

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development
Small Area Plan/Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Date: December 2, 2013

Project Name: Linden Hills Small Area Plan

CPED Staff and Phone: Brian Schaffer, Principal Planner 612.673.2670

Ward: 13

Neighborhood Organizations:

Linden Hills Neighborhood Council

Current Comprehensive Plan Designations:

Community Corridors: 44th Street West and France Avenue South

Neighborhood Commercial Nodes: 43rd & Upton and 44th & France

BACKGROUND

The Linden Hills Small Area Plan (LHSAP) is a policy document produced by the Linden Hills Neighborhood Council (LHiNC) and the City of Minneapolis to guide land use and development in the Linden Hills neighborhood for the next 20 years. It builds upon the policy direction of *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth (TMP)*, the City's Comprehensive Plan. It is meant to articulate a vision for the neighborhood based on existing City policy and input from community stakeholders – both public and private - throughout the planning process. The City, public partners, and community organizations will use the plan to guide their own decision-making processes, implementing incremental changes to realize the full vision.

The plan examines the current conditions of the area, develops a future vision of what community members want the neighborhood to become, and then formulates specific policy recommendations that will help implement that vision. The plan itself builds on past planning efforts and public involvement processes.

The small area plan was completed using funds from the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP). LHiNC appointed a steering committee comprised of neighborhood residents, property owners, and business owners to guide the development of the plan. CPED staff served as the project manager and managed the consultant contract. An RFP was issued in November 2012 and a consultant was chosen in December 2012. The consultant team included:

- SEH, Inc.
- Cornejo Consulting
- Miller Dunwiddie Architecture

The impetus for the plan was strong community response to development projects proposed in and adjacent to the neighborhood commercial nodes in Linden Hills. In March 2012 a zoning moratorium was put in place to provide the neighborhood space to engage in a planning process and dialogue about the future of the neighborhood commercial nodes and community corridors in Linden Hills. The moratorium expired in March 2013.

The 45-day public comment period opened on September 5, 2013 and ran through October 21, 2013. The City Planning Commission (CPC) reviewed and discussed the draft plan on October 19, 2013 during the 45-day public comment period. In their review Planning Commissioners focused on concerns about the interpretation of the TMP policies of growing the City and ensuring compatible and appropriate design that resulted in a three story building height maximum in the draft LHSAP. The CPC felt that allowing additional building height to accommodate a fourth story was more in keeping with policies of the TMP.

On November 19, 2013 CPED returned to the CPC to discuss proposed revisions to the plan that attempted to address the comments received on the plan. The revisions reflected changes directed to the LHSAP by the Linden Hills Small Area Plan Steering Committee. The Planning Commission recognized the significant work the Steering Committee had done to revise the Plan's recommendations to address the CPC's previous concerns about the interpretation of the policies of the TMP, but still expressed concern about the feasibility of accommodating four story mixed use development in the height of 44 feet proposed in the revised plan. The CPC also expressed concerns about recommendations that were inconsistent with the current Zoning Code definitions of how to measure height and the height of four story buildings.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The public engagement process for the LHSAP kicked off in February 2013 with a survey to gather feedback from the community on desires for the future of Linden Hills. The online survey was supplemented by hard copy surveys that were delivered to every household in Linden Hills. In total over 400 responses were received. A summary of the Survey results can be found on the project webpage, LHSAP.org, or by clicking [here](#).

Following the survey in February, a community workshop was held to discuss preliminary results of the survey and discuss issues and opportunities in the project area. A summary of the February workshop can be found on the project webpage or by clicking [here](#)

In April 2013 two community workshops were held to work through ideas and alternatives for specific elements of the plan including Land Use, Building and Site Design, Public Realm, Connectivity and Parking, and Heritage Preservation. Over 100 people attended the workshops. A summary of the April workshops can be found on the project webpage or by clicking [here](#).

In June 2013 an in-person and online open house were held to review and comment on draft concepts that were created based on the input of the April community workshops. In total, over 100 people provided comments on the concepts presented in the open house. A summary of the June Open House can be found on the project webpage or by clicking [here](#).

In September 2013, one week after the draft plan was open for the 45-day public comment period, an open house was held to allow the public to review and discuss the plan's recommendations with the project team. Approximately 40 people attend the open house.

In addition to the public engagement, the steering committee appointed by LHiNC was integral in reviewing and refining the public engagement process and content of the engagement as well as providing feedback and guidance on the overall content of the plan. The steering committee held eight official meetings throughout the planning process and contributed countless hours reviewing, commenting and informing the planning process and the content of the plan.

During the 45-day public comment period 25 comments were received. These comments are in attachment B.

At the time of the publication of this report only four correspondences from the public has been received. This is included in attachment C. The LHiNC Board took final action on the LHSAP on November 25, 2013. Their correspondence and any additional comments received after the publication of this report will be included in material provided to the CPC and the Public at the December 2, 2013 public hearing.

Creative City Making

The Linden Hills Small Area Plan was a pilot project of Creative City Making, collaboration between the City of Minneapolis and Intermedia Arts to embed artists in planning process. Creative City Making was made possible by a grant from ArtPlace America. Three artists, Roger Cummings, Caroline Kent, and Samuel Ero-Phillips, engaged youth from Southwest High School in the development of the plan and developed a Zine, a picture book questionnaire, to further engage members of the community on elements of the plan.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS OF THE LHSAP RECOMMENDATIONS

A vision for the project area and five overarching goals were created to guide the evolution of the project area. Each section of plan creates a framework based on an understanding of existing conditions and existing policy before making recommendations. The plan establishes new policy and specific recommendations to further the vision and goals it establishes.

VISION & GOALS OF THE LHSAP

Linden Hills is a thriving pedestrian-friendly and sustainable urban village that offers varied housing, commercial, open space, and transportation choices to meet residents' and business owners' needs. Renovation and new development support and enhance the existing scale and character of the neighborhood.

Neighborhood scale and character are in part defined by:

- A walkable, pedestrian friendly public realm
- An eclectic mix of human-scale buildings
- Vibrant, independent, neighborhood-serving businesses

To fulfill this vision five goals have been established:

1. Keep and enhance what makes the Linden Hills commercial districts unique.
2. Ensure appropriately-scaled development.
3. Encourage complementary uses, activities, and public realm enhancements.
4. Promote public infrastructure and private development that reinforces an ecologically healthy neighborhood.
5. Support the development of a broad spectrum of life-cycle housing options.

LAND USE & DEVELOPMENT INTENSITY SECTION

The LHSAP establishes a context for the neighborhood by reviewing past and current development patterns. It reviews applicable City policy and the existing Zoning Code as it relates to the Linden Hills Overlay District. The LHSAP addresses building height and design in Section 3.2 Building & Site Design. See pages 38-41 of the LHSAP for all the policies, recommendations and the proposed future land use map.

- Study and refine the existing Linden Hills Overlay Zoning District to reflect the guidance in this Small Area Plan, including the amount and location of parking and allowed uses. The study should also consider applying the overlay district to the 44th & France Neighborhood Commercial Node to further encourage more pedestrian oriented development patterns.
- Define the existing commercial areas between Chowen and Zenith Avenues as a new mixed use Neighborhood Commercial Node.
- Expand the southern boundary of the 44th & France Neighborhood Commercial Node to include the property at 4519 France Avenue South.
- Expand the southeastern boundary of the 43rd & Upton Neighborhood Commercial Node to include the property at 2720 West 44th Street.
- Redefine the area along France Avenue from the corner of 46th Street up to the south property line of 4519 France Avenue South as Medium Density Residential.
- Redefine the area along the north side of 44th Street between Drew Avenue and France 44 Liquors as Medium Density Residential.

- Redefine the area along the north side of 44th Street between Xerxes Avenue and St. John the Apostle Church and School as Medium Density Residential.

Analysis of LHSAP Recommendations

The boundary refinements of the 44th & France and 43rd & Upton Neighborhood Commercial Nodes reflect the existing development patterns of the nodes and clarify its boundary from when it was first established with the adoption of the TMP in 2009.

Density: The definition of three new areas of Medium Density Residential at 44th & Xerxes, 44th & Drew and France and 46th reflect TMP policy that calls for medium density residential property adjacent to nodes and in other appropriate locations along community corridors. In all of these locations it was determined that medium density residential versus high density was preferred due to existing development patterns of the area and the context of the adjacent properties. While, the narrative of the TMP states that community corridors could accommodate high density development, it is not required. As written, the Linden Hills Small Area Plan reflects a preference expressed in community feedback for supporting medium density. This desire for medium density is supported by the specific policies of the TMP.

Linden Hills Overlay District: The LHSAP recommendations call for exploring revisions to the Linden Hills Overlay District to address a reduction and flexibility in parking requirements. The Linden Hills Overlay District was the precursor to the Pedestrian Overlay District in the current Zoning Code. With the exception of the parking requirements and some prohibited uses the two overlay districts share many common items and better aligning these districts is desired. The LHSAP calls for applying this overlay district to the 44th & France neighborhood commercial node.

Consistency with TMP Policy: The LHSAP breaks up guidance that affects growth into two sections: Land Use & Intensity and Building & Site Design. The Land Use & Intensity section identifies geographic areas for the future land use map. The Building & Site Design section provides guidance on building height and massing, which does affect the envelope or size of a building. The following provides an analysis of land use policy in response to discussion about the ability of the plan to accommodate growth. The analysis in the Building & Site provides more analysis on this item issue in relation to the specific building design guidance.

The TMP does not set a housing unit growth requirement or goal for any neighborhood in Minneapolis. The TMP promotes growth along land use features such as neighborhood commercial nodes and community corridors within those features a range of densities area promoted where appropriate. The LHSAP as written is consistent with the policies of the TMP regarding land use and practices of CPED in developing small area plans.

BUILDING & SITE DESIGN SECTION

The LHSAP focuses on three aspects of building design (1) Building height and massing, (2) building length, and (3) transitions to lower density development. The LHSAP articulates a context based on existing conditions and outlines the policies of the TMP to set a framework to explore guidance on these main topics. First, the plan establishes high-level policy statements and then provides specific recommendation on Building Height & Length and Transitions. The following is a summary of the recommendations in the Building & Site Design section. See pages 45-50 of the LHSAP for the full discussion of the recommendations and companion graphics:

Summary of LHSAP Plan Recommendations on Building & Site Design				
<i>Applicable location</i>	43rd and Upton Neighborhood Commercial Node	44th and Beard Neighborhood Commercial Node	44th and France Neighborhood Commercial Node	Along the Community Corridors
<i>Land Use</i>	Mixed Use Encouraged	Mixed Use Encouraged	Mixed Use Encouraged	Multi-family, Mixed use not allowed
<i>Height</i>	Maximum of 44 feet. Three or four stories allowed within the height maximum. See analysis below regarding feasibility of four story mixed use buildings within this maximum height.	Maximum of 44 feet. Three or four stories allowed within the height maximum. See analysis below regarding feasibility of four story mixed use buildings within this maximum height.	Maximum of 50 feet and four stories allowed within	Maximum of 44 feet. Three or four stories allowed within the height maximum.

Summary of LHSAP Plan Recommendations on Building & Site Design				
<i>Applicable location</i>	43rd and Upton Neighborhood Commercial Node	44th and Beard Neighborhood Commercial Node	44th and France Neighborhood Commercial Node	Along the Community Corridors
<i>Massing</i>	Fourth story of any building required to be stepped back from street façade by 10 feet.	Fourth story of any building required to be stepped back from street façade by 10 feet.	<p>Fourth story of any building required to be stepped back from street façade by 10 feet.</p> <p>A fourth story of a building that is not stepped back from the street façade will be considered if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A publicly accessible plaza or open space is located adjacent to 44th Street • The four story portion of the building complies with the building articulation requirement and does not exceed 70 feet in length along any adjacent street 	Fourth story of any building required to be stepped back from street façade by 10 feet.

Summary of LHSAP Plan Recommendations on Building & Site Design				
<i>Applicable location</i>	43rd and Upton Neighborhood Commercial Node	44th and Beard Neighborhood Commercial Node	44th and France Neighborhood Commercial Node	Along the Community Corridors
<i>Building Length</i>	<p>Buildings should be articulated according to rhythms established by current lot widths and scale of existing storefronts</p> <p>Buildings should be articulated into modules that do not exceed 50 feet in length along any street.</p> <p>The modules of a building should be defined by articulation that is at least 4 feet deep.</p>	<p>Buildings should be articulated according to rhythms established by current lot widths and scale of existing storefronts</p> <p>Buildings should be articulated into modules that do not exceed 50 feet in length along any street.</p> <p>The modules of a building should be defined by articulation that is at least 4 feet deep.</p>	<p>Buildings should be articulated according to rhythms established by current lot widths and scale of existing storefronts</p> <p>Buildings should be articulated into modules that do not exceed 70 feet in length along any street.</p> <p>The modules of a building should be defined by articulation that is at least 4 feet deep.</p>	<p>Buildings should be articulated according to rhythms established by current lot widths and scale of existing development</p> <p>Buildings should be articulated into modules that do not exceed 50 feet in length along any street.</p> <p>The modules of a building should be defined by articulation that is at least 4 feet deep.</p>
<i>Building Transitions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a new three or four story building is adjacent to single- or two-family structures, the top floor shall be setback an additional 10 feet from the required rear and side yards of the property. Adjacent structures are defined as properties that share a side or rear property line or an alley with the subject property. • Encourage building designs that articulate or enliven the rear façade. • Encourage site designs that use vegetative buffers to reduce the visual impacts of higher density development on adjacent lower density development. 			

Defining the Existing Context: The LHSAP defines the existing context of Linden Hills through an analysis of past and current development patterns. The existing context serves as the basis for defining elements of compatibility for new development. The following is a short summary of this existing context:

- 43rd & Upton: mixed use buildings ranging from 1-3 stories in height, building width approximately 50 feet. Along 43rd St W two original buildings have roof top additions that are setback from the front façade of the building, thus reducing their visibility. To the north and east immediately adjacent to the node is 4 story multifamily housing. To the north and west immediately adjacent to the node are low-scale residential homes.
- 44th & Beard: one and two story commercial buildings approximately 50 feet in width or less. Medium and high density multifamily housing west and south of the node. Low scale residential housing surrounding the rest of the node.
- 44th & France: primarily one story commercial buildings in a more auto centric development pattern. Buildings have a range of widths and orientations that reflect various development patterns of the node. Medium and high density multifamily housing east and south of the node. Low scale residential housing surrounding the rest of the node.
- France and 44th Street W Community Corridors: 1-3 story single family and multiple family buildings with building widths ranging from approximately 30 to 70 feet depending on the development.

Community input on building scale, height and massing: Community input on building design throughout the planning process focused on promoting compatible buildings and the avoidance of large scale development that was too tall and did not relate to the rhythm of the existing development patterns of the area. As the planning process evolved the input from the community became clearer. Participant revealed that four story developments were too tall and out scale for most of the project area based on the existing development patterns. Three stories were revealed as the preferred building height. There was a strong concern about parcel assembly that might result in buildings with long monotonous street frontages that do not reflect the smaller scale development of the area. There was a preference to break up large developments into separate buildings and to mitigate the impacts of new development on adjacent lower scale residential development.

Analysis & Discussion of LHSAP Recommendations

Building Height: The LHSAP guidance on compatible heights has been the focus of significant discussion and analysis since the draft of the plan for the 45-day comment period was released. The definitions of compatibility and appropriateness and their translation into building height and ultimately how that

height results into the amount of new growth that can be accommodated on a site and in Linden Hills is at the center point of this discussion.

Participants in the planning process revealed a strong concern over four story development and preferred shorter developments that reflected the existing rhythms of the buildings and were more consistent with the primarily one and two story development within the project area. At the same time comments from CPED and CPC on the plan were clear that more efforts needed to be made to accommodate developments greater than three stories.

The recommendations in the LHSAP on shorter building heights for four story buildings and stepped back four stories are a result. In reducing the maximum building height of the building it encourage more compatible overall heights and more compatible floor to floor heights that can better relate to the scale of the surroundings. Stepping back the fourth story of a building reduces its visual impact and further addresses some of the concerns the community expressed about compatible building heights.

It is appropriate to set maximum heights for buildings that are inconsistent with current zoning code definition of a four story building as long as they are feasible and reflect the entirety of the policies of the TMP. The LHSAP is a policy document and the Zoning Code is regulatory document. Policy informs regulation, not the other way around. The LHSAP recommendations for building heights are inconsistent with the current Zoning Code's definition of a four story building, which is 56 feet in height (the Zoning Code defines a story as 14 feet). The LHSAP recommendation for lower absolute building heights reflects attempts to strive for compatibility in scale of buildings while allowing a fourth story to accommodate housing growth in appropriate locations. This recommendation is consistent with interpretation of TMP policy that balances promoting growth while developing design requirements to make new buildings compatible with the existing building fabric of the area.

Maximum Height of 44 Feet and Mixed Use Development: CPED believes that a four story mixed-use building would be very difficult to develop within a maximum height of 44 feet. Mixed use buildings are encouraged in the neighborhood commercial nodes of 43rd & Upton and 44th & Beard where the 44 feet height maximum is proposed. As a result of this height maximum these areas will likely not have four story mixed used development. Commercial first floors of mixed use buildings often range between 14 and 16 feet in height and as a result do not leave enough height for three corresponding floors of residential units, the required structural floor members, and building insulation.

A proxy for how much height is needed to accommodate a four story mixed uses building is to look at recent developments in Minneapolis. The shortest height for a four story mixed use building that has been recently approved and constructed in the City is 48 feet. It is located on the northeast corner of 26th Street West &

Lyndale Ave S. It might be possible to have a shorter four story mixed used building than 48 feet, but it is clear that to accommodate a fourth story in a mixed used building the maximum building height would likely need to be increased from 44 feet.

Measurement of Height: The LHSAP introduces a new way of measuring height. Measuring from the curb level versus how the Zoning Code defines the measurement of height which is from existing grade at a point 10 feet out from the proposed building. This new measurement definition was proposed to provide a more understandable way to define height that would provide a clear expectation of the envelope of new buildings. It was also proposed to further reduce the envelope of new developments and address the concerns about the overall height of buildings when there are grade changes that do not make it clear.

This proposed measurement of height from the curb level is problematic as it creates a new definition of height that only applies to the project area of the LHSAP. CPED is recommending that this new definition of measuring height be removed from the LHSAP.

Building Length: The LHSAP recommends the articulation of new buildings into modules to relate to the various contexts of the area. The LHSAP recommendations about the depth of articulation and the length of building modules is more specific than guidance in the current Zoning Code and is reflective of a strong community desire to see new development that better relates to the small scale traditional commercial storefront and residential development pattern of the community.

Transitions: The recommendations of the LHSAP are consistent with TMP policy that states “provide appropriate physical transition and separation using green space, setbacks or orientation, stepped down height, or ornamental fencing to improve the compatibility between higher density and lower density residential uses.”

Additional Discussion on the Consistency of the LHSAP Recommendations with the Policies of The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth

The TMP does not set a recommended height or maximum height for new buildings within the City of Minneapolis. The height, massing, length and transitions of a new building are based on the interpretation of the policies of the TMP. Most specifically guidance around these issues sits at the crux of three major topics of policy in TMP: Housing, Land Use and Urban Design. The TMP does not weight one policy or topic of policy over the others. Together these policies need to be interpreted to shape the location, intensity and design of development in locations throughout the City.

The guidance in the LHSAP was developed within the policy framework of the TMP. The applicable policies of the TMP are included in the Plan for reference and can be found in the TMP. The following is a summary of these three areas of policy.

The TMP calls for medium and high density housing in appropriate locations across the City to grow the housing supply and the population of the City. The TMP further refines appropriate locations for medium and high density housing within Linden Hills through the land use features of neighborhood commercial nodes and community corridors. Neighborhood Commercial Nodes are guided for medium and high density, with medium density adjacent to the nodes to serve as a buffer to lower scale residential area. Community corridors are guided for a range of low to high density development and higher densities are promoted near neighborhood commercial nodes. The policies about appropriate locations for density are accompanied by Urban Design policies that promote building orientation, scale, form, massing, buffering and setbacks that are appropriate with the context of the surrounding area. The TMP specifically states “smaller-scale, multi-family residential development is more appropriate along Community Corridors and Neighborhood Commercial Nodes”

The Land Use & Intensity and Building & Site Design sections of the LHSAP provide a thorough analysis of the past and current development patterns and building and site characteristics to define the context that TMP polices call for new development to be “compatible” or “appropriate” with.

CPED believes the LHSAP recommendations are consistent policies of the TMP. However, based on the feedback from Planning Commissioners at their Committee of the Whole meetings October and November there appear to be differing interpretations of how to apply the policies of the TMP within Linden Hills.

The community is deeply connected to and committed to retaining the building fabric and character of the neighborhood commercial nodes of 43rd & Upton and 44th & France. This commitment to retaining the character results in the LHSAP having more restrictive definitions of compatibility for new building design that trump the potential additional housing units that would come from a fourth story of any new mixed use building in the 43rd & Upton and 44th & Beard Neighborhood Commercial Nodes. Four story developments are allowed and feasible along the community corridors and within the 44th & France neighborhood commercial node.

If the Planning Commission feels that they cannot accept the interpretation of the TMP policies that led to the recommendations in the LHSAP, CPED recommends that the Planning Commission work within the context created in the plan of promoting overall building heights that are more reflective of the existing character of the area and shorter than what is currently allowed by the Zoning

Ordinance. Any new recommended building height should represent the minimum height needed to make a four story mixed use building feasible.

MOVEMENT, CONNECTIVITY & PARKING SECTION

The LHSAP addresses several elements in its Movement, Connectivity & Parking section. Connecting the three commercial nodes of Linden Hills, encouraging modes of transportation other than cars, and addressing parking issues are major topics covered in this section of the LHSAP. Much like the other sections of the LHSAP this section provides background information on existing conditions and applicable TMP policies before developing policies and specific implementation recommendations. The following are the specific implementation recommendations. See pages 57-67 of the LHSAP for more detail on the policies and recommendations for this section.

Pedestrian Infrastructure Improvements

- Add curb extensions (bump-outs) at key intersections along 44th Street and at 43rd & Upton to improve pedestrian safety, help calm traffic, and enhance the overall streetscape.
- Explore the installation of decorative pedestrian lighting from Upton Avenue and 43rd Street to 44th Street and France Avenue.
- Expand the quantity and distribution of bike parking facilities.

Sunnyside Avenue

- Improve safety and convenience for pedestrians crossing between Sunnyside Avenue and 44th Street by enhancing or redesigning Sunnyside Avenue between France Avenue and 44th Street as a more pedestrian-oriented facility.

Former Streetcar Right of Way

- Explore the formalization of pedestrian and bicycle use of former streetcar right of way between Xerxes and Upton Avenue through infrastructure improvements.
- Ensure site improvements and designs within and adjacent to the streetcar right-of-way that increase the real and perceived safety of users of the streetcar right of way
- Analyze options for refining the function and design of the former street car right-of-way to accommodate vehicle traffic associated with the parking and access of the commercial uses within the 43rd & Upton neighborhood commercial node while not compromising the desire for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure that is safe and inviting.

Parking

- Manage and reconfigure existing supply of parking resources to their maximum potential while also seeking opportunities for expanding car share, bike rental, and neighborhood transit circulator service.
- Ensure that parking facilities maintain and enhance the character of Linden Hills through their location, design and the types of facilities.

Connectivity

- Improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to, from, and within the three commercial nodes.
- Enhance the “Christmas Tree” public green space along 44th Street between Chowen and Beard Avenues.

Analysis & Discussion of LHSAP Recommendations

Parking: The recommendations on parking in the LHSAP are framed by understanding the supply of parking. While there was interest in increasing the overall supply of parking it was realized that increasing the supply of parking has negative impacts on the character of the area and the over 900 on-street and off-street parking spaces in the area could be better utilized to maximize their utility. This is in keeping with TMP policy

Former Streetcar Right of Way: Linden Hills contains a larger stretch of intact former Como Harriet Streetcar Right of Way. In portions of the neighborhood this right of way is used for commercial drive aisles for parking, a residential alley, community gardens and multi-use paths and a commercial parking lot. The recommendations in the LHSAP attempt to address the potential of how a portion of the right of way could be better utilized between Xerxes & Upton Avenues while recognizing that significantly more technical analysis is required to understand its full constraints and opportunities.

SUSTAINABILITY & THE ENVIRONMENT SECTION

Linden Hills has had a strong and long standing commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship. The plan examines sustainability as it relates to the social sphere, transportation, economy and environment. In this section of the LHSAP many more policies were developed than specific implementation recommendations. Below are the specific recommendations for this section. See pages 72-75 of the LHSAP for more detail on the policies and recommendations for this section.

- Provide access via web links to green building organizations’ information (USGBC LEED, MN B3, Green Globes, etc.) on the neighborhood’s web site to further educate and promote sustainable, green building practices.
- Integrate stormwater best management practices (BMPs), such as rain gardens, permeable paving, and vegetative green roofs, as components of new development and significant renovations or additions to existing sites and buildings.
- Convert tree-lawn boulevards along 44th Street to linear rain gardens (vegetated bio-swales), where practical.
- Expand on the program of hosting topical presentations to the neighborhood by renowned experts in the fields of sustainability and green design.

Analysis & Discussion of LHSAP Recommendations

The LHSAP recognizes the potential of using the collection of public and private properties to better manage and filter storm water as well having compact enough development densities to support green energy development and even potential shared services to create district energy options.

HERITAGE PRESERVATION SECTION

Heritage Preservation was a key element of the LHSAP. Much of the interest in the areas of 43rd & Upton and 44th & France revolved around retaining and preserving the fabric of these highly valued places. There was strong interest exploring tools such as local and national designation that could offer both stronger regulatory framework but also potential financial tools to maintain, update and enhance the existing building fabric. The following are the specific implementation recommendations. See pages 81-82 of the LHSAP for more detail on the policies and recommendations for this section.

- Seek funding for and implement a study by qualified consultants to determine the eligibility of properties and/or districts within the Small Area Plan Study Area and the Area of Influence.
- Explore the creation of Conservation Districts in areas valued for their distinctive development patterns.
- Use the results of the historic designation study as the basis for identifying and creating Conservation Districts in Linden Hills as another tool to protect its character.

Analysis & Discussion of LHSAP Recommendations

The community finds significant value in retaining its existing building fabric. These existing buildings not only define the physical character of the area, but the existing traditional building fabric provides for relatively lower rents compared to new construction. These lower rents foster small and independent businesses, which is also identified as a significant part of the neighborhood's character. Local and national historic designation and conservation districts are tools the community can use to retain its existing building fabric and provide more detailed review of alterations and new construction in these sensitive areas. Retaining and preserving the historic building fabric is not only supported by policies of the TMP related to heritage preservation it is supported by policies related to urban design as a way to retain and promote traditional building form.

FUTURE RELATED ACTIONS

- **Comprehensive Plan changes.** This small area plan will be amended into *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*.

- **Rezoning study.** A rezoning study is required to bring future land use regulations in compliance with this adopted plan.
- **Development review.** Future development proposals for property in Linden Hills would require City Planning Commission review of development applications such as rezonings, conditional use permits, street vacations, and site plan review. The Planning Commission also has a role in recommending whether the capital improvement plan, proposed land sales - including those sold through the RFP process –and the establishment of redevelopment districts are in conformance with the City’s Comprehensive Plan and the small area plan.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the City Planning Commission and City Council **adopt** the Linden Hills Small Area Plan as an articulation of, and amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, and direct staff to undertake a rezoning study to implement the adopted policies with these modifications and clarifications:

1. Remove “(measured from the curb level)” from recommendations in the top two bullet points of Building Height & Length on page 46 of the LHSAP.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Linden Hills Small Area Plan Final Draft dated November 19, 2013
 - a. Linden Hills Small Area Plan Appendices. (not included in hard copy of report, but can be found on the project webpage at LHSAP.org or by clicking [here](#)).
- B. Communication received during the 45-day Public Comment Period.
- C. Communication received since the 45-day Public Comment Period.