



## CPED STAFF REPORT

Prepared for the City Planning Commission

CPC Agenda Item #1  
September 15, 2014

### SMALL AREA PLAN SUMMARY

<i>Project Name:</i>	Nicollet Island East Bank Neighborhood Small Area Plan
<i>Prepared By:</i>	<a href="#">Haila Maze</a> , Principal Planner, (612) 673-2098
<i>Ward:</i>	3
<i>Neighborhood:</i>	Nicollet Island East Bank Neighborhood Association
<i>Existing Land Use Features:</i>	<i>Activity Center:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• East Hennepin</li></ul> <i>Commercial Corridors:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Central Ave (south of 7th St NE)</li><li>• Hennepin Ave E</li></ul> <i>Community Corridors:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> St NE</li><li>• 4<sup>th</sup> St SE</li><li>• Central Ave (north of 7<sup>th</sup> St NE)</li><li>• University Ave NE</li></ul>
<i>Zoning Plate Numbers:</i>	14

### BACKGROUND AND PROCESS

The Nicollet Island East Bank neighborhood is located within Minneapolis' Northeast Community. The neighborhood's mainland boundaries are railroad tracks on the northwest, Central Avenue on the southeast, and the riverfront. The neighborhood also includes Nicollet Island in its entirety. The mainland portion is primarily high density mixed use, while Nicollet Island is a mix of low density residential, park, and institutional.

The neighborhood includes most of the East Hennepin Activity Center, and it is crossed or bordered by no fewer than two Commercial Corridors and four Community Corridors. The remainder of the East Hennepin Activity Center is in the Marcy-Holmes neighborhood. Marcy-Holmes recently completed a small area plan, which was adopted by the City Council on August 15, 2014. The guidance for the Activity Center split by these neighborhoods is consistent, thanks to ongoing communication between the leadership and staffing of the two planning processes.

This is the Nicollet Island East Bank neighborhood's first small area plan. It was initiated and led by the Nicollet Island East Bank Neighborhood Association (NIEBNA). The motivating factors for planning included: (1) the aforementioned Activity Center; (2) a desire to accommodate growth and development and to proactively respond to developer inquiries, and (3) an effort to enhance the neighborhood through investments in transit and public realm. This includes responding to the ongoing Nicollet-Central streetcar project, whose proposed alignment would pass right through the middle of the neighborhood – including a couple potential stops.

It should be noted that plans for two additional adjacent neighborhoods – St. Anthony East and Sheridan – are moving forward on the same approval timeframe. While each plan must be reviewed and approved separately, they are being tracked together since they share similar geography and issues, and are together a policy framework for a significant part of Northeast Minneapolis.

### **Planning Process and Community Engagement**

Prior to beginning its plan update, the NIEBNA board developed a request for proposals to hire a consultant to assist them with the planning process. They retained the services of a consultant team led by WSB and Associates, which worked with them throughout much of the process.

Working with the consultant, NIEBNA assembled a representative steering committee to guide the planning process. The process included robust public outreach, including:

- Three community-wide public meetings
- Online business survey and project website
- Focus groups with businesses and representatives of the development community
- Participation in National Night Out and Neighborhood Fest

This planning process lasted for about a year, from mid-2013 to mid-2014. Overall, the process involved over 200 residents, business people, and other stakeholders. NIEBNA reviewed and finalized the draft in Spring 2014.

### **Review and Approval Process**

The plan was first brought to the City Planning Commission Committee of the Whole (CPC COW) on June 12, 2014, to provide an overview of the plan. The 45-day public review period was held from June 30 to August 13, 2014. Public comments received during that period were compiled, and a response was provided for each one. Comments and responses for both periods are included here.

The plan was subsequently brought back to CPC COW on August 28, 2014. Since then, the plan has been amended to reflect comments from the 45 day review and from the CPC COW meeting.

After review and action by the Minneapolis City Planning Commission, CPED intends to take the plan to the Zoning and Planning Committee of the City Council on October 9, 2014.

Pending full adoption of the plan by the CPC and Council, it will be submitted subsequently to the Metropolitan Council for amendment to the *Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* (the City's comprehensive plan).

## **PLAN OVERVIEW**

The Nicollet Island East Bank Plan policy direction is divided into five main sections: (1) Land Use and Housing, (2) Transportation, (3) Urban Design, (4) Economic Development, (5) Arts, Culture, and Heritage Preservation, and (6) Parks, Open Space, and Sustainability. Each of these is summarized below.

### **Land Use and Housing**

The mainland area of the neighborhood is already primarily a medium to high density mixed use commercial and residential district, and is mostly within the Activity Center boundary. This plan takes the next step and extends the Activity Center and mixed use guidance to the entire mainland portion. This includes a recommendation to expand the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay district to match this boundary change as well.

The plan also encourages higher densities and taller buildings, as long as they are able to provide exceptional streetscapes and site designs. The plan proposes several strategies for how to incentivize this type of development, through both community process and regulatory control, including looking at guidelines attached to the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District.

The plan supports ground floor retail throughout the mixed use area. In terms of housing, the plan supports a wide range of affordability levels. It also supports working with developers on sites that are contaminated to address those concerns. The plan in particular highlights a potential high density vision for the Superior Plating site, the neighborhood's largest readily available redevelopment site. This reflects ongoing conversations between the neighborhood and potential developer.

It should be noted that the guidance for Nicollet Island is much more focused on preservation of existing conditions. The plan notes that the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is currently in the midst of an update to their central riverfront master plan. This will have implications for a significant portion of the island, but is not yet complete.

The plan acknowledges the presence of a large amount of parking in the neighborhood, including district parking. It recognizes this fact, and supports efficient use of parking in a busy commercial district.

Overall, the plan embraces density and development, recognizing that it can contribute to a vital, interesting and diverse urban area.

## **Transportation**

The plan takes a close look at E Hennepin Avenue and 1st Avenue NE, a one-way pair that are two of the neighborhood's main streets. It suggests additional study to determine if it is feasible to convert them to two-way traffic, as was done in Downtown for both of these same streets. The plan includes case studies from other cities that converted one-way streets to two-way. While there are still some questions about the feasibility from a traffic perspective, the plan supports this with the intention of creating and supporting more pedestrian-oriented corridors in the business district. The plan also recommends the restoration of one block of 4<sup>th</sup> St NE to two-way traffic.

The neighborhood's ongoing involvement in and support for the Nicollet-Central streetcar planning process comes through in the plan. The plan supports the development of streetcar along 1<sup>st</sup> and Hennepin, as shown in the current locally preferred alternative. It also supports the development of the line for the full extent of the neighborhood and beyond, as well as the future alignment of the University and 4<sup>th</sup> streetcar line. The plan does not offer support for the concept of an operations and maintenance facility on the Superior Plating site, as it does not appear to be consistent with their vision for high density mixed use on the site.

Generally, the plan supports an improvement of the pedestrian experience along the neighborhood's main corridors. This includes streetscape improvements, year-round maintenance, safety improvements,

and a possible additional connection to St. Anthony West. The plan also supports efficient management of parking resources for the business district.

### **Urban Design**

Working with the vision for higher density mixed use, the plan also supports high quality urban design. The plan includes a checklist of potential improvements to be used during the neighborhood review of development projects, and looks for ways to encourage and incentivize good design.

The plan also includes recommendations for public realm improvements, focused on a pedestrian friendly environment.

### **Economic Development**

To encourage new growth and development and to support the existing business district, the plan supports a development vision that will bring more people to the area, and support a busy, interesting urban place.

It also recommends ongoing cooperation with the business association around shared interests, including marketing and events, parking concerns, and general area maintenance and vitality. The plan supports the current business mix, and encourages additional business locations that add to the variety of the area.

### **Arts, Culture, and Heritage Preservation**

The plan supports the arts in a variety of ways. It encourages the installation of additional public art, supports ongoing festivals and events, seeks to work with the local arts community, and seeks to attract performing arts venues to the neighborhood. It also recognizes the development review process as a time for the neighborhood to encourage the incorporation of art as part of new developments.

The plan recognizes that a portion of the neighborhood is within the St. Anthony Falls historic district, and indicates that development within that boundary will be in conformance with historic district guidelines.

The plan acknowledges that past City survey work has identified an additional potential historic district, related to historic streetcar commercial, overlapping with a portion of the neighborhood. However, this plan did not attempt to do an in-depth designation study – partly because the potential district extends beyond neighborhood boundaries, and partly because there was not strong community interest in historic designation or other formal preservation tools. (It is worth noting that the City recently authorized the demolition of two potentially historic properties in this potential district – Totino's and Superior Plating.) The plan does identify a number of the prominent buildings that would likely be considered contributing, and asks that they be taken into account in future development plans.

### **Parks, Open Space, and Sustainability**

Most of the neighborhood's parkland is incorporated within the central riverfront regional park. As noted above, the Park Board has an update to the plan for this area underway. The neighborhood and its stakeholders will continue to be involved in that planning process – which will provide much more detailed guidance as to that parkland than will this small area plan.

As such, this plan focuses on improvements within the interior of the neighborhood's mainland area. It recommends pursuing small plaza, green spaces, streetscape amenities, and parklets at key locations. As with other improvements, the priority corridors are primarily E Hennepin Ave, Central Ave, 1<sup>st</sup> Ave NE, and University Ave. There is a convergence of recommendations (for green space and pedestrian amenities) near the northern tip of the neighborhood, around the complicated intersection of Central, Hennepin, and 5<sup>th</sup> St SE.

## Implementation

The plan has an implementation framework, based around a series of strategic actions outlined at the front of each section of the plan. In addition, the overview highlights the top implementation priorities, which include:

- Investigate the feasibility of restoring one-way streets to two-way operations
- Expand Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District to include the entire mainland neighborhood
- Attract high quality development to underutilized areas
- Increase emphasis on the pedestrian with amenities such as artwork, wider sidewalks, trees, parklets, enhanced lighting, street “furniture” (benches, tables, etc.), and transparent building facades.
- Investigate the feasibility of eliminating overhead utilities
- Support streetcar implementation
- Improve connections to the riverfront parkland and to bicycle and pedestrian trails.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY

This plan will be consistent with the following applicable policies of [The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth](#):

**Land Use Policy 1.1: Establish land use regulations to achieve the highest possible development standards, enhance the environment, protect public health, support a vital mix of land uses, and promote flexible approaches to carry out the comprehensive plan..**

1.1.6 Develop small area plans for designated land use features, particularly Activity Centers, Growth Centers, and Major Retail Centers, in consultation with neighborhood associations, residents, and other stakeholders.

**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.**

1.5.1 Support an appropriate mix of uses within a district or corridor with attention to surrounding uses, community needs and preferences, and availability of public facilities.

**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.**

1.8.1 Promote a range of housing types and residential densities, with highest density development concentrated in and along appropriate land use features.

**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.**

1.9.1 Support the continued presence of existing small-scale retail sales and commercial services along Community Corridors.

**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.**

1.11.2 Support the continued presence of small-scale, neighborhood-serving retail and commercial services in Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.

**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.**

1.12.2 Encourage mixed use buildings, with commercial uses located on the ground floor and secure entrances for residential uses.

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

2.1.1 Continue addressing the needs of all modes of transportation, emphasizing the development of a more effective transit network.

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

2.2.3 Promote street and sidewalk design that balances handling traffic flow with pedestrian orientation and principles of traditional urban form.

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

2.3.1 Ensure that there are safe and accessible pedestrian routes to major destinations, including transit corridors, from nearby residential areas.

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.**

2.5.1 Complete a network of on- and off-street primary bicycle corridors.

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.**

2.8.3 Maximize the efficient use of off-street parking by developing district parking strategies in high density mixed-use areas such as Activity Centers and Growth Centers.

**Transportation Policy 2.9: Promote reliable funding and pricing strategies to manage transportation demand and improve alternative modes.**

2.9.3 Link transit improvements, such as streetcars, to economic development outcomes.

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

3.1.1 Support the development of new medium- and high-density housing in appropriate locations throughout the city.

3.1.2 Use planning processes and other opportunities for community engagement to build community understanding of the important role that urban density plays in stabilizing and strengthening the city.

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

3.2.1 Encourage and support housing development along commercial and community corridors, and in and near growth centers, activity centers, retail centers, transit station areas, and neighborhood commercial nodes.

3.2.2 Engage in dialogue with communities about appropriate locations for housing density, and ways to make new development compatible with existing structures and uses.

The plan recommends the expansion of an Activity Center, as discussed above. The justification for the expanded land use feature is to more fully accommodate growth and development in the City. This overall goal is highly consistent with the comprehensive plan.

Otherwise, this plan's land use and design guidance is otherwise largely consistent with existing comprehensive plan guidance for the applicable land use features. The plan is also largely consistent in terms of its guidance on other topics, including housing, transportation, and urban design.

## FUTURE RELATED ACTIONS

Implementation of the plan recommendations is part of Planning staff's 2014 work plan and will likely continue into the future. Elements of this include:

- **Comprehensive plan changes.** This plan will be incorporated into the City's comprehensive plan, including incorporating this plan's future land use map into the comprehensive plan's citywide Future Land Use map and making the changes noted above to the land use features. This requires Metropolitan Council review for consistency with regional systems plans, in accordance with state law. As this review follows City approvals, City adoption of the plan as part of the comprehensive plan will be contingent on the pending Metropolitan Council review. This will move forward after plan adoption, possibly bundled with other pending comprehensive plan updates.
- **Potential text amendment or rezoning.** While the plan does not propose major land use changes that would necessarily impact base zoning (at least not immediately), it does suggest some potential zoning code changes. These may be accommodated through a future rezoning study – again, perhaps handled jointly with other pending changes.

- **Development review.** Future development proposals for property in the Nicollet Island East Bank neighborhood will require Planning Commission review of development applications such as rezonings, conditional use permits, and site plan review. In this way, the Planning Commission has a role in the incremental implementation of the plan. Environmental impact assessments and/or transportation demand management studies will be undertaken as necessary.
- **Capital project prioritization.** The capital improvements process (through the City, County, and other public entities) provides an important way to implement recommended projects in the comprehensive plan. This plan's identification of these projects provides additional priority and weight to them in project review and ranking. It also allows for proposals to be made when funding opportunities (such as grants) emerge.
- **Support for stakeholder-led implementation efforts.** As this is the neighborhood's plan, some implementation may be led by the neighborhood association, based on their interest and capacity. This is anticipated to be ongoing and will need periodic City review or assistance.
- **Streetcar planning.** Additional transportation and design work will be necessary for development and implementation of the plan for the Nicollet-Central Streetcar.

## PUBLIC COMMENT

A number of comments were received during the 45-day comment period from individuals, community organizations, and government staff. There were a number changes as a result of these comments, including adding detail and clarification around topics and concepts in the plan. These edits did not represent large changes in the direction or intent of the plan, but rather added to the existing framework. A table listing the comments and the responses to them is attached.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### **Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development:**

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development recommends that the City Planning Commission and City Council **approve** the Nicollet Island East Bank Neighborhood Small Area Plan and **amend** the policy guidance for the area into the City's comprehensive plan with the following conditions:

- The comprehensive plan amendment is subject to final review and approval by the Metropolitan Council.
- Additional transportation planning and design work will be necessary for development and implementation of the Nicollet-Central Streetcar. The features and recommendations of this

plan will be referenced in that planning process and reevaluated in conjunction with the larger project. They may be adjusted, refined, or updated if necessary.

- The features and recommendations of this plan will be used to guide preparation of an updated comprehensive plan in upcoming years. As with all small area plans, features and recommendations of this plan will be reevaluated and may be adjusted or updated in the next update to the Comprehensive Plan.

## ATTACHMENTS

- Nicollet Island East Bank Neighborhood Small Area Plan
- Written comments received to date
- Table of comments and responses

The plan is also available online at: <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/cped/projects/NIEBplan>.

## Maze, Haila R.

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**From:** Clegg, Barry F. <Barry.Clegg@gpmlaw.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, August 07, 2014 9:00 AM  
**To:** Maze, Haila R.  
**Subject:** Comment on NIEBNA Small Area Plan

I support adoption of the Small Area Plan as proposed. My sense is that most neighborhoods support the City's goal of population growth and density in principle, but that support melts away when projects are actually proposed that increase density and height. I am glad to see my neighborhood welcome that density and height and propose some thoughtful guidelines as to how that can be achieved in ways that are pedestrian friendly and promote economic development. The Nicollet Island East Bank Neighborhood is the logical extension of downtown population growth on the East Bank and this plan encourages and facilitates that growth in a positive way.

Thanks.

Barry Clegg  
Nicollet Island

**Barry Clegg**  
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## Maze, Haila R.

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**From:** Dore Mead <dore.mead@usa.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 12, 2014 8:36 AM  
**To:** Maze, Haila R.  
**Subject:** Comments on the draft Small Area Plan for Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood

Dear Haila:

This e-mail provides my comments on the draft Small Area Plan (SAP) for the Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood. All of these comments refer to the East Bank portion of the neighborhood only.

The current Minneapolis Zoning Code does not include a primary zoning district that is a good match for the future development I believe the Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood Association (NIEBNA) envisions for the East Bank. The lack of an appropriate zoning district led the SAP's steering committee and the NIEBNA Board to search for an alternative approach to effect the same result an appropriate primary zoning district could accomplish in a more conventional way. In the draft SAP, that alternative approach takes the form of expanded standards for the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District.

A more-direct approach -- namely, an appropriate primary zoning district -- would be better. But that approach would take time, time that's not likely available as quickly as needed in today's development climate. So in the meantime, I applaud the alternative approach for trying to accomplish the neighborhood's wishes in a fashion I hope the City will support and developers will understand.

In particular, in a neighborhood that seeks a significant increase in density and a City that seeks the same, the current code's reliance on maximum height restrictions seems contradictory and self-defeating. Consider the Corner Apartments, proposed at the corner of First Avenue Northeast and Second Street Northeast, part of a Planned Use Development the City approved years ago. The PUD anticipates the Corner Apartments as a ten-story building with, I believe, nearly 100 dwelling units. By contrast, the developer now plans to proceed with a six-story structure that accommodates only 56 apartments; and yet the developer is not required to return to the City for approval to build fewer units -- because that's the nature of the current zoning code.

Another example (albeit just outside the East Bank) is Kelly Doran's Mill & Main project. I understand the City approved that development as an 11-story structure, with appropriate density. By contrast, it is now nearing completion with several fewer floors and, of course, less density.

Instead, wouldn't an appropriate primary zoning district for a near-downtown, urban core neighborhood establish a *minimum* height for a structure, rather than a *maximum*? Or at least a *required* height? Wouldn't it be in the City's best interest to require developers who decide to provide *less* density to return to the City for approval? Why make it easy for developers to do *less* than they themselves had once proposed? At times, "doing less" may be justified; but shouldn't the developer have to prove that case to the City, given the City's vested interest in growing the population and the employment base?

I agree wholeheartedly with NIEBNA's commitment to the development of tall, architecturally-distinguished, mixed-use towers that will significantly increase both the population and the employment base of the East Bank. At the same time, where appropriate, smaller mixed-use structures should protect and complement nearby low-rise historic buildings.

Throughout the East Bank, ground floor spaces should be filled with thriving, pedestrian-oriented commercial

businesses that attract people to shopping, dining, personal service, and entertainment venues. With more residents and more people working in the neighborhood, the East Bank will be able to support more commercial businesses. At the same time, those new residents, workers and businesses will put more "eyes on the streets" during the work week as well as nights and weekends, making the East Bank even safer than it is today.

The ideal primary zoning district for the East Bank would require developers to maximize the residential population and employment base in the neighborhood by building tall, slender structures. That district would also value historic structures by allowing developers to construct smaller structures were appropriate near low-rise historic buildings. And finally, the district would require developers to provide ground-floor designs with "active façade features" that would further enhance the pedestrian experience in the East Bank.

Haila, it has been wonderful working with you during the Small Area Plan's development process. You do the City proud!

Doré Mead  
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612.581.2639

## Maze, Haila R.

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**From:** John Larkey <john\_larkey@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 12, 2014 1:31 PM  
**To:** Maze, Haila R.  
**Subject:** NIEB SAP - public comment

Haila, overall I think the NIEB SAP is very well-done & balances amenities and needs of commercial, residential & visitor stakeholder groups that will make NIEB one of the most desirable neighborhoods to live, work & play - and is a plan that has a vision for the future.

I share a few specific comments with CPED below. If any questions, please let me know. jkl

Restore one-way streets to two-way operations - this is a must.

Support streetcar implementation - this is a must. The initial route terminus should be Lowry Ave - the NE corridor is the largest re-development contributor to the streetcar project justification & route must extend this far.

The street car maintenance barn should not be in NIEB (this was mentioned in one public street car meeting - this barn should be at Broadway (existing rail yard area), or further north & east.

Expand Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District to include entire neighborhood. This is a must. Also, should extend across Central Ave (into Marcy Holmes) & the adjoining areas of SAE & SAW at the triangle point of NI-EB.

Attract high quality development to underutilized areas - Superior Plating site (& the East end of this block) are immediate priorities. The Wells Fargo bank block, and US bank block / Surdyks / West Photo should also be high priority for re-development & will be the "heart" of the neighborhood.

Increase emphasis on pedestrian and bicycling. Specifically, improve connections to the riverfront parkland and to bicycle and pedestrian trails. with amenities such as bike racks, artwork, wider sidewalks, trees, parklets, enhanced lighting, street "furniture" (benches, tables, etc.), and transparent building facades.

Infrastructure - eliminate overhead utilities & upgrade wireless access when opportunities present themselves

Embrace density and diversity - three specific examples: encourage taller buildings; include residential options across price point spectrum; incorporate child & pet-friendly amenities in the community.

Green space to be included in all developments & across the neighborhood. The surface lot on SE corner of 1st Ave NE & 2nd St NE is TOO SMALL for a significant development - this should be established as a park / green space for the entire community to utilize.

Appropriate amount of parking should be included in planning of any new developments.

A "new zoning" classification for Activity Centers like NIEB may be necessary for CPED/City to establish - one does not currently exist. Key components would include higher density & design factors mentioned in the plan.

A Special Tax increment zone (similar to DID) in the area should be considered for businesses in the area - to support safety, cleanliness & desirability for businesses, residents and visitors.

Improved access and linkage to River is a must and should be integrated into the MPRB / Waterfront planning. A specific consideration of access to the water and recreation (hiking, biking, canoeing, picnicking, etc) is a must.

Sent from my iPad

## Maze, Haila R.

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**From:** Kyle Watkins <jkwatkins@FocusFinancial.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, July 18, 2014 4:45 PM  
**To:** Maze, Haila R.  
**Subject:** NIEBNA small area plan

Hello,

I am a resident at The Cobalt. We moved into the area from the suburbs a few years ago. I just read the small area plan and I think it is fantastic work. It provides an excellent, proactive vision for the area. It is a tremendous framework for assessing future development proposals. I believe the next few years, with the right new developments, will provide a great opportunity to get the synergy going that will last for years and feed on itself. Thank you for all of those who worked on this plan!

**Kyle Watkins, CFP®**

Financial Advisor  
Executive Officer

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**REAL ESTATE DIVISION**  
**Strategic Planning and Resources Department**

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**TO:** Haila Maze, AICP  
Principal City Planner  
City of Minneapolis  
Community Planning and Economic Development

**FROM:** J. Michael Noonan, AICP  
Senior Department Administrator

**DATE:** August 11, 2014

**RE:** Nicollet Island – East Bank Neighborhood – Small Area Plan

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The Nicollet Island – East Bank Neighborhood – Small Area Plan has been reviewed by a number of departments within Hennepin County. The County supports the vision of the plan and its major strategic goals. The top priorities of the plan establish a direction for the future. We endorse the stated goal of taking advantage of all the neighborhood has to offer and the promise of what can become.

"The neighborhood of the future will have safe and bustling streets and sidewalks where people can be found walking at all hours of the day and night. In a compact neighborhood teeming with people, tall buildings will comfortably face shorter neighbors, and no two buildings will look exactly alike. The community will be transit oriented and people friendly. It will include the full spectrum of housing, business and other options that will attract and support residents and visitors from across the region and beyond."

We are encouraged by the accommodating and supportive nature of the plan and the desire to be a place of action and accommodation.

Hennepin County does have specific comments related to certain of these priorities and these will follow. These comments related to chapter 3 of the Plan.

- Hennepin Avenue and 1st Avenue (CSAH 52) are a one-way pair of minor arterial roadways that extend from 7th Street SE across the Mississippi River bridge. After crossing into downtown Minneapolis, these roadways merge into a two-way roadway, which intersects with Washington Avenue (CSAH 152). These roadways then continue as city streets through downtown Minneapolis.

The small area plan strongly favors the conversion of Hennepin Avenue and 1st Avenue from the current one-way roadway pair to two-way operations on each roadway. Numerous examples were provided in the plan (Table 3-1) demonstrating one-way roadways that were converted or evaluated for conversion into two-way roadways. However, no information was provided with these examples to show a comparison of traffic volumes, patterns, speeds, crashes, etc. In addition, the Hennepin Avenue and 1st Avenue 2-way Conversion Evaluation Report completed by Minneapolis Public Works Traffic and Parking Services (July 2010) was referenced in the plan. This report states that nine design alternatives were analyzed using the VISSIM traffic analysis software. However, it is not clear over what portions of the Hennepin Avenue and 1st Avenue segments was analyzed.

Impacts of one-way to two-way roadway conversions affect traffic operations and safety by increasing conflicts and the potential for crashes. These sections of Hennepin Avenue and 1st Avenue currently carry 15,300 and 10,300 vehicles per day, respectively. This one-way pair of roadways provides sufficient capacity for motorists traveling to/from downtown Minneapolis. This desired change to the roadway network will impact traffic patterns and may shift traffic volumes onto adjacent roadways and/or river crossings. Unless it can be demonstrated that this proposed change will function acceptably from a traffic operations and safety perspective, Hennepin County does not currently support this proposed change.

- The plan identifies the locally preferred alignment for the streetcar transit service (Nicollet – Central Streetcar Line), which would utilize the Hennepin Avenue bridge as the river crossing with Hennepin Avenue as a northbound route and 1st Avenue as a southbound route. Hennepin County supports multi-modal travel and supporting connections, including the streetcar and other transit modes. However, with the potential configurations shown in the plan (including mixing streetcar and vehicular traffic), the capacity of Hennepin Avenue and 1st Avenue could likely be reduced. Microscopic traffic analysis is needed to demonstrate that, with the streetcar service as proposed along Hennepin Avenue and 1st Avenue, traffic would continue to operate at an acceptable level of service.
- Safety concerns are identified in the plan at the following two intersections due to the current design (skewed intersection):
  - Central Avenue/East Hennepin Avenue/5th Street
  - Central Avenue/1st Avenue/7th Street

In the plan, a possible closure of 5th Street between Central Avenue and East Hennepin Avenue is proposed. While this is a complex area that may merit

improvement, further analysis of the traffic volumes and travel patterns is needed to determine the impacts of this potential closure.

- The plan states that pedestrians should have priority along the corridors in the study area, with elimination of all pedestrian push buttons at traffic signals proposed. In general, the county supports an integrated transportation system that serves buses, bicyclists, and pedestrians as well as cars and commercial traffic. As opportunities for improvements to pedestrian and bicycle modes occur in this area, the county may consider potential traffic signal improvements such as countdown timers.
- The county supports the maintenance of pedestrian facilities throughout the year, as proposed in the plan. However, more discussion of current responsibilities and proposed changes to determine the goals of the maintenance plan and the identified funding to support those changes.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our comments. We are available to discuss these in greater detail. This can be arranged by contacting me at 612 348-8537.

JMN/jmn



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Pamela French

August 13, 2014

Haila Maze, AICP, Principal City Planner  
Community Planning & Economic Development  
105 5th Avenue South, Room 200  
Minneapolis, MN 55401

**Re: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Comments on the Draft Nicollet  
Island-East Bank Neighborhood Small Area Plan**

Dear Ms. Maze:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood Small Area Plan. The Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board (MPRB) is proud to own and maintain public parkland within the neighborhood and looks forward to an ongoing partnership. We offer the following comments on the draft plan:

- The plan recommends using trade-off criteria to evaluate increasing height and density of new development. This is similar to a performance-based approach and has the potential of providing positive public benefits. MPRB staff would like to be involved in further discussions on how this approach could enhance the provision of park amenities in the area.
- The parks and open space chapter of the plan articulates goals and strategic actions for parklets and streetscape enhancements. The plan also mentions exploring using funds generated from the Minneapolis Park Dedication Ordinance to fund these improvements. These types of improvements are within existing public right-of-way and, in some cases, would be temporary. The Minneapolis Park Dedication Ordinance articulates how and where park dedication fees can be spent. They must be spent on parkland acquisition or park development at MPRB discretion. The MPRB will focus on long-term investments and give priority to needs in existing parks. The MPRB will employ the “private land maintained for public use” park dedication option in only unique circumstances when the option provides strategic facilities or connectivity or when there is no nearby park.
- The parks and open space chapter also mentions a desire to pursue adding a micro, urban park/open space in the northeast section of

the neighborhood. MPRB staff would be interested in exploring this idea further with the neighborhood to determine if there is a suitable location, whether it should be a public or private space, and whether it would be a good match for the Minneapolis Park Dedication Ordinance.

- The introduction articulates that the land adjacent to the Mississippi River and Nicollet Island are in the National Park and the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. It further indicates that the land is subject to U. S. National Park Service regulations. The area is designated as the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. The National Park Service works with 25 local governments, several state agencies and numerous organizations to protect the globally significant resources along the 72-mile stretch of river running through the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metro area. The regulations of the National Park Services pertain to those lands within the corridor that are owned by the National Park Service/Department of Interior.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the draft Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood Small Area Plan.

Sincerely,



Bruce L. Chamberlain  
Assistant Superintendent for Planning

cc: President Liz Wielinski

Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood Small Area Plan  
Public Works Comments

- Page 1-5. Other Planning Efforts Affecting the Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood” – There is no mention of the Pedestrian Master Plan.
- Page 2-12. “Curb cuts are not to be implemented without specific justification of the necessity.” That is always true. “In all cases...signage and other means...” It may not always be practical to sign every curb cut and doing so would result in “sign clutter” and more obstructions in the pedestrian realm.
- Page 3-2. Strategic Actions #1 & #2 – Public Works will not commit to the statements regarding restoring East Hennepin, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE, and 4<sup>th</sup> Street to two-way traffic. At most, we could say “study” or “examine” conversion of these roadways to two-way traffic.
- Page 3-2. Strategic Actions #5 – “...year-round maintenance of the pedestrian realm” sounds like snow removal. Sidewalk snow removal is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner.
- Page 3-2. Strategic Actions #9 – This statement doesn’t make sense. Traffic signals operate on a coordinated, timed basis. The push-button provides priority for the next phase of the signal for pedestrians. Eliminating the push-button would *reduce* the priority for pedestrians.
- Page 3-2. Strategic Actions #10 – A Ped/Bike bridge at this location is not identified in the Bicycle Mater Plan.
- Page 3-3. 2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph – Change to “*This Plan calls for....and for **exploring the restoration of two-way traffic...***”
- Page 3-3. Last Paragraph – Change to “***If East Hennepin Avenue and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue....***”
- Page 3-4. Plan for Transportation – Same comment as above: Public Works will not commit to the statements regarding restoring East Hennepin, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue NE, and 4<sup>th</sup> Street to two-way traffic. At most, we could say “study” or “examine” conversion of these roadways to two-way traffic.
- Page 3-8. Change to “*The **design of the streetcar line should consider the possibility of the restoration of....***”
- Page 3-9. Address Problematic Intersections in the Neighborhood – Change to “*With the **potential conversion of...***”
- Page 3-10. Enhance Transit Information – “The Metropolitan Council should install real time arrival signs at all transit stops in the neighborhood.” Has this been vetted by Met Council? This is not their standard practice.

## CPED Manager NIEB Plan Comments

- Recommendations for bicycle connections in the plan are not necessarily clear. Need to add map showing proposed facilities, including linkages to Downtown network.
- The plan needs to more fully address heritage preservation concerns. This is a potential historic district. Plan needs to acknowledge this and point towards an approach for reviewing this. It may be suggesting the need for a separate study, since the potential district actually extends beyond the NIEB neighborhood boundaries.
- All blocks in the main part of the neighborhood need to show up as mixed use, as stated in the text. This is inconsistent on the maps.
- The language around affordable housing needs to be expanded and enhanced.

**Nicollet Island East Bank Small Area Plan  
Comments and Responses from 45 Day Review Period – as of 9/8/14**

Comment	Source	Location in Plan	Response
<p>I support adoption of the Small Area Plan as proposed. My sense is that most neighborhoods support the City’s goal of population growth and density in principle, but that support melts away when projects are actually proposed that increase density and height. I am glad to see my neighborhood welcome that density and height and propose some thoughtful guidelines as to how that can be achieved in ways that are pedestrian friendly and promote economic development. The Nicollet Island East Bank Neighborhood is the logical extension of downtown population growth on the East Bank and this plan encourages and facilitates that growth in a positive way.</p>	Barry Clegg	Introduction p. 1-8	The plan supports this
<p>The current Minneapolis Zoning Code does not include a primary zoning district that is a good match for the future development I believe the Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood Association (NIEBNA) envisions for the East Bank. The lack of an appropriate zoning district led the SAP's steering committee and the NIEBNA Board to search for an alternative approach to effect the same result an appropriate primary zoning district could accomplish in a more conventional way. In the draft SAP, that alternative approach takes the form of expanded standards for the Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District.</p> <p>A more-direct approach -- namely, an appropriate primary zoning district -- would be better. But that approach would take time, time that's not likely available as quickly as needed in today's development climate. So in the meantime, I applaud the alternative approach for trying to accomplish the neighborhood's wishes in a fashion I hope the City will support and developers will understand.</p>	Dore Mead	Land Use and Housing p. 2-2	The plan supports modifications to zoning and overlays to support the vision for high density mixed use

Comment	Source	Location in Plan	Response
<p>In particular, in a neighborhood that seeks a significant increase in density and a City that seeks the same, the current code's reliance on maximum height restrictions seems contradictory and self-defeating. Consider the Corner Apartments, proposed at the corner of First Avenue Northeast and Second Street Northeast, part of a Planned Use Development the City approved years ago. The PUD anticipates the Corner Apartments as a ten-story building with, I believe, nearly 100 dwelling units. By contrast, the developer now plans to proceed with a six-story structure that accommodates only 56 apartments; and yet the developer is not required to return to the City for approval to build fewer units -- because that's the nature of the current zoning code.</p> <p>Another example (albeit just outside the East Bank) is Kelly Doran's Mill &amp; Main project. I understand the City approved that development as an 11-story structure, with appropriate density. By contrast, it is now nearing completion with several fewer floors and, of course, less density.</p> <p>Instead, wouldn't an appropriate primary zoning district for a near-downtown, urban core neighborhood establish a <i>minimum</i> height for a structure, rather than a <i>maximum</i>? Or at least a <i>required</i> height? Wouldn't it be in the City's best interest to require developers who decide to provide <i>less</i> density to return to the City for approval? Why make it easy for developers to do <i>less</i> than they themselves had once proposed? At times, "doing less" may be justified; but shouldn't the developer have to prove that case to the City, given the City's vested interested in growing the population and the employment base?</p>	Dore Mead	Land Use and Housing p. 2-11	The plan supports modifications to zoning and overlays to support the vision for high density mixed use
I agree wholeheartedly with NIEBNA's commitment to the development of tall, architecturally-distinguished, mixed-use towers that will significantly increase both the population and the	Dore Mead	Executive Summary p. 5	The plan supports this

Comment	Source	Location in Plan	Response
employment base of the East Bank. At the same time, where appropriate, smaller mixed-use structures should protect and complement nearby low-rise historic buildings.			
Throughout the East Bank, ground floor spaces should be filled with thriving, pedestrian-oriented commercial businesses that attract people to shopping, dining, personal service, and entertainment venues. With more residents and more people working in the neighborhood, the East Bank will be able to support more commercial businesses. At the same time, those new residents, workers and businesses will put more "eyes on the streets" during the work week as well as nights and weekends, making the East Bank even safer than it is today.	Dore Mead	Executive Summary p. 5	The plan supports this
The ideal primary zoning district for the East Bank would require developers to maximize the residential population and employment base in the neighborhood by building tall, slender structures. That district would also value historic structures by allowing developers to construct smaller structures were appropriate near low-rise historic buildings. And finally, the district would require developers to provide ground-floor designs with "active façade features" that would further enhance the pedestrian experience in the East Bank.	Dore Mead	Land Use and Housing p. 2-12 and Appendix p. A-5	The plan supports all of these concepts
The Park Board is presenting a plan that includes new paths -- and paving of existing unpaved paths -- that the Park Board's Citizens Advisory Committee has voted out more than once before. The neighborhood does not support this.	Dore Mead	Parks, Open Space & Sustainability p. 7-3	Added language to clarify that NIEBNA supports the maintenance of existing paths but opposed the development of new or the paving of unpaved paths
Overall I think the NIEB SAP is very well-done & balances amenities and needs of commercial, residential & visitor stakeholder groups that will make NIEB one of the most desirable neighborhoods to live, work & play - and is a plan that has a	John Larkey	Various places	The plan supports this

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Location in Plan</b>	<b>Response</b>
vision for the future.			
Restore one-way streets to two-way operations - this is a must.	John Larkey	Transportation p. 3-4	The plan supports this
Support streetcar implementation - this is a must. The initial route terminus should be Lowry Ave - the NE corridor is the largest re-development contributor to the streetcar project justification & route must extend this far.	John Larkey	Transportation p. 3-7	The plan supports this
The street car maintenance barn should not be in NIEB (this was mentioned in one public street car meeting - this barn should be at Broadway (existing rail yard area), or further north & east.	John Larkey	Transportation p. 3-7	Language added to clarify that the neighborhood does not consider the East Bank area an appropriate location for a streetcar maintenance barn
Expand Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District to include entire neighborhood. This is a must. Also, should extend across Central Ave (into Marcy Holmes) & the adjoining areas of SAE & SAW at the triangle point of NI-EB.	John Larkey	Land Use and Housing p. 2-2	The plan supports the expansion of the PO district to cover the neighborhood. However, it does not cover the area outside the study area in other neighborhoods since they were not part of the planning process
Attract high quality development to underutilized areas - Superior Plating site and the East end of this block are immediate priorities. The Wells Fargo bank block, and US Bank block / Surdyks / West Photo should also be high priority for re-development & will be the "heart" of the neighborhood.	John Larkey	Economic Development p. 5-2	The plan supports this
Increase emphasis on pedestrian and bicycling. Specifically, improve connections to the riverfront parkland and to bicycle and pedestrian trails with amenities such as bike racks, artwork, wider sidewalks, trees, parklets, enhanced lighting, street "furniture"	John Larkey	Executive Summary p. 4 and Urban Design p. 4-4	The plan supports this

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Location in Plan</b>	<b>Response</b>
(benches, tables, etc.), and transparent building facades.			
Infrastructure - eliminate overhead utilities & upgrade wireless access when opportunities present themselves	John Larkey	Executive Summary p. 4	The plan supports this
Embrace density and diversity - three specific examples: encourage taller buildings; include residential options across price point spectrum; incorporate child & pet-friendly amenities in the community.	John Larkey	Various locations	The plan supports this
Green space to be included in all developments & across the neighborhood. The surface lot on SE corner of 1 <sup>st</sup> Ave NE & 2nd St NE is TOO SMALL for a significant development - this should be established as a park /green space for the entire community to utilize.	John Larkey	Parks, Open Space & Sustainability p. 7-2	Plan references parklets and green space along 1 <sup>st</sup> Ave NE. The specific location is part of a larger PUD, and more study is needed to determine if this is an appropriate location for green space.
Appropriate amount of parking should be included in planning of any new developments.	John Larkey	Transportation p. 3-10	The plan supports this
A "new zoning" classification for Activity Centers like NIEB may be necessary for CPED/City to establish - one does not currently exist. Key components would include higher density & design factors mentioned in the plan.	John Larkey	Land Use and Housing p. 2-2	The plan supports modifications to zoning and overlays to support the vision for high density mixed use
A Special Tax increment zone (similar to DID) in the area should be considered for businesses in the area – to support safety, cleanliness & desirability for businesses, residents and visitors.	John Larkey	Land Use and Housing p. 2-18	The plan supports this as an option
Improved access and linkage to River is a must and should be integrated into the MPRB / Waterfront planning. A specific consideration of access to the water and recreation (hiking, biking, canoeing, picnicking, etc.) is a must.	John Larkey	Parks, Open Space & Sustainability p. 7-3	The plan supports this concept. Added language specifically identifying water-related recreation.
I am a resident at The Cobalt. We moved into the area from the suburbs a few years ago. I just read the small area plan and I think it is fantastic work. It provides an excellent, proactive vision for	Kyle Watkins	Various locations	The plan supports this

Comment	Source	Location in Plan	Response
<p>the area. It is a tremendous framework for assessing future development proposals. I believe the next few years, with the right new developments, will provide a great opportunity to get the synergy going that will last for years and feed on itself. Thank you for all of those who worked on this plan!</p>			
<p>The Nicollet Island East Bank Neighborhood Small Area plan has been reviewed by a number of departments within Hennepin County. The County supports the vision of the plan and its major strategic goals. The top priorities of the plan establish a direction for the future. We endorse the stated goal of taking advantage of all the neighborhood has to offer and the promise of what it can become.</p>	Hennepin County	Various locations	The plan supports this
<p>We are encouraged by the accommodating and supportive nature of the plan and the desire to be a place of action and accommodation.</p>	Hennepin County	Various locations	The plan supports this
<p>Hennepin Avenue and 1<sup>st</sup> Ave (CSAH 52) are a one-way pair of minor arterial roadways that extend from 7<sup>th</sup> Street SE across the Mississippi River bridge. After crossing into downtown Minneapolis, these roadways merge into a two-way roadway, which intersects with Washington Avenue (CSAH 152). These roadways then continue as city streets through downtown Minneapolis.</p> <p>The small area plan strongly favors the conversion of Hennepin Avenue and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue from the current one-way roadway pair to two-way operations on each roadway. Numerous examples were provided in the plan (Table 3-1) demonstrating one-way roadways that were converted or evaluated for conversion into two-way roadways. However, no information was provided with these examples to show a comparison of traffic volumes, patterns, speeds, crashes, etc. In addition, the Hennepin Avenue and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue 2-way Conversion Evaluation Report completed by</p>	Hennepin County	Transportation p. 3-4	<p>The scope of this plan is general, and does not focus on providing the technical details outlined here.</p> <p>Added language to clarify that a traffic study is needed to inform the discussion regarding the conversion of Hennepin and 1<sup>st</sup> from one-way to two-way.</p>

Comment	Source	Location in Plan	Response
<p>Minneapolis Public Works Traffic and Parking Services (July 2010) was referenced in the plan. This report states that nine design alternatives were analyzed using the VISSIM traffic analysis software. However, it is not over what portions of the Hennepin Avenue and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue segments were analyzed.</p> <p>Impacts of one-way to two-way roadway conversions affect traffic operations and safety by increasing conflicts and the potential for crashes. These sections of Hennepin Avenue and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue currently carry 15,300 and 10,300 vehicles per day, respectively. This one-way pair of roadways provides sufficient capacity for motorists traveling to/from downtown Minneapolis. This desired change to the roadway network will impact traffic patterns and may shift traffic volumes onto adjacent roadways and/or river crossings. Unless it can be demonstrated that this proposed change will function acceptably from a traffic operations and safety perspective, Hennepin County does not currently support this proposed change.</p>			
<p>The plan identifies the locally preferred alignment for the streetcar transit service (Nicollet-Central streetcar line), which would utilize the Hennepin Avenue bridge as the river crossing with Hennepin Avenue as a northbound route and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue as a southbound route. Hennepin County supports multimodal travel and supporting connections, including the streetcar and other transit modes. However, with the potential configurations shown in the plan (including mixing streetcar and vehicular traffic), the capacity of Hennepin Avenue and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue could likely be reduced. Microscopic traffic analysis is needed to demonstrate that, with the streetcar service as proposed along Hennepin Avenue and 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, traffic would continue to operate at an acceptable level of service.</p>	Hennepin County	Transportation p. 3-7	<p>The scope of this plan is general, and does not focus on providing the technical details outlined here.</p> <p>Added language to clarify that a traffic study is needed to inform the discussion regarding the location and configuration of streetcar.</p>
<p>Safety concerns are identified in the plan at the following two</p>	Hennepin	Transportation p. 3-	Added language to clarify

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Location in Plan</b>	<b>Response</b>
<p>intersections due to the current design (skewed intersection):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central Avenue/East Hennepin Avenue/5<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• Central Avenue/1<sup>st</sup> Avenue/7<sup>th</sup> Street</li> </ul> <p>In the plan, a possible closure of 5<sup>th</sup> Street between Central Avenue and East Hennepin Avenue is proposed. While this is a complex area that may merit improvement, further analysis of the traffic volumes and travel patterns is needed to determine the impacts of this potential closure.</p>	County	9	that a traffic study is needed to inform potential improvements to these intersections.
<p>The plan states that pedestrians should have priority along the corridors in the study area, with elimination of all pedestrian push buttons at traffic signals proposed. In general, the county supports an integrated transportation system that serves buses, bicyclists, and pedestrians as well as cars and commercial traffic. As opportunities for improvements to pedestrian and bicycle modes occur in this area, the county may consider potential traffic signal improvements such as countdown timers.</p>	Hennepin County	Transportation p. 3-2	Added language to support technology upgrades that will enhance the pedestrian experience; no longer references specific technology
<p>The county supports the maintenance of pedestrian facilities throughout the year, as proposed in the plan. However, more discussion of current responsibilities and proposed changes to determine the goals of maintenance plan and the identified funding to support those changes.</p>	Hennepin County	Transportation p. 3-10	Added language to clarify that this will require additional discussion with responsible parties to determine roles and mechanisms for making this happen
<p>The plan recommends using trade-off criteria to evaluate increasing height and density of new development. This is similar to a performance-based approach and has the potential of providing positive public benefits. MPRB staff would like to be involved in further discussions on how this approach could enhance the provision of park amenities in the area.</p>	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Parks, Open Space & Sustainability p. 7-2	The neighborhood will work with MPRB on this initiative
<p>The parks and open space chapter of the plan articulates goals and strategic actions for parklets and streetscape enhancements. The plan also mentions exploring using funds generated from the</p>	Minneapolis Park and Recreation	Parks, Open Space & Sustainability p. 7-2	Modified language to clarify how these funds can be spent.

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Location in Plan</b>	<b>Response</b>
Minneapolis Park Dedication Ordinance to fund these improvements. These types of improvements are within existing public right-of-way and, in some cases, would be temporary. The Minneapolis Park Dedication Ordinance articulates how and where park dedication fees can be spent. They must be spent on parkland acquisition or park development at MPRB discretion. The MPRB will focus on long-term investments and give priority to needs in existing parks. The MPRB will employ the “private land maintained for public use” park dedication option in only unique circumstances when the option provides strategic facilities or connectivity or when there is no nearby park.	Board		
The parks and open space chapter also mentions a desire to pursue adding a micro, urban park/open space in the northeast section of the neighborhood. MPRB staff would be interested in exploring this idea further with the neighborhood to determine if there is a suitable location, whether it should be a public or private space, and whether it would be a good match for the Minneapolis Park Dedication Ordinance.	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Parks, Open Space & Sustainability p. 7-2	The neighborhood will work with MPRB on this initiative
The introduction articulates that the land adjacent to the Mississippi River and Nicollet Island are in the National Park and the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. It further indicates that the land is subject to U. S. National Park Service regulations. The area is designated as the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. The National Park Service works with 25 local governments, several state agencies and numerous organizations to protect the globally significant resources along the 72-mile stretch of river running through the Minneapolis/Saint Paul metro area. The regulations of the National Park Services pertain to those lands within the corridor that are owned by the National Park Service/Department of Interior.	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board	Land Use and Housing p. 2- 6	Added language to further clarify role of National Park Service
Other Planning Efforts Affecting the Nicollet Island-East Bank Neighborhood” – There is no mention of the Pedestrian Master	Public Works staff	Introduction p. 1-5	Added reference to Pedestrian Master Plan

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Location in Plan</b>	<b>Response</b>
Plan.			
“Curb cuts are not to be implemented without specific justification of the necessity.” That is always true. “In all cases...signage and other means...” It may not always be practical to sign every curb cut and doing so would result in “sign clutter” and more obstructions in the pedestrian realm.	Public Works staff	Land Use and Housing p. 2-12	Rewrote section to call for “appropriate means” rather than specifying signage
Strategic Actions #1 & #2 – Public Works will not commit to the statements regarding restoring East Hennepin, 1st Avenue NE, and 4th Street to two-way traffic. At most, we could say “study” or “examine” conversion of these roadways to two-way traffic.	Public Works staff	Transportation p. 3-4	Added language to clarify that a traffic study is needed to inform the discussion regarding the conversion of Hennepin and 1 <sup>st</sup> from one-way to two-way.
Strategic Actions #5 – “...year-round maintenance of the pedestrian realm” sounds like snow removal. Sidewalk snow removal is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner.	Public Works staff	Transportation p. 3-10	Added language to clarify that this will require additional discussion with responsible parties to determine roles and mechanisms for making this happen
Strategic Actions #9 – This statement doesn’t make sense. Traffic signals operate on a coordinated, timed basis. The push-button provides priority for the next phase of the signal for pedestrians. Eliminating the push-button would reduce the priority for pedestrians.	Public Works staff	Transportation p. 3-2	Added language to support technology upgrades that will enhance the pedestrian experience; no longer references specific technology
Strategic Actions #10 – A Ped/Bike bridge at this location is not identified in the Bicycle Master Plan.	Public Works staff	Transportation p. 3-2	The plan states just that the concept should be explored as a potential project
2nd Paragraph – Change to “This Plan calls for...and for	Public Works	Transportation p. 3-	Made suggested change

Comment	Source	Location in Plan	Response
<b>exploring the restoration of two-way traffic...</b>	staff	3	
Last Paragraph – Change to “ <b>If</b> East Hennepin Avenue and 1st Avenue....”	Public Works staff	Transportation p. 3-3	Made suggested change
Page 3-4. Plan for Transportation – Same comment as above: Public Works will not commit to the statements regarding restoring East Hennepin, 1st Avenue NE, and 4th Street to two-way traffic. At most, we could say “study” or “examine” conversion of these roadways to two-way traffic.	Public Works staff	Transportation p. 3-4	Added language to clarify that a traffic study is needed to inform the discussion regarding the conversion of Hennepin and 1 <sup>st</sup> from one-way to two-way.
Change to “The <b>design of the streetcar line should consider the possibility</b> of the restoration of....”	Public Works staff	Transportation p. 3-8	Made suggested change
Address Problematic Intersections in the Neighborhood – Change to “With the <b>potential</b> conversion of...”	Public Works staff	Transportation p. 3-9	Made suggested change
Enhance Transit Information – “The Metropolitan Council should install real time arrival signs at all transit stops in the neighborhood.” Has this been vetted by Met Council? This is not their standard practice.	Public Works staff	Transportation p. 3-10	Added language to state that the neighborhood will encourage the Met Council to install real-time arrival signage
Recommendations for bicycle connections in the plan are not necessarily clear. Need to add map showing proposed facilities, including linkages to Downtown network.	CPED staff	Transportation p. 3-10	Added map showing all recommended projects
The plan needs to more fully address heritage preservation concerns. This is a potential historic district. Plan needs to acknowledge this and point towards an approach for reviewing this. It may be suggesting the need for a separate study, since the potential district actually extends beyond the NIEB neighborhood boundaries.	CPED staff	Arts, Culture & Heritage Preservation p. 6-7	Added language to state that a past survey had identified a potential historic district covering the East Hennepin commercial district, but that a decision was made to not address it in this plan – and that it may require further study.

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Location in Plan</b>	<b>Response</b>
All blocks in the main part of the neighborhood need to show up as mixed use, as stated in the text. This is inconsistent on the maps.	CPED staff	Land Use and Housing p. 2-4	Updated map to show mixed use coverage on all mainland parcels
The language around affordable housing needs to be expanded and enhanced.	CPED staff	Land Use and Housing p. 2-2	Added language to support a range of affordability levels to meet the needs of all residents
The plan should reference the future 4 <sup>th</sup> and University streetcar alignment, which is in the long range plan for the streetcar network.	CPED staff	Transportation p. 3-7	Added language and map referencing future streetcar project.
The historic preservation chapter should more specifically reference the part of the plan covered by the St. Anthony Falls Historic District, and the design implications for development within the area based on the historic district's adopted design guidelines.	CPED staff	Arts, Culture & Heritage Preservation p. 6-3	Added language referencing historic district and design guidelines as well as map of district boundary.