



TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Tuesday, September 15, 2015

9 – 11 a.m.

Room 132 City Hall

Meeting Notes

Committee members present: Ann Calvert, Hilary Dvorak, Jessica Galatz, Jeff Johnson, Chris Linde, Bob Loken, Ben Shardlow, Sarah Stewart

[Please see [website](#) for Technical Advisory Committee Member affiliations]

Committee members excused: Kathleen Boe, Leonard Bonacci, Brenda Bell-Brown, Sean Broom, Tom Evers, Michael Hagen, Jenifer Hager, Cyndi Harper, Dan Kenney, Tom Loftus, Peter MacDonagh, Nick Ngo, Jesse Osendorf, Heidi Ritchie, Patrick Sadler, Abdi Salah, Susan Segal, Sarah Stewart, Rory Stierler, Julia Tabbut, Alene Tchourumoff, Melvin Tennant

Guests: Bill Deef sitting in for Melvin Tennant; Shefali Pai, Hennepin County

Staff/consultants present: Bruce Chamberlain, Lydia Major, Kjersti Monson, Colleen O'Dell, Rattana Sengsoulichanh, Lacy Shelby, Marsha Wagner

Staff Guests: Philip Potyondy, Renay Leone, and Michael Schroeder (Parks)

1. Welcome/Introductions of New Participants

Meeting 8 of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was called to order at 9:07 a.m. by Kjersti Monson, Director, Long Range Planning, City of Minneapolis Community Planning & Economic Development (CPED).

2. Downtown Service Area Master Plan Update

Lydia Major, Landscape Architect, LHB, gave a brief overview of Minneapolis Park and Recreation's (MPRB) Steering Committee progress to date. They are winding up the Phase II community engagement process, and are closing down Mapita. She showed some preliminary findings that indicate what kind of programming and activities are important to people. [[PPT Page 4](#)] Mapita is very rich with data. There were more than 500 participants and thousands of data points were entered.

Lydia talked about some MPRB events that are upcoming and to which TC members were invited to attend:

- Design Week, October 19-23. On Monday, October 19, they are hosting an open house/workshop from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. at Mill City Museum to begin the master planning process for individual parks.
- Steering Committee/Open House Pin-Up, Thursday, October 22, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Walker Art Center. This meeting is in conjunction with the Steering Committee and City meeting. Lydia invited TAC members to take [flyers](#) describing Design Week events and distribute them to their constituencies.
- In preparation for Design Week MPRB is currently meeting with neighborhoods and neighborhood organizations to get their input on neighborhood park master plans. They will be following up with the neighborhoods following Design Week to ensure that the outcomes meet their needs and to confirm their direction in the process.

3. Downtown Public Realm Framework Plan (Streets and Plazas)

Kjersti shared the status of the framework and requested from the committee tangible and tactical feedback on the Physical Framework plan. Reviewing the overall structure of the policy document, the Downtown Public Realm Framework (DPRF) will be comprised of:

- Overarching Values: whole systems planning, sustainability, equity, and people-first planning
- Policy Chapters: Physical Framework (corridors, places/districts, connections), Public Realm Guidelines, and Implementation Toolkit
- Recommendations: integrated modes, events and activation, and implementation

At this meeting the focus is on the substance of the document, the policy chapters. The Physical Framework is comprised of elements to which policy guidance will adhere. It has four primary building block elements:

- District: The Riverfront, the single district identified.
- Corridor: There are three corridor typologies identified: destination, activity, and connector. Corridors will be defined in the plan through policy guidelines addressing intensity and density of features.
- Public Space: This includes both parks and plazas.
- Connections/linkages: This is about recommended linkages, including vehicular, pedestrian and bike.

The whole systems plan approach is about supporting the movements of people as pedestrians, bikers, and transit users along priority corridors between destinations. Priority corridors in the Public Realm Framework should be pleasant, and pedestrians and bikers should not encounter dead ends or broken connections. Achieving this will require both physical planning and wayfinding.

Kjersti presented a map that contains the entire framework plan as it exists today, showing corridors and key connections, with features identified in the legend [[PPT Page 10](#)]. Destination corridors, shown in bright orange, are characterized primarily by active commercial uses such as retail storefronts, restaurants/bars, sidewalk cafes, entertainment venues, and department stores/shopping centers. These corridors attract visitors, workers and residents alike and are key destinations in downtown for leisure activities. Kjersti listed corridors that the team had identified as examples: First Avenue is an entertainment corridor; Hennepin Avenue is a theater district; Nicollet Mall is for pedestrians; and Main Street having a special relationship to the river, outdoor seating, a big gathering place; Cedar Riverside offers eclectic music, culture, and theater; Loring Park/Harmon Place area is very unique.

Activity corridors are characterized by more intermittent pedestrian traffic throughout the day and contain a mix of uses including single use office buildings, residential buildings and mixed-use buildings. The retail presence is less continuous and may include smaller cafes and restaurants that serve a local population. Examples include Chicago Avenue South, Washington Avenue, Fifth Street and Second Street.

Connector corridors are streets used primarily as connections between destinations. They are multi-modal and may carry large volumes of pedestrians, bicycles and cars, particularly during peak commuting times. Their use characteristics are varied but generally contain a mix of active and non-active uses and may have swaths of industrial or institutional land use. They offer clues about where way-finding may be implemented. Examples include 10th Avenue North, 11th Avenue, Portland Avenue, 7th Street North, 9th and 10th Streets South.

Photos of several of these corridors as they exist today were shown. Guidance for each of these corridors includes suggestions for ground floor uses and design considerations:

Destination Corridor: [PPT Page 12](#).

Activity Corridor: [PPT Page 17](#).

Connector Corridor: [PPT Page 21](#).

The Riverfront District is a zoning overlay intended to provide for the development of a character district wherein use and activity enhances the riverfront. Entertainment and commercial uses, residential uses, institutional and public uses, parking facilities, limited production and processing, and public services and utilities are allowed. MPRB and the Parks Foundation have already done a lot of work planning for the Central Riverfront through the RiverFirst initiative and Water Works Park, and the City is determining how it can enhance this area without infringing on those areas that are already built out. If there is opportunity for development in the future this policy document will be in place to guide the continuing evolution of a meaningful district with the river at its core.

Recommended linkages, addressing the pieces that are missing, propose a satisfactory connection between pedestrian and bicycle modes and an identified destination or amenity. Linkages could be roads, trails, vertical circulation, or through-block connections. Some might involve way-finding or additional infrastructure like adding a road. High volume bike corridors are identified on the map [\[PPT Page 26\]](#) and will be the focus of priority intervention. As bikes flow into downtown on high volume corridors, there should be clear paths to key destinations.

Kjersti discussed an area on the map identified as the 35W “Lid” that was proposed by the Metropolitan Design Center (UMN College of Design) and championed by Downtown Council. [\[PPT Page 28\]](#) She said this is not adopted policy but it should be reflected as an inset to keep the idea alive as a significant connection to Cedar Riverside, and a consideration for future development.

Lacy Shelby, Principal Urban Designer, Minneapolis CPED, shared how TAC members and others have been involved in small group conversations to define policy recommendations specifically around street furnishing, greening, and ground floor uses for the past several weeks. As the physical framework is developed policy guidelines will be attached to guide the level of intensity on each of the following:

- Street furnishing: Defined as anything that enhances the public realm by providing important amenities for pedestrians improving livability and adding vitality to a street. Street furnishings make for a more welcoming experience for those users while providing interest. Examples include garbage receptacles, benches, and bike racks. Guidance will be provided on placement/siting/spacing (accessibility requirements), minimum clearance dimensions, permitting, process and maintenance requirements. An example of a guideline sheet for bike racks was provided [\[PPT Page 33\]](#). A sheet for each type of street furnishing element that the City controls and manages will be created and provided to developers and others interested in placing street furnishings. Some guidance and criteria already exist around siting, but the intention is to aggregate the information in one place.
- Street trees and greening guidance: The goal will be to address planting requirements focused on providing guidelines around minimum requirements like dimensions, planting medium, species selection practices (MPRB), tree protection, spacing requirements, and tree guard and tree grate guidance. Typologies may include tree pit and connected tree pit; raised, stormwater, and freestanding planters; and understory planting.
- Ground floor uses: The goal will be to encourage appropriate complimentary ground floor uses on key corridors and in districts and to develop general design guidance on the relationship of ground floor spaces to the public realm in Downtown. Some different typologies of ground floor

uses are office space/lobby, restaurant/sidewalk café, entertainment/sports complex, walk-up residential unit, green space/buffer and residential amenity space. Performance goals will be established for ground floors abutting public realm elements, including appropriate uses. There will be corridor/district specific guidance.

The third part of the policy document is the Implementation Toolkit, which is an examination of existing tools and programs available in the City for enhancing the street. It will identify and recommend funding, operations, and maintenance tools that are currently available or could be enabled through policy changes, resulting in the creation of a one-stop-shop for community members to identify strategies for enhancing their streets. Lacy reviewed some of the tools and programs that the City currently has, and said they continue to research and explore other tools for possible recommendation.

A Placemaking Hub is being developed as an online resource. This will allow a community member to click on a box and look at the different types of features they can deploy into their street or sidewalk. An example of an informational sheet was shown [[PPT Page 41](#)]. It describes the program's objectives, goals and benefits; how to utilize the program; roles of applicants and the City; and project contacts. Much of this program information already exists, but it is scattered throughout the City's website. By consolidating this information in one location, it can be easily accessed and implemented by many more people.

4. Large Group Share: Sharing on Small Group Outcomes

Kjersti reiterated that they are reaching the end of their creative work on the DPRFP. This small group exercise will give participants a chance to communicate what might be missing and offer additional ideas in terms of corridor typology for guidance.

CPED staff compiled the results of the small group exercise in documents which are appended to these meeting notes. Please see Appendices A and B.

5. Upcoming Activities/Adjourn

- The final TAC meeting is on Tuesday, October 6.
- On the staff level, the policy document will be completed on November 3. At that point it will be circulated to TAC, SC and other stakeholders for a three-week review period, giving them an opportunity for feedback before it goes out for public comment around November 23.
- Design Week will be held October 19-23.
- A public meeting will be held on October 22 at the Walker Art Museum, starting at 6:00 pm. More information will be sent by email.
- A Steering Committee meeting, run by MPRB, will be held on December 17.

Lacy thanked those present for their flexibility with changes to meeting dates. She also thanked them for their meaningful input, and said it would be reflected in the work that is being done.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:42 a.m.

*This constitutes my understanding of items discussed and decisions reached.
If there are any omissions or discrepancies, please notify the author in writing.*

Submitted by:

Marsha Wagner, CastleVisions

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