# Downtown Rezoning Study Rationale

North Loop – Glenwood Avenue

The North Loop Small Area Plan recommended designation of Glenwood Avenue as a Commercial Corridor. This identification recognizes the commercial potential along this corridor in the Lower North Loop and is also consistent with the designation of Glenwood as a Commercial Corridor just east of the study area in the Bassett Creek Valley redevelopment area. The current uses include warehousing, retail, supportive housing, a bar, a publicly-owned parking lot, and a towing company. Rezoning the existing I2 to the proposed C3A would better recognize the land use designation and its potential for future commercial uses as well as bring some existing businesses into conformance.

North Loop – Neighborhood Core

Most of the core of the North Loop is included in the Warehouse Historic District. For these properties mainly north of the viaduct, both the adopted plan and the historic guidelines recommend height of between 2 and 10 stories. The plan envisions a mix of uses that could maintain the historic character but also increase density of housing and commercial offerings. The majority of properties in the neighborhood core are zoned I2 and those north of the viaduct also have the Industrial Living Overlay District. Even with the ILOD, residential development is dramatically limited in height and overall density for an area near Minneapolis regional transit hub, The Interchange.

For properties within the historic district – generally between 5th and 10th Avenues North and Washington Avenue North and the viaduct – the recommended zoning is the new B4N Downtown Neighborhood district. The B4N complements adopted planning and historic policies by:

- Permitting the existing mix of uses in the North Loop
- Supporting the policy height of 10 stories
- Allowing the housing density appropriate in a transit-oriented district

The Freeway West District includes properties along the viaduct and 5th Street North and between 6th and 10th Avenues North. As an existing district in the original *Downtown East/North Loop Master Plan*, most of the recommendations for land use and development continue to be relevant. The original plan recommended a new residential neighborhood in the western reaches of the 5th Street North corridor. The *North Loop Small Area Plan* recognized some opportunities for development on under-utilized sites and offers more flexibility for future uses while recognizing that residential is the likeliest option. Freeway West offers tremendous opportunities for increased housing density and/or improved opportunities for employment that build on direction from the original plan to view 5th Street as a major transit and pedestrian spine throughout Downtown as a whole. In order to implement this policy through zoning, the recommendation is to rezone these properties from I2 to the B4S-1 district.

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North Loop – Old Warehouse

This district covers the area where the historically-designated Warehouse District originated. There are possibilities for large-scale redevelopment along Hennepin Avenue that should include a mix of uses. Otherwise, new development should maintain and enhance the historic character of the district. A concentration of street-level destination retail, services, and entertainment establishments are encouraged along Washington and Hennepin Avenues. Both the plan and historic guidelines call for a height of 2-6 stories in the district and transitioning to 10+ stories for the sites near Hennepin Avenue.

The current B4C zoning has no height limit and allows for more auto-oriented uses, both items not envisioned in the adopted plan. In order to better match the policy, the proposed zoning for most properties in this area is C3A. C3A is more in line with height standards and will promote more of a pedestrian retail and restaurant experience that the community desires. An unfortunate and unintended consequence of the change from B4C to C3A is the introduction of parking and bulk requirements. To alleviate some of these consequences, staff is proposing to change the text of the Downtown Height Overlay District to allow properties west of Hennepin Avenue within the overlay area to develop to 6 stories by right and eliminate parking requirements for non-residential uses consistent with C3A properties in the Mill District.

Downtown East/Elliot Park

This rezoning study is proposing to review properties near the Downtown East/Metrodome LRT station for possible rezoning. This area is part of the adopted *Downtown East/Elliot Park Master Plan* and many sites were rezoned to implement that plan in 2006; however, the City did not have ideal zoning districts to implement height standards, specifically. In many cases the policy calls for development in the range of 5-13 stories but most sites were rezoned to the B4S district because the City did not have an appropriate zoning district to accommodate the bulk standards. The new B4N district is a good fit to accommodate the uses desired near the LRT station while it will bring the zoning height in better conformance with adopted policy.

Loring Park

Hennepin Avenue south of 10th Street starts to see a character shift from major regional destinations to neighborhood uses such as residential and smaller-scale neighborhood-serving retail. A consistent theme of the Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan relates to appropriate transitions between uses, intensity of use, and density. By rezoning the Harmon Historic District on the east side of Hennepin and Laurel Village on the west side to B4N, it will better articulate this transition from the Hennepin Theater District to the Loring Park neighborhood in both height and uses.

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