



### **Minnehaha Park Renovation Plan**

Minnehaha Park is located within the half-mile radius of the proposed LRT station, east of Hiawatha Avenue and south of Godfrey Parkway. The 1992 Minnehaha Park Renovation Plan is now being implemented. This plan outlines several objectives concerning the areas immediately adjacent to the park. These include:

- Strengthen relationships to adjacent points of interest.
- Study opportunities to acquire adjacent non-residential land such as open spaces and underutilized land.
- Encourage sensitive treatment of off-site land development and reclamation of the natural river bank.
- Ensure visual and functional integration of Highway 55 with the park.
- Encourage rezoning of adjacent property to compatible land uses.
- Encourage appropriate uses of adjoining railroad tracks.<sup>1</sup>

### **Recommendations:**

- In accordance with goal 1, design trails and sidewalks that make pedestrian/bicycle access between the park and the redevelopment area easy and convenient.
- In accordance with goal 3, utilize drainage strategies that protect water quality of Minnehaha Creek, such as bioswales.
- In accordance with goals 2 and 6, design a finger park as an extension of Minnehaha Park on the site of the abandoned Soo line rail spur behind the existing strip mall.
- In accordance with goal 5, the City should rezone the rail spur site as open space.

### **Linking Light Rail Transit to the City**

This study was completed by landscape architecture students at the University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies. The document outlines existing conditions, issues and opportunities, and potential development scenarios for six neighborhood LRT station areas.

The students identified the following opportunities and issues for the 46th Street neighborhood:

#### Opportunities

- Abundance of underutilized land
- Proximity to Minnehaha Park
- Rail spur as new green connection to park

<sup>1</sup> *Minnehaha Park Renovation Plan, Minnesota Park and Recreation Board, Summer 1992.*

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### Issues

- High-speed, auto-oriented character of Hiawatha
- Transit facility in close proximity to residential neighborhood west of Hiawatha

### Community Input

When asked what they valued most about their neighborhoods, residents agreed that the proximity to the river and park as well as the safety of the area were most important. Concerns focused on safety and comfort of crossing the railroad tracks and Hiawatha, and traffic.

When asked what they most wanted to see in station-area development, residents favor a mix of uses, pedestrian-scale landscaping and streetscaping, mid-rise buildings, and convenience retail. Residents do not want to see “parking lots or large stores” and are concerned with the threat of non-resident parking occurring on the neighborhood streets.<sup>2</sup>

## **Hiawatha Corridor LRT Aesthetic Design Guide**

This document sets guidelines for the design of the parts of the LRT corridor that lie between the stations. Specifically the plan regulates the design of overhead wires, poles, crossing gates, fencing, railings, lighting, bridges, and landscaping. It is intended for use by the Minnesota Department of Transportation when they design and construct these elements of the corridor.

The seven design principles laid out in this study are:

1. Respond to the character of corridor districts
2. Seek system-wide design continuity
3. Provide “background” and “foreground” elements
4. Provide opportunities for public art enhancements
5. Express broad and unifying design themes
6. Landscape as a transit greenway
7. Maintain important views

The 46th Street Station falls in the district that this report calls “grain elevators.” The design features called for in this area include decorative fencing, a ped/bike path between the LRT and Hiawatha, new sound walls, large-scale public art in berm area, and special lighting of grain elevators.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> *Linking Light Rail Transit to the City: Six Neighborhood Station Districts, University of Minnesota Center for Transportation Studies, August 1999.*

<sup>3</sup> *Hiawatha Corridor LRT Aesthetic Design Guide, Minnesota Department of Transportation, March 2000.*

### **Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association LRT survey results**

In October 1998 The Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association (SENA) conducted a survey of its residents regarding light rail transit (LRT). The survey asked open-ended and multiple-choice questions about the light rail itself, the potential redevelopment that light rail might generate, and the neighborhood as whole. The results of the open-ended questions are summarized as follows.

#### What do you like most about this neighborhood?

When asked this question residents repeatedly responded that they value the proximity to open space, lakes, and the creek. They also like their neighbors, the strong community feel, the affordability, residential character, and location (close to downtown) of the neighborhood.

#### What issues related to LRT, do you feel need to be addressed in the planning process?

Residents are concerned with the issues of property values, safety, congestion, and the environmental impacts of increased development and bus service. They are also concerned about non-residents parking on the neighborhood streets.

#### How would you like to see the area around the light rail station used?

Residents responded that they would like to see coffee shops, restaurants, quaint retail, increased open space and mixed-income development. They did not want a bus turn-around or park-n-ride in their neighborhood, and would like to see the area remain pedestrian and bicycle-friendly.

### **Longfellow Planbook**

The Longfellow Community Council produced this book of architectural plans for traditional Longfellow bungalows. These plans are meant to help residents retain the architectural integrity of their homes when making additions or changes to them. This document provides a brief history of residential architecture in this neighborhood and promotes the importance of maintaining the historic character.

### **Nokomis East Neighborhood Association LRT survey results**

The Nokomis East Neighborhood Association (NENA) surveyed residents in September 1999 about the proposed light rail and the potential development that a new station at 50th and Hiawatha might incur. While this survey focused on a different station than the one in this study, it may be expected that the residents of Nokomis East may have similar opinions about the 46th Street station. About two-thirds of respondents were in favor of building light rail in general and a slightly larger percentage were in favor of building a station at 50th Street.

The questions regarding new development in the area focused on the possibility of higher-density housing. About two-thirds of residents opposed higher-density housing along the rail line and three-fourths opposed it in their neighborhood. When asked what kind of higher-density housing would be most acceptable, residents preferred housing for a mix of ages and incomes and would least like to see high-income condominiums.

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In a final question, residents identified loss or degradation of park land as their number one concern.

### **Grand Rounds Scenic Byway Interpretive Master Plan**

The Grand Rounds Scenic Byway is a series of roadways that travel along various scenic parkways and lakes, circling the Minneapolis metropolitan area. This document lays out a plan for raising cultural and recreational awareness of the byway. This plan includes:

- Interpretation sites where educational programs and exhibits will be located
- Informational kiosks with maps and educational materials
- Uniform signage and reference markers throughout the byway directing motorists, pedestrians, bicycles, etc to points of interest and route connections
- Orientation and hospitality centers
- Byway access areas from interstates and other major roads
- New landscape features
- Upgrading of amenities such as benches, fountains, restrooms and public telephones
- Extension and connection of bike/ped paths

The plan also recommends additional historic documentation of the area, both narrative and photographic, and the development of a Grand Rounds Byway website.

### **Hiawatha / Lake Station Area Master Plan**

This masterplan was completed in June 2000 as the first of the series of studies to be completed for the area encompassed by the half-mile radius around each light rail station on the Hiawatha corridor. 46th Street is the second of these studies to be conducted.

This report consists of the following elements:

- Outline of the principles of transit-oriented development
- Report on existing conditions in terms of land use and the neighborhoods
- Analysis of the opportunities and constraints
- Identification of potential redevelopment sites
- Assessment of market-based development potential
- Recommendations for streetscape improvements and guidelines
- Proposed redevelopment plan
- Implementation strategies

### **Longfellow Community NRP Action Plan, 1995**

This NRP Action Plan describes improvement programs and projects residents have chosen for their neighborhood through a grass-roots community process. These programs

range from creating community gardens to youth recreation programs. Each program satisfies a goal identified under the category of Neighborhood Safety, Environment and Transportation, Housing, Community Development, or Youth and Families.

### **Nokomis East Neighborhood Association NRP Full Plan, 1998**

This NRP plan begins with the history and demographics of the Nokomis East Neighborhood. Next it describes the process by which residents created the plan. The bulk of the report is devoted to describing the various improvements that residents want for their neighborhood.

Forty-two programs and projects, from tree-planting to low-interest home improvements to installing traffic-calming devices are detailed in this document. Thirty-six were being implemented and funded within 17 months of the plan's approval. The programs fall into the broader categories of Safety, People Services, Housing, Environment, and Economic Development.

### **Standish & Ericsson Neighborhoods NRP Full Neighborhood Action Plan, 1998**

This document described the results of a community-based process of identifying needed improvements in the neighborhood. The residents of Standish-Ericsson organized the following action groups: Commercial, Crime Prevention and Safety, Housing, Parks and Environment, People and Community, and Transportation. Each group had general goals for neighborhood improvement such as "improve traffic safety," "protect and enhance the environment," or "increase positive opportunities for youth." For each goal they established objectives and strategies which were turned into programs and projects. These are described in the report, along with funding and implementation details.

### **Demographic briefs on Hiawatha, Minnehaha, Standish, Keewaydin, and Ericsson**

#### **Hiawatha LRT Corridor Transit-Oriented Development Market Study**

This market report outlines the potential for new transit-oriented development for the station areas along the length of the Hiawatha corridor.

According to this report, 46th Street is considered one of four catalyst station areas "that offer: 1) market potential, 2) an opportunity for LRT and TOD-promoting measures to enhance development potential; and 3) available land." The report urges public entities to focus funding and other resources at these four station to stimulate the general success of the LRT and TOD efforts.

The market study states that the 46th and Hiawatha station area has the potential to absorb the following:

- Approximately 150,000 square feet of new commercial space
- Redevelopment of 160,000 square feet of commercial and industrial space
- Approximately 1000 townhouse and apartment units

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### **Minnehaha Creek Watershed District's Rule N: Stormwater Management for Land Development**

According to the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) website, all new development within the district that will create any new impervious surface or alter the contours of the land must submit a stormwater management plan. Also the developer must obtain a permit from the MCWD that approves this plan.

### **Vegetated Swales of the Landscape Architectural Technical Information Series from ASLA, 1998**

This document details the effects, uses and proper design of vegetated swales or bioswales as they are called in this report. The author explains that as areas urbanize, and paved area increases, stormwater run-off is unable to infiltrate the soil. The run-off also collects urban pollutants. Vegetated swales are one solution for mitigating these negative affects. Swales can reduce of peak flows and reduce pollutants.

However, bioswales are not the answer in all locations. According to this report, bioswales are inappropriate on steep slopes, in fill areas, in high-density areas, on sites with concentrated flows or sandy soils either of which would erode the vegetation.

This document continues to describe the correct design of swales including guidelines on size, shape, inlets, outlets, vegetation, check dams, aesthetics and construction.

#### **Recommendation:**

This document should serve as a guide when designing and constructing the bioswales proposed in the recommended plan herein.

### **Chapter 6 of the Pedestrian Facilities Guidebook, 1997**

This document is from a pedestrian guidebook prepared for the State of Washington. The selected chapter focuses on pedestrian and bicycle considerations involved in designing intersections. Text and drawings describe urban design features such as intersection bulb-outs, extended medians, and elongated refuge islands. All of these features are applicable to the intersections of 46th and Hiawatha and/or nearby intersections.

These guidelines should be considered when designing the pedestrian and bicycle-friendly improvements to intersections in the half-mile radius, particularly the 46th and Hiawatha intersection.

#### **Recommendation:**

- Intersection bulb-outs should be utilized at appropriate intersections.
- The “pork-chop” islands adjacent to the free right turn lanes at 46th and Hiawatha should be enlarged and elongated to increase the comfort zone of the pedestrians and to slow the speeds of motorists making the right turn.
- Medians should be extended into the crosswalks to serve as a refuge spot for pedestrians.