

MINNEAPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

**NICOLLET ISLAND EAST BANK
NRP PHASE II
NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN**



**Date Approved by the Nicollet Island East Bank
Neighborhood Association: September 8, 2016**

Date Adopted by the Policy Board: October 18, 2016

Date Adopted by the City Council: February 10, 2017

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

On the banks of the Mississippi River across from downtown Minneapolis, the Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood is a crossroads linking Downtown, the University of Minnesota, and the Northeast Arts District.

The neighborhood includes Nicollet Island on the Mississippi River just east of Downtown, and the portion of the eastern riverbank located in the triangle between Central Avenue and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad tracks.

It is a neighborhood of contrasts. Nicollet Island provides the setting for 19th Century homes near the River's edge and for Nicollet Island Park with its commanding views of the river, Downtown and the Stone Arch Bridge. The East Bank – with its eclectic mix of low-rise historic storefronts and modern residential high-rises – reminds visitors of both the East Bank's early days as the City's first commercial district and then its first re-birth with major industrial compounds. Nicollet Island-East Bank includes one of the most heavily used park districts in the Metropolitan Area: The Mississippi Riverfront.

Since approval of the NRP Phase I Plan in 1997, the neighborhood has achieved a good mix of quality medium to high density housing, allowing the population to increase substantially. The area's desirability is enhanced by its proximity to downtown Minneapolis, the Mississippi River, and the University of Minnesota, as well as by its park spaces, trails, and vibrant small businesses.

Each major roadway – East Hennepin, Central, University, and 1st Avenues as well as 4th Street – is a major transportation corridor and a vital commercial and residential street. Our neighborhood is poised to capture significant growth during the current wave of development in the City.

Demographic Profile

The neighborhood's population has increased substantially during the past two decades, from 666 in 1990 to 828 in 2000 (a 24 percent increase). By 2010, the population jumped to 1,309, a 59 percent increase since 2000.

The population is primarily middle aged, with approximately 77 percent of residents between 25 and 64 years of age. Fourteen percent of the population is over the age of 65, compared to 8% citywide. The neighborhood has few children, with less than 5 percent of the population under the age of 17 (compared to 20% citywide).

In 2010, approximately 84 percent of residents (compared to 61% citywide) reported "White" as their race or ethnicity. "Black or African American" comprised 5.3 percent of neighborhood residents; "Asian or Pacific Islander" 4.2 percent; "Two or more races" 2.3 percent; and "Hispanic or Latino" 3.7 percent.

82.9 percent of residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher. The median household income is \$97,083. The median rent in 2009 dollars was \$1,292 for the 2010 census. Citywide median income is \$54,482.

Approximately 31.3 percent of the housing stock in the neighborhood was built between 2000 and 2010, while 18.9 percent was built in 1939 or earlier. At the time of the 2010 Census, there were 915 housing units in the neighborhood. This was a substantial increase in housing since 1990, a year in which the Census indicated only 415 dwelling units. The household tenure has changed dramatically during the past 20 years, going from 27 percent owner occupied in 1990, to 40 percent owner occupied in 2000, to 69 percent owner occupied in 2010. Following a hiatus in construction from 2008 through 2015, our neighborhood is now home to several new housing projects in various stages of development. We expect an increase in rental units as well as additional retail space in these new properties.

NICOLLET EAST BANK NRP PHASE II PLANNING PROCESS

Background

In 2014, a strong and effective community engagement process was conducted by the NIEBNA Small Area Plan Steering Committee of seventeen people representing a broad cross-section of Partners in the area. Working with its consultant team, the Committee held three well attended neighborhood-wide meetings, compiled an online business survey and project website, gathered input at National Night Out and Neighborhood Fest, and held focus groups with businesses and representatives of the development community.

In total, over 200 residents, business people, and other Partners – almost 20% of the neighborhood’s population and representing a wide array of thoughts, opinions, and perspectives – participated in the planning process. Through this process, the neighborhood identified planning goals and priorities for the future (Small Area Plan p. ES-3):

MAJOR STRATEGIC GOALS LISTED IN THE NIEBNA SMALL AREA PLAN

1. Strengthen the neighborhood’s role in the regional economy, with emphasis on businesses that are unique, in part by restoring East Hennepin to its historic commercial roots.
2. Guide infill development while increasing density, cultivating mixed-use corridors, and increasing communal green space.
3. Attract a rich mix of residents, cultural experiences, businesses and other institutions, building types and styles, and employment opportunities.
4. Adapt to contemporary use the historical character, unique architecture, and regional and neighborhood parks – in cooperation with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and in compliance with the historic district guidelines of the St. Anthony Falls Heritage Zone and the Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan.
5. Expand and improve pedestrian, bicycling, and transit infrastructure throughout the neighborhood.
6. Provide an exceptional urban pedestrian experience for people of all ages.
7. Act as stewards of the environment, valuing sustainability, energy conservation, minimal surface water run-off, and re-use/reduce/recycle economies.
8. Enhance public safety through maximum use of “eyes-on-the-street” building designs.

Building on the Small Area Plan for NRP Planning

The NIEBNA Small Area Plan was approved by the City Council on October 17, 2014 and provides the basis for our NRP Phase II Action Plan. During the summer of 2016, NIEBNA supplemented the strong foundation of community engagement done in connection with the Small Area Plan with additional outreach to solicit feedback on priorities for our NRP Phase II Plan.

In addition to discussions at our regular meetings in June and July, we gathered input through an online survey of residents and businesses. To make a special effort with renters, we prepared and distributed flyers in apartment buildings directing residents to our survey. Further, our Council Member Jacob Frey assisted by posting information and links to the survey on his Facebook page and in his monthly e-newsletter. We dedicated a section of our website to providing information and accepting comments on the draft Action Plan. By using this variety of strategies, we aimed to maximize our reach to the diverse residents of our neighborhood.

We received 184 survey responses. The priorities most often ranked #1, 2 or 3 were: Parks & Trails, Historic Preservation, Public Safety and Transportation. Responses from renters were generally similar to owners, although renters more frequently identified Historic Preservation and Transportation in their top three priorities. Human Services and Education were ranked lowest by the most people, although renters showed a stronger preference for Education. Respondents indicated that their most frequent activities are visiting parks, exercising, shopping and eating out.

Planning for NRP Phase II

June 2013 - October 2013	Community Engagement and Planning for Small Area Plan
October 2014	City Council Approval of NIEBNA Small Area Plan
Spring 2016	NIEBNA Board appoints NRP Phase II Steering Committee
June 2016	Steering Committee begins meeting on an ad hoc basis. Reviews outcomes of NRP Phase 1; prepares an online survey of NRP Phase 2 priorities building on foundation of the Nicollet Island East Bank Small Area Plan described above.
June 2016	Survey distributed through website and neighborhood list serves.
July 2016	Preliminary survey results presented to NIEBNA Board.
August 2016	Continue to promote survey and distribute flyers to rental buildings. Steering Committee drafts the Phase II Action Plan and publishes on the NIEBNA website.
September 2016	NRP Phase II Action Plan presented to, and approved by, the NIEBNA membership at the 2016 NIEBNA Annual meeting.
October 2016	Submission to Policy Board for approval
Nov/Dec 2016	Submission to Minneapolis City Council for approval

Nicollet Island East Bank Steering Committee Members

Lisa Hondros, Chair, Craig Beddow, Barry Clegg, Victor Grambsch, Katie Greene and Keri Kranz

Nicollet Island East Bank Neighborhood Association Board of Directors (as of August 2016)

Victor Grambsch (President), Barry Clegg (Vice President), Lisa Hondros (Treasurer), Michael Guncheon (Secretary), Craig Beddow, Nancy Casey, Rodd Johnson, John Larkey, Matt Lehman, Dore Mead, Jeffrey Meehan, Leo Melzer, Steve Rosenberg, Tom Sheran, Kevin Upton, Kyle Watkins and Mike Welton.

THE ACTION PLAN

Vision

The Nicollet Island-East Bank neighborhood will achieve significant growth in both residential and business population and tax base during the next 20 years. When fully developed, the neighborhood will be a culturally diverse home to at least hundreds more people and scores of thriving new businesses. A vital urban neighborhood in its own right, Nicollet Island-East Bank also functions as a major crossroads for the City and as a destination for the region.

With new housing built to universal design standards along easy-to-navigate sidewalks and streets, the neighborhood will serve as an urban laboratory where innovations take place within the public realm. The eclectic neighborhood will be known for its public art, walkability and bikability, access to great public transportation, welcoming plazas and innovative parklets, environmental sensitivity, and careful blending of the new with the old.

Visitors from across the region will have numerous reasons to seek out Nicollet Island-East Bank as a place to shop, dine, or simply enjoy access to the riverfront. Buildings both small and tall will anchor and enliven busy, bustling streets. The sustainable and environmentally-sound neighborhood will offer such a wide variety of housing, commercial, and cultural choices that residents will never have to leave the neighborhood.

ALLOCATIONS BY STRATEGY

Strategy	Allocation
HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	
1.1 Affordable Housing Support	121,619
2.1 Small Area Plan Implementation	5000
2.2 Neighborhood Branding	
PARKS AND ENVIRONMENT	
3.1 Park Master Plan Implementation	25000
4.1 Sustainable Building Practices	
4.2 Green Transportation	
SAFETY AND LIVABILITY	
5.1 Transportation Infrastructure Improvements	10000
5.2 Increase Pet Friendliness in the Neighborhood	5000
6.1 Policing Efforts	
6.2 Support Additional Police Patrols	
7.1 St. Anthony Falls Heritage Zone Interpretative Plan Implementation	3500
7.2 Historic Preservation Efforts	3500
8.1 Quality of Life	
9.1 NRP Development and Implementation	2500
TOTAL	176,119

NOTE: NRP Phase II total allocation is \$176,119. City Council has frozen \$59,850. Total allocation less the frozen funds results in accessible funds in the amount of \$116,269, with \$61,769 currently available for Strategy 1.1 Affordable Housing Support.

No funds are allocated to Strategy 6.2 Support Additional Police Patrols in this Plan, but please note that the City awarded NIEBNA \$6,240.73 of Community Oriented Public Safety Reserve Funds in the early 2000s for this purpose.

HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL 1: Increase affordable housing within the City of Minneapolis.

Strategy 1.1: Affordable Housing Support

Provide development and construction loans to a proven organization that is actively developing affordable housing in Minneapolis.

Description: Provide low interest loans for development of affordable housing in Minneapolis. When loans are repaid, the revenue generated may be reinvested in this or other Nicollet Island East Bank strategies.

Partners: City of Minneapolis, Third Party administrator such as Non-Profit Assistance Fund.

Resources: \$121,619 NRP Phase II Funds (NOTE: City Council has frozen \$59,850 of these funds. Currently accessible amount is \$61,769)

GOAL 2: Strengthen the neighborhood's role in the regional economy

Strategy 2.1: Small Area Plan Implementation

Implement the NIEBNA Small Area Plan strategies for economic development, including but not limited to promoting a diverse mix of unique businesses and services, enhancing the Nicollet Island-East Bank's strength as a destination neighborhood, and planning for appropriate development.

Description: Cooperate with area business associations to ensure that new development is seamlessly integrated into the neighborhood. Partner with neighborhood business owners to create pop-up galleries in vacant storefronts. Continue working with arts and cultural groups to bring more activities to the neighborhood.

Partners: NEBA

Resources: \$5,000 NRP Phase II Funds

Strategy 2.2: Neighborhood branding

Description: Study development of a new name for "Nicollet Island East Bank" neighborhood

Partners: NEBA

Resources: \$TBD

PARKS AND ENVIRONMENT

GOAL 3: Improve the quality of parks and trails

Strategy 3.1: Park Master Plan Implementation

Implement the [Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan](#) in our neighborhood, including but not limited to connecting trails on Nicollet Island and on Main Street between 1st Ave NE and E Hennepin Ave.

Description: The Park Board Master Plan for the Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park identifies the open space along the east side of Nicollet Island from Merriam Street to the railroad tracks as a "Key Focus Area" and "Missing Link" in critical pedestrian and bike connections (pages 7-8, 7-9). The Master Plan further calls for non-asphalt trail surfaces in this area and existing trail continuing from the railroad tracks to Boom Island (page 7-32). In addition, the Master Plan highlights wayfinding problems caused by fragmented trails on the south tip of the island and calls for removing the dumpsters currently on the south side of the Pavilion to improve aesthetics and pedestrian circulation (pages 2-30, 7-32). The Master Plan also calls for narrowing Main Street "between East Hennepin and 1st Avenue NE to provide space for an off-street pedestrian and bike trail connection on the river- side of the road." (page 7-26) Partner with Park Board to support implementation of trail connections in the Master Plan.

Partners: Friends of the Mississippi River, MWMO, MPRB, Hennepin County

Resources: \$25,000 NRP Phase II Funds

GOAL 4: Promote sustainability as a primary design goal and objective for the neighborhood and elsewhere in the City

Strategy 4.1: Sustainable Building Practices

Make sustainability a primary objective for all building decisions

Description: When reviewing and commenting on new developments make sustainability considerations a leading factor in decisions to support or oppose a proposed development with respect to such things as:

- Building design, materials and technology
- Construction methods
- Provision of green space
- Provision for parking/storing non-car impedimenta like bikes

Partners: Developers, building managers, CPED, architects

Resources: \$TBD

Strategy 4.2: Green Transportation

Promote use of green transportation modes.

Description: Promote use of transportation modes other than private automobiles as preferred transportation options. Actions may include:

- Promote personal active modes (walking, biking, pogo stick hopping, etc.)
- Encourage and reward use of public transit (see Livability)
- Free transit fare cards for a limited time for or new residents
- Discounted fare passes for residents
- Expanding the Downtown Fare Zone (currently \$0.50 per ride) to cover the entire neighborhood.
- Building new bus stop shelters with information on next bus to arrive and other

Partners: building/association managers, merchants, MTC

Resources: \$TBD

SAFETY AND LIVABILITY

GOAL 5: Enhance general livability for both residents and visitors by making the neighborhood a pleasant and safe place to live, work and have you being.

Major streets in the neighborhood will always carry heavy traffic – NIEBNA is a cross roads as well as a destination. As the neighborhood populations grows and the number of customers for location business increases managing the streets for all users will be critical to having a livable neighborhood.

Strategy 5.1: Transportation Infrastructure Improvements

Description: Implement the recommendations of the City of Minneapolis Hennepin/First Ave Transportation Study, including but not limited to improving infrastructure for pedestrian, bicycling and transit safety.

- Restoration of two-way traffic pattern on Hennepin and First Ave NE
- Pedestrian controlled traffic signals at selected intersections (e.g. Bank St SE & University Ave SE and 1st Ave NE at 5th and 6th Streets)
- Signage and street painting to better define and control street crossings.
- Permanent “Your Speed Is” signs at key intersections within Nicollet Island East Bank
- Provision of separated bike lanes
- Planning for inclusion of the Nicollet – Central Street Car line
- Other improvements as detailed in the Hennepin/First Ave Transportation Study

Partners: Public Works, Pedestrian Advisory Committee, Bicycle Advisory Committee, Hennepin County, MN DOT, MTC

Resources: \$10,000 NRP Phase II Funds

Strategy 5.2 Increase pet friendliness in the neighborhood

Description: Pets are important to people, and the neighborhood should accommodate quadrupeds as well as bipeds which may include:

- Providing pet accessible greenspace widely throughout the neighborhood – even small spaces are helpful
- Providing water in a widely as possible and consider pet needs in any public water fountains.
- Providing pet dropping cleanup supplies (bio-degradable bags) and disposal facilities

Partners: MPRB, City Public Works, merchants, building /association managers

Resources: \$5,000 NRP Phase II Funds

GOAL 6: Enhance public safety

Strategy 6.1: Policing Efforts

Support local policing efforts, e.g. increased patrols, blue emergency lights

Description: Support the Second Precinct Substation, including the

Keep the Beat fundraiser that raises funds for increased patrols and other services.

Partners: MPD (Second Precinct)

Resources: \$TBD

Strategy 6.2: Supplemental Patrols

Support additional police patrols.

Description: Work with the Minneapolis Police Department and with other Eastside neighborhoods to add directed patrols in high crime spots, with a major focus on property crime suppression.

Partners: MPD (Second Precinct), Audubon Neighborhood Association, Beltrami Neighborhood Council, Bottineau Neighborhood Association, Columbia Park Neighborhood Association, Holland Neighborhood Improvement Association, Logan Park Neighborhood Association, Marcy Holmes Neighborhood Association, Concerned Citizens of Marshall Terrace, Northeast Park Neighborhood Association, Prospect Park East River Road Improvement Association, St. Anthony East Neighborhood Association, St Anthony West Neighborhood Organization, Sheridan Neighborhood Organization, Southeast Como Improvement Association, Waite Park Community Council and Windom Park Citizens in Action.

Resources: \$6,240.73 of Community Oriented Public Safety Reserve Funds

GOAL 7: Preserve and protect historic resources

Strategy 7.1: St. Anthony Falls Heritage Zone Interpretive Plan Implementation

Implement the [St. Anthony Falls Heritage Zone Interpretive Plan](#), including but not limited to providing high quality historic interpretation in digital media.

Description: Partner with appropriate historic preservation organization to provide historic walking tours on mobile apps and preservation of stories in other digital media.

Partners: St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board, appropriate historic preservation organization, MPRB

Resources: \$3,500 NRP Phase II Funds

Strategy 7.2: Historic Preservation Efforts

Preserve historic and cultural resources throughout the neighborhood, including but not limited to preserving our oral history, artifacts, and other documentation that contribute to the historic interpretation of our neighborhood.

Description: Partner with appropriate historical preservation organization and the Northeast Business Association (NEBA) to collect stories for preservation in digital media.

Partners: Appropriate historical preservation organization, NEBA

Resources: \$3,500 NRP Phase II Funds

GOAL 8: Support a welcoming neighborhood for all

Strategy 8.1: Quality of Life

Description: Improve quality of life with activities and initiatives, including but not limited to:

- Supporting aging in place
- Supporting services for the homeless
- Supporting activities welcoming new Americans
- Promoting classes and information events aimed at seniors
- Graffiti suppression and removal including, for example, using artistic wrappings on electrical and utility boxes
- Other beautification projects to maintain and improve the the local visual environment.

Partners: City of Minneapolis, East Side Neighborhood Services, University of Minnesota, MPS Community Education, appropriate cultural and arts organizations

Resources: \$TBD

GOAL 9: Support development and implementation of the NRP Phase II

Action Plan

Strategy 9.1: NRP Implementation

Support communications and labor costs associated with development and implementation of the NRP Phase II Action Plan

Description: Expenses include outreach and communications.

Partners: NCR

Resources: \$2,500 NRP Phase II Early Access Funds