

Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Master Plan

Minneapolis, Minnesota



Prepared for:
The Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood

Prepared by:
Cunningham Group Architecture, Inc.
Donjek, Inc.
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

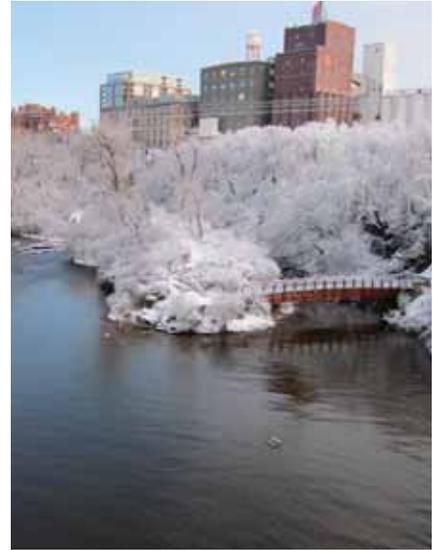


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Steering Committee

Robert Stableski, Chair
Paul Buchanan
Shannon Evans
Phill Kelly
Crisi Lee
Lynn Nyman
Daniel Oberpriller
Larry Prinds
Nicolas Ramirez
Kathy Ricketts
Hung Russell
Sonny Schneiderhan
Pierre Willette

Special thanks to:
Arvonne Fraser

Consultant Team

Cunningham Group
Architecture, Inc.

Donjek, Inc.

Kimley-Horn and
Associates, Inc.



Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Master Plan

Executive Summary

With a vibrant residential and business identity, rich natural amenities along the Mississippi River, and a prime location between the University of Minnesota and downtown Minneapolis, Marcy-Holmes is a sought-after destination, well-traveled gateway, and treasured place to live.

The neighborhood's residents describe it as eclectic, diverse, and active, with a rich historical tapestry. It is the oldest neighborhood in the city, proud of its heritage, and yet progressive in its nature; the neighborhood is capable of dealing with change and managing it to benefit the entire community. It is home to an impressive array of talent: teachers, scientists, senators, artists, students, families, empty-nesters, and many more.

These diverse assets are why Marcy-Holmes has experienced dramatic growth for many years. The neighborhood has been planning proactively for over ten years, and created their first neighborhood plan in 2003. Since then, the pace of growth has increased even more, forcing the neighborhood to confront the physical challenges of this growth. Residents are concerned that, with so many new buildings being built, the valued historical fabric of the neighborhood could be lost. The influx of new residents and visitors puts pressure on infrastructure that struggles to keep up with demand.

This Plan addresses the concerns that come with growth and change, and suggests ways to direct the change to enhance the strengths of the neighborhood. It articulates a clear vision for the Marcy-Holmes neighborhood over the next ten years and outlines a consensus arrived at through an open and inclusive process.

Public Process

To listen to as many voices as possible in Marcy-Holmes, the steering committee and Board of Directors created an open and democratic planning process.

The process included 200 neighbors attending open meetings, 2,200 online interactions, seven focus groups on specific topics, periodic updates to the Board, and a highly-engaged steering committee. Participants played an active role in shaping and writing this Plan and the final product reflects this open process.

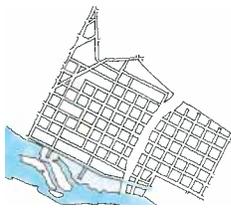


Neighborhood Goals

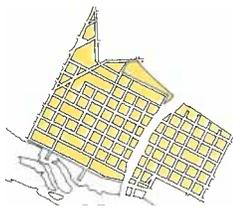
The public process informed the creation of six overarching goals for this Plan:



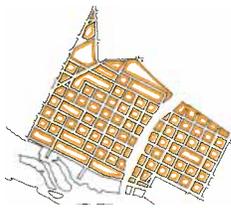
1. Be one neighborhood
Celebrate the neighborhood's distinct character areas as parts of a vibrant whole.



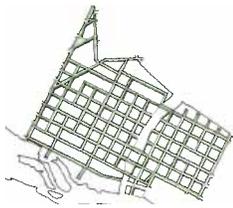
4. Love the riverfront
Connect the Mississippi River to the whole neighborhood by enhancing local access.



2. Live here now
Meet the needs of those who live here for any amount of time.



5. Make change contribute
Welcome growth that gives back to the community and contributes to a high quality of life.



3. Make the streets ours
Prioritize local use of the streets through multi-modal and intersection improvements.



6. Welcome the tension of complexity and contradiction
Embrace the diverse physical environment, celebrating history and evolving appropriately.

Achieving the Goals: Frameworks

To achieve these goals, the Plan makes recommendations within three primary frameworks: Land Use, Open Space, and Transportation. It also addresses Built Form, Economic Development, Arts and Culture, and Heritage Preservation. These frameworks must function together and separately to serve the neighborhood well.

Land Use

Absorb growth in specific areas, add neighborhood nodes on key intersections, support mixed-uses, preserve and enhance character, and improve environmental quality.

Built Form

Encourage a healthier range and mix of housing types, enhance the high-quality pedestrian environment throughout, and locate building types strategically.

Open Space

Invest in public green spaces, and improve connections within the neighborhood and with the riverfront. Prioritize the Mississippi River Trail connection between the Stone Arch Bridge and Dinkytown.

Transportation

Emphasize bike- and pedestrian-friendly streets, including improved crossings on University Ave SE and 4th St SE. Match infrastructure to changing land uses and travel patterns.

Economic Development

Attract and retain businesses that provide local employment and support actively entrepreneurship and incubator businesses. Expand commercial nodes and Dinkytown while preserving its historic character.

Arts and Culture

Create arts-inspired gateways and wayfinding, expand programming in public spaces, and engage artists in shaping places and activities.

Heritage Preservation

Reuse and rehabilitate existing buildings. Invest in the long-term quality and viability of the riverfront landscape.

Character Areas

Though the frameworks span the entirety of the neighborhood, they do not address the different needs and different challenges specific areas within the neighborhood face. For this reason, neighborhood residents identified five areas in Marcy-Holmes that exhibit different urban character that should be reinforced. The Plan makes recommendations tailored to each of five Character Areas.



- 9th Street Industrial.** Support and promote existing and future jobs, embrace diversity of building uses and eras, improve connectivity, and plan for the Triangle area.
- West Side.** Maintain neighborhood stability, improve connectivity, enhance neighborhood amenities, and preserve historic neighborhood fabric.
- East Side.** Reestablish diversity of people, housing, and uses, promote neighborhood stability, reinforce a mix of uses, establish and nurture partnerships, and improve public amenities.
- Riverfront.** Expand and improve riverfront parks, improve connectivity, balance local and regional access and use, create bike- and walk-friendly environments on 2nd Street SE, and embrace diversity of building uses and eras.
- Dinkytown.** Support and strengthen business district vitality, enhance multi-modal transportation network and parking options, and preserve historic character while expanding the commercial area for redevelopment.

A Vision for Marcy-Holmes in 2024

Over the next ten years, Marcy-Holmes will grow and change into a more complete, diverse, and stable—yet flexible—community. The West Side’s residential areas will stabilize, population and housing on the East Side will diversify, the Riverfront will continue to grow as a regional and local attraction, and areas north of 8th Street SE and west of Hennepin Avenue E will provide jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for the creative sector (A).

Most growth and physical change will occur along transit lines or around existing commercial areas, such as Central Avenue and Dinkytown (B), allowing areas in-between to remain quiet, with lower scale buildings and leafy streets. Some small neighborhood-oriented commercial nodes will further serve these areas (C).

Potential new buildings in defined areas will appeal to a range of new residents, should the opportunity arise (D). Human-scaled ground floor windows and doors will create a comfortable walking and lingering environment for residents and visitors. Materials and styles will reflect the neighborhood’s desire for eclectic architectural expression. Like many of the original buildings in Marcy-Holmes, new buildings will be built to high sustainability standards so they can benefit from generations of reinvestment.

New developments will keep and bring families, artists, singles, and seniors to the East and West Sides. Students will remain a welcome part of the community; however, they will be more integrated into the neighborhood as responsible and constructive citizens.

Current and new residents will enjoy new parks along the river and improved parks within the neighborhood (E). Residents will be able to bicycle, walk, and run seamlessly from all parts of the neighborhood to the Riverfront, the University of Minnesota, Dinkytown, and destinations beyond, some via the expanded Mississippi River Trail-Stone Arch-Dinkytown Greenway recreational connection (F), and others via improved intersections on University Avenue SE and 4th Street SE (G).

Public streets and underused spaces will serve as informal and temporary spaces for events and gatherings, and 5th Street SE, a neighborhood-oriented street that connects the East and West Sides and many neighborhood resources, will become a cohesive, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly amenity (H). Eleventh Avenue SE will parallel 6th Avenue SE as an attractive, bike-friendly street, connecting Marcy Park with a trail to the Riverfront (I).

Dinkytown will remain central to the neighborhood and the University; however, it will diversify with a broader range of community-oriented offerings, such as a modern urban library, health clinic, community center, and other uses (J).

All of this will be possible by prioritizing partnerships among the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, the University of Minnesota, the Dinkytown Business Association, the Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Association, and other entities interested in celebrating Minneapolis’s original neighborhood as a growing, healthy place with world class living and learning opportunities.



A Vision for Marcy-Holmes in 2024



A) Jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities for the creative sector

B) Growth and physical change along transit lines or around existing commercial areas

C) Small neighborhood-oriented commercial nodes

D) Potential new buildings in defined areas as opportunity arises

E) Enhanced and new parks along the river, and improved parks in the neighborhood

F) Expanded Mississippi River Trail-Stone Arch-Dinkytown Greenway connection

G) Improved intersections on University Avenue SE and 4th Street SE

H) A formal, cohesive, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly 5th Street SE

I) 11th Avenue SE bike friendly connection between Marcy Park and the Riverfront

J) Dinkytown diversified with a broader range of community-oriented offerings

Plan Implementation

This Plan serves as an invitation to those within and outside the neighborhood to be active participants in change. The Plan is not a road map. Rather, it is a compass meant to guide the neighborhood's development over the next ten years. It is a tool to reference at key times to ensure the community is moving in the desired direction.

Many variables will change over the life of the Plan, and alliances among neighborhoods, the University of Minnesota, the City of Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and other agencies are essential to accomplish its goals. For this reason, the document prioritizes a thoughtful, flexible framework instead of prescribed decisions. The Implementation section outlines some actions to work toward the vision.



I. Neighborhood & Plan Context



Overview

The Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Master Plan is an invitation to the neighborhood, the development community, the City, and other partners to participate in community-driven development. Marcy-Holmes recognizes its place in Minneapolis as a desirable location for many and has dealt with development pressures for decades.

Marcy-Holmes is eclectic, diverse, and active, and has a rich historical tapestry. It is the oldest neighborhood in the city, and yet its residents rigorously embrace the challenges and opportunities of the future.

The neighborhood welcomes development, as long as it contributes to overall community goals. The Plan looks to public and private partners to invest in infrastructure and keep pace with the addition of thousands of new residents, employees, and visitors who come to and travel through the neighborhood.

The neighborhood recognizes its identity is not defined by a moment in time but by the accumulated complexity from layers of change over time. Throughout Marcy-Holmes, new is next to old, big is next to small, young students are next to seniors, and natural is next to urban.

How to use this plan

This Plan is not a detailed road map or series of action steps for how to arrive at a vision. The Plan is a compass—a tool to reference at key times, a tool to ensure the community is moving in the desired direction.

Ultimately, people—not plans—make decisions about the neighborhood. This Plan provides frameworks to be used in the decision-making process. The Plan invites latitude and flexibility in its interpretation. This gives the Plan a longer life, more adaptability, and greater usefulness over time.

Overview (Continued)

Marcy-Holmes is a progressive community in an historic and ever-changing environment. The hallmark of a progressive community is its willingness and eagerness to work constructively with the forces that impact it. Progressive communities are tolerant, accepting, and eager to welcome newcomers and to recognize them as essential contributors to an ever-evolving community.

In Marcy-Holmes, innovative ideas and interesting people collide and wrestle with tensions and contradictions that come from a willingness to grow a progressive community in an historical context. Because of this, Marcy-Holmes is an attractive home to teachers, scientists, artists, senators, mayors, and others engaged in civic and creative enterprises.

This progressive attitude has created a community of contrasts. Overlapping interests and forces in Marcy-Holmes create challenges and tensions at times, but it is important to remember the underlying reason for this dynamic: *Marcy-Holmes is a desirable place to be.*

People want to be here, invest here, do business here and visit here. The neighborhood is rich with history and natural beauty, and offers exceptional access to places for learning, working, worshipping, shopping, and dining. Marcy-Holmes is a community of engaged residents who truly love their neighborhood. It is connected to the rest of the region and it offers a strong sense of place to all who live, work, and visit. These are qualities that the neighborhood wants to protect and enhance, and that this Plan prioritizes.



Many enjoy the natural beauty and urban experience of the Mississippi Riverfront in Marcy-Holmes (above). Well-kept houses illustrate the interesting history still evident in the neighborhood as shown by this attractive triplex (below).

A history of Marcy-Holmes

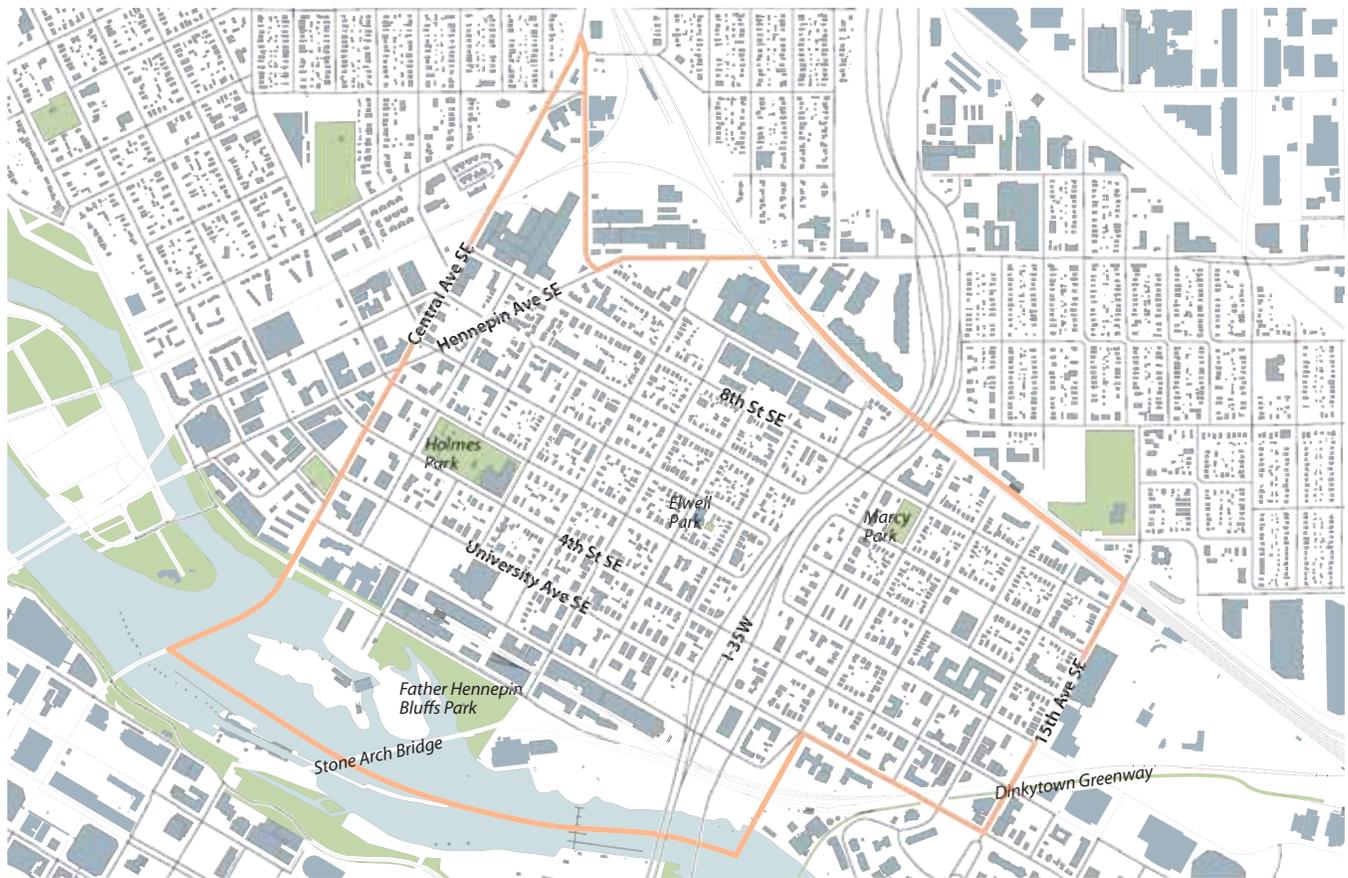
Native Americans were the first Marcy-Holmes residents. They created a portage around the waterfalls, a sacred area where warfare was prohibited. Dakota still visit this natural sanctuary with its seeps and caves.

Father Louis Hennepin, a Franciscan priest captured by the Dakota, is credited as the first European to see the falls in 1680. He was taken with their beauty, and named them after his patron saint, St. Anthony of Padua. His accounts of the new world helped make this a destination for adventurous travelers in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The falls became the center for logging businesses, and by 1850, the town of St. Anthony Falls had a population of 656. The first store opened in 1847, at what is now Main Street and 2nd Avenue SE. The first frame houses were built in 1848, and the first school opened in 1849.

St. Anthony Falls incorporated in 1855 and was later named St. Anthony. It merged with Minneapolis in 1872. Fifth Street SE became the premier address in the city. It was home to flour manufacturers, lumbermen, merchants, and other civic leaders. In 1976, a portion of 5th Street SE was designated a local historic district. Marcy-Holmes has two other historic districts: the St. Anthony Falls Historic District and the University of Minnesota Greek Letter Chapter House Historic District. Two national landmarks—the Stone Arch Bridge and Dinkytown Greenway—are also part of Marcy-Holmes.

Most text: <http://marcy-holmes.org/neighborhood/history/>



Master Plan Study Area

The Marcy-Holmes neighborhood is defined by the Mississippi River on the southwest, the University of Minnesota on the south and east, and major roads and railways on the north, east, and west. Marcy-Holmes is home to a variety of commercial, entertainment, and cultural districts and services; includes eight churches, seven schools, and four parks; and is part of a state critical area and national park. There are more creative occupation jobs per square mile in the Marcy-Holmes ZIP code than in any other Minneapolis area outside downtown.

Marcy-Holmes in the Region

Marcy-Holmes is located between the two largest employment, entertainment, and cultural destinations in the state: downtown Minneapolis and the University of Minnesota. This means the neighborhood experiences many livability benefits as well as challenges.



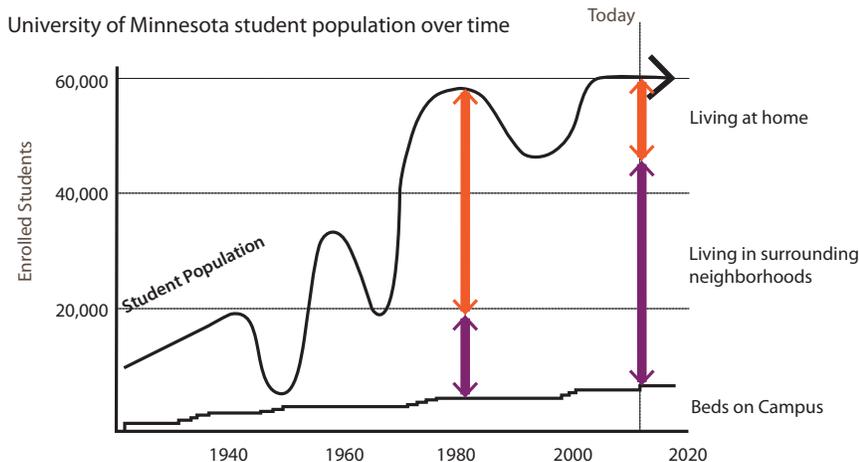
Major roadways convey people through the neighborhood en route elsewhere, but also must serve those living here. The Mississippi River, parklands, and bikeways are major local assets for the neighborhood, but are also regional destinations that draw many people.

These assets mean more people spend time and money in the neighborhood, but it also means the residents must share valuable space and resources.

Population Trends over Time

Because the neighborhood is located between Downtown Minneapolis and the University of Minnesota, Marcy-Holmes is under constant development pressure. Daytime populations at the U of M and Downtown have grown considerably over the past 50 years. This growth coincided with the decline of industry along the riverfront and increasing availability of high-amenity land. Even when real estate cycles are down, Marcy-Holmes remains a desirable place to invest.

After increasing dramatically after WWII, the overall University of Minnesota head count has not changed significantly since the 1980s. What has changed is the desire for students to live near campus and the University’s commitment to providing on-and near-campus housing. Until 1990, the University was a commuter campus: most students lived throughout the region and commuted on a daily basis. On-campus housing was sparse but adequate. In the past 15 years, however, thousands of students have moved closer to campus in search of a more collegiate experience. By design, on-campus housing remains relatively sparse, guaranteed only for first-years due to limited space and other priorities. But the student demand to live in Marcy-Holmes and surrounding neighborhoods is high. The result has been a growth in student population, a change in housing patterns, and a change in focus for new development.



The gap between student enrollment and on-campus housing has increased dramatically since 1950. This gap, combined with a shift in desires to live closer to campus, has resulted in great pressure for student housing in Marcy-Holmes and other University area neighborhoods.

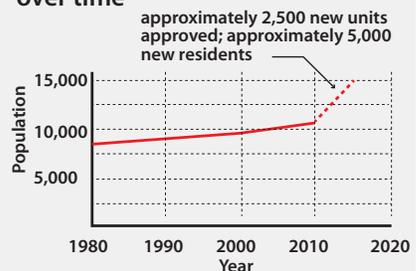
Marcy-Holmes has seen not only a dramatic rise in student population, but also a rise in non-student population. Developments such as The Phoenix, Mill and Main, and A-Mill Artist Lofts along the Riverfront add 700 new units, which totals about a quarter of total new units in the neighborhood.

A desirable neighborhood



Over 830 new housing units have been built and about 1,844 have been proposed in Marcy-Holmes since 2010 (orange). The spike in growth is due in part to pent-up demand from the recession. As this current cycle wanes, growth rates will likely return to historic rates.

Marcy-Holmes population over time



Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth

The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth is a policy document that guides the physical development of the entire city. It is the policy basis for this Plan, and defers to it for specific development guidance. At the regional level, the Metropolitan Council guides The Minneapolis Plan. Metropolitan Council goals relevant to Marcy-Holmes include:

- Maintaining current infrastructure.
- Renewing and improving infrastructure, buildings, and land to provide for additional growth, particularly at centers along transit corridors.
- Supporting developments that integrate land uses.

The Minneapolis Plan is fully consistent with the Metropolitan Council’s policy direction, with a focus on:

- Accommodating growth forecasts through reinvestment at appropriate densities and targeting higher density in locations with convenient access to transportation corridors and with adequate sewer capacity.
- Supporting the conversion or reuse of underused lands in order to accommodate growth forecasts, ensuring efficient utilization of existing infrastructure investments and meeting community needs.
- Make local transportation, transit, pedestrian and bicycle investments to improve connections between workplaces, residences, retail, services and entertainment activities.
- Encouraging the preservation of existing neighborhoods and expansion of housing choices within the city.

The Minneapolis Plan also indicates, via land use features in Marcy-Holmes like community corridors and neighborhood commercial nodes, where growth should be focused. These underlying land use features guide how the city reviews development proposals.

Growth and Development

Community growth and development are important because each:

- Helps a community continually reinvent and differentiate itself.
- Helps fund public improvements and amenities like parks and schools.
- Builds political representation and clout.
- Strengthens local economies and provides economic opportunities.

Challenges with growth and development can be unsettling and unpredictable. If unmanaged, growth and development can displace residents, force people to make adjustments to routines, and come at a cost to social and cultural capital. But when well-managed, growth and development can be part of a virtuous and self-fulfilling cycle of community health and well-being.

A community’s struggles with this can be productive if these struggles result in a clear vision that growth and development can help achieve. The neighborhood wants growth and development to make a deliberate and positive contribution to the overall quality of life for residents, and insists that growth and development facilitate protecting and enhancing the neighborhood’s underlying strengths and values.

Possible kinds of growth

The neighborhood supports growth and development that gives back to the community. Over the next ten years, some areas will see a lot of growth, while others will see very little. The graphics below suggest the likely degree of change (orange) in different areas.



Little growth
Some neighborhood areas will experience very little growth and development. A few buildings may change, but these will blend with and enhance the residential character of the area. This includes the areas between 8th and 4th Sts SE.



Moderate growth
Some areas will experience moderate amounts of growth and development. Larger surface parking lots and blighted buildings may redevelop into townhouses and small apartment buildings. Transit corridors will experience this kind of growth and development.



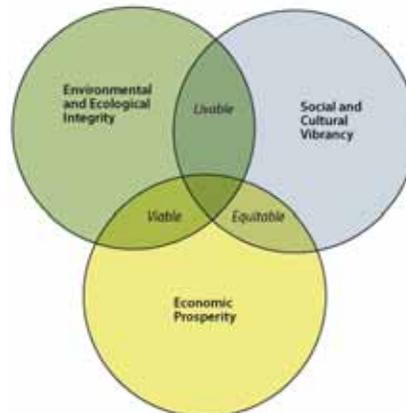
Most growth
Some areas will experience a lot of new growth and development. Taller buildings that ensure a pleasant pedestrian environment and architectural variety will draw a range of new residents. The Riverfront, 15th Ave SE, and the areas along University Ave SE and 4th St SE will absorb most of this kind of growth and development.

Sustainability in Marcy-Holmes

Marcy-Holmes is one of the most sustainable neighborhoods in the region. It is centrally located, well-served by transit, almost fully built out, and connected to major utilities and infrastructure. In addition, the neighborhood provides services for basic needs of its residents.

People have lived here for a long time, and people will want to continue living here far into the future. This Plan supports developments and policies that meet the needs of today’s residents, business owners, and workers, without compromising the needs of those who live and work here in the future.

This Plan also considers sustainability as the combination of livability, viability, and equity. All recommendations aim for success in these areas, while striving for balance among the environment, local economy, and culture.



In addition, while not mentioned in the Frameworks specifically, the actions proposed contribute to a sustainable neighborhood that is pedestrian and bicycle friendly; has connectivity, parks, and green space; prioritizes housing maintenance; and supports population density, live-work environments, and job center creation.

Public engagement

The Plan builds on strengths, addresses weaknesses, and realizes opportunities identified in open meetings with neighbors.



- Strengths**
- Riverfront
 - Dinkytown
 - Holmes Park
 - Marcy Open School
 - 5th St SE



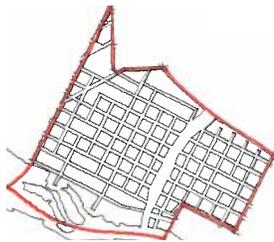
- Weaknesses**
- I-35W
 - Deteriorating properties
 - Inappropriately used properties
 - Dinkytown changes
 - Railroad trench (Granary)



- Opportunities**
- Surface parking lots
 - Railroad trench (Granary)
 - Dinkytown
 - 9th St industrial and employment areas
 - Intersections

Master Plan Goals

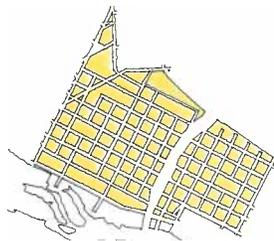
Public input informed the creation of six goals, which organize and guide efforts toward the development and implementation of this plan. They are intentionally broad and strategic, and provide guidelines within which the community can take action toward implementation.



Be one neighborhood.

Marcy-Holmes has several distinct geographic areas, each with its own character and identity. Together, these areas comprise a single neighborhood of diverse, eclectic places and experiences. Marcy-Holmes should celebrate character areas as distinct parts of a vibrant whole.

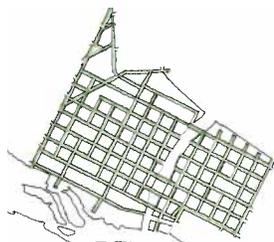
- Make physical, visual, and cultural connections between areas.
- Increase visibility and access between and to different character areas.
- Celebrate commonalities as well as differences.



Live here now.

Some live in Marcy-Holmes for a long time, and some live here for a short time. The amount of time is not what engenders neighborhood commitment; it is the quality and meaning of that time. Marcy-Holmes should seek to offer a high-quality of life to everyone who lives here, whether they are here for weeks, months, or years.

- Provide appropriate housing options for people in all life stages and at all price points.
- Improve access to transportation, recreation, and commercial services.
- Highlight and prioritize civic and cultural resources.



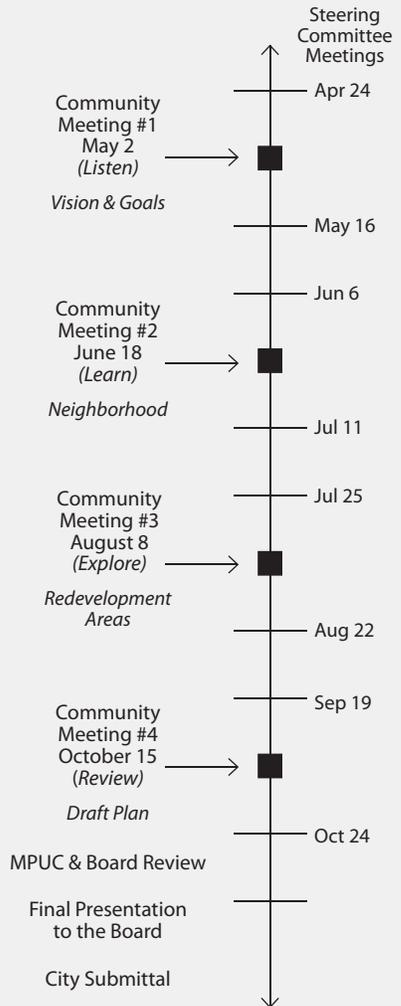
Make the streets ours.

Major roadways bisect and border Marcy-Holmes. These roads were designed to link Downtown and the University of Minnesota with the region, not to serve the neighborhood. New traffic patterns, shifting mode choices, and additional population from recent developments demand a change in how these roads function in Marcy-Holmes.

- Improve bicyclist and pedestrian environments on major streets.
- Improve troublesome intersections.
- Update traffic management infrastructure.
- Prioritize the character and feel of local streets.

Public engagement

- 8 steering committee meetings
- 4 public meetings
- 7 focus groups
- over 100 participants
- 2281 online interactions

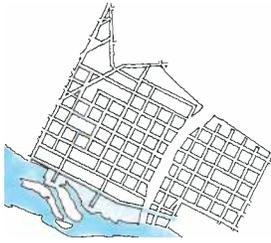


“Our close proximity to the U of M is a major asset. I like being in and near this world class academic community.”

“I think we could change the feel and perception of the neighborhood by slowing down the traffic, increasing the walkability, and improving the safety of cyclists and pedestrians.”

“New development/new buildings should contribute, not be a detriment, to the pedestrian environment. For example, retail at street level, entrances/exits onto the sidewalk, etc.”

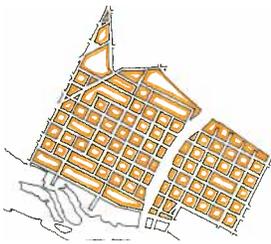
“Historic buildings play a special role in creating the distinctive character of our neighborhood.”



Love the riverfront.

All of Marcy-Holmes is a riverfront neighborhood. The Mississippi River is a valuable natural asset and major regional attraction, yet local access to it is difficult. Efforts along the riverfront should prioritize the riverfront as both a regional *and* local resource.

- Champion efforts to connect riverfront bike trails and open space with the Granary corridor.
- Ensure that Mississippi River corridor plans enhance access to and use of the riverfront.
- Promote ideas that connect *all* parts of the neighborhood to the riverfront.



Make change contribute.

Marcy-Holmes is a desirable place to live. This leads to significant development pressure and rapid change. Change, while unpredictable, is not bad; however, change that occurs without regard to neighborhood desires and standards can be. New development in Marcy-Holmes should “give back,” and contribute positively to the overall quality of life.

- Encourage sustainable building practices.
- Create a pedestrian-friendly environment adjacent to the sidewalk.
- Provide land for public use.
- Designate a percentage of housing units as affordable.
- Improve water quality and native plant habitat.



Welcome the tension of complexity and contradiction.

Marcy-Holmes is full of contradictions: it is old and new, a place for small and large houses and industrial structures, full of local resources and regional attractions, and home to long-time residents and transient students. Marcy-Holmes should embrace and celebrate this tension, which makes for a rich and vibrant place.

- Respect—but don’t mimic—historic architecture.
- Preserve and update buildings with modern technologies and innovative approaches to rehabilitation.
- Match amenities to changing populations.

Public engagement



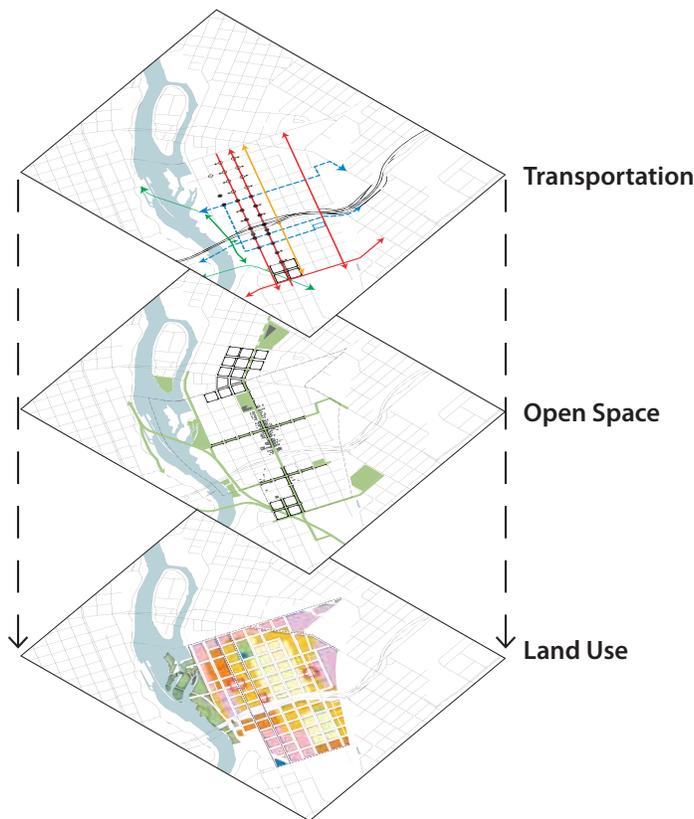


II. Plan Frameworks

Frameworks

Land Use, Open Space, and Transportation are the three frameworks that organize and define the physical environment. Other categories, such as Built Form, Economic Development, Arts and Culture, and Heritage Preservation are parts of these frameworks.

As with systems in the human body, each must function independently of—and together with—the others. If one fails, they all fail. This is why it is important to understand frameworks as individual systems that must function as part of a single neighborhood.



What is land use?

Land use explains which uses are desirable for particular areas. In this plan, land use neither reflects exactly what exists now, nor exactly what will happen in the future. Rather, land use is a direction in which the neighborhood is headed (see next page). Important land use terms from The Minneapolis Plan include:

Community Corridor

Primarily residential with intermittent commercial uses at intersections. Medium density, transitioning to low density in surrounding areas.

Commercial Corridor

Historically have been prominent destinations. Mix of uses, with commercial uses dominating. High density, transitioning to medium density in surrounding areas.

Neighborhood Commercial Node

Generally retail or service uses on at least three corners of an intersection. Mix of uses occurs within and among structures. High density, transitioning to medium density in surrounding areas.

Activity Center

Mix of uses with citywide and regional draw. High intensity of uses. High density.

Transitional Industrial

Currently industrial but that may transfer to another use over time.

Low Density Residential

<20 dwelling units per acre.

Medium Density Residential

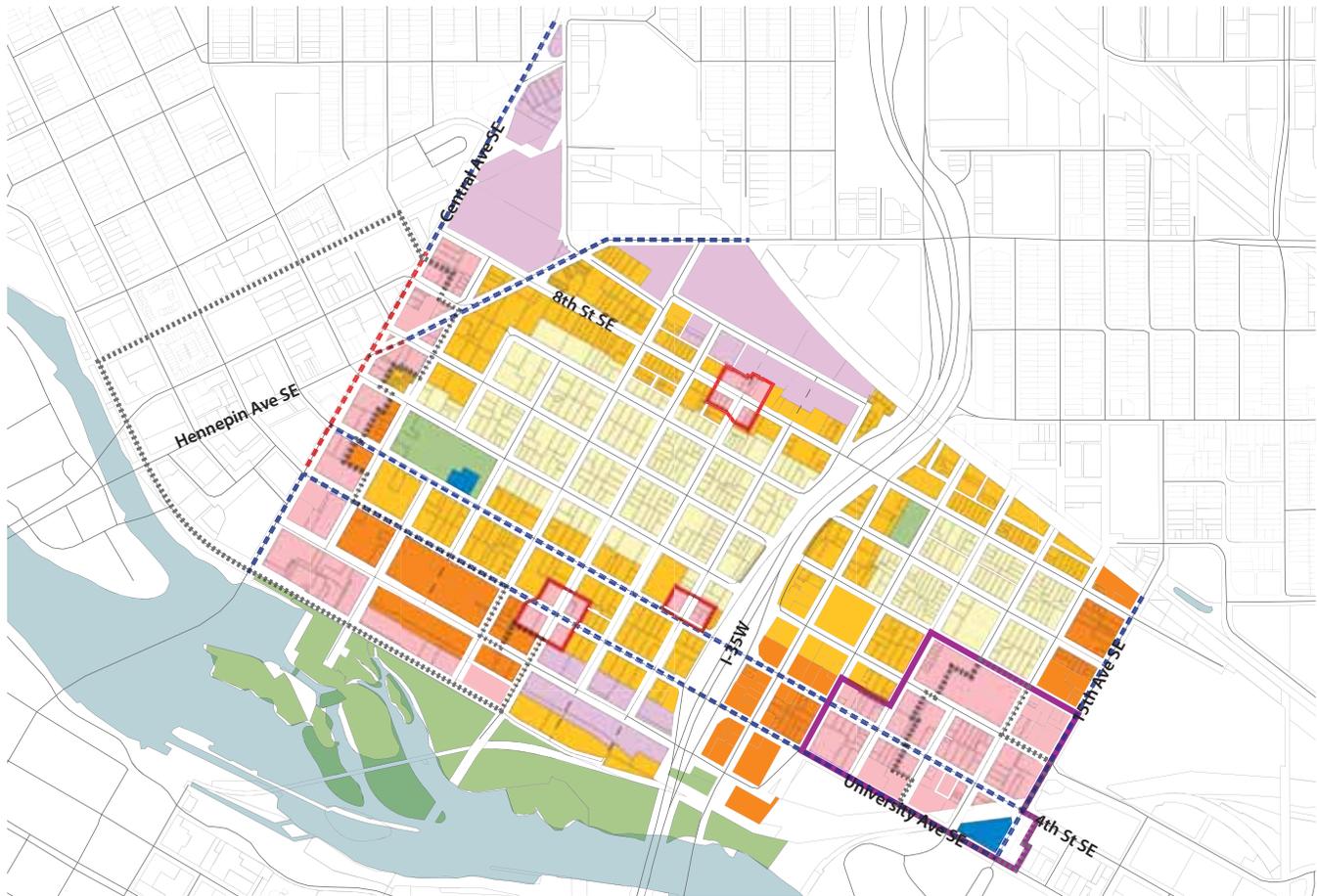
20-50 dwelling units per acre.

High Density Residential

50-120 dwelling units per acre.

Land Use

Propose future uses and plan for growth



*See previous page for definition of terms.

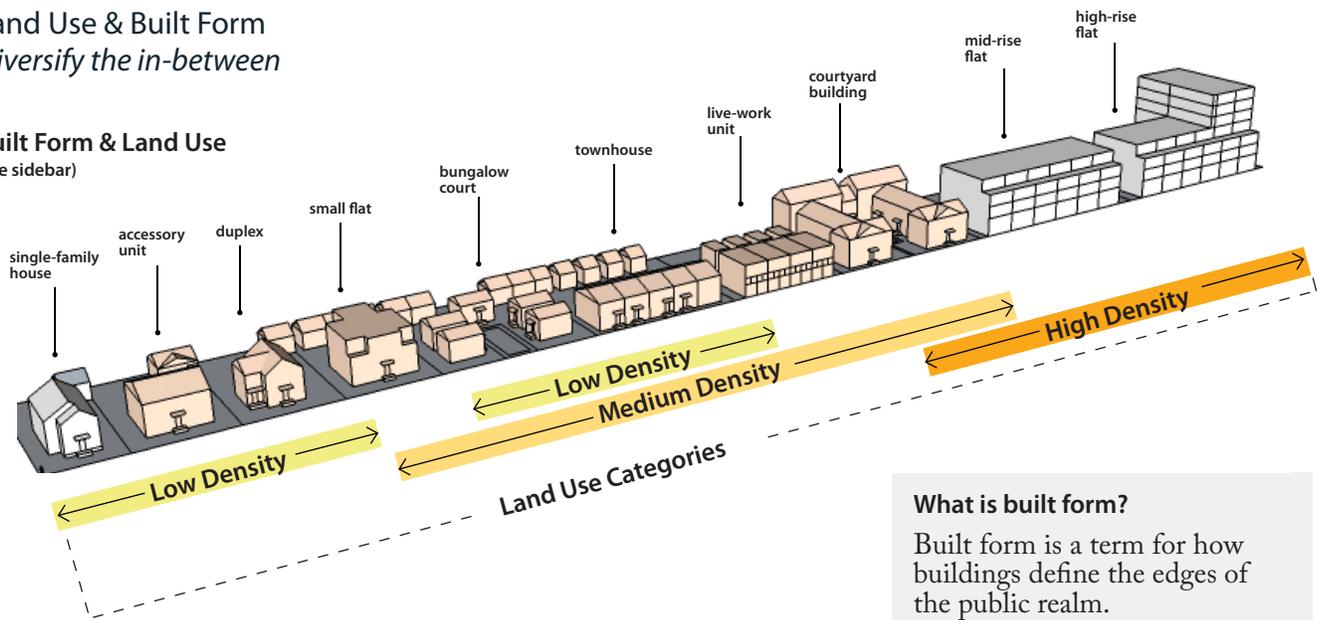
Goals

Develop and maintain a land use pattern that:

- Reinforces the urban neighborhood pattern of small blocks and connected streets.
- Increases density in parts of the neighborhood.
- Encourages a mix of housing types, styles, and levels of affordability.
- Encourages neighborhood commercial nodes in suitable locations.
- Distributes community and institutional resources throughout the neighborhood.
- Provides guidance for possible future uses and patterns in transitional industrial areas.
- Encourages park and open space uses exclusively between the Mississippi River and Main Street, from Central Avenue SE to the Dinkytown Greenway.
- Manages the transition from higher density areas to lower density areas.

Land Use & Built Form
Diversify the in-between

Built Form & Land Use
(see sidebar)



Goals

Develop and maintain a pattern of buildings that:

- Creates a high-quality pedestrian environment by ensuring the lower floors of all buildings create a safe and active sidewalk environment.
- Locates taller buildings to capture views and minimize shadows.
- Carefully introduces a wider range of neighborhood-scaled buildings between 4th and 8th Streets, as long as such buildings are allowable within existing zoning designations and are possible to guide with existing zoning tools.
- Reinforces neighborhood nodes and other commercial areas with vertical mixed-use buildings with active, visible ground floor uses.
- Encourages buildings that can adapt to changes in demand and users over time.
- Encourages environmentally-friendly building and site design that contributes to community and ecological health.

What is built form?

Built form is a term for how buildings define the edges of the public realm.

It describes broadly what buildings look like, how much lot space they occupy, how tall they are, and how they interface with sidewalks, streets, and other public areas. Building mass and frontage are the most important aspects.

How does land use relate?

Low Density Residential

- Are the areas of least intense use and density.
- Focus lower density and intensity in lower use areas.

Medium Density Residential

- Focus medium density along transit and transportation corridors and near commercial centers.
- Offer the most diversity of housing options.
- Are transitions between higher and lower use and density areas.

High Density Residential

- Are the areas of most intense use and density.
- Focus higher density along transit and transportation corridors and near commercial centers.

Land Use & Built Form (Continued)

Existing Zoning

Marcy-Holmes is currently comprised of two primary zoning districts: the R2B Two-family District and the R5 Multiple-family District. According to the City of Minneapolis Code of Ordinances:

The R2B Two-family District is established to provide for an environment of predominantly low density, single and two-family dwellings and cluster developments.

The R5 Multiple-family District is established to provide an environment of high density apartments, congregate living arrangements and cluster developments.



Graphic: ESRI, City of Minneapolis
http://www.minneapolismn.gov/zoning/maps/zoning_maps_index

What is zoning?

Zoning is the means of land use control employed by local governments. Zoning imposes different land use controls that specify the allowed uses of land and buildings and the intensity or density of uses.

What is the difference between built form and zoning?

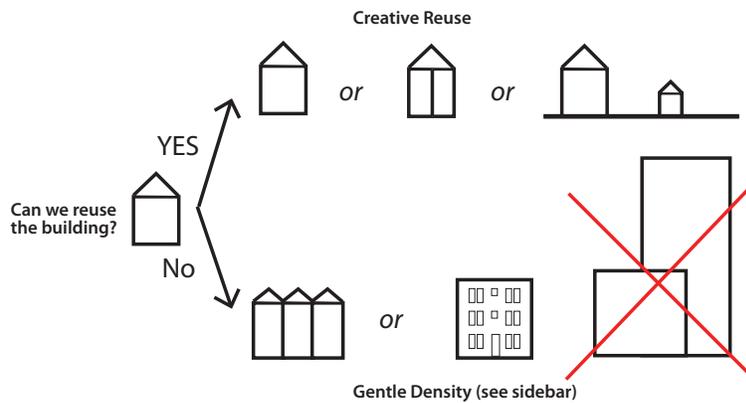
There is some overlap between built form and zoning, but built form refers to buildings and not uses. In addition, zoning is a legal tool, while built form is only a guideline. Built form's focus is on the feel and human experience of the environment, and how the building's shape and frontage contributes or detracts from this feel and experience.

Land Use & Built Form (Continued)

Single-family Housing

Single-family houses contribute to the unique character of Marcy-Holmes. Though fewer than 10 percent of residents live in single-family houses, many are well-built and many offer a tangible link to the past. Many of those that remain demonstrate the value of building simple, flexible structures that can be reinhabited generation after generation.

The neighborhood supports the reinvestment and rehabilitation of all buildings, including single-family houses, when financially feasible. The neighborhood also recognizes the unique challenges to maintaining the single-family housing stock. Underlying land values, size and configuration of house and lot, intense demand for rental housing, and unpredictability of neighbors can create disincentives to reinvest in existing housing stock.



The Plan recommends rehabilitation of as many original structures as possible, particularly the single-family houses that contribute to the residential character between SE 4th and 8th Street throughout the neighborhood. If homes in this area are beyond feasible rehabilitation, then the Plan recommends gentle density that is allowable with existing zoning designations and maintains the area character.

Housing policies

This Plan supports efforts to maintain the neighborhood’s original housing stock where financially feasible. Options to do so include supporting policies that:

- Create subsidies to cover the gap between acquisition/fix-up costs, to encourage owner occupancy, and to encourage long-term residency.
- Allow for the creation of a neighborhood Community Development Corporation (CDC) to generate ideas and leverage capital for rehabilitation.
- Allow acquiring clusters of homes by public-private partnerships and returning them to owner occupancy and long-term residency.
- Reinforce the strong urban fabric created by single-family houses and other appropriate housing solutions of a similar scale.

What is gentle density?

Gentle density is represented by building types and redevelopment patterns that reinforce the prevailing pattern of residential streets between 4th and 8th Streets SE throughout the neighborhood. Gentle density includes townhouses, accessory units, and small apartments that are carefully scaled and situated on properties to maintain the general character of leafy streets, small yards, active porches, and parking in the rear of lots.

Land Use & Built Form (Continued)

Neighborhood Gateways

The neighborhood recommends defining gateway locations and implementing policies and actions that enhance these neighborhood entrances. Gateway treatments should not be literal signs or archways; rather, they should be a change in the environment, a landmark building, or a threshold to cross to communicate a sense of arrival. Gateways also include major thoroughways in the neighborhood, such as University Avenue SE, 4th Street SE, and 8th Street SE. Consistent treatments by public and private owners along these streets, such as lush boulevard treatments, artistic bus shelters, or other arts installations, are encouraged.



Building Frontage

The Plan identifies locations for retail and public frontage. These frontage conditions are strongly encouraged by the City at Neighborhood Commercial Nodes and in the core of Activity Centers. They are encouraged, but not required, on the edges of Dinkytown and on East Hennepin Avenue. Retail frontage should include frequent entries, high transparency, and an outdoor zone that merchants and restaurants can use to animate the public realm.



What is frontage?

Frontage is the full length of a plot of land or a building, measured along the street and sidewalk, onto which the plot or building fronts. Its elements are the placement and design of the building (including doors and windows), as well as the design of space between the building and the sidewalk.

Existing neighborhood gateways needing improvement



Approaching Marcy-Holmes on the 10th Avenue Bridge, looking northeast.



Approaching Marcy-Holmes on 15th Avenue SE, looking southwest.



Approaching Marcy-Holmes on University Avenue SE, looking southeast.

Open Space
Park is as park does



Goals

- Improve stewardship of existing parks and open spaces.
- Expand use of natural landscaping and rain gardens to improve ecological health and water quality.
- Develop new kinds of open spaces, such as pocket parks.
- Use non-park spaces in park-like ways.
- Configure and use traditional park spaces in innovative ways.
- Ensure new residential concentrations are served by vibrant parks.
- Emphasize programming as one of the cores of park value.
- Develop partnerships with the Park Board, the City, non-profit organizations, and property owners to increase open space and natural area stewardship.
- Increase public park lands along the riverfront and bluff.



The street system is the largest inter-connected public realm network in the city. Streets and other open spaces, whether publicly or privately owned, should be used in new and creative ways. A traditional way of thinking about parks (left), and a new way of thinking about parks (right).

Park is as park does

To support and enhance the quality of life for Marcy-Holmes residents, the neighborhood should expand its definition of parks beyond the valued spaces already in use.

Events and programming can transform passive spaces into park assets to meet the needs of a larger population with diverse interests. For example, sidewalk “parklets” (below) can be cost-effectively established in high-use pedestrian zones such as 13th and 14th Avenues SE between University Avenue SE and 5th Street SE.



The top deck of a parking ramp lends itself to theater and movie screenings. Establishing a “woonerf” street (below) allows for public right-of-way to be used as public space, in conjunction with car access and bike and pedestrian travel. The neighborhood’s future parks will be those spaces, within and outside of the traditional park system, where recreation is invited to take place.



Open Space (Continued)

Regional projections suggest a broad trend toward smaller households, particularly those without children. A higher proportion of University students are choosing to live in surrounding neighborhoods including Marcy-Holmes than in the past, exemplifying rising demand for accessible, amenity-rich neighborhoods. Parks and strengthened connections are factors that combine to attract and retain neighbors across a range of ages.

Research indicates the value of actively-used, well-maintained parks and open spaces for neighborhood property values and community safety. Through its plan frameworks, the Marcy-Holmes neighborhood has an opportunity to elevate parks, bikeways, and other shared spaces to become a larger part of the community’s recreation system, as well as its ecology.

Strengthening and Linking Existing Parks

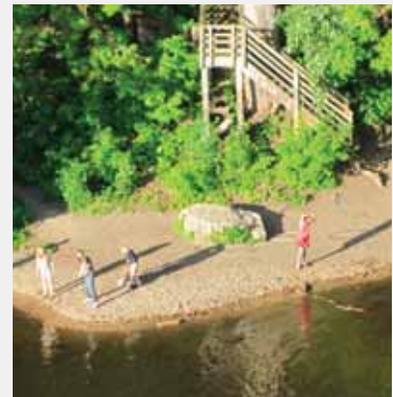
Marcy-Holmes is inseparable from the city’s core park system that includes Marcy Park, Holmes Park, Elwell Park, and the Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park. Strengthening these spaces with programming, and providing clearer navigation to them for residents and visitors, will make the most of their important contributions to the neighborhood’s quality of life. The visibility and usability of Marcy Park and usability of Holmes Park could be improved through a reconfiguration of their features, making the parks more flexible for activities and providing better visibility for patrons. As a package, the parks, bikeways, and riverfront can serve as an easily navigated system of routes connecting the neighborhood to downtown, the University of Minnesota, and surroundings. The capacity of parks to sustain habitat, absorb and treat stormwater, and encourage the growth of shade trees offers underlying ecological benefits important to Marcy-Holmes.

Matching New Open Space to New Population

Marcy-Holmes is adjusting to a heightened interest by developers and owners in more dense residential real estate. The increasing concentration of residents in Marcy-Holmes should be supported not only with innovative programming strategies, but also with additional green space. Proposals for new development should include publicly accessible open space to support residents and add to the neighborhood’s system of recreation assets. Leveraging public and railroad-controlled land at the southern end of 11th Avenue SE and the riverfront space between the I-35W and 10th Avenue bridges offers opportunities to locate new parks near high concentrations of users. An expanded and enhanced Dinkytown Greenway as a linear park can also serve as a contributing amenity.

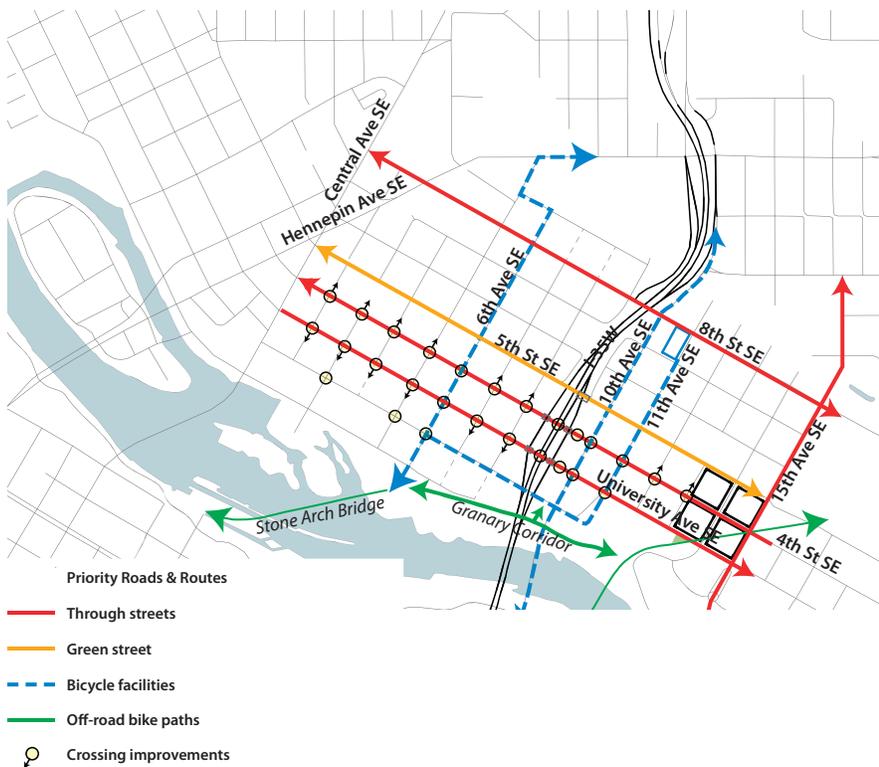
Programming and Partnerships

The Marcy-Holmes neighborhood has an opportunity to support the value and vitality of its parks and open spaces through partnerships focused on programs. The neighborhood can foster programming with non-profits and the Park Board to promote ideas like food gardens. Partnerships with University of Minnesota student, Greek, and faith organizations can be explored to stage events in Marcy Park, Holmes Park, on sidewalks, or in other open space. Local organizations such as the Dinkytown Business Association, Northeast Business Association, Aveda Academy, Wilderness Inquiry, and the Soap Factory represent potential partners to use neighborhood open spaces in new ways that communicate the vitality of Marcy-Holmes.



Transportation

The system is outdated; update it to fit



Goals

- Maintain existing connectivity and pursue additional opportunities to integrate with the regional multi-modal transportation system.
- Provide safe, convenient, and inviting bicycling and pedestrian facilities to promote and foster bicycling and walking.
- Mitigate the impacts of through traffic on public open spaces and the pedestrian and bicycling environments.
- Implement parking strategies that adequately serve the needs of local businesses and residents while maintaining sufficient parking pressure to encourage use of alternative modes of transportation.
- Treat local streets as shared public spaces with equal access for all users.
- Ensure that the neighborhood’s transportation infrastructure aligns with changing land uses and travel patterns.
- Increase facilities for and frequency of mass transit service as density increases.

Suggested bicycle markings



Shared



Assigned



Buffered



Protected

What about streets?

Plan recommendations favor a high-quality, connected, and livable street system. In Marcy-Holmes, the street system has not changed much, but the modes of transportation and the ways people use streets have.

The neighborhood understands the important regional role of University Avenue SE and 4th Street SE, so recommendations emphasize local connections and access in harmony with maintaining regional capacity and mobility.

What about parking?

Parking pressure encourages the use of alternative modes of transportation, so the plan does not recommend zoning changes to require additional off-street parking spaces. Instead, policies that support walking, bicycling, carsharing, and transit use will diminish the need for car ownership in the neighborhood over time.

In areas where demand for on-street parking from non-residents far exceeds supply, the plan recommends considering a multi-block, coordinated effort to establish Critical Parking Areas. Minneapolis requires support from at least 75 percent of property owners to establish such areas, and imposes an annual fee of \$25 for a permit.

For Dinkytown, the plan recommends further discussion regarding on-street parking, especially within the expanded footprint of the commercial district.

Economic Development

Marcy-Holmes has always been a neighborhood with a strong employment base. Despite the transition of some industrial lands to housing along the river, Marcy-Holmes will remain a neighborhood with a mix of uses, including large and small employers.

Goals

- Support existing employers in the neighborhood.
- Support job creation in industries that leverage the unique assets of Marcy-Holmes, such as access to the University and Downtown, a high number of artists, a high number of students, and a climate supportive of entrepreneurial and incubator businesses.
- Recognize that increased population will contribute to economic development due to local spending on daily goods and services.
- Recognize tourism also results in an increase in spending on commercial and retail services.

Arts and Culture

Marcy-Holmes has many working artists and arts institutions; however, the presence of these individuals and groups is not as evident as it could be. With the many infrastructure projects proposed for the neighborhood, art and artists can play a central role in decision-making and implementation.

Goals

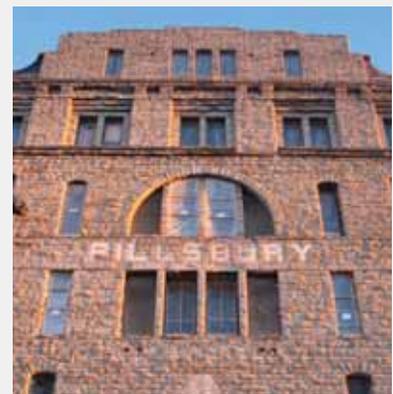
- Support local artists’ involvement and influence in everything from park design to bus shelters to street lighting to community engagement events.
- Support increasing the visibility of the arts and creative interventions in public infrastructure projects and private developments.
- Keep and expand arts-related assets like the Soap Factory.

Heritage Preservation

Marcy-Holmes is rich in cultural and historical buildings, landscapes, and streets. Three historic districts protect the St. Anthony Falls area, 5th Street SE west of I-35W, and several Greek properties. These places are highly valued by neighborhood residents for their character and quality, and for the strong connection to the past that they convey.

Goals

- Support adaptive reuse, rehabilitation, and renovation of existing buildings if possible.
- Support investments in the long-term quality and viability of the riverfront landscape, including vegetation, water, and cultural systems.
- Recognize that heritage refers not just to the past, but also to the evolving story of change over time that contributes to the eclectic nature of Marcy-Holmes.
- Raise awareness of the neighborhood’s historic assets.
- Preserve and enhance the historic character of Dinkytown.

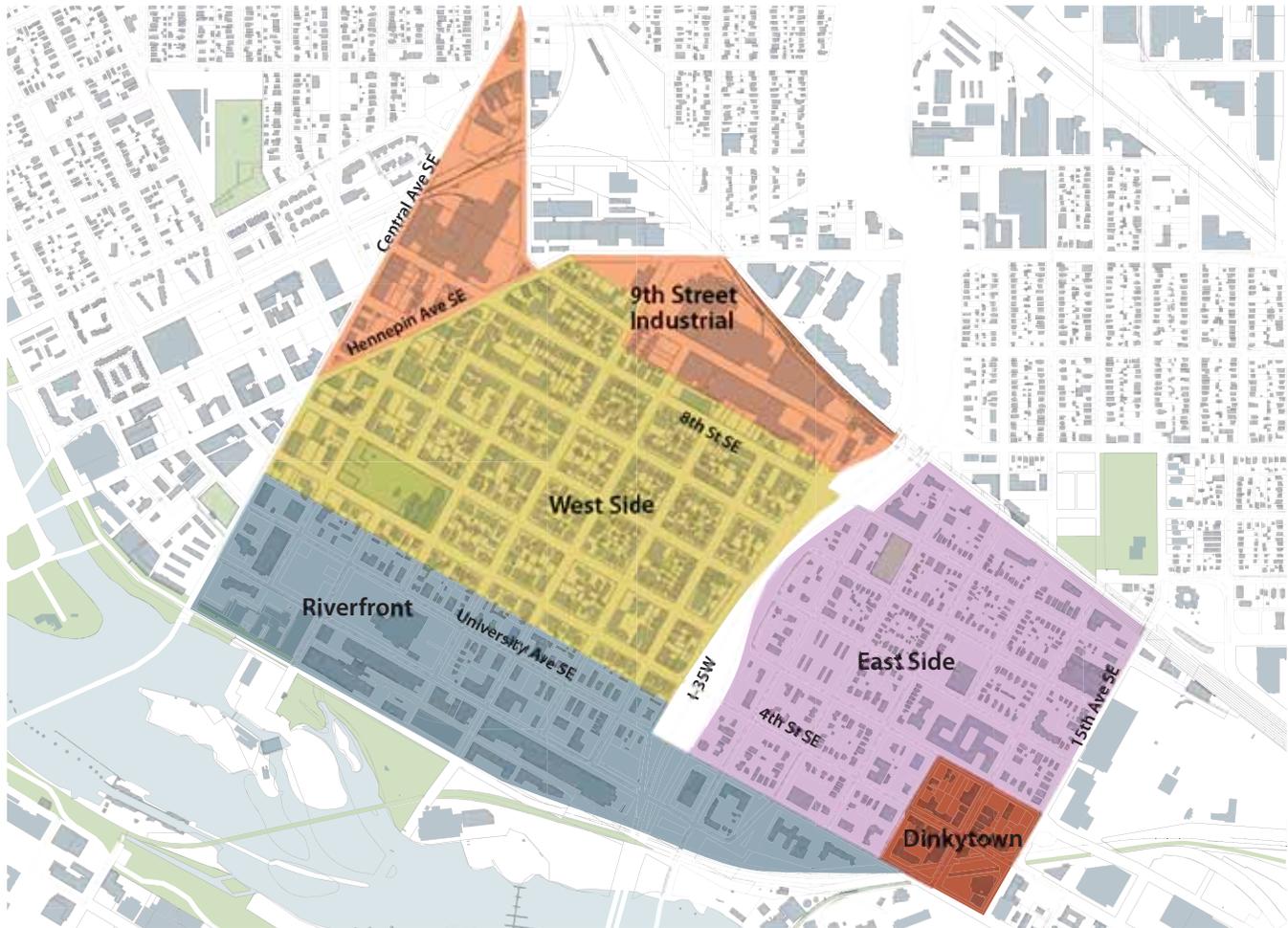




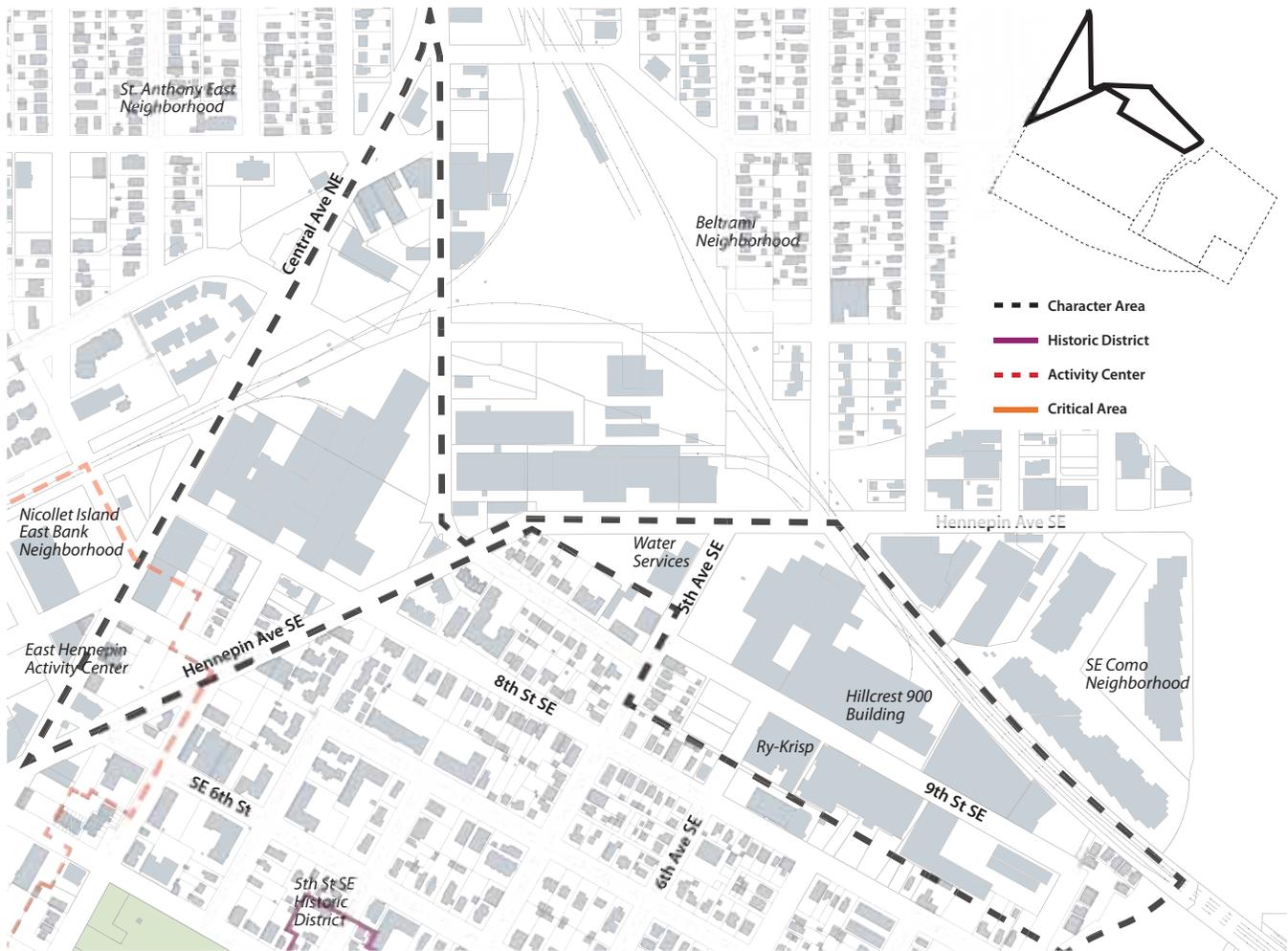
III. Character Areas

The Five Character Areas

Although Marcy-Holmes is one neighborhood, different areas within face different challenges, have different needs, and exhibit different urban character. For this reason, Section III includes specific priorities, findings, recommendations, and implementation actions tailored to each of the five distinct areas. This approach enables plan reviewers and implementors to consider general neighborhood recommendations as well as specific character area recommendations when making decisions.



- 9th Street Industrial.** Support and promote existing and future jobs, embrace diversity of building uses and eras, improve connectivity, and plan for the Triangle area.
- Riverfront.** Expand and improve riverfront parks, improve connectivity, balance local and regional access and use, create bike- and walk-friendly environments on 2nd Street SE, and embrace diversity of building uses and eras.
- West Side.** Maintain neighborhood stability, improve connectivity, enhance neighborhood amenities, and preserve historic neighborhood fabric.
- East Side.** Reestablish diversity of people, housing, and uses, promote neighborhood stability, reinforce a mix of uses, establish and nurture partnerships, and improve public amenities.
- Dinkytown.** Support and strengthen business district vitality, enhance multi-modal transportation network and parking options, and preserve historic character while expanding the commercial area for redevelopment.



9th Street Industrial Character Area Description

The 9th Street Industrial area is a hidden gem. A favorite walking destination to many, it is a unknown to others. It is a place of history, work, play, and progress, and can emerge as a live-work-make district that supports the incubation of new cottage industries side-by-side with existing places of employment. New buildings with both housing and workspace will coexist with Ry-Krisp, the 900 Building, and other existing businesses in the area. It is a continuing story of the neighborhood’s working history, and a welcoming place for additional creative, entrepreneurial, and light industrial places of employment.

The 9th Street Industrial Character Area is the northernmost area in Marcy-Holmes. Boundaries include major street and rail corridors, which delineate Marcy-Holmes from four adjacent neighborhoods.

This area is characterized by large format buildings that are currently—or once were—functioning as industrial and warehouse uses. Offices, workshops, and recreational spaces also occupy this area, and some residential buildings exist here, too. It is primarily a working district, with convenient access to trucking corridors and a rail line. It also supports one of the neighborhood’s two bicycle network connections to the north.



The 900 Building before (above) and after (below) a renovation that accommodates a variety of new uses.

Photos: Hillcrest Development, LLLP

9th Street Industrial 1: Jobs

Finding

This traditionally industrial employment area is shifting toward an employment mixture of light industry, cottage industry, arts production, and incubator office.

Discussion

In the City’s future land use plan, this area is identified as Transitional Industrial. This means it currently serves as an industrial area, but may eventually evolve to other uses compatible with surrounding development. Although the area may remain industrial for some time, it will not have the same level of policy protection as areas within industrial districts.

Recommendations

- Prioritize office and incubator space to encourage growth and support of small, local businesses.
- Prioritize new workshop and studio space that supports light industry, cottage industry, and arts creation businesses.
- Retain existing employment centers such as Ry-Krisp and commercial/office uses in the Hillcrest 900 Development.

Actions

- Create a business development prospectus for employers and redevelopers highlighting this area.
- Develop zoning for live-work buildings.
- Position city water services site for redevelopment or preservation.



Aerial view of part of the 9th Street Industrial Character Area.

Graphic: Google Earth Pro

Relevant City Policy

Land Use Policy 1.2: Ensure appropriate transitions between uses with different size, scale, and intensity.

Economic Development Policy 4.1: Support private sector growth to maintain a healthy, diverse economy.

Economic Development Policy 4.2: Promote business start-ups, retention, and expansion to bolster the existing economic base.

Economic Development Policy 4.5: Attract businesses investing in high job density and low impact, light industrial activity to support the existing economic base.

Economic Development Policy 4.9: Focus economic development efforts in strategic locations for continued growth and sustained vitality.

Environment Policy 6.15: Support local businesses, goods, and services to promote economic growth, to preserve natural resources, and to minimize carbon footprint.

Arts and Culture Policy 9.1: Integrate and utilize arts and culture as a resource for economic development.

9th Street Industrial 2: Diversity of uses and eras

Finding

There is a mix of old and new, as well as live and work, but there are no plans for the future arrangement of this mix.

Discussion

This area tells a rich story of Marcy-Holmes’s past. It can also tell the story of the neighborhood’s evolution over time, as buildings and uses adjust to accommodate current and future needs.

Recommendations

- Reuse existing buildings and historical properties, recognizing that some may be obsolete for redevelopment.
- Situate underused properties for redevelopment to create the next generation of flexible, sustainable buildings.
- Be sure that rehabilitated, renovated, and new buildings and uses transition smoothly into the surrounding residential areas.
- Consider how green and park space can be incorporated into new developments to improve water quality and native plant communities.

Actions

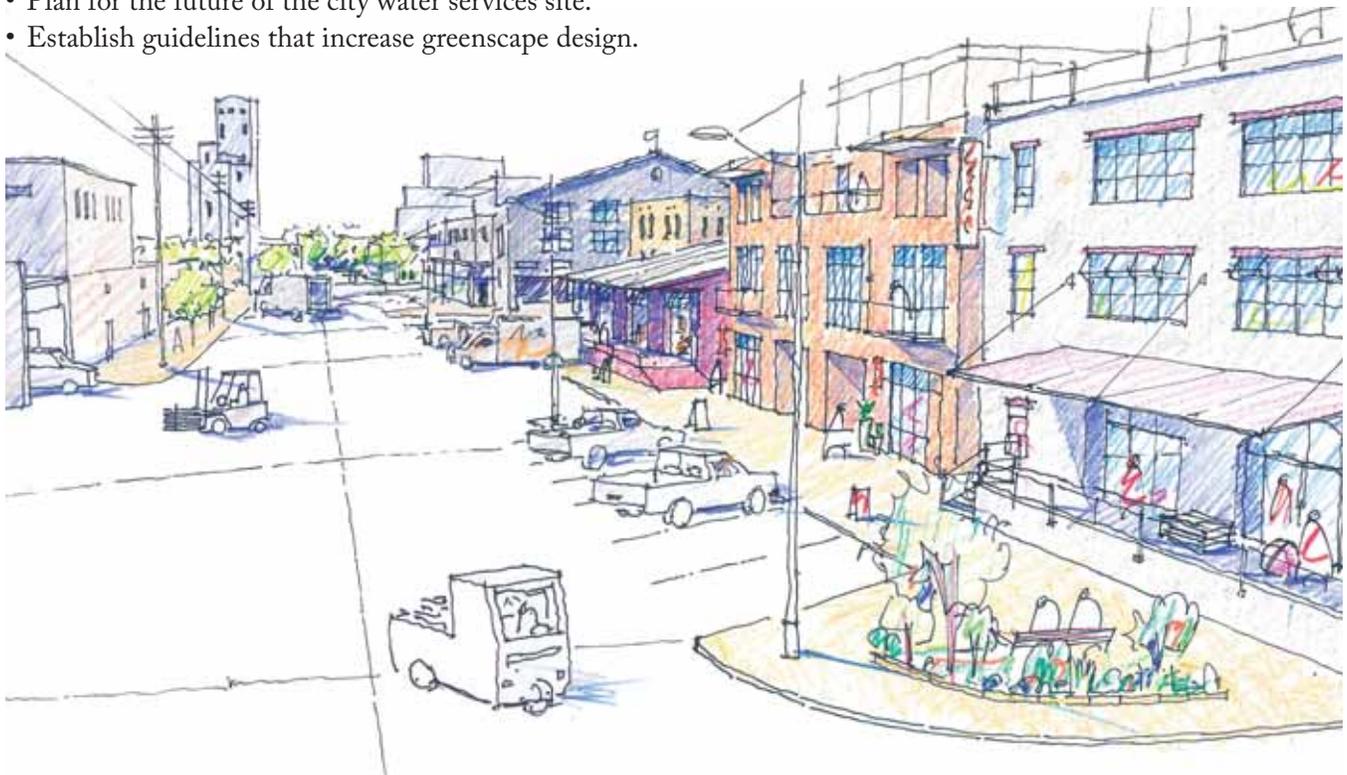
- Offer incentives for building reuse or sustainable construction.
- Offer incentives to include open space into redevelopments.
- Create diagonal on-street parking to replace surface lots where large truck loading access is not needed.
- Plan for the future of the city water services site.
- Establish guidelines that increase greenscape design.

Relevant City Policy

Environment Policy 6.3:
Encourage sustainable design practices in the planning, construction, and operations of new developments, large additions, and building renovations.

Arts and Culture Policy 9.6:
Promote collaborations among arts and cultural organizations, artists, the City, and other partners.

Urban Design Policy 10.12:
Design industrial uses with appropriate transitions and other design features which minimize negative impacts on surrounding residential uses.



This illustration of 9th Street looking southeast shows one possible vision for the future live-work-make mix of the 9th Street Industrial area.

9th Street Industrial 3: Connectivity

Finding

This area is disconnected from the rest of the neighborhood, especially from the riverfront.

Discussion

This area is home to businesses, industries, and activities, and is host to one of only two official neighborhood bicycle route connections north. Many Marcy-Holmes residents are unaware of this unique area and what it has to offer now and in the future, despite its economic, historical, recreational, and artistic contributions.

Recommendations

- Reconnect 7th and 8th Avenues between 8th Street and 9th Street to increase the visibility and accessibility of the area.
- Balance safety considerations given the high amount of truck, bicycle, and pedestrian activity.
- Improve infrastructure to prevent flooding.

Actions

- Identify 7th and 8th Avenue rights-of-way as opportunities for reconnecting the street grid.
- Plan for pedestrian and bicycle safety as the City’s bicycle master plan is implemented.
- Conduct a flooding assessment study related to private and public property to decrease flooding and improve water quality.
- Improve the bicycle and pedestrian environment on the Stone Arch Bike Boulevard.

Relevant City Policy

Land Use Policy 1.3:
Ensure that development plans incorporate appropriate transportation access and facilities, particularly for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit.

Transportation Policy 2.5:
Ensure that bicycling throughout the city is safe, comfortable, and pleasant.

Transportation Policy 2.7:
Ensure that freight movement and facilities throughout the city meet the needs of the local and regional economy while remaining sensitive to impacts on surrounding land uses.

Urban Design Policy 10.15:
Wherever possible, restore and maintain the traditional street and sidewalk grid as part of new developments.



9th Street Industrial 4: The Triangle

Finding

This area will change, both in preparation for and after the development of the streetcar line on Central Avenue.

Discussion

Many changes in accessibility, land use, and building occupancy and use are ahead for this area, both within the Marcy-Holmes borders and outside them. All changes will impact Marcy-Holmes to some degree, and the neighborhood will need to be part of all plans and studies that will guide and enforce these changes.

Recommendations

- Work with surrounding neighborhoods when planning for this area to ensure appropriate access and connectivity between Marcy-Holmes and the Beltrami, St. Anthony East, and Nicollet Island East Bank.
- Support streetcar service on Central Avenue for economic development and increased access and mobility.

Actions

- Create a cross-neighborhood work group charged with providing direction to the City, County, and Metropolitan Council.
- Coordinate with the Nicollet Island East Bank neighborhood to implement each neighborhood’s small area plan recommendations for Central Avenue.
- Monitor studies and take positions, especially on road alignments, complete streets strategies for both Central and Hennepin Avenues, and streetcar service and facilities.
- Support locating the streetcar maintenance facility north of Marcy-Holmes.

Relevant City Policy

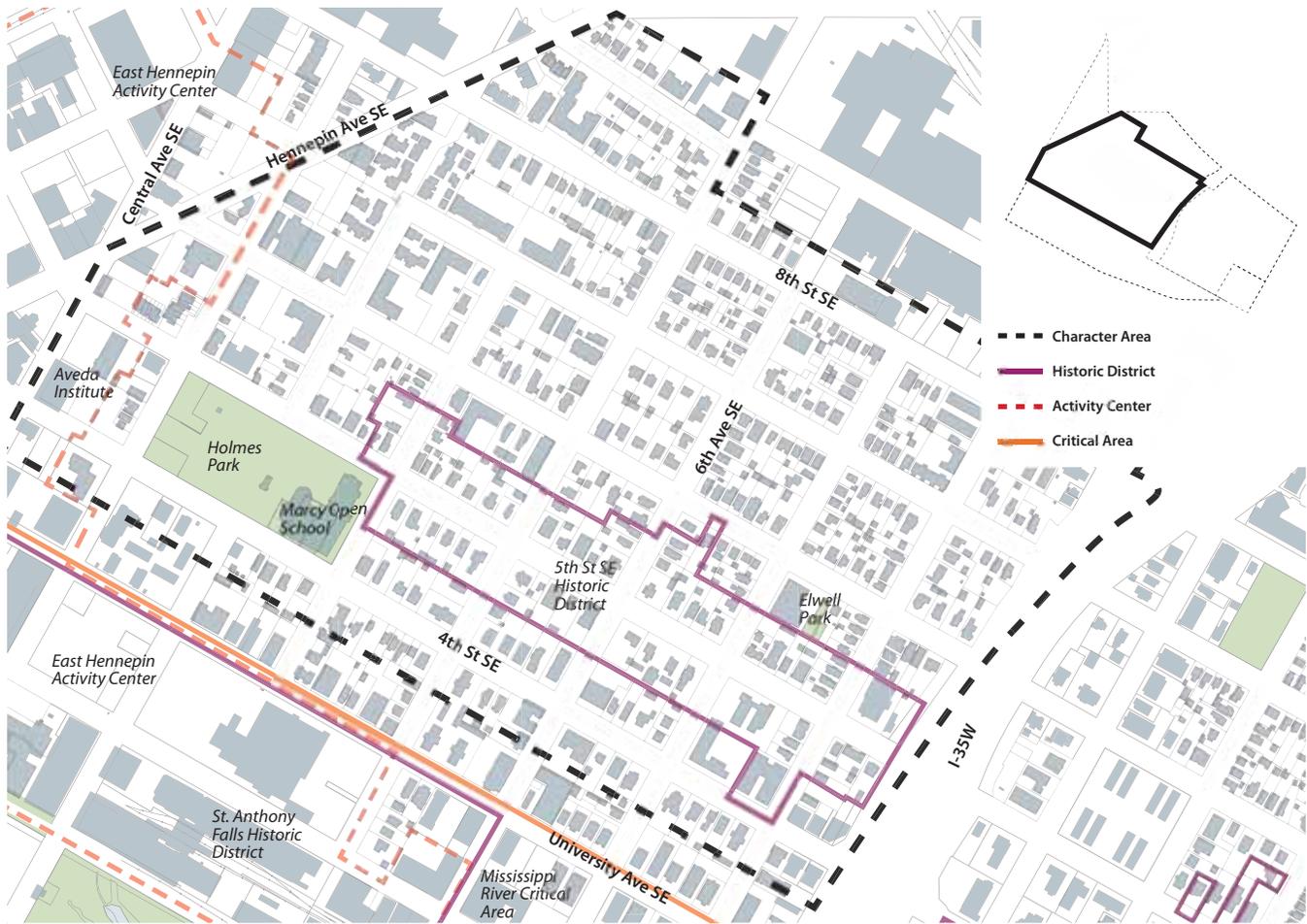
Transportation Policy 2.2: Support successful streets and communities by balancing the needs of all modes of transportation with land use policy.

Transportation Policy 2.4: Make transit a more attractive option for both new and existing riders.

Minneapolis Streetcar Feasibility Study:



The Triangle is where many neighborhoods and street orientations converge.



West Side Character Area Description

The West Side is predominantly a quiet residential area with a diverse mixture of housing types, styles, and sizes, ranging from many-unit apartment and condominium buildings to single-family houses. Many houses are historic, and have been here since lumber milling industrial days. Unlike in many other areas, much of the housing stock has maintained that historic character over time.

Interior streets, as characterized by 5th Street SE, are generally well-defined and tree-lined. Conversely, both 4th and 8th Streets SE present livability challenges to the West Side. They are fast-moving vehicular thoroughfares that border the area and are not particularly pedestrian- or bicyclist-friendly.

Prominent area amenities include Marcy Open School, Holmes Park, the 5th Street SE Historic District, the 5th Street Bikeway, the Stone Arch Bike Boulevard, the Aveda Institute, commercial areas along Central Avenue SE, neighborhood coffee shops and markets, and adjacency to the Riverfront.

The West Side Character Area extends from Central Avenue SE on the west to I-35W to the east, and north to south from 8th Street SE to 4th Street SE, including the properties on each side of these streets.



West Side 1: Stability

Finding

Housing stability on the West Side is at risk.

Discussion

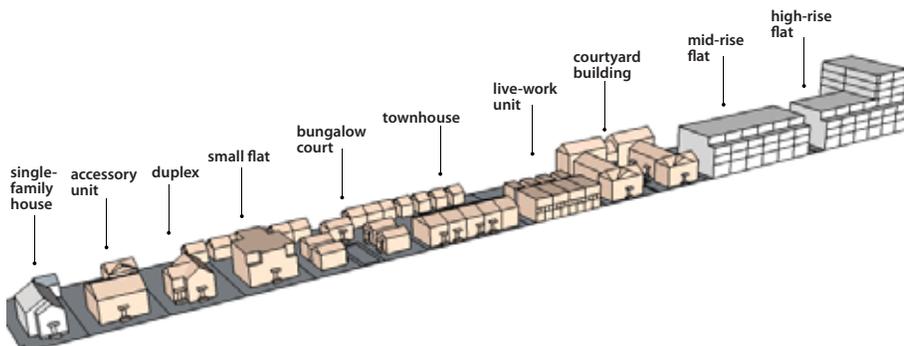
High demand for housing on the West Side results in higher property values. The West Side’s high quality housing stock, park and school amenities, and convenient location near the University of Minnesota and downtown Minneapolis have attracted new residential and rental property owners. Some rental property owners have allowed their properties to deteriorate, which thus increases the costs of renovation and maintenance. As housing costs have increased, low and middle income residents find fewer housing options here.

Recommendations

- Increase and expand paths to affordable homeownership.
- If housing is beyond repair, enable a variety of creative options for renovation or redevelopment in keeping with existing zoning and neighborhood built form recommendations.
- Maintain housing quality and property upkeep.
- Formalize 5th Street SE as a special neighborhood amenity that connects existing cultural and commercial resources, unifies the West Side and East Side, and draws students, seniors, families, and others.
- Improve infrastructure to prevent flooding.

Actions

- Prioritize enforcing the property maintenance code.
- If existing housing stock is beyond repair, support gentle increases in density to expand the range of housing options and maintain housing quality.
- Examine the possibilities, pros, and cons of establishing a Conservation District overlay for part of the area.
- Explore ways existing buildings can return to homeownership through housing assistance, buyback programs, and redevelopment.
- Add 5th Street SE and recommendations for becoming a park-like street that is open to cars but prioritizes pedestrians and bicyclists to the City’s Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).
- Conduct a flooding assessment study related to private and public property to decrease flooding and improve water quality.



Relevant City Policy

Land Use Policy 1.8: Preserve the stability and diversity of the city’s neighborhoods while allowing for increased density in order to attract and retain long-term residents and businesses.

Housing Policy 3.1: Grow by increasing the supply of housing.

Housing Policy 3.3: Increase housing that is affordable to low and moderate income households.

Housing Policy 3.6: Foster complete communities by preserving and increasing high quality housing opportunities suitable for all ages and household types.

Housing Policy 3.8: Preserve and strengthen community livability by enforcing high standards of property management and maintenance.

Heritage Preservation Policy 8.7: Create a regulatory framework and consider implementing incentives to support the ethic of “reduce, reuse, recycle” and revitalization for buildings and neighborhoods.

Urban Design Policy 10.8: Strengthen the character and desirability of the city’s urban neighborhood residential areas while accommodating reinvestment through infill development.

Urban Design Policy 10.14: Encourage development that provides functional and attractive gathering spaces.

West Side 2: Connectivity

Finding

Fourth Street SE is a barrier to riverfront access, and conditions on both 4th and 8th Streets SE are unfriendly for pedestrians and cyclists.

Discussion

Marcy-Holmes is a riverfront neighborhood, but access to the riverfront is difficult for West Side residents living north of 4th Street SE. Fourth Street SE is a high-volume one-way arterial with few signals and formal crossing areas for pedestrians and cyclists. Currently, MnDOT owns 4th Street SE, but the City of Minneapolis is in charge of operations. The City of Minneapolis Streetcar Feasibility Study identifies 4th Street SE as part of the City’s long-term streetcar network. Eighth Street SE is one of the three streets to cross I-35W, and thus is a busy throughway that needs updating and neighborhood-friendly improvements. The first state bikeway, the Mississippi River Trail, travels north along 6th Avenue SE from Main Street SE to I-35W via 5th Street SE.

Recommendations

- Improve pedestrian and cyclist crossing experience on 4th and 8th Streets SE by decreasing the crossing distance and increasing visibility of crosswalks.
- Create a neighborhood-oriented experience and environment along 4th and 8th Streets SE.
- Support streetcar plan for service on 4th Street SE and Central Avenue SE as a viable, sustainable, predictable long-term mass transit service.
- Improve infrastructure to prevent flooding.

Actions

- If state ownership for 4th Street SE limits flexibility in the pursuit of neighborhood-oriented improvements, pursue city or county ownership.
- Install bump-outs at all intersections on the south sides of 4th Street SE, and allow for permanent on-street parking instead of Sunday-only parking.
- Prioritize investments in street trees and street tree maintenance to soften, shade, and define the street, as well as to keep the urban tree canopy thriving.
- Pursue protection for and replacement of at-risk public ash trees.
- Follow bicycle infrastructure improvement recommendations suggested in this plan (See Transportation map and guidelines in Section II).
- Create arts-inspired wayfinding and gateway expressions that extend the Riverfront experience across 4th Street SE and celebrate the local creative community.
- Participate in streetcar planning efforts and support streetcar-related development along 4th Street SE and Central Avenue SE.
- Conduct flooding assessment study related to private and public property to decrease flooding and improve water quality.

Relevant City Policy

Transportation Policy 2.2: Support successful streets and communities by balancing the needs of all modes of transportation with land use policy.

Transportation Policy 2.3: Encourage walking throughout the city by ensuring that routes are safe, comfortable, pleasant, and accessible.

Transportation Policy 2.5: Ensure that bicycling through the city is safe, comfortable, and pleasant.

Transportation Policy 2.6: Manage the role and impact of automobiles in a multi-modal transportation system.

Environment Policy 6.14: Preserve and enhance the quality of the urban environment to promote sustainable lifestyles for its citizens.

Urban Design Policy 10.16: Design streets and sidewalks to ensure safety, pedestrian comfort, and aesthetic appeal.



Existing sculptures along 6th Avenue SE define the sidewalk as it approaches the riverfront.

West Side 3: Neighborhood amenities

Finding

Needs for neighborhood amenities and services have increased.

Discussion

At the heart of the West Side are amenities such as Marcy Open School and Holmes Park. Some commercial services exist at the perimeter and could be the seeds for further development. But Marcy-Holmes has experienced significant population growth in recent years. New amenities, infrastructure improvements, and neighborhood services are necessary to build on the strengths of what exists and to support the growing numbers and kinds of people living in the area.

Recommendations

- Establish additional areas for neighborhood-oriented commercial services in places where commercial already has a presence.
- Plan for a well-balanced multi-modal (walking, biking, driving, riding transit) transportation experience on 4th and 8th Streets SE.
- Use non-park spaces, such as streets, underused open spaces, and surface parking lots, in park-like ways.
- Encourage all owning and renting residents to be involved in the neighborhood.
- Improve Holmes Park.

Actions

- Designate official Neighborhood Commercial Nodes centered at 8th Street SE and 7th Avenue SE, and at 4th Street SE and 8th Avenue SE.
- Add 5th Street SE and recommendations for becoming a park-like street that is open to cars but prioritizes pedestrians and bicyclists to the City's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).
- Expand formal programming and permit informal programming of underused and vacant spaces (see Open Space map and guidelines in Section II).
- Evaluate programmed and non-programmed spaces in Holmes Park and recommend improvements to be included in Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Capital Improvement Program.
- Meet with the Nicollet Island East Bank neighborhood to unify small area plan recommendations for Central Avenue.



Relevant City Policy

Land Use Policy 1.5: Promote growth and encourage overall city vitality by directing new commercial and mixed use development to designated corridors and districts.

Land Use Policy 1.9: Through attention to the mix and intensity of land uses and transit service, the City will support development along Community Corridors that enhances residential livability and pedestrian access.

Land Use Policy 1.11: Preserve and enhance a system of Neighborhood Commercial Nodes that includes a mix of housing, neighborhood-serving retail, and community uses.

Possible Neighborhood Commercial Nodes for the City's Future Land Use Plan:



Fifth Street SE connects many stable neighborhood cultural and commercial resources. Thus, it is positioned to become a more formal, stable asset linking the West and East Sides.

West Side 4: Historic neighborhood fabric

Finding

Residents value the character of residential blocks.

Discussion

The beloved urban fabric in this area is created by buildings, streets, yards, trees, and the personalization of private space. Single-family homes are part of the fabric and should remain so; however, there are other building types that exist here and can be developed here gradually and purposefully.

Recommendations

- Explore ways that single-family properties in disrepair can become affordable owner-occupied multi-family housing without disrupting the fabric and scale of the area.
- Prioritize the public realm of tree-lined streets, consistent building form and character, and the overall feel of the area.
- Encourage consideration of environmental, economic, and social sustainability in renovation and redevelopment efforts.
- Encourage stewardship of the urban forest and tree canopy.

Actions

- Develop guidelines for construction and renovation between 4th and 8th Streets SE that focus on maintaining the fabric of the area.
- Develop guidelines that are inclusive of a range and variety of building types at an appropriate scale.
- Offer incentives for sustainable redevelopment and renovation.
- Prioritize investments in street trees and street tree maintenance to soften, shade, and define the street, as well as to keep the urban tree canopy thriving.



A variety of buildings and landscapes define residential character.

Relevant City Policy

Housing Policy 3.7: Maintain the quality, safety, and unique character of the city’s housing stock.

Environment Policy 6.3: Encourage sustainable design practices in the planning, construction, and operations of new developments, large additions, and building renovations.

Environment Policy 6.8: Encourage a healthy thriving urban tree canopy and other desirable forms of vegetation.

Open Space Policy 7.6: Continue to beautify open spaces through well designed landscaping that complements and improves the city’s urban form on many scales—from street trees to expansive views of lakes and rivers.

Heritage Preservation Policy 8.8: Preserve neighborhood character by preserving the quality of the built environment.

Urban Design Policy 10.4: Support the development of residential dwellings that are of high quality design and compatible with surrounding development.

Urban Design Policy 10.5: Support the development of multi-family residential dwellings of appropriate form and scale.

Urban Design Policy 10.7: Maintain and preserve the quality and unique character of the city’s existing housing stock.



East Side Character Area Description

The East Side relates closely to the University of Minnesota. Most of the housing, retail, and services within this area cater to students, faculty, staff and others associated with university life. This area has changed dramatically over the past few decades as students have moved closer to campus and campus visitors have increased. This has resulted in both new construction as well as the conversion of most houses to rental properties. The fabric and character of the area remains intact, but it is fragile because many of the buildings are in poor condition.

The blocks are small, uses are compact, and parking is at a premium. As a result, most local residents move about the area by foot, bike, rollerblade, skateboard, and bus.

The East Side Character Area extends east to west from 15th Avenue SE to I-35W, and north to south from the rail line to University Avenue SE and the edge of Dinkytown.



East Side 1: Diversity

Finding

The East Side lacks housing and population diversity.

Discussion

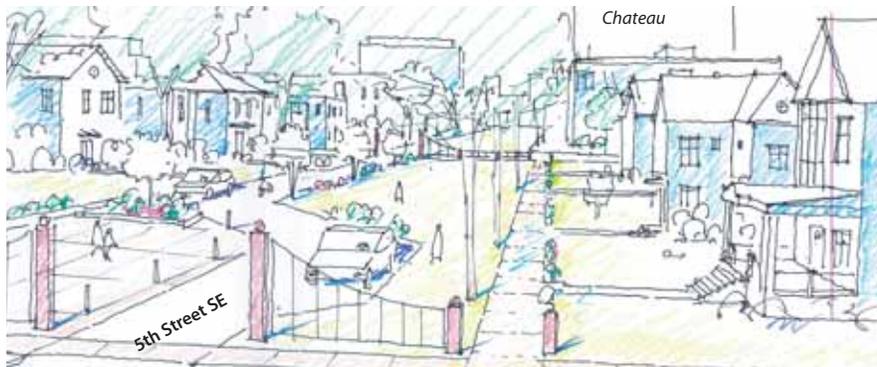
Undergraduate students are integral to the energy and cultural richness of Marcy-Holmes. The livability of the East Side depends on them, as well as people of all ages, to choose to live and stay here. Students, seniors, families, University staff and faculty, and other long-term residents give time and talent to build community resilience. Recent development projects have catered to undergraduate living, and homesteaded properties have been converted to student rental housing. Recovering the diversity of the East Side is essential for the long-term sustainability of the neighborhood.

Recommendations

- Encourage the University of Minnesota to strengthen its stewardship role in off-campus housing through shared University Area Housing Strategies.
- Increase and expand paths to affordable homeownership.
- Strengthen existing cultural resources that draw residents of all ages: the library, Marcy Park, Marcy Open School, local churches, and Dinkytown.
- Encourage developments that exemplify sustainability and flexibility.
- Formalize 5th Street SE as a special neighborhood amenity that connects existing cultural and commercial resources, unifies the West Side and East Side, and draws people of all ages to use it and live on it.

Actions

- Develop a housing investment plan and possibly an overlay district that includes participation by the University of Minnesota, sororities and fraternities, and developers of diverse housing types.
- Develop guidelines for housing types consistent with existing zoning.
- Define appropriate building types and ownership and rental models to broaden choice for a wider range of possible residents, including faculty, staff, and graduate students.
- Find opportunities and developers for infill and other non-student housing, such as senior housing, live-work housing, and affordable staff/faculty housing similar to Pillsbury Court.
- Detail a reinvestment strategy for the area around Marcy Park.
- Use City capital and other funding to make 5th Street SE a park-like street that is open to cars but prioritizes pedestrians and bicyclists.



Relevant City Policy

Housing Policy 3.2: Support housing density in locations that are well-connected by transit, and are close to commercial, cultural, and natural amenities.

Housing Policy 3.6: Foster complete communities by preserving and increasing high quality housing opportunities suitable for all ages and household types.

Environment Policy 6.3: Encourage sustainable design practices in the planning, construction, and operations of new developments, large additions, and building renovations.

As on the on West Side, 5th Street SE can become a park-like street that prioritizes pedestrians and cyclists but still allows cars. Consideration should be given to creating a woonerf that increases and diversifies informal use of the public right-of-way.

East Side 2: Stability

Finding

Much of the housing is in disrepair, needs improvement, or is beyond repair.

Discussion

Many rental houses on the East Side have deteriorated. These properties have high market values (over \$350,000 for a house on a small lot), and generate reliable, generous cash flow. Few potential homeowners are willing to pay a premium for a home in disrepair, pay for necessary renovations to make it livable, and assume the risk and nuisance of living in the middle of a high concentration of undergraduate renters. Increased enforcement and incentives are essential to improve housing quality and neighborhood stability.

Recommendations

- Maintain housing quality and property upkeep.
- Increase and expand paths to affordable homeownership.
- Develop a public-private partnership with housing stakeholders, including the University of Minnesota, landlords, and Greek community, to improve residential quality of life.
- Consider creating or collaborating with a Community Development Corporation.
- Explore ways to increase investment in existing properties and improve regulatory enforcement, such as adding a housing component to the University Area Overlay District.
- Encourage the University of Minnesota to implement new neighborhood investment strategies.

Actions

- Prioritize enforcing the property maintenance code and engaging residents and partners in improving neighborhood livability.
- Encourage the University of Minnesota to implement new neighborhood investment strategies.
- Develop a housing investment plan for properties on 5th Street SE.
- Encourage developers to use available regulatory tools, in keeping with existing zoning requirements, to aggregate lots for more dense development where there are many adjacent properties that are beyond repair.

Relevant City Policy

Housing Policy 3.1: Grow by increasing the supply of housing.

Housing Policy 3.8: Preserve and strengthen community livability by enforcing high standards of property management and maintenance.

Urban Design Policy 10.4: Support the development of residential dwellings that are of high quality design and compatible with surrounding development.

Urban Design Policy 10.5: Support the development of multi-family residential dwellings of appropriate form and scale.

Urban Design Policy 10.6: New multi-family development or renovation should be designed in terms of traditional urban building form with pedestrian scale design features at the street level.

Urban Design Policy 10.8: Strengthen the character and desirability of the city’s urban neighborhood residential areas while accommodating reinvestment through infill development.



Some homes are in good shape and attract long-term residents (left). Others are in poor condition and are less attractive to potential homeowners (right).

East Side 3: Mix of uses

Finding

Development pressure on Dinkytown and increased population growth require additional cultural and commercial resources.

Discussion

Development pressure on Dinkytown is high. Expanding the mixed-use area along University Avenue SE and 4th Street SE will allow Dinkytown to grow without compromising the beloved four-block area. Prioritizing a new library, mixed-use clinic/senior housing, and other community services will give Dinkytown some relief while helping transform the East Side into a community of more diverse uses and can increase density needed for improved transit service.

Recommendations

- Prioritize commercial, cultural, service, and residential mixed-use on the edges of Dinkytown, especially much needed daily-use services, such as grocery stores, that support residents and promote a walkable neighborhood.
- Invest in pedestrian-, cyclist-, and transit-friendly infrastructure on University Avenue SE, and SE 4th and 8th Streets.

Actions

- Designate a mixed-use area around Dinkytown to include the immediate blocks west of Dinkytown.
- Expand Dinkytown Activity Center to include areas recommended in the Dinkytown Business District Plan.
- Seek partners to develop civic and cultural uses such as a library, clinic, churches, and senior housing west of the Dinkytown area.
- Advocate for shared parking solutions among commercial businesses, churches, and the University of Minnesota that enable Dinkytown to expand and function sustainably.

Relevant City Policy

Land Use Policy 1.4: Develop and maintain strong and successful commercial and mixed-use areas with a wide range of character and functions to serve the needs of current and future users.

Land Use Policy 1.5: Promote growth and encourage overall city vitality by directing new commercial and mixed-use development to designated corridors and districts.



Mid-rise housing

Potential library in base of mixed-use building with shared parking beneath

Potential clinic in base of senior housing



The west edge of Dinkytown will accommodate expansion of retail and community uses. Parking lots and other underused properties will be redeveloped with a mix of uses that broaden the appeal of the area to the full university and neighborhood population.

The Rondo Library is an example of a library in the base of a mixed-use building in Saint Paul, MN.

East Side 4: Partnerships

Finding

There is a lack of cooperation and coordination among stakeholder groups on the East Side.

Discussion

The Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Association, Dinkytown Business Association, University of Minnesota, and City of Minneapolis are some of the formal entities who share an interest in the success of the East Side. These entities, as well as other groups like landlords, property owners, developers, churches, the library, and residents benefit from the East Side’s triumphs and struggle with its challenges. Partnerships among these groups will benefit all with a shared interest in the area’s success.

Recommendations

- Strengthen existing partnerships with the Marcy-Holmes Neighborhood Association (MHNA), the Dinkytown Business Association (DBA), Greek organizations, University of Minnesota and affiliated student organizations, landlords, and developers.
- Support projects, such as a health clinic and library, that tie together multiple needs and interests of area partners (MHNA, DBA, the U of M, residents, landlords and property owners, developers, churches, and the library).

Actions

- Continue to involve DBA representative, landlord/property owners, U of M representative on Marcy-Holmes neighborhood board.
- Continue to involve Marcy-Holmes resident in DBA.
- Remain active in the University District Alliance.
- Strengthen existing partnerships and create a forum to include landlords and developers.

Relevant City Policy

Transportation Policy 2.8: Balance the demand for parking with objectives for improving the environment for transit, walking, and bicycling, while supporting the city’s business community.

Urban Design Policy 10.13: Work with institutional and public partners to assure that the scale and form of new development or expansion will occur in a manner most compatible with the surrounding area.



Marcy Park area housing improvements and reinvestment

Expansion of Dinkytown

11th Avenue SE connection to the Riverfront

East Side 5: Public amenities

Finding

The East Side lags behind the West Side and the Riverfront in the amount and quality of public amenities and access to the Mississippi River.

Discussion

Public amenities increase confidence in an area, make a place more comfortable, and improve overall quality of life. The East Side needs investment in both existing and new amenities to keep current residents well-served and to attract new residents.

Recommendations

- Increase park space relative to increases in population.
- Create strong physical connections to the Riverfront.
- Formalize 5th Street SE as a special neighborhood amenity that connects existing cultural and commercial resources, unifies the West Side and East Side, and serves as an additional public open space.
- Develop a vertical connection between Dinkytown and Dinkytown Greenway.
- Redesign Marcy Park with amenities that attract and accommodate a broader population.

Actions

- Prioritize 11th Avenue SE as a primary riverfront connection for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Add 5th Street SE and recommendations for becoming a park-like street that is open to cars but prioritizes pedestrians and bicyclists to the City's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).
- Promote Marcy Park as a park in need of reinvestment and redesign.
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities at I-35W entrances and exits and in other major pedestrian areas on University Avenue SE, 4th Street SE, and 15th Avenue SE.
- Improve I-35W crossings at University Avenue SE, 4th and 8th Streets SE, and the pedestrian bridge on 5th Street SE with lighting and wider sidewalks for increased safety and comfort for all users, and to accommodate future uses.



Relevant City Policy

Transportation Policy 2.3: Encourage walking throughout the city by ensuring that routes are safe, comfortable, pleasant, and accessible.

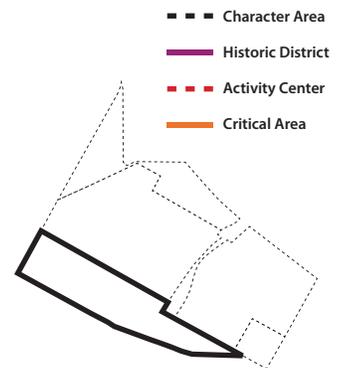
Transportation Policy 2.5: Ensure that bicycling throughout the city is safe, comfortable, and pleasant.

Open Space Policy 7.1: Promote the physical and mental health of residents and visitors by recognizing that safe outdoor amenities and spaces support exercise, play, relaxation, and socializing.

Urban Design Policy 10.14: Encourage development that provides functional and attractive gathering places.

Urban Design Policy 10.17: Provide sufficient lighting to reflect community character, provide a comfortable environment in a northern city, and promote environmentally friendly lighting systems.

Fifth Street SE already connects many stable neighborhood cultural and commercial resources: Dinkytown, sororities, fraternities, Pillsbury Court, the pedestrian bridge, the 5th Street SE Historic District, Marcy Open School, Holmes Park, churches, and others. Thus, it is positioned to become a more formal asset linking the East and West sides, perhaps in the form of a park-like street that is open to cars and parking, but that prioritizes the pedestrian and cyclist experience. Through partnerships with existing property owners, the City, the U of M, and developers, 5th Street SE can become an anchor of stability on both the East and West sides.



Riverfront Character Area Description

As the birthplace of Minneapolis and home to the original Pillsbury A-Mill, the area has local and national historic significance. The area’s seeps and caves were well known to Native Americans, who created portages and honored this area as sacred. Sawmills, flour mills, and associated industrial development have largely transitioned to housing, entertainment, recreation, and offices; a few industries continue to thrive. The current mix of uses, structures, and attractions make the area one of the most visited and loved in the region.

Because the area has experienced such transition, much of the infrastructure is outdated and not appropriate for current use. For example, 2nd Street SE, originally designed for industrial access, now operates as a high-speed alternative to University Avenue SE and 4th Street SE.

The Riverfront will continue to change over the coming decade. The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is undergoing a major Central Riverfront Planning process, which is looking at the future of the area adjacent to the river. Eventually, the remaining surface parking lots will become valuable enough to redevelop with multi-story buildings.

The Riverfront Character Area extends from properties north of University Avenue SE to the water’s edge, and west to east from Central Avenue SE to the Dinkytown Greenway.

Riverfront 1: Connectivity

Finding

Marcy-Holmes is a Riverfront neighborhood, yet access to and along the Riverfront is difficult from most adjacent areas.

Discussion

Busy streets, trails that end, private property ownership, and steep topography are the primary barriers to connectivity between the Riverfront and surrounding areas. For example, University Avenue SE is a high volume roadway that is difficult to cross, the Dinkytown Greenway is disconnected from Father Hennepin Bluffs Park by several properties in private ownership, and steep topography creates accessibility issues between the Riverfront and the East Side. These existing barriers are not insurmountable, and connections that overcome them are essential to improving access and increasing local and regional connections to the valued environmental, economic, and social resources the Riverfront offers. In addition, the reverse is true: the Riverfront is a gateway to the treasured resource that is the Marcy-Holmes neighborhood overall.

Recommendations

- Improve pedestrian and cyclist crossing experience on University Avenue SE by decreasing crossing distance and increasing visibility of crosswalks.
- Create a neighborhood-oriented experience and environment along University Avenue SE and 2nd Street SE.
- Support the streetcar plan for service on University Avenue SE as a viable, sustainable, predictable long-term mass transit service.
- Mark 2nd Street SE as the entrance to the riverfront with lighting, artistic elements, or pavement that suggests the river’s presence.
- Extend bicycle and pedestrian access from 11th Avenue to the Dinkytown Greenway.
- Connect the Mississippi River Trail, but not the road, between the Stone Arch Bridge, the Dinkytown Greenway, and East River Road.
- Reestablish the street grid if the opportunity arises, specifically on 4th, 7th, and 8th Avenues SE, to improve riverfront pedestrian and bicycle access if redevelopment occurs.
- Expand riverfront park land on the bluff and river edge.

Actions

- If state ownership for University Avenue SE limits flexibility in the pursuit of neighborhood-oriented improvements, pursue city or county ownership.
- Install bump-outs at all intersections on the north sides of University Avenue SE.
- Participate in streetcar planning efforts and support streetcar-related development along University Avenue SE.
- Follow bicycle infrastructure improvement recommendations suggested in this plan (See Transportation map and guidelines in Section II).
- Prioritize investments in street trees and street tree maintenance to soften, shade, and define the street, as well as to keep the urban tree canopy thriving.
- Pursue protection and replacement of at-risk park and boulevard ash trees.
- Promote the Mississippi Trail connection between the Stone Arch Bridge and Dinkytown Greenway.

Relevant City Policy

Transportation Policy 2.1:
Encourage growth and reinvestment by sustaining the development of a multi-modal transportation system.

Transportation Policy 2.6:
Manage the role and impact of automobiles in a multi-modal transportation system.

Environment Policy 6.8:
Encourage a healthy thriving urban tree canopy and other desirable forms of vegetation.

Urban Design Policy 10.15:
Wherever possible, restore and maintain the traditional street and sidewalk grid as part of new developments.



University Avenue SE has many responsibilities, one of which is to convey auto traffic between I-35W and major destinations. People use the avenue differently now than when it was designed, however, and it is time to prioritize local users, multiple modes of travel, and a variety of adjacent land uses. Establishing University Avenue as a prime address for new development can help it become a street where bicycles and pedestrians are safe and comfortable.

Riverfront 2: Local-Regional Balance

Finding

The Riverfront is both a local and regional destination, but it serves neither use as well as it could.

Discussion

Although the Riverfront draws local, regional, and international visitors, its potential is not fully realized. Its appearance is shabby, programming is poorly coordinated, and wayfinding is incomplete. Commercial entities would also benefit from a more coordinated and effective approach to physical improvements, area programming, and marketing.

Recommendations

- Prioritize and coordinate improvements among riverfront partners, including the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, and the City of Minneapolis.
- Prioritize the area as a local amenity that supports residents and businesses.
- Increase year-round Riverfront activity, programming, and publicity about events, particularly highlighting natural and historical assets.
- Add green space to accommodate new growth and improve water quality.
- Preserve and protect the health of native vegetation and aquatic systems.
- In the Mississippi River Critical Area, encourage design that contributes to ecological, scenic, and recreational assets of the river.

Actions

- Participate actively in Central Riverfront Planning process, especially to advocate for upgraded facilities and amenities to serve residents better and to improve the ecological health of the area.
- Designate the area east of I-35W, between University Avenue SE and the proposed Mississippi River Trail, to accommodate higher density residential development, while adhering to Critical Area guidelines.
- Expand park space between 6th and 11th Avenues SE, including the bluff and flats below.
- Identify next steps with public and private partners for developing a whitewater park.



Relevant City Policy

Environment Policy 6.9: Be a steward of clean water by protecting and enhancing its surface and groundwater systems.

Open Space Policy 7.1: Promote the physical and mental health of residents and visitors by recognizing that safe outdoor amenities and spaces support exercise, play, relaxation, and socializing.

Open Space Policy 7.4: Work to restore and preserve ecosystem functions in green open space areas.

Open Space Policy 7.6: Continue to beautify open spaces through well-designed landscaping that complements and improves the city’s urban form on many scales—from street trees to expansive views of lakes and rivers.

Open Space Policy 7.8: Strengthen existing and create new partnerships, including public-private partnerships, to deliver the best park and open space system possible.

Heritage Preservation Policy 8.5: Recognize and preserve the important influence of landscape on the cultural identity of Minneapolis.

Dinkytown Greenway and new development
New Neighborhood Commercial Node

Improved and expanded Riverfront park

Riverfront 3: 2nd Street SE

Finding

Second Street SE is designed as an industrial street, but it is trending toward residential and entertainment uses.

Discussion

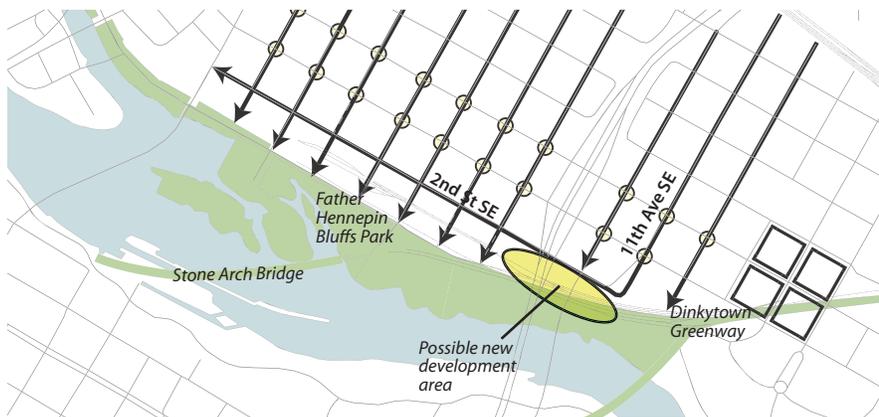
Second Street SE is a calmer street connection between the East and West Sides than University Avenue SE and 4th Street SE. It is also a challenging and unfriendly street to walk and cycle along and across due to its width, variable topography, and lack of visibility.

Recommendations

- Improve 2nd Street SE as a pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly alternative to University Avenue SE.
- Improve the 2nd Street SE building frontage and pedestrian environment.

Actions

- Create neighborhood-oriented street sections for the City’s next Capital Improvement Plan and for implementation with private development, emphasizing calming automobile traffic and improving bicycle and walking conditions.
- Establish pedestrian-oriented guidelines for new development along 2nd Street.
- Increase availability of street parking in areas it is currently not allowed.



Connecting the Dinkytown Greenway with the Stone Arch Bridge and Father Hennepin Bluffs Park is a neighborhood priority. Development along 2nd Street SE could assist in achieving this.

Relevant City Policy

Transportation Policy 2.2: Support successful streets and communities by balancing the needs of all modes of transportation with land use policy.

Transportation Policy 2.3: Encourage walking throughout the city by ensuring that routes are safe, comfortable, pleasant, and accessible.

Transportation Policy 2.5: Ensure that bicycling through the city is safe, comfortable, and pleasant.

Urban Design Policy 10.4: Support the development of residential dwellings that are of high quality design and compatible with surrounding development.

Urban Design Policy 10.6: New multi-family development or renovation should be designed in terms of traditional urban building form with pedestrian scale design features at the street level.

Urban Design Policy 10.14: Encourage development that provides functional and attractive gathering spaces.

Riverfront 4: Diversity of uses and eras

Finding

Old and new create a diverse mix of buildings and uses with some uncertainties about the future of various properties and landmarks.

Discussion

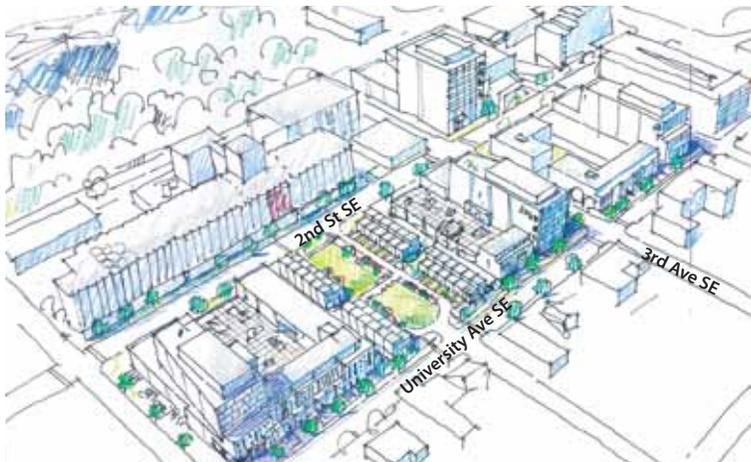
The Riverfront area represents the beginning of the settlements of St. Anthony, the predecessor of Minneapolis. Buildings here, such as the grain elevators and the Phoenix, give Marcy-Holmes its unique texture of buildings large and small, old and new, and generic and unique. In determining the future of current buildings and uses, the Plan recommends keeping current buildings and supporting current uses. If this is not possible, modifications or updates to existing buildings and uses are the next best option. Removal and replacement of existing uses and buildings should be the final option in this area. Preparation for all of these approaches is important.

Recommendations

- Support current uses and jobs at businesses such as Metal-Matic, General Mills, W.D. Forbes, and the Soap Factory, as well as current uses and jobs at St. Anthony Main and surrounding commercial areas.
- Create general redevelopment guidelines to prepare for remotely possible land use changes at General Mills, Metal-Matic, W.D. Forbes, and the white grain elevators.
- Support new uses for old buildings, such as the grain elevators.
- Encourage infill development with green space, a mix of housing types, and connectivity with the Mississippi River.

Actions

- Meet the current and future operating needs of Metal-Matic, General Mills, and W.D. Forbes.
- Encourage property improvements that ensure existing places of employment remain a positive neighborhood presence.
- Develop alternatives for the future of the grain elevators on 2nd Street SE, such as whether they should be kept in their entirety and used as an arts canvas, kept partially but with an opening for a connection to 4th Avenue SE, or removed entirely to open land for development.



If land uses change over time or if General Mills decides to relocate at some future date, one possible long-term vision of infill development might include a mix of housing types, a new green space, and improved connectivity. A development like this should improve the experience on 2nd Street SE with pedestrian-friendly frontage conditions.

Relevant City Policy

Housing Policy 3.2: Support housing density in locations that are well-connected by transit, and are close to commercial, cultural, and natural amenities.

Economic Development Policy 4.1: Support private sector growth to maintain a healthy, diverse economy.

Environment Policy 6.3: Encourage sustainable design practices in the planning, construction, and operations of new developments, large additions, and building renovations.

Heritage Preservation Policy 8.1: Preserve, maintain, and designate districts, landmarks, and historic resources which serve as reminders of the city’s architecture, history, and culture.

Arts and Culture Policy 9.6: Promote collaborations among arts and cultural organizations, artists, the City, and other partners.

Urban Design Policy 10.5: Support the development of multi-family residential dwellings of appropriate form and scale.



Dinkytown Character Area Description

The Dinkytown area is a lively business district. Centered on the intersection of 4th Street SE and 14th Avenue SE, Dinkytown serves the neighborhood, campus area, and region with an eclectic mix of businesses – as it has for over 100 years. While the core has been predominantly commercial for years, the area immediately adjacent includes medium to high density housing and several institutional uses.

Change has been a consistent theme in Dinkytown throughout its history. The business district contains buildings from many different eras, from the late 1800s to the present day. The mix of businesses has changed too, adapting to the needs and preferences of the changing demographics. The most recent wave of change has caused significant interest, as it is on a larger scale than most previous projects, has introduced more residential into the commercial core, and has replaced some public parking lots which were used by a number of area businesses. Questions arose about the impact of the new development on the character of Dinkytown and the existing businesses, and what is the appropriate city policy moving forward.

As a result of all the unique issues and challenges facing Dinkytown, it was the subject of a more in-depth study conducted alongside the neighborhood planning process. The business district plan focused on issues specific to that area, leaving broader neighborhood issues to the neighborhood-led planning process. The full Dinkytown Business District Plan is included as an appendix of this plan. The main recommendations from that planning effort are incorporated here. It is the intent to provide a consistent and seamless policy framework for the entire neighborhood, including Dinkytown.

Dinkytown 1: Preservation

Finding

The Dinkytown area has some distinct architectural elements and cultural history that contribute to its status as a potential historic resource.

Discussion

Research on the Dinkytown area conducted as part of the business district planning process found that the area could potentially be designated as a historic district. However, due to the eclectic nature of the area and concerns about flexibility for future development, there was not strong consensus that designation was the appropriate preservation tool. Additionally, the City has been in the midst of developing a conservation district ordinance – which could provide a flexible and useful tool, but cannot be utilized yet as the ordinance has not been finalized or adopted. Once this is complete, there should be a follow-up to discuss further. The plan recommends a designation study process that will include additional research, education, and discussion around these issues.

There is the potential for broader support of involvement in the Main Street Program, a voluntary, non-regulatory approach focused on supporting the business district. However, this does require a degree of local initiative and dedication of some additional resources.

Recommendations

- Establish a clear “commercial district” and consider practices to preserve the remaining historic, architectural, and cultural value of that area.
- Conduct a designation study to evaluate the eligibility of the Dinkytown commercial district for local and/or national historic district designation.
- Based on the results of the designation study and supporting analysis, make a determination regarding the appropriate preservation and design guidance for the Dinkytown area.
- Pursue Dinkytown’s participation in the Minnesota Main Street Program as a potential framework for supporting and promoting the business district.
- Consider establishment of a Local Conservation District for the Dinkytown area as an option for preserving the area’s character.
- Consider using the existing Transfer of Development Rights tool to address development in Dinkytown when appropriate opportunities exist.

Actions

- Pursue a designation study to research potential historic resources and preservation options, and to provide a forum for additional discussion.

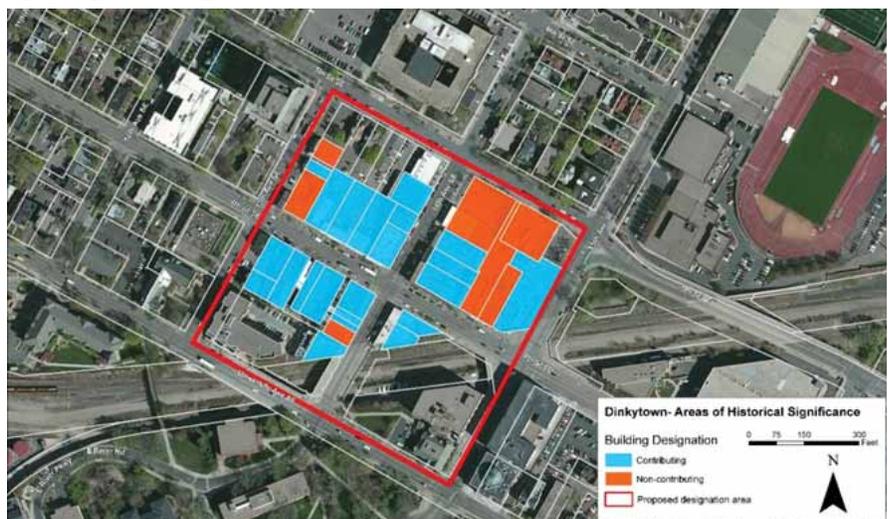
Relevant City Policy

Heritage Preservation Policy 8.2: Continue to evaluate potential historic resources for future studies and designation as the city ages.

Heritage Preservation Policy 8.6: Provide educational, financial, technical, and regulatory assistance to ensure the survival of the city’s historic resources.

Heritage Preservation Policy 8.8.2: In addition to local designation, develop other preservation tools, like conservation districts, to preserve the historic character of neighborhoods and landscapes.

Heritage Preservation Policy 8.10: Promote the benefits of preservation as an economic development tool and a method to achieve greater environmental sustainability and city vitality.



Dinkytown 2: Economic Development

Finding

Dinkytown’s unique and adaptable character contributes to its success as a business district, serving a mix of neighborhood, convenience, and destination markets. A coordinated strategy is needed to address the needs of the existing business mix and to help the district to continue to thrive into the future.

Discussion

A market study conducted as part of the Dinkytown planning effort demonstrated the hybrid nature of the markets served by the Dinkytown business district. They range from walk-up traffic from the neighborhoods, convenience uses for the adjacent campus community, and destinations for customers from throughout the region. There is also a mix of local and chain/franchise ownership, and an increasing focus on restaurants and bars typical of the University area.

While there are several University-area business districts, Dinkytown is unique in its nostalgic collegiate character. This is facing change, especially as rent structures for commercial space in new buildings being constructed tends to be much higher than levels in the many of the older buildings – pricing out some uses. While this is part of the evolution of the market, there is some concern that the brand which distinguishes Dinkytown (particularly as a destination) will be impacted and therefore it will be less competitive. Recommendations include a focus on supporting the existing business district and encouraging a diversity of types and ownership.

Recommendations

- Expand the commercial footprint of Dinkytown as shown in the Land Use chapter, thereby increasing the potential space available for retail and service uses.
- Require ground floor retail or other active uses in the commercial core at 4th and 14th, to support commercial district vitality and to ensure that housing does not outbid the retail.
- Support the existing mix of small businesses in Dinkytown through various financial and technical assistance tools available through the city and other local sources.
- Support a broader diversity of businesses by placing controls on granting new and/or expanded liquor licenses.
- Support the preservation of elements of Dinkytown which contribute to its unique branding and market niche.
- Continue to maintain a special service district for the area, and consider higher service levels to further the goals of this plan.
- Pursue enhanced maintenance of public realm, including litter removal, façade maintenance and renovation, upgrades to aging infrastructure, and other elements.
- Promote safety and security of the district through regular foot patrols, including late nights and events, and investigate options for safety center or police substation in Dinkytown area.
- Consider marketing and branding strategies that build on Dinkytown’s uniqueness, including the element of nostalgia which distinguishes it from other commercial areas.
- Support a mutually beneficial relationship between the University and Dinkytown, in terms of cross-promotion, vendor relationships, event management, and shared use of infrastructure and transit.

Actions

- Identify additional financial and technical assistance resources that can be used by area businesses and the business district as a whole.
- Work on additional organization efforts to support and strengthen the business district.

Relevant City Policy

Economic Development Policy 4.1: Support private sector growth to maintain a healthy, diverse economy.

Economic Development Policy 4.2: Promote business start-ups, retention and expansion to bolster the existing economic base.

Economic Development Policy 4.9: Focus economic development efforts in strategic locations for continued growth and sustained vitality.



Dinkytown 3: Transportation & Parking

Finding

Dinkytown is a truly multimodal area, with high volumes of automobile, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit traffic. Balancing the needs of these systems and their users is a major task.

Discussion

As shown in the market analysis, customers and visitors of Dinkytown come from all over, and arrive via various means. The bicycle and pedestrian counts are among the highest in the city, largely due to the walkable nature of the area and the close proximity to the University. Likewise, people travel to the area by car in significant numbers, Dinkytown is situated on two busy one-way streets with close proximity to two interstate highways.

For bicycles and pedestrians, safety is a priority, especially where there’s mixing of all the modes. There is also a need for upgraded and more accessible bicycle facilities and connections. For automobiles, the major issue is parking – particularly since some public parking has been recently removed from the core of Dinkytown by new development. The plan recommendations focus on a number of strategies addressing these and other related issues.

Recommendations

Parking

- Support current efforts around providing a remote parking shuttle service from the 4th Street SE parking structure to Dinkytown businesses
- Explore the development of a public Dinkytown circulator bus, providing access to the business district, parking facilities, and other destinations in the area.
- Improve signage to and from available on and off-street parking and develop a positive marketing campaign around parking options to patrons and employees of Dinkytown businesses.
- Develop shared parking strategies for off-street surface parking in and around Dinkytown.
- Explore the use of “smart” parking meters in the commercial core of Dinkytown where parking demand is highest.
- Consider modifications to on-street parking in Dinkytown and in nearby Marcy Holmes to improve parking situations for both residential and business needs. Focus particularly on the streets bordering the proposed expansion of the business district.
- Work with the University of Minnesota to encourage students, faculty, and staff to not occupy long-term street parking spaces in and around Dinkytown during weekdays and weekday evenings
- Enhance lighting and safety features at the 4th Street SE parking ramp, and improve the pedestrian experience along 4th Street SE from the ramp into Dinkytown, as well as along other significant pedestrian corridors connecting into Dinkytown and the University campus.
- Work with the city to increase the use and favorability of valet options in Dinkytown.
- Consider charging residential developers fees in-lieu of providing off-street parking that can then be used to provide public parking spaces
- Explore costs and benefits of placing an additional parking ramp within the study area, possibly with access to the Granary Corridor trench.

Relevant City Policy

Transportation Policy 2.2: Support successful streets and communities by balancing the needs of all modes of transportation with land use policy.

Transportation Policy 2.3.2: Identify and encourage the development of pedestrian routes within Activity Centers, Growth Centers, and other commercial areas that have superior pedestrian facilities.

Transportation Policy 2.5: Ensure that bicycling throughout the city is safe, comfortable and pleasant.

Transportation Policy 2.5.5: Provide public bicycle parking facilities in major destinations such as Downtown, Activity Centers and Growth Centers.

Transportation Policy 2.8: Balance the demand for parking with objectives for improving the environment for transit, walking and bicycling, while supporting the city’s business community.

Recommendations

Pedestrian & Traffic Safety

- Increase the education and awareness of road users in the form of a public campaign aimed at all modes of transportation.
- Identify and complete missing and inadequate links in the bicycle network to ensure that these non-motorized forms of transportation are not forced onto sidewalks for safe travel.
- Install high visibility crosswalks at the intersections of 15th Avenue SE and 5th Street SE, 15th Avenue SE and 4th Street SE, and 14th Avenue SE and 4th Street SE to improve the visibility of pedestrians.
- Observe the intersections of 15th Avenue SE and 5th Street SE, 15th Avenue SE and 4th Street SE, and 14th Avenue SE and 4th Street SE at peak rush hour periods during the University of Minnesota school year to determine traveler behavior and determine other potential specific engineering improvements to improve safety and convenience of non-motorized transportation users.
- Enhance the pedestrian realm throughout Dinkytown with additional pedestrian amenities, including more and improved benches, trash containers, planters, lighting, and public art.

Bicycle Facilities

- Regularly repaint faded pavement markings for bicycle facilities throughout Dinkytown.
- Pursue additional options to delineate and enhance bicycle facilities on 15th Avenue SE, a primary bicycle route.
- Consider narrowing travel and parking lanes on 4th Street SE to provide room for a bicycle lane through the commercial core, to increase safety and accessibility for people choosing to ride a bicycle to and through the district.
- Install on-street bicycle infrastructure along 5th Street SE, and continue similar streetscape treatments present along the street to the west of Dinkytown.
- Complete a vertical connection between the Dinkytown Greenway and Dinkytown.
- Place clear signage along 5th Street SE near 17th Avenue SE and at Oak Street SE near TCF Bank Stadium directing bicyclists northwest into Dinkytown
- Install additional new bicycle racks where feasible, particularly along 14th Avenue SE and 4th Street SE in the core of Dinkytown.
- Investigate Dinkytown as a possible location for a designated and branded bicycle hub equipped with amenities like covered bicycle parking, bicycle lockers, bicycle maintenance features, and others. This should be studied in conjunction with examining the feasibility of a parking ramp within the greenway trench.

Other Transportation

- During times of construction, maintain pedestrian and bicycle connectivity so that preferred routes of travel are not obstructed, particularly on important pedestrian and bicycle routes such as 15th Avenue SE
- Use special service district and other strategies to fund year-round maintenance of the Dinkytown commercial core, possibly in partnership with the University.

Actions

- Continue ongoing short and long term strategies to address parking needs, including joint discussions between the neighborhood and business association regarding how to improve overall parking scenarios for both.
- Support upgrades and enhancements to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, as opportunities become available.



Dinkytown 4: Land Use & Design

Finding

Guidance for Dinkytown involves balancing the need to accommodate growth and development with maintaining the area’s unique character and pedestrian scale.

Discussion

The discussion around the land use for Dinkytown has focused on the existing commercial character of the business district. While new development has been introducing residential into the core, there is still a strong interest in maintaining an active ground floor commercial presence, particularly around the intersection of 4th St SE and 14th Avenue SE. In the context of the city’s comprehensive plan, this is shown as mixed use, as all commercial zoning districts also allow residential. Particularly in the core, residential is appropriate on the upper floors, not the ground floor level.

As discussed in the Economic Development section, there is a desire to expand the commercial footprint of Dinkytown to allow for a mix of uses in a broader area. This is reflected in the future land use map, which expands this area, and the boundary of the Activity Center along with it.

The design guidance in this chapter for new and rehabilitated development is focused on maintaining pedestrian scale and feel at the street level. To this end, the plan recommends that upper floors be stepped back, storefronts be scaled to be fairly narrow, and that elements of traditional urban form characteristic of the area be incorporated in the design. While these design standards are at present stand-alone guidance, they have the potential to be a starting place for future design standards developed for a designated district – if that is pursued.

Recommendations

- Guide Dinkytown for mixed use, to accommodate existing and new mix of commercial, residential, institutional, office, and other compatible uses.
- Expand the Dinkytown mixed use business district to the blocks immediately surrounding the core area (see future land use map).
- Expand the boundary for the Dinkytown Activity Center to the blocks immediately surrounding the core area (see future land use map).
- Allow for infill development within the Activity Center, when the development is designed to be compatible with the area’s character.
- Require an active ground floor retail presence in development within the core area of Dinkytown, particularly near the intersection of 4th St SE and 14th Avenue SE.
- Use the plan’s design guidelines as part of the development review process to ensure new development is compatible with the existing area.
- Support residential development in the area surrounding the Dinkytown business district compatible with the guidance in the Marcy Holmes Master Plan Update.
- Encourage an active, pedestrian oriented street presence for the University-owned property fronting 15th Avenue SE.

Actions

- Make changes to land use policy and zoning guidance to support expansion of the commercial district.
- Use design guidelines in the review of proposed new projects in the area.

Relevant City Policy

Land Use Policy 1.5: Promote growth and encourage overall city vitality by directing new commercial and mixed use development to designated corridors and districts.

Land Use Policy 1.12: Support Activity Centers by preserving the mix and intensity of land uses and by enhancing the design features that give each center its unique urban character.

Urban Design Policy 10.9: Support urban design standards that emphasize traditional urban form with pedestrian scale design features at the street level in mixed-use and transit-oriented development.

Urban Design Policy 10.10: Support urban design standards that emphasize a traditional urban form in commercial areas.

