region. Activity Centers attract a large number of visitors and traffic because they have a concentration of activity. The presence of many different businesses (such as retail, commercial, entertainment, educational, and other cultural or public facilities) encourages activity all day long and into the evening.

At Activity Centers, *The Minneapolis Plan*:

- promotes developing medium to high density residential uses;
- encourages the provision of convenient and accessible transit service and the enhancement of the pedestrian environment to make Activity Centers more easily navigated by pedestrians; and
- supports parking strategies that both accommodate high customer demand and minimize impact on sidewalk traffic.

The 50th and France area has many of these characteristics. Some of the challenges that can emerge at Activity Centers, such as addressing overflow parking on neighboring streets, defining a unique identity, and increasing trash removal and street cleaning efforts, have been well-managed at 50th and France. Other challenges, such as traffic congestion, limited transit service, and limited accommodation of cyclists and the handicapped, require increased attention and investment. In addition, this area should support more and different types of residential uses.

### ***The Windom Industrial Area is a "Potential Growth Center"\****

The Windom Industrial Area is designated a Potential Growth Center in *The Minneapolis Plan* (see map). Job generation is the principal component of a Growth Center, but a successful growth center incorporates a mix of other land uses, such as office, commercial, and residential, that complement the employment activity and make it a busy and interesting place before and after working hours. Growth Centers usually have a high number of jobs per acre and good access to and from transportation networks.

At Growth Centers, *The Minneapolis Plan*:

- supports the development of higher density housing so that employees can choose to live close to work;
- encourages investments in transit and other public infrastructure to meet the commuting needs of employees and mitigate the impact of additional vehicle traffic; and
- promotes the development of amenities such as parks, schools, libraries, and small businesses that provide basic goods and services so that employees can meet their daily needs in and around the workplace.

The Windom Industrial Area has some of these features. It could become a Growth Center by providing higher density jobs and encouraging residential development of varying types and affordabilities. *The Minneapolis Plan* estimates that between 100 and 500 new jobs and between 360 and 700 new residential units can be generated in the Windom Industrial Area. Buffering the adjacent residences from the impacts of the industrial area will be important. Providing commercial goods and services and creating pedestrian amenities, such as an improved sidewalk environment or public gathering place, will also contribute to the area's evolution as a Growth Center by supporting the residential uses.

Heavy industrial activity is not necessarily inappropriate in the Windom Industrial Area if it is compatible with adjacent residential, office, and commercial uses. Mitigating negative impacts, such as noise, dust, odor and visual impacts through buffering, screening, restrictions on hours of activity, or enhanced compliance with pollution prevention requirements, may enhance compatibility.

\* The Potential Growth Center designation indicates that the area requires further discussion and study to determine the viability and appropriateness of the suggested changes.

## **Important issues in the Southwest Community**

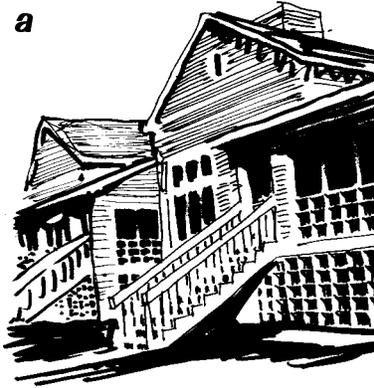
The Southwest Community is a very stable, residential part of the city anchored by the amenities of Lake Harriet, Minnehaha Creek, and Grass Lake. But Southwest is more than just residences. It also provides places for people to work, shop, and play. These places create positive benefits (jobs, goods, and services) and negative impacts (increased traffic, noise, and spillover lighting). These areas must continually change and evolve to better balance the needs of all community residents. Planning efforts should focus on these dynamic areas in order to address change and ensure that this change is desirable to the community.

**This brochure provides an introduction to *The Minneapolis Plan* vision for these and other opportunity areas in the Southwest Community and provides context for community planning efforts.**



## **The Windom Industrial Area is a "Major Housing Site"**

As mentioned above, in addition to employment, housing is another important component of the Potential Growth Center concept. Over the next 20 years, Minneapolis will likely absorb between 9000 and 10,500 households (Metropolitan Council and City of Minneapolis projections). These new households will be searching for new housing types that are more varied than the housing that currently exists in Minneapolis today. In order to meet this projected demand, *The Minneapolis Plan* supports the development of new housing at several Major Housing Sites around the city.



*The Minneapolis Plan* recognizes the need for housing adjacent to the Potential Growth Center by designating the area near the Windom Industrial Area, and particularly around Highway 121 and Lyndale, as a "Major Housing Site" (see map).

*The Minneapolis Plan* supports the development of Major Housing Sites adjacent to amenities such as Growth Centers, Activity Centers, natural features and public facilities such as parks, schools, and libraries. Major Housing sites should be medium- to high-density, varied in type, and affordable at various income levels. Good transit access, development of commercial uses that provide everyday goods and services, and a pedestrian-friendly, walkable environment are other important components of Major Housing Sites.

The area near the Windom Industrial Area has some of these characteristics. Provision of higher density housing of different types and affordabilities, as well as pedestrian improvements such as an enhanced street and sidewalk environment, would help this area evolve into a Major Housing Site. In addition, easy access to goods and services for nearby residents would be enhanced by the development of additional commercial uses in this location.

## **Other plans for the Southwest Community**

Other plans (in addition to NRP Phase I neighborhood plans) have been developed for specific areas in the Southwest Community. It may be useful to refer to these plans for additional guidance regarding land development and community enhancement. (Only the more recent plans are listed here.)

- Linden Hills Neighborhood Design Framework: A Plan for the Commercial Districts (1997)
- Lyndale Avenue: A Vision (1997)
- West 50th Street Traffic Management Study (1999)
- Nicollet Avenue: The Revitalization of Minneapolis' Main Street (2000)
- Market Study of Neighborhood Commercial Areas and Nodes: City of Minneapolis (1996)

## **Whom can I contact for more information?**

*The Minneapolis Plan* contains many more policies on topics such as urban form, transportation, residential, commercial, and industrial land use, the environment, and community building.

For more information, contact:

Minneapolis Planning Department  
350 South Fifth Street, Room 210  
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Phone: (612) 673-2597  
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Web: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/citywork/planning/index.html>

*The Minneapolis Plan* and brochures are available on the web site.

If you have special needs, please call the Planning Department. Please allow a reasonable amount of time for accommodation.

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