

Chapter 4

Public Realm

This chapter of the *Loring Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan* addresses public facilities and services with an emphasis on circulation, listing *Recommendations* for each of the following:

Transit

Streets

Walking

Bicycling

Parks and Open Space

Livability

Many of the *Recommended Policies* in this chapter will be performed by the City of Minneapolis or the Minnesota Department of Transportation, so their participation is implied although not stated in each action. The City of Minneapolis would be ultimately responsible for the funding and implementation of public improvements and regulating land development. Citizens for a Loring Park Community (CLPC) should continue as an advocate, facilitator, community advocate, and convener of discussion. The neighborhood organization and local government agencies would continue to work as partners on implementation efforts. This document is intended to be adopted as an amendment to the Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan as a Small Area Plan.

This chapter addresses one of the five major strategic goals of **The Loring Park Neighborhood Master Plan.**

IV

Cultivate an exceptional urban pedestrian experience and enhance connections to destinations in surrounding neighborhoods.

I

Nurture our role in the region's creative economy.

II

Guide infill development and strengthen mixed use corridors.

III

Protect, preserve and enhance historic character and unique architecture.

V

Achieve sustainable buildings and infrastructure.





PDF files of this chapter and the entire master plan can be found at the City of Minneapolis Community Planning & Economic Development (CPED) webpage dedicated to approved city plans *and* at Citizens for a Loring Park Community (CLPC) webpage:
www.loringpark.org

Frontispiece image: sidewalk along south side of Fawkes Block on Harmon Place, facing Loring Park. Photo below looking in same direction was taken during the streetcar era (tracks visible), when a tree-lined Harmon Place connected to Hennepin Avenue, a condition removed with construction of the Lowry (I-94) Tunnel.



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Transit

The 2010-2011 master planning process for the Loring Park Neighborhood addressed many issues related to the streets, places and spaces of the public realm. It became instantly apparent that Loring residents choose to live in Loring for specific reasons related to its uniqueness. Among the most unique characteristics is the location, access, connectivity and walkability of the streets, and the ability to get a range of transit options. Unique to Loring is the low proportion of people forced to own or drive a car. The master planning process revealed a strong desire to further cultivate this unique *location efficiency* and the *multi-modalism* made available to its residents. Many community members have made an urban lifestyle choice, and that means driving less miles, and walking more. So, as topics such as walkability, safety, sustainability and transit were explored, one key challenge emerged: *What can and should be done to make it possible – even preferable – to live in the Loring Park Neighborhood without owning a car?*

One evident place to start was improving access to current and emerging transit alternatives. The neighborhood is already well

served by bus transit with major routes on Hennepin/Lyndale corridor and on Nicollet Avenue, but the need for improvements remains.

This section addresses potential transit enhancements such as the Neighborhood's response to the potential streetcar line on Nicollet Avenue, better access to hourly car or bicycle rental, an expanded Downtown Fare Zone and access to the planned Southwest Corridor light rail transit stations.

Recommendations

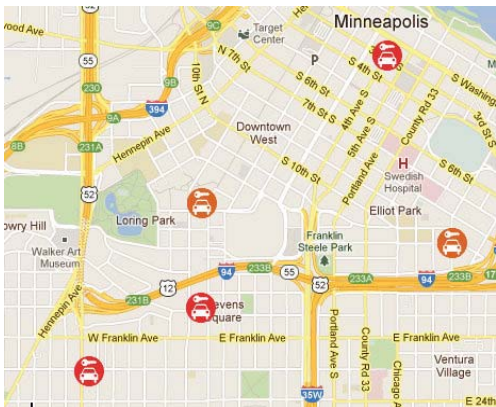
4.1 Nicollet Avenue Streetcar Support efforts by the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County and the Metropolitan Council to introduce streetcar service along Nicollet and Central Avenues, with stop(s) in the Loring Neighborhood. CLPC and the Loring Park Community should be represented on any advisory group for streetcar planning, including the Streetcar Alternatives Analysis Study.

4.2 Access to the Southwest LRT Stations & Cedar Lake Trail: Improve pedestrian and bicyclist access to the Cedar Lake Trail and to the planned Southwest LRT stations at Royalston and Van White Boulevard through short-term and long-term projects described in the Walking and Biking sections of this chapter.

4.3 Downtown (Bus) Fare Zone: Support the Access Minneapolis goal for near-downtown neighborhoods of increasing the accessibility to, from and across downtown for community members and visitors. Support efforts to extend the Downtown Bus Fare Zone along the Hennepin/Lyndale Corridor to the Walker Art Center and along Nicollet Avenue to I-94. Any changes to the zone's boundaries should happen through a re-evaluation of the Downtown Bus Fare Zone that ensures that boundaries are established using consistent criteria across downtown.

4.4 Car-Sharing: Support the growth of neighborhood car-share services in order to decrease reliance on automobiles (and automobile ownership) by making cars available for occasional trips that are not amenable to walking or transit. Car-sharing provides critical back up support for people who choose not to own a car, or who otherwise choose to live very pedestrian and transit oriented lifestyles. Provision of car-sharing parking stalls also may contribute to an overall decrease in demand for parking. The following are municipal policies that are being undertaken in other cities to actively support car-sharing:

- Increase the number of car-share vehicles stationed across the neighborhood
- become a visible advocate and partner for car-sharing
- include car-sharing in applications for grants, loans, and other incentives
- provide on-street parking using the following methods:
 - establish car-sharing or “option zones” – on-street parking stalls designated for car-sharing vehicles as a class, similar to taxi zones (Seattle & Portland, Philadelphia)
 - exempt car-sharing cars from city parking meter charges (Austin)
- encourage or incentivize car-sharing in new development projects to reduce amount of total parking required or constructed
- engage and learn from local car-sharing companies (i.e. HourCar) for examples from Minneapolis/Twin Cities of how public sector can actively support car-sharing
- encourage or create/find incentives for existing businesses, institutions and multi-family residential properties to host car-sharing facilities



The image above shows active car-sharing (HourCar) in and around the Loring Park Neighborhood, including a location within the Loring Parking Ramp. Published info in regarding this location at www.hourcar.org (February 2012):

Loring Hyatt

1330 Nicollet Mall, Minneapolis, MN

Cars here:

#9 - Red Toyota Prius

#11 - Light Blue Toyota Prius

Complete Streets

& Context Sensitive Design

Below are links to recently adopted federal, state, county and municipal street design policy:



Streets

The connectivity of the street network internally is a major strength, yet the quality of connections outward, particularly to adjacent neighborhoods, are an opportunity for improvement. This chapter identifies design and policy strategies for connections at the edge. Minor adjustments are proposed to the City's newly adopted context-sensitive system of streets described in *Access Minneapolis*. No street additions or closures are recommended by this plan. While recommendations provide a certain level of specificity, the City may need to achieve the intent of the plan through design solutions that serve current best practices and implementation practicality.

Recommendations

4.5 Complete Streets & Context Sensitive (Street Design)

Solutions: Ensure that every public street is maintained as a *complete street*, including accommodations for all forms of travel. The streetscape design and design speeds for each thoroughfare should be *context sensitive* (calibrated to the urban context). Promote compliance with emerging legislation and policy at federal, state, county and

United States Department of Transportation Policy Statement on Bicycle & Pedestrian Accommodation Regulations and Recommendations



http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/overview/policy_accom.cfm

Minnesota Department of Transportation Complete Streets



<http://www.dot.state.mn.us/planning/completestreets/index.html>



Hennepin County Complete Streets
<http://www.hennepin.us/completestreets>



ACCESS MINNEAPOLIS










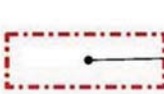

Ten Year Transportation Action Plan -
Objective 1: Make transportation design decisions based on place type in addition to street function

http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@publicworks/documents/webcontent/convert_279031.pdf

Figure 4A



Loring Park Neighborhood Map of Public Realm Improvements

-  Streetcar Line
-  One Way Conversion to Two Way
-  Streetscape Improvements
-  Grand Promenade
-  Bicycle Lane or Path Improvements
-  Bridge / Underpass Improvements
-  New Sidewalk
-  Neighborhood Boundary
-  Safe Crossing Improvements
-  Public Sites, Facilities or Parks with Master Plans
-  Public Realm (Chapter 4) Policy

4.8 Renaming Oak Grove Street along Loring Park Edge –

Re-name the section of Oak Grove Street from 430 Oak Grove Street (former Northwestern National Life Insurance Company Building) to Hennepin/Lyndale Avenues to 15th Street in order to align with the naming of the rest of the street east along the south side of Loring Park.

4.9 Groveland Bridge Design: As this bridge spanning I-94 is rebuilt or improved, through a public process and in collaboration with Stevens Square Community Organization, ensure that sidewalks have adequate width, access ramps, lighting and decorative railings. Utilize public art to establish a gateway with a sense of welcoming to the Loring Park Neighborhood from Stevens/Loring Heights.

4.10 Freeway Edges: Improve dilapidated fences and landscaping along the extensive freeway frontage of the neighborhood. Mobilize volunteers to pick up litter along these highways including on the “neighborhood side” of the freeway fences.

4.11 On-Street Parking & Parking by Permit: Maximize on-street parking. Continue to use on-street parking as a vital element of the overall parking management strategy in the neighborhood. Continue to rigorously enforce meters and manage posted hourly limits to ensure that these spaces are used for short-term parking only. The City’s current Critical Parking District Plan (within the Loring Park Neighborhood), allowing on-street permit parking for residents, should be evaluated on an ongoing basis for potential adjustments to the plan.

4.12 Preserve & Enhance the Connectivity of the Street Network: While there are no major expansions now envisioned for the current public realm network of streets and open spaces, it is important that there be no right-of-way contractions, street closings or further privatizing of existing streets or public spaces. All auto, bicycle, and pedestrian connections to surroundings should remain. The policy towards existing public realm network within the district



Looking for... Parking?

Automobile parking issues will remain critical for the Loring Park Neighborhood. Parking is addressed within several recommendations of this plan:

See Chapter 2

Land Use & Built Form

- 2.5 District Parking
- 2.6 Surface Parking Lots
- 2.7 Structured Parking

See Chapter 4

Public Realm

- 4.11 On-Street Parking & Parking by Permit
- 4.21 Harmon Place Improvements
- 4.23 Loring Village
- 4.32 Loring Hill

See Chapter 5

Sustainability

- 5.4 The Loring Indicators Indicator #6 Surface Parking Lots

and along the perimeter should be one of ‘conservative expansion’. More specifically, block sizes should remain the same size or become smaller by development of new mid-block walkways, alleys, or streets.



For specific recommendations related to
**Nicollet Avenue Bridge
 over Interstate 94:**

See Chapter 4
Public Realm
 4.23 Loring Village
 ... (c) Public Art
 ... (1) Nicollet Avenue
 Bridge Design

4.13 Improvements to 16th, 17th & Laurel - Support the efforts of the Basilica of St. Mary to work with the City to reconfigure the adjacent portions of 16th, 17th and Laurel Avenues for improved traffic circulation, safety, emergency access and parking in that confined area while preserving public access. These public improvements would be consistent with the Basilica’s site master plan.

4.14 Overhead Utility Lines: Over time, bury all existing above grade utility lines below ground. Require all new utilities to be installed below ground where possible.

4.15 Street Plantings/Tree Canopy: Assist the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board in surveying missing or diseased trees in the neighborhood public rights-of-way. Collaborate with the Park Board on sustainable selection of tree species, tree size, and streetscape planting methods. Develop partnerships to sustainably green and beautify private and public spaces along the public right-of way, including medians and freeway barriers.

4.16 Freeway Overpasses: Ensure that adequate sidewalks, bicycling lanes, pedestrian-scale lighting and public art are included when the bridges over the freeway are eventually rebuilt.

4.17 15th Street Bridge Design (east to Elliott Park): As this bridge to Elliot Park is rebuilt or improved, through a public process ensure that sidewalks have adequate width, access ramps, lighting and decorative railings. Utilize public art within the bridge design to establish a sense of welcoming to the neighborhood.

4.18 First Avenue Bridge Design: As this freeway overpass bridges is rebuilt or improved, through a public process ensure that sidewalks have adequate width, access ramps, lighting and decorative

railings. Where appropriate, establish public art to establish a sense of welcoming to the Loring Park Neighborhood from Stevens/Loring Heights.

4.19 Limitation of Skyway Expansion – Complying with long range downtown recommendations set forth in *Downtown 2025*, the Loring Park Neighborhood should see conservative or no expansion proposed to its portions of the existing skyway network. Exceptions, such as the following within the Activity Center in Loring Village, may be considered, but would require extensive dialogue and other design considerations in order to also improve street-level comfort and walkability:

- i. Across 12th Avenue from Convention Center to buildings north.
- ii. Across 1st Avenue from Convention Center to blocks west (into Loring Village) – *(a ‘climate controlled connection’ of some form may become necessary to serve potential lodging uses, but would need further community dialogue.)*



For recommendations related to **LaSalle Avenue under The Loring Greenway:**

See Chapter 1

Cultural Assets & Economic Vitality

1.2 Priority Locations for Public Art
- (m. Loring Greenway)

See Chapter 4

Public Realm

4.28 Walking Under The Loring Greenway

4.44 The Loring Greenway

Recommendation 4.20 (a-d)

Harmon Place Improvements



The community formed four teams to walk about the neighborhood and photo-document the critical issues in four focus areas, including Harmon Place (see photos above and below).

See the full Public Realm Discovery report, design alternatives, and Harmon Focus Group I & II Event

Records at

<http://www.loringpark.org>



Harmon Place, running parallel to Hennepin one block to the south, was closed at Spruce Street and Tenth Street long ago, and is no longer a main street for auto show rooms. Four wide lanes of traffic remain in place, carrying among the lowest average daily traffic counts in downtown (2500 adt).

The 80' wide street can be reduced from four lanes to two lanes between MCTC (at Spruce Street) and the University of St Thomas (at Tenth Street), creating the opportunity to improve the four blocks in between campuses for biking, walking, additional parking, public art, greenery and sustainable improvements.

The community believes this public realm investment may encourage quality of life for residents, students, and encourage continued private investment in adaptive reuse and sensitive infill development, reactivating many of the tall historic shop-fronts.

To this end, the following pages include several guidelines intended to guide decisions regarding the design and implementation of a range of improvements desired by the community:

a. Build on Existing Historic District Character & Recent Campus Investments - Improvements on Harmon should support and complement the recent pedestrian-oriented design of the plaza and connecting walks at the Minneapolis Community and Technical College, the investments made near St Thomas, and the neighborhood's vision for built form and urban character set by the guidelines of the Harmon Place Historic District Design Guidelines.



Yale Place

Spruce St

13th St.

HARMON
AVE

HENNEPIN
AVE

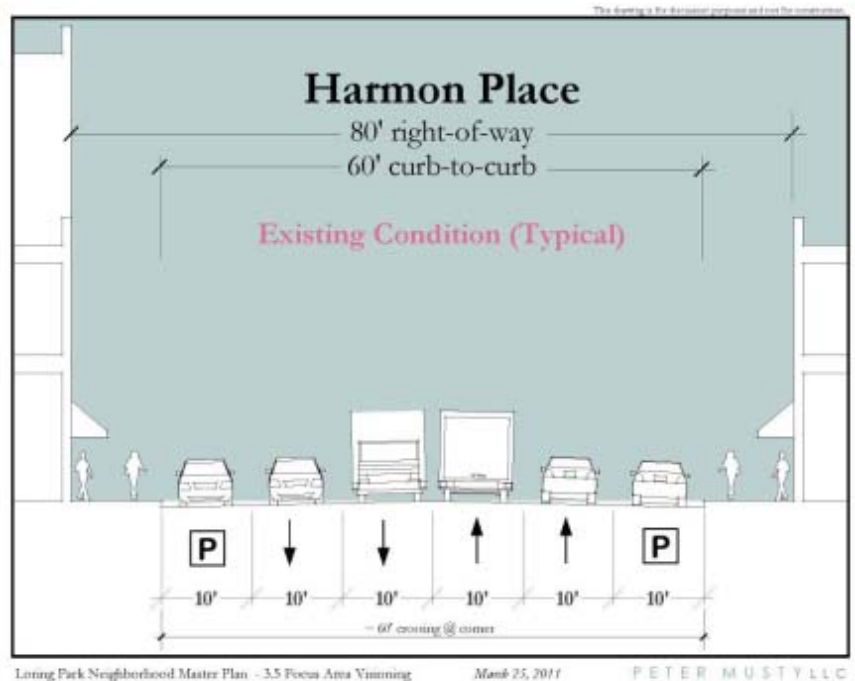
12th St.

11th St.

10th St.

- b. Harmon Place and Yale Place as Connectors** - Enhance Harmon Place and Yale Place in their role as a complementary pair of neighborhood local access streets by investing in pedestrian and bicycling environments that stretch from Loring Park and MCTC to St. Thomas University. The bicycle route across Loring Park is routed along the western side of the park, so Harmon Place should serve as a bicycle connection from the park to the north through the MCTC campus north to 10th Street. (See related Recommended Actions in Bicycling section.)
- c. Harmon Place Storefronts** – Invest in renewed streetscape in a manner that will support the viability of commercial businesses activating Harmon’s tall historic shop-front spaces.
- d. Harmon Place Streetscape Improvements** – Improve Harmon Place from MCTC to Tenth Street South to function as a traffic-calmed street that welcomes pedestrians and bicyclists, residents, office workers, and people traveling to Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC). and St. Thomas University. Adhere to the following community supported

Figure 4B



guidelines when designing improvements along Harmon Place between Spruce Street and Tenth Street:

- i. **Two Lanes** - establish two 11-foot traffic lanes (reduced from the current four lanes)
- ii. **Bicycle Markings** - add bicycle designations in both directions such as sharrows or painted bike lanes (see 5.2 in *Bicycling*)
- iii. **Diagonal Parking** - add diagonal head-in or diagonal back-in parking on both sides
- iv. **Sidewalks** - retain or expand 10-foot sidewalks on both sides
- v. **Bicycle & Scooter Parking** - add bicycle and scooter parking on both sides of every block
- vi. **Corner Bump-Outs** - create corner bump-outs with clearly marked pedestrian crosswalks
- vii. **Greenery & Tree Canopy** - establish continuous greenery and tree canopy along the sidewalk on both sides, making Harmon Place into a continuous green corridor.
- viii. **Streetscape Character** - to further communicate the special and welcoming character of Harmon Place, public improvements should include visual cues such as light pole banners, public art, decorative pedestrian-scale lighting and greenery.
- ix. **Sustainability** - all improvements should be considered an opportunity to demonstrate advancements in sustainable streetscape design
- x. **Community Engagement** - formal efforts should continue to be made to engage students and community members in the development of ideas during the design process
- xi. **Design Standards** - comply with municipal and MSA design standards

The illustrations on the next page represent two design solutions (of more than seven) that were preferred by community members:

<http://www.loringpark.org>



“...On Harmon...there should be some historic demarcation, perhaps with public art, with materials drawing on the show room heritage; look at ways to use steel that bring forth or emulate the era...” – Kim Havey, neighborhood resident, design & sustainability professional, & neighborhood volunteer – one of several ideas for Harmon recorded during one of ten key stakeholder interviews:

<http://www.loringpark.org>

Figure 4C

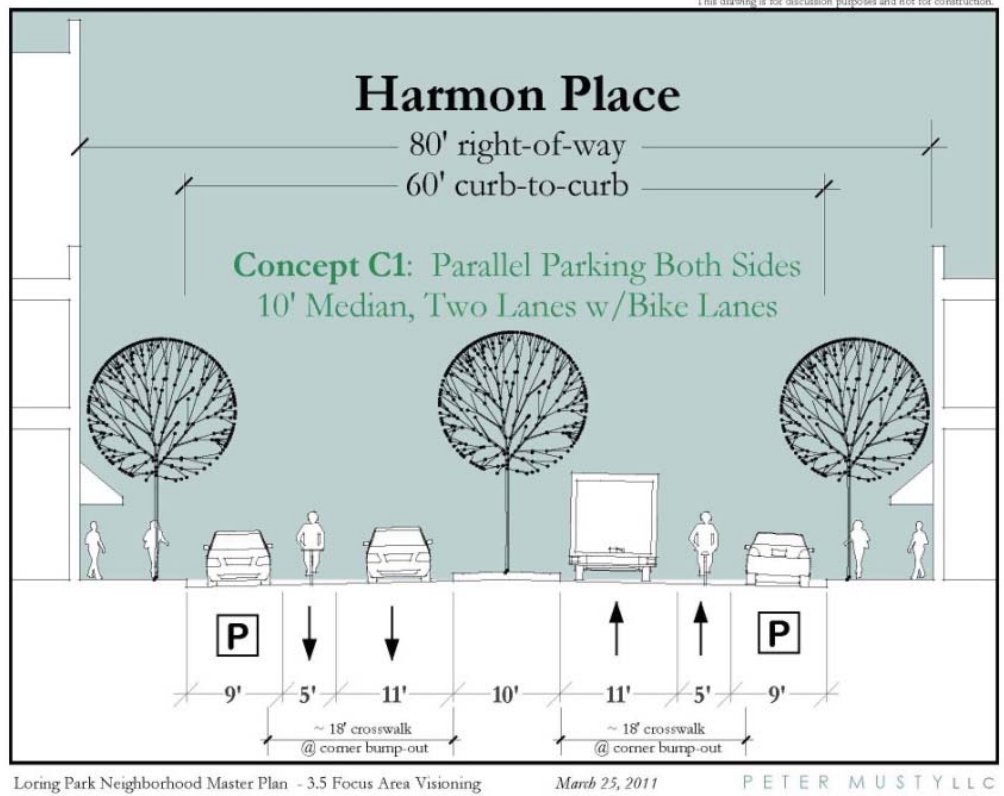
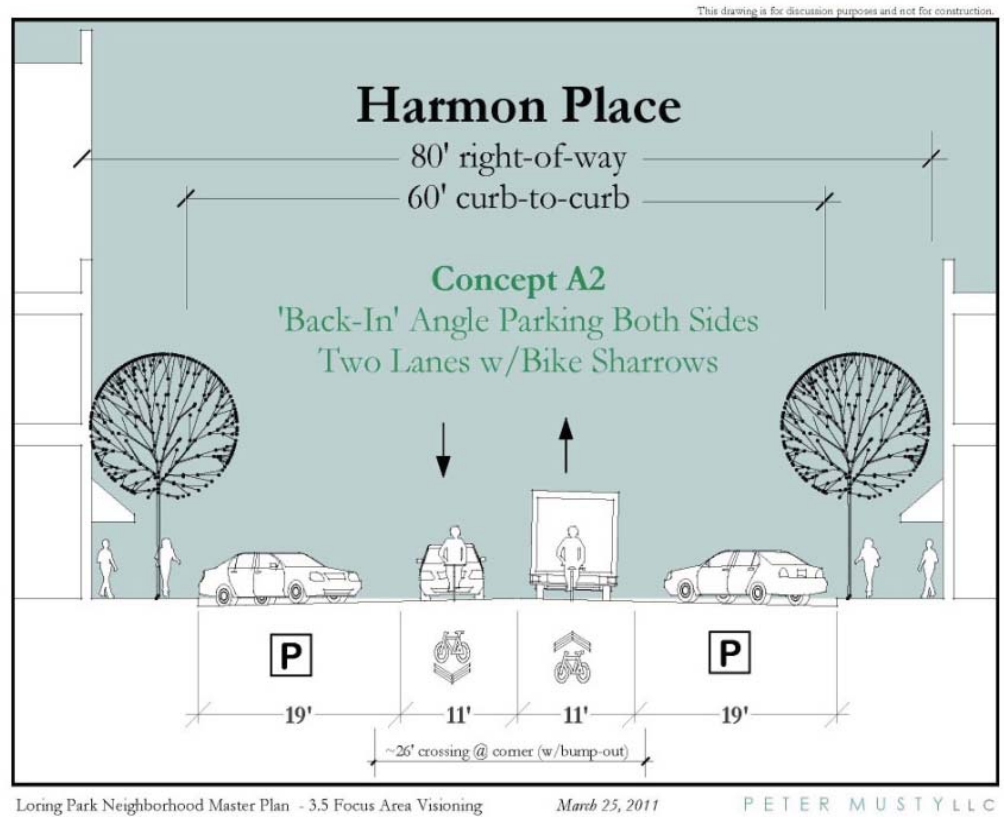


Figure 4D

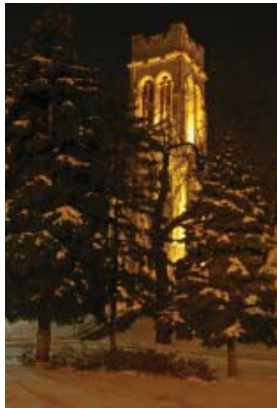


Recommendation 4.21 (a-f)

Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor

Built along the ages-old Native American trail that connected Lake Calhoun to St. Anthony Falls, Hennepin-Lyndale has served as a prominent and very busy transportation corridor since the early history of Minneapolis. The corridor, which rises along a ridge overlooking the city, provided a picturesque setting for spacious mansions that were built in the late nineteenth century by prosperous bankers and industrialists.

Over time mansions adjacent to the corridor were replaced by some of the city's most prominent institutions. These include the Basilica of St. Mary (*below left*), Dunwoody Institute, the Walker Art Center, the Cathedral of St. Mark (*below center*), Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church (*below right*), and also the major public space institutions of Loring Park and the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden.



The civic importance of the corridor has grown over the years, but so have the demands on the corridor for automobile traffic. The overlapping mix of local, state and federal roadways leaves the space heavily dominated by bare concrete and fast moving cars. The high concentration of major institutions makes this a very active place for pedestrians. Every effort should be made to improve the pedestrian environment so that it is safer and more befitting the civic nature of the place.



November 6, 2010

Community Workshop II Visioning Loring 2030

Community Visioning & Design Workshops

The Loring Park Neighborhood conducted four community based workshops in 2010-2011 in support of the master plan. Nicollet Avenue (south of Grant) was consistently identified as having great potential as a place of vibrant activity, more green, and new development that is in character with Loring Park Neighborhood – to strengthen an identity that is separate but complimentary to the downtown core. Sensitivity to the viability of small, locally owned and neighborhood serving businesses was a continued concern.

Documentation of community priorities from this and other events can be found at

<http://www.loringpark.org>.



Aerial above taken in 1940. image below from Google Earth, 2012

Long Range Transformational Opportunities

Long term, dramatic improvements may be possible, particularly in conjunction with potential freeway changes at the Lowry Tunnel. Such a project may not happen within the twenty year time frame of this plan. It is therefore important in the short term that solutions are found which work within the general confines of the existing infrastructure. Using creativity, cooperation and additional



investment, the following significant improvements may be possible:

a. Safe Crossings. Improve the safety and comfort of key on-street pedestrian crossings between the east and west side of the corridor – In addition to the Whitney Pedestrian bridge on-street connections are also important along portions of the corridor including at Groveland Avenue, Oak Grove Street (15th Street) / Vineland Place, and the underpass at Hennepin Avenue / Dunwoody Boulevard. Striping, signaling upgrades, and mid-corridor pedestrian island streetscape improvements should be considered.



- i. **Intersection of Hennepin/Lyndale Corridor at Oak Grove Street (15th Street).** Facilitate crossing Hennepin-Lyndale at Oak Grove Street (15th Street) by keeping cross walk striping clear and visible and by installing count-down signal timers with visible and audible displays. Improve pedestrian hardscape areas. Add landscaping and public art. This intersection was recently ranked as one of nine intersections in the City in greatest need of improvement.
- ii. **Intersection of Hennepin/Lyndale corridor at Groveland.** Keep cross-walk striping clear and visible. Install count-down signal timers with visible and audible displays. Improve pedestrian hardscape areas. Add landscaping and public art.

Above left: The Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor today (view looking northward from intersection at Oak Grove Street). Older photo above: Volunteers (or workers?) erecting a Christmas Tree at Virginia Triangle, near the intersection of Oak Grove, at the convergence of Hennepin & Lyndale Avenues. Date unknown, taken before the construction of Lowry (Interstate 94) Tunnel and the resulting redesign and reconstruction of the Hennepin-Lyndale corridor near Loring Park. This project improved traffic flow for automobiles in, out and around downtown, but led to near total separation (for pedestrians) to and from Loring Park and Loring Hill to neighborhoods to the west and south.

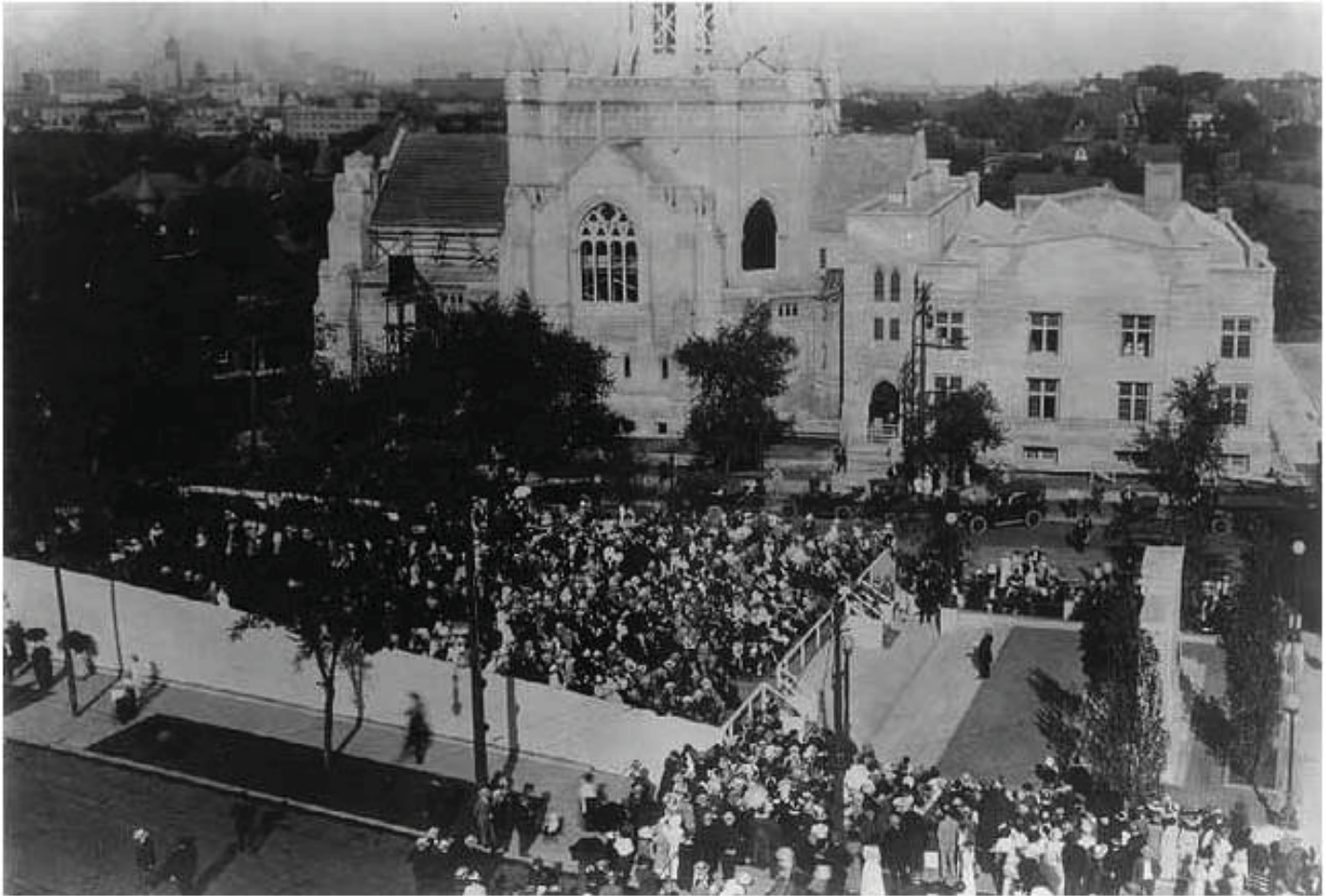


Image: Before the automobile dominant decades of the late twentieth century, the Hennepin-Lyndale corridor had developed a long history as a primary place for major civic gatherings and as a setting for major public art. Shown is the dedication (year not known) of Lowry Memorial at the Virginia Triangle, showing church structure now known as Hennepin United Methodist Church. (Location is the intersection at convergence of Hennepin, Lyndale, and Groveland)

- b. **Streetscape.** Incorporate art and high quality design as an integral part of future public infrastructure projects. These include elements such as fencing, guardrails, lighting, pavements, street furniture, utility structures, etc. Create interesting, beautiful and well managed streetscapes and landscapes at existing locations along the corridor. Pursue options to add more greening and pedestrian space where possible in the future.
- c. **Way-finding.** Add way-finding at key points along corridor.
- d. **Lowry Tunnel Focal Point.** Install a feature work of public art at the head of the Lowry tunnel where 15th Street crosses to Vineland Place. Use public art to provide scale and beauty to the broad expanse of the corridor, and to create a focal point for

pedestrians who use this location to walk between Loring Park and the Walker Art Center (*See Chapter 1 Cultural Assets & Economic Vitality*)

e. **Walking to Van White (Southwest LRT) Station:** The potential light rail transit station near the planned Van White Boulevard will be in walking distance of the Loring Park Neighborhood. Sidewalks currently run from the neighborhood to that location north of I-394 along the north side of Dunwoody Boulevard and through the Walker Art Museum - Parade Stadium area. No significant improvements are identified for those routes at this time, however the walkability and safety along Dunwoody Boulevard from Hennepin to the new station should be comprehensively analyzed for needed improvements concurrent with any transit improvements.

f. **Transit Stops.** Upgrade transit stop streetscapes and shelters using high quality design and artistry.

g. **Bike Paths & Sidewalks.** Coordinate design of walking and bicycle paths that run parallel to the Hennepin – Lyndale corridor. Where there is high bicycle traffic, provide adequate separation between each mode including at the west side of the corridor between 15th Street and Groveland Avenue.

h. **Public Space: Hennepin Avenue at Basilica of St Mary.** Support efforts to define the space in front of the basilica (including, from building to building, areas including the street, intersection, interstate wall and underpass)... as a prominent public space through improvements to landscaping, infrastructure and the addition of public art.



2008: Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor Design Charrette

The poster shown on the last page of this section, which can be found at www.loringpark.org, summarizes a range of short term ‘functional improvements’ that would improve non-vehicular experiences in the corridor. Along with the public realm design guidelines for Loring Park Edge found in this chapter, this document should be used as a starting point for implementation of improvements within the corridor.

Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor Design Charrette : 15 YEAR PLAN

Lowry Hill Residents Association • Citizens for a Loring Park Community • AIA Minneapolis

HTTP://DOWNTOWN2015.COM/HOMEPAGE/HENNEPINLYNDALE/HENNLNYPAGE.HTM

APRIL 26, 2008

ISSUES

- Current freeway edges are incompatible with the character of adjacent institutions
- Current freeway underpass is dark, threatening and a gathering place for vagrants.
- Major entrance to downtown has poor visual and civic presence.
- Past landscape improvements are inadequately maintained.
- Visual and audial noise caused by high-speed interstate is disruptive to adjacent urban uses.
- Salt spray from freeway has damaged trees in the north west corner of Loring Park.
- Pedestrian bridge is convenient for only some of the pedestrian traffic crossing the Hennepin/Lyndale corridor. On-grade crossings remain crucial to pedestrian traffic further south.
- Poor pedestrian crossing accommodations - confusing pedestrian path - wind-swept - threatening automobile environment - frequent panhandling
- Shared bicycle and pedestrian path is confusing and threatening to use.
- Lack of trees and other foliage along corridor creates a windswept, auto-dominated environment.
- Over-head road signage is out of character and out of scale with the surrounding urban environment.
- Lack of street-front activity associated with adjacent institutions
- Poor pedestrian crossing accommodations - confusing pedestrian path - wind-swept - threatening automobile environment - poor transit accommodations
- Excessive impermeable surfaces - too much asphalt - missed opportunities for greening
- Poor pedestrian (& cyclist) environment - freeway fencing is rundown and unattractive - landscaping is unkempt and uninspiring
- Poor pedestrian environment adjacent to commercial uses.



jvh 2008

OPPORTUNITIES

- **PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE PATHWAY IMPROVEMENTS**
 - Review elements of pedestrian infrastructure, including pavements, layout, landscape/landscaping, lighting, signage, security. See Minneapolis Street & Sidewalk Design Guidelines
 - Establish which segments of pathway are in most critical need of improvement.
 - Pursue improvements through city long-range improvement funding, non-auto transit grants, incorporation of pedestrian improvements into adjacent public and private construction projects, investments on the part of adjacent properties, civic gifts from people, businesses and organizations across the Twin Cities.
- **CROSSWALK IMPROVEMENTS**
 - Crosswalks and associated walkways at two intersections: at Groveland Avenue and at Vineland Ave./15th St. were identified as having the most critical problems and the most urgent need for improvements. Look for opportunities to improve all crosswalks along corridor, but focus efforts on these two intersections.
 - Document effects of poor pedestrian conditions on neighboring institutions including the Walker, St. Mark's, and Hennepin Ave. Methodist Church. Incorporate into both neighborhood's planning and advocacy efforts.
 - Identify improvement options such as striping, signage and landscape
 - Organize efforts to make improvements around city policy and planning guidelines such the Transportation Action Plan and the Pedestrian Masterplan
 - Pursue funding support through methods noted in the pedestrian/ bicycle pathways section at the top of this column.
- ➔ **INTERCONNECTING PATHWAY IMPROVEMENTS**
 - Identify important pathways that connect to, or intersect with the Hennepin/Lyndale Corridor. Encourage and support efforts to strengthen these pathways, especially those that connect together the Loring Park and the Lowry Hill neighborhoods and that connect to Downtown Minneapolis and to The Lakes.
- T** **TRANSIT & TRANSIT STOP IMPROVEMENTS**
 - Support efforts to improve transit service along the Hennepin and Lyndale Transit Corridors - including the expansion of the downtown bus fare zone and the introduction of streetcar service on Hennepin Avenue.
 - Improve transit stop facilities, including shelters, landscaping, scheduling, signage, cleanliness, security.
 - Incorporate art and artistry into transit facilities
 - Seek funding through a variety of governmental jurisdictions, grants, and private investment (e.a. bus shelter providers)
- A** **ART AS AN ELEMENT OF THE CIVIC LIFE AND FABRIC OF CORRIDOR**
 - Find opportunities to incorporate new public art works at fitting locations along the corridor.
 - Incorporate art and artistry into new public infrastructure where ever possible.
- I** **INSTITUTIONS - ANCHORS OF A CIVIC CORRIDOR**
 - Support health and vitality of major institutions along the corridor.
 - Encourage civic/cultural activity within the public realm of the corridor.
 - Encourage investments by area institutions to enrich the character of the corridor.
 - Support public improvements to the corridor that benefit the vitality of institutions located along the corridor.
- G** **NEW GREENING ALONG PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY**
 - Seek opportunities to increase the amount of vegetation along the corridor. Focus on areas that are currently either unplanted or where additional trees or other plants could be added.
 - Work with experts to find low maintenance plants that are tolerant of harsh road and winter conditions.
 - Develop strategies for greening using new technology such as green walls and artificial trees.
- I** **INTERSTATE LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS**
 - Build political support for funding to help mitigate the damage that the building of Interstate 94 and the Lowry tunnel caused to the Hennepin/Lyndale Corridor.
 - Develop a partnership with MNDOT in addressing problems such landscaping, signage, noise, salt damage, etc.
 - Encourage partnerships that would allow for the incorporation of art and artistry into the construction of new infrastructure.

FEATURE VIGNETTES

1 GROVELAND SQUARE

- Establish a sense of place in the area between Groveland Ave. & Douglas Av.
- Redesign island that runs along Henn/ Lyndale to incorporate new pavement, landscaping, new transit facilities and public art.
- Expand the size of the island to the west. Provide a bump-out at the Henn/ Lyndale crosswalk at the north-east corner of the island.
- Incorporate public art as a focal point landscaped island to mark this as a gateway to the Lowry Hill neighborhood.
- Strengthen connection between the Loring Park and Lowry Hill neighborhoods with improved cross walks and shared transit facilities that are located at various points along the corridor.

2 LORING GATEWAY

- Establish this park entrance as a gateway to Loring Park and to the Loring Park neighborhood.
- Coordinate multiple pathways and provide orientation to major destinations.
- Incorporate public art to establish a gateway presence.
- Improve park pathways leading from this entrance to the the downtown side of the park and along the west side to improve pedestrian connections to major destinations along the corridor.

3 AUTOSCAPE GARDENS

- Establish this interchange as a civic entrance to the city from the freeway.
- Enhance existing landscaping.
- Incorporate several works of landscape art which celebrates this 20th century auto scape.

4 BASILICA SQUARE & THE WEST GATE

- Establish a complete urban space by strengthening the freeway edge to form the third wall of a triangularly shaped city square.
- Construct new freeway screening that fits the character of adjacent architectural elements and which is an inspiring artistic work in itself.
- Use the medieval city wall and gate as a typology to address the design of the freeway edge and the Hennepin Avenue underpass - mark the underpass as a gate in the wall - an entry to downtown - the west gate.
- Recognize the freeway. Options: celebrate American Interstate system (I-94 Boston 1133 mi. east Seattle 1362 mi. west) - expand Basilica gardens as the Garden of St. Anthony and St. Christopher in honor of travelers.

5 THE LOWRY TUNNEL ENTRANCE & THE GRAND TERRACE

- Create a central civic focal point for the Hennepin/Lyndale Civic Corridor at and around the entrance of the Lowry Hill Tunnel.
- Create an art screen around the approach to the tunnel that would serve to re-establish urban edge walls, and that would mitigate damage done by the freeway such as noise, fumes and salt damage.
- Screen could incorporate a variety of materials including green wall technology. Various levels of transparency could be used to both reveal and hide the freeway and the surrounding urban landscape.
- Create a "Grand Terrace" at the Vineland/ 15th St. intersection. Redesign green space locate over the entrance to the tunnel to be a green plaza with a major public Art Work marking the historic crossing of Hennepin and Lyndale Avenues.

Recommendation 4.22 (a-p)

‘Loring Village’ Improvements

Loring Village represents one of the most outstanding transitions between a downtown business core and a residential district found anywhere in America. The district, which includes the region's largest convention center, major churches and an intact area of four-story early twentieth century apartment buildings, offers wonderful opportunities for the entire city.



Image to the left: West side of 15th Nicollet Avenue at 15th Street, near the heart of Loring Village.

Image source next page: Google Earth

If one adds to this the outstanding beauty of the Park for which the neighborhood is named (at the district's western edge), and, the central spine of Minneapolis, Nicollet Avenue, which has primary standing as both a commercial and transportation corridor, it is no surprise that this is a priority area for the Loring Park Neighborhood and for the Loring Park Master Plan.

Emerging Vision: Strengthen Connections to Neighboring Districts and Realize Potential as *Activity Center*

Strong, continued collaboration between CLPC and the Stevens Square Community Organization will be important moving forward,

Stevens Square
Neighborhood

Interstate 94

Oak Grove
Street

NICOLLET
AVENUE

15th Street

Spruce
Street

LASALLE
AVENUE

14th Street

FIRST
AVENUE

E. Grant Street

NICOLLET
MALL

13th Street

DOWNTOWN

Loring
Greenway



as there is a very strong desire in the community to reconnect (to ‘heal the gap’) caused by construction of the freeway between Downtown/Loring Park Neighborhood and districts and neighborhoods to the south.

And, as explained in more depth within *Chapter 2: Land Use and Built Form*, continuing to realize the districts full potential as an emerging Activity Center (*see sidebar*) rests on key issues such as the design sensitivity of new in-fill development, the efficient provision and effective management of parking, improvements to the quality of the pedestrian environment, and steps to ensure safety and the perception of safety.

The following detailed recommendations address several of these issues, focusing on improvements to the public realm of the district:

- a. **District Parking Strategy** – Create and implement a coordinated parking plan as a first step in further developing the area along Nicollet Avenue as an Activity Center. The plan should give consideration to resident, commercial and institutional needs, and to both on and off-street parking. Existing parking facilities at the Minneapolis Convention Center and the Loring Park Parking Ramp should be considered. All new parking facilities should be underground or fully concealed (*see Chapter 2 – Land Use & Built Form* for additional information on parking structures). The public parking that is currently provided at the “Meter-Farm” site at 15th and Nicollet Avenue should be incorporated into any new development for that site.
- b. **Streetscapes** – District wide, take advantage of public and private development to create a greener, more inviting pedestrian environment and to encourage the pedestrian flow of residents and visitors to, and between, the district's key attractions.
 - i. **Street Furniture** - Add attractive street furniture including trash and recycling receptacles, bike racks and way-finding aids.

‘Loring Village’

...an emerging

Activity Center

Loring Village includes the northern blocks of ‘Eat Street’ in the Loring Park Neighborhood, just north of Interstate 94 along Nicollet. This area was one of four identified by the Community as a focus area in the 2010-2011 Loring Park Neighborhood Master Plan process.

Nicollet, as a critical link in the region’s Primary Transit Network, is the first corridor in the metro area to be considered for the restoration of streetcars.

Chapter 2: Land Use & Built Form provides information regarding the recommendation to designate a major portion of the district an **‘Activity Center’**. (*Activity Center* is a City of Minneapolis comprehensive plan land use designation that carries a set of established policies supporting investment in location efficient new development (walkable, affordable, sustainable and supportive of transit)...within an identified district that has become or is becoming a unique destination with a distinct identity within the City.

- ii. **Pedestrian Lighting** - Improve pedestrian lighting with energy efficient bulbs that provide adequate and attractive light, and which meet neighborhood and city design standards.
 - iii. **Gardening & Greenery** - Encourage investment in attractive and sustainable gardening adjacent to public walkways by property owners and resident volunteers.
 - iv. **Tree Canopy** - Add to the street tree canopy with the goal of meeting LEED-ND standards for spacing and coverage. Where street trees are not possible due to utilities or clearance issues, alternatives such as vertical greening or other planting in (or adjacent to) the public right-of way should be encouraged to provide additional shade. Vertical greening should be considered at blank walls.
 - v. **Overhead Utilities** - Move overhead utility lines underground.
- c. **Nicollet Avenue** - Maintain and enhance the Nicollet Avenue streetscape from Grant Street to the Stevens Square Neighborhood and encourage an active, safe and enjoyable sidewalk experience. The following recommendations are in addition to the general streetscape improvement recommendations found previously in this chapter:
- i. **Safety** - Prioritize Nicollet Avenue for safety and patrol efforts in order to establish a safe perception of the district and to maintain a safe experience for residents and visitors (See *Livability* section later in this chapter for more detailed information and recommendations.)
 - ii. **Interactive Street Frontage** - Maximize the amount of transparent glazing along the first level storefront edge of the Avenue. Future development should include interesting street front architecture with glazing that visually connects the activities of inside and out. Blank walls should be avoided in future developments. Existing blank walls should be

addressed with potential options including vertical greening, public art, or the insertion of new windows. (See Chapter 2 *Land Use & Built Form*, LEED-ND NPD credit 1 *Walkable Streets*), and Fig. 2-2 *Built Form Plan* for more detailed information on desired building to street relationships.)

- iii. **Street Trees (Tree Canopy), Greenery & Furniture** - Maintain existing street trees, streetscape infrastructure and amenities, and pursue opportunities to make improvements and add features including additional flowers, planters and green space, scooter and bike parking, and trash / recycling bins.
- iv. **Pocket Parks** - Pursue opportunities to add pocket parks along the avenue.
- v. **Public Art** - Add public art that is an integral part of the fabric of new public infrastructure and private development. Featured works of public art should be added at key locations in order to provide the district with focus and identity. (See also *Chapter 1: Cultural Assets & Economic Vitality / Map: Priority Locations for (New) Public Art*.)
- vi. **Eat Street Gateway** - Use public art at Grant Street and Nicollet Avenue to establish a gateway to Nicollet Avenue South (also know as Eat Street).
- vii. **Way-finding** - Maintain existing way-finding tools and pursue opportunities to make improvements at key locations along the Avenue including at Grant Street and 15th Streets.
- viii. **Nicollet Avenue Bridge** - Mend the division in the pedestrian fabric between the Loring Park and Stevens Square portions of the Nicollet Avenue Commercial Corridor caused by poor pedestrian conditions at the Nicollet Avenue Interstate 94 freeway bridge (*see item 1 for additional guidance*).
- ix. **Nicollet Avenue Design Guidelines** - The current Nicollet Avenue Design Guidelines should be incorporated into new developments and when portions of the existing streetscape require replacement (*see Nicollet Avenue Design Guidelines*).

d. **East-West Connections** - Improve east-west pedestrian Connections between the Minneapolis Convention Center, Nicollet Avenue, and Loring Park. Take advantage of the close proximity between the major destinations of the district by improving the quality of east-west pedestrian corridors. Better connections between the residential portions of Loring Village and Loring Village Activity Center will support more activity on Nicollet Avenue and will provide more attractive walking options for visitors who visit multiple destinations in the neighborhood. East-West connections include Grant Street (*see item e*), 14th Street (*see item f*) and 15th Street (*see item g*).

e. **Grant Street** - Develop Grant Street as a primary on-street green corridor connecting Nicollet Avenue South (also know as “Eat Street”), Loring Park, and the front door of the Minneapolis Convention Center. In addition to the general streetscape improvement recommendations found in item 4.11.a., the following street specific policies are recommended:

- i. **Crosswalks** - Improve crosswalks along Grant Street including 1st Avenue, Nicollet Avenue, LaSalle Avenue, Spruce Place, and the connection to Loring Park at Willow Street with bump-outs, striping and/or other improvements that are determined appropriate and available.
- ii. **Way-finding** - Maintain existing way-finding tools and pursue opportunities to make improvements at key locations along the street including the front and west entrance of convention center; the meeting between Nicollet Avenue South and Nicollet Mall, and the entrance to Loring Park at Willow Street.
- iii. **Street Narrowing** - Pursue opportunities to narrow the roadway east of LaSalle Avenue from the current four down to two or three lanes (as determined feasible) in order to be able to expand the area dedicated to pedestrians and greening.

- iv. **Downtown Improvement District** - Expand service of the Downtown Improvement District (DID) to include both sides of Grant Street, from 1st Avenue S. to LaSalle Avenue in order to maintain current amenities and to pursue future improvements. Currently only the north side of the street is included in district services preventing the street from being treated in an efficient and holistic way.

- f. **14th Street** - In addition to the general streetscape improvement recommendations found in item 4.11.a., the following street specific policies are recommended:
 - i. **Sidewalks & Walkways** - Improve walkway quality and address sidewalk width / clearance issues between the west entrance of the convention center to Nicollet Avenue and to Loring Park.
 - ii. **Crosswalks** - Improve crosswalks along 14th street including at Nicollet, LaSalle Avenue, Spruce Place, and the connection to Loring Park at Willow Street with bump-outs, striping and/or other improvements that are determined appropriate and available.

- g. **15th Street** - In addition to the general streetscape improvement recommendations found in item 4.11.a., the following street specific policies are recommended:
 - i. **Sidewalks & Walkways** - Improve walkway quality and address width / clearance issues between Nicollet Avenue and the Hennepin-Lyndale Corridor.
 - ii. **Crosswalks** - Improve crosswalks along 15th street including at 1st Avenue, Nicollet Avenue, LaSalle Avenue, Spruce Place, and connecting to Loring Park from north and south sides of the street at Willow Street with bump-outs, striping and/or other improvements that are determined appropriate and available. Street crossings should also be improved farther west on 15th including at Oak Grove Street and at Hennepin Lyndale.



Photo of streetcar approaching sidewalk station in Portland, Oregon, taken by Master Plan Steering Committee Member Richard Sandberg.

- iii. **Bike Lanes** - Maintain existing bicycle lanes and pursue opportunities for improvement.
- h. **Bike Share Stations, Car Share Locations, and On-Street Bike Parking** - Support multi-modal transit in conjunction with the Nicollet Avenue Primary Transit Corridor by encouraging private and public investment in facilities that encourage urban, earth friendly transit options.
- i. **Transit & Streetcar Facilities** - The Loring Village Activity Center should be well served by future transit facilities including streetcar stations. When locating future transit stations along Nicollet Avenue, the districts two most important intersections (Nicollet/15th Street and Nicollet/Grant Street) should be considered.
- j. **Expansion of Downtown Improvement District (DID)**- Expand services of the Downtown Improvement District (DID) to the south. Partner with the DID to provide a superior level of on-street maintenance and visitor services to the Loring Village Activity Center.
- k. **Two Way Conversion of LaSalle & First:** Advocate for the conversion of one-way to two-way traffic on LaSalle and First Avenues, perhaps in conjunction with the re-opening of Nicollet Avenue at Lake Street.
- l. **Nicollet Avenue Bridge over Interstate 94:** Make improvements to the Nicollet Avenue Bridge in order to re-establish a continuous pedestrian experience that is safe, attractive, and sensitive to the urban context of the commercial and transit corridor. Any upgrade or major change to the bridge should involve a public process that includes the Loring Park and Stevens Square Communities. The two neighborhoods have had a dialogue over the course of several decades on how to repair the damaging gap caused by the construction of the freeway. Uses identified include visions for landscaping, park space, structured parking, retail stalls and mixed use buildings. Three visionary solutions have been forwarded for structurally spanning the Interstate right of way adjacent to Nicollet:

- Option a) **Widen Bridge Deck** - widening of the Nicollet Avenue bridge deck on one or both sides
- Option b) **Land Bridge** - full or partial decking (land bridging) of the Interstate airspace between LaSalle Avenue to First Avenue
- Option c) **Lowry Tunnel Extension** - extension of the Lowry Tunnel eastward to Nicollet or First Avenue

m. **Convention Center Plaza & Visitors Center:** Continue to enhance the Convention Center Plaza as a community activity center and major public gathering space. Future enhancements may include artistic additions to the face of the convention center or iconic public art within or surrounding the plaza. Improvements should be coordinated with walking improvements at the Greenway, Grant Street and 13th Street. Support the development of the Visitor Information Center located adjacent to the plaza as a major launching point for exploration of the city and of nearby attractions in the Loring Park Neighborhood.

n. **Priority Locations for Public Art:** there is broad support for the upgrade of existing public art and the development of new public art throughout the neighborhood, with installations within the Loring Village Activity Center. *See page 13 of Chapter 1 - Cultural Assets & Economic Vitality: Priority Locations for Public Art.*

o. **Illegal Cab Parking:** Peak time overcrowding of cab stands near Grant and Nicollet should be reviewed and remedied by City's Regulatory Services.

p. **Truck and Bus Staging around the Convention Center -** Seek a long-term solution to convention trucks and buses having to queue on First and Third Avenues. One possible response might entail building a deck over the truck dock court south of the Convention Center while maintaining a green edge and bicycling lanes along 16th Street in order to relate to the neighborhood better. Such additional off-street parking would be needed if the surface parking lot at Central Lutheran Church were to be lost to development, as that site is used by Convention Center-related cars and trailers.



Walking

The *walkability* of the Loring Park Neighborhood is a major strength of the neighborhood, and with continued attention can become an even more important factor as to why community members move here, stay here and invest here. Loring is best experienced on foot. Major events will continue to draw a wide diversity to the City's central park. An emerging municipal strategy to connect the Mississippi River to the Walker/Sculpture Garden will surely send even more newcomers sauntering through, hopefully regardless of season.

With some exceptions, walking in the Loring Park Neighborhood is generally well accommodated by the streetscape, as there are sidewalks on nearly every block face, paths in place across the park, and continuous tree canopy in most places. It will continue to be a primary means of transportation for community members.

And yet, there is a lot of room for improvement; to the internal network such as crossings to Loring Park. As the neighborhood intensifies around transit, the opportunity for amenities near stops and stations will emerge. More immediately, walking to adjacent neighborhoods and districts is in need of major improvement, so several recommendations address that need, especially with regard to

transit access. These include improving connections to downtown employment or to the bus, streetcar or light rail transit stations.

Recommendations

4.23 Walking to the Stevens Square - Loring Heights

Neighborhood: Through a public process including affected neighborhood organizations, ensure that as the bridges over I-94 at Groveland, LaSalle (recently completed), Nicollet and First Avenues are rebuilt they include generous sidewalks, access ramps, lighting and decorative railings. The public realm connection across Interstate 94 at Nicollet presents unique opportunities beyond these treatments, and is addressed in other sections of this plan.

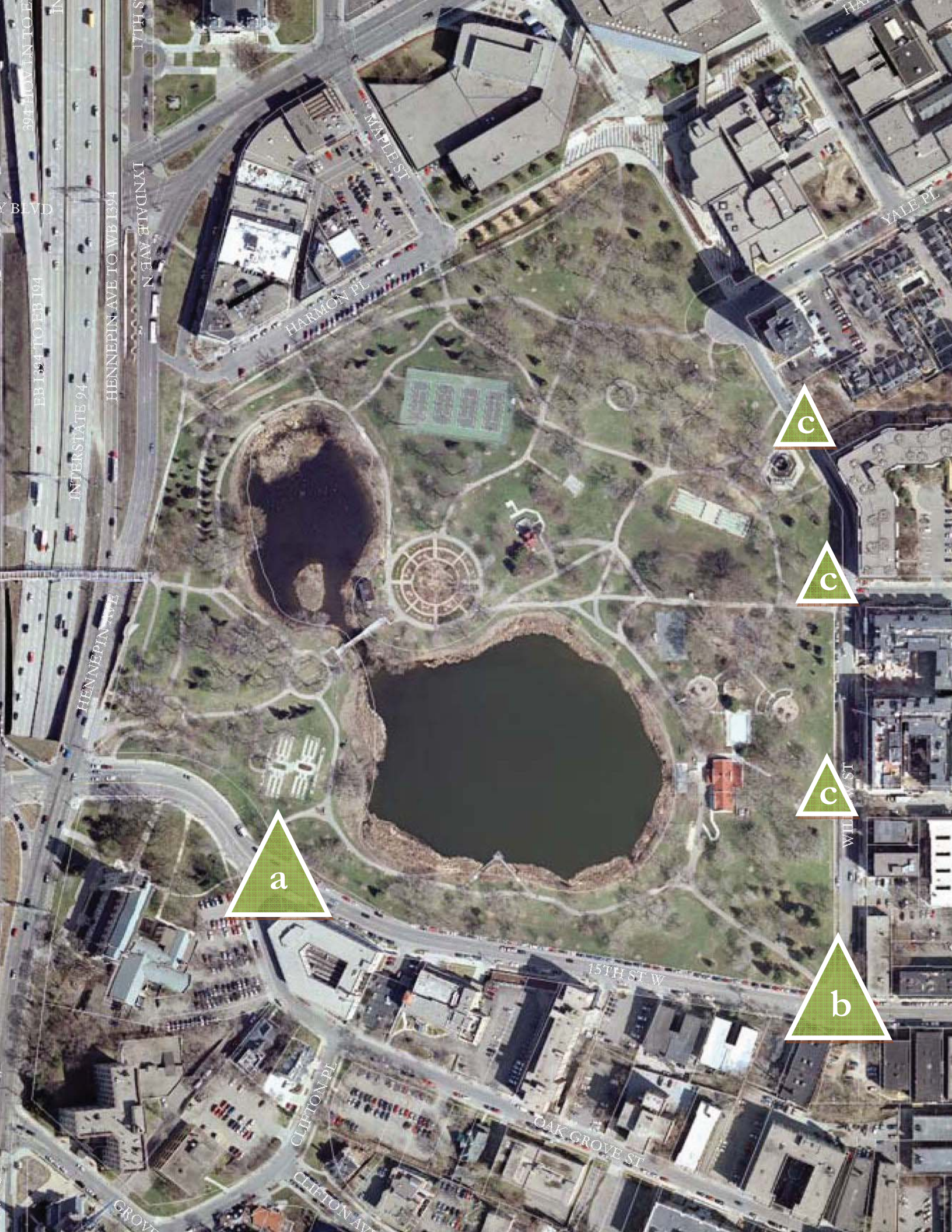
4.24 Walking to the Elliot Park Neighborhood: Through a public process including affected neighborhood organizations, ensure that when the bridge over I-35 at 15th Streets is rebuilt it includes generous sidewalks, access ramps, lighting and decorative railings.

4.25 Walking under the Loring Greenway: Improve the pedestrian experience comprehensively under the Loring Greenway at La Salle Avenue. (Such a study should include recommendations for lighting, wall surfaces, public art (such as ‘water wall’, murals or other features), safety, separation of pedestrians & cars, etc.) Explore feasibility of stairway connection between Loring Greenway and LaSalle Avenue.

4.26 Walking to the North Loop Neighborhood: Through a public process including affected neighborhood organizations, Improve walking and bicycling between the Loring Park Neighborhood and the North Loop Neighborhood by improving the environment along 11th and 12th Streets and along 16th Street. Improvements in that corridor may include striped pedestrian crossings, better lighting, street trees and land redevelopment that is more attractive to view and provides more “eyes on the street.” The North Loop Neighborhood includes attractions such as the Farmers’ Market, Cedar Lake Trail access, and the planned light rail transit stations along Royalston Street and at Target Field.

4.27 Universal Access: Ensure that all public circulation improvements and all new buildings observe the principles of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which improves mobility for all.

4.29 Way-finding to the Downtown Skyway: Improve way-finding from Nicollet Avenue / Loring Village to the skyway via better signage to existing skyway entries off of Nicollet Mall & Convention Center. There is little support in the community for extensions of the skyway further into the neighborhood. Loring wishes to focus public realm investment on street level, encouraging all pedestrian activity to take place on the sidewalks of current streets, or within current public spaces during all seasons of the year.



a

b

c

c

c

Recommendation 4.30 (a-c)

Safe Crossings to Loring Park

The following recommendations define desired characteristics of several key crossings along the edge of Loring Park:



The image above is a photo of a part of a citizen/consultant team during the Discovery Workshop in October 2010. They are crossing Oak Grove Street at 15th Street, returning to The Woman’s Club after photo-documenting issues (and recording their related ideas) after their walkabout around the edge of Loring Park. Establishing safe crossings to the Park from the neighborhood streets emerged as a primary concern.

a **Crossing to Loring Park at the Intersection of 15th Street and Oak Grove Street** – To improve pedestrian crossing safety, rebuild the intersection of 15th and Oak Grove Streets with these features:

- i. clear T design with the east-west legs dominant
- ii. corner bump-outs
- iii. striped pedestrian markings kept clear and visible
- iv. count-down signal timers with visible and audible displays
- v. improved pedestrian hardscape areas
- vi. added landscaping and public art

b **Crossings to Loring Park at the Intersection of Willow Street & 15th Street** - To improve pedestrian crossing safety, rebuild the intersection of 15th and Oak Grove Streets with these features:

- i. clear T design with the east-west legs dominant
- ii. corner bump-outs
- iii. *edge* address timing of lights
- iv. striped pedestrian markings kept clear and visible

c **Crossings to Loring Park along Willow Street** - Upgrade the striped pedestrian crossing between the Loring Greenway and Loring Park by building a raised “pedestrian plateau,” which would also provide a traffic calming effect. Implement pedestrian striping of crosswalks at Grant Street intersection. Study intersections at 14th Street and Yale Place to determine necessity of pedestrian crossing improvements at these intersections.



c

g

b

h

d

a

e

Recommendation 4.31 (a-1)

Image source previous page:
Google Maps

Loring Hill Improvements

Loring Hill has one of the most distinctive urban landscapes in the city of Minneapolis. Situated along the side of a ridge overlooking Loring Park, the mixture of historic mansions, green yards, grand churches and early twentieth century apartment buildings set the stage for a public realm that is highly valued by the community.

The design guidelines specifically define desired characteristics of public realm investments within the focus area defined by Loring Hill Design Guidelines, Section 2.10 - Recommendations, Public Realm & Parking. Where there are differences in the following policy to that within the Loring Hill Guidelines, the following recommendations shall take precedent:

- a. **Connection to Loring Park**
- b. **Traffic Calming**
- c. **Hennepin-Lyndale Corridor**
- d. **Freeway Edge**
- e. **Pocket Parks**
- f. **Dog Parks**
- g. **Dell Place**
- h. **Shared Parking**
- i. **Parking Structures**
- j. **Vistas & Viewsheds**
- k. **Grand Stairway**
- l. **Street Design**

a **Connection to Loring Park** - Loring Park is the "front yard" to Loring Hill and part of the prominent public realm; access, preservation and connection to the park should be emphasized, including:

- i. Safe Crossings - Enhanced pedestrian access/connection from Loring Hill to 15th Street and from Loring Hill across 15th Street to Loring Park
- ii. Traffic calming efforts for 15th Street

See related Recommendation 4.30 in this chapter titled: Safe Crossings to Loring Park.



The mansion at 419 Oak Grove Street is comfortably situated on the southwest corner of the intersection of Oak Grove and Clifton Place, across from The Woman's Club of Minneapolis.

b **Traffic Calming** - The primary pedestrian route to Loring Park along Oak Grove Street, Clifton Place and Clifton Avenue merits traffic calming treatment at key intersections such as; Oak Grove Street, Clifton Place at Oak Grove, Clifton Avenue and Groveland, as well as at Clifton Avenue and Clifton Place. Add a speed table along Groveland Avenue.

c **Hennepin-Lyndale Corridor** - The Lyndale/Hennepin corridor on the west edge of the neighborhood must be treated in an attractive and appealing way to improve pedestrian crossings and adjacent walkways. Special consideration should be given to the Groveland Avenue and 15th Street/Oak Grove intersections. *See also related policy 4.21 in this chapter: Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor.*

- d** **Freeway Edge** - Aesthetics in the neighborhood along the south side at the freeway cut should be improved. Examples include:
 - i. Decorative fencing along the MnDOT ROW
 - ii. Decorative fence on Groveland Avenue across I-94
- e** **Pocket Parks** - Incorporate pocket parks and plazas at key locations:
 - i. NE corner of Spruce Place and Oak Grove Street
- f** **Dog Parks** - Incorporate dog parks where possible.
- g** **Dell Place** - Re-align Dell Place to the 1-94 Hennepin Avenue exit.
- h** **Shared Parking** – Shared parking lots are a common practice in Loring Hill; consider more formal, district parking solutions at strategic locations - these may be formally or informally defined and easily delivered by private partnerships since a number of office, commercial and nonresidential uses require parking this may support a modest parking fee solution. Potential locations include;
 - i. Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church surface lot
 - ii. Episcopal Center site
 - iii. The Woman's Club of Minneapolis surface lot
- i** **Parking Structures** - Parking structures should be below ground and/or fully concealed in Loring Hill. Desirable types of parking structures are illustrated in the Building Types section of the Loring Hill Design Guidelines. (See *Type VI* images for examples.) The decision to approve additional parking facilities should evaluate overall traffic impacts as well as impacts to intersections) pedestrian traffic and on-street parking availability or peak demand hours.
- j** **Vistas & View-sheds** - Views of the architectural features of mansions and institutions (such as the churches along Hennepin/Lyndale corridor and the Woman's Club) and other locally designated historic buildings should be preserved from

public streets and lands. New development should not interfere with these views.



k Grand Stairway from Loring Hill:

Implement a pedestrian stairway between 15th and Oak Grove Streets at a mid-block location, and a similar stairway between Oak Grove Street and Clifton Avenue. These stairways may be either privately owned and maintained or publicly owned and privately maintained. Addressing the hazards of snow and ice will be of special concern.

l Street Design – As street improvements are made, the context sensitive street methodology and design guidelines recently adopted by the City of Minneapolis will be used throughout the neighborhood. These designs will need to be calibrated to Loring Hill context, through a community based process, and also reconciled with the hierarchy of street designs recommended within the *Loring Hill Design Guidelines*.

Grand Stairways: Regional and International Precedents

Regional examples for cross-block stairways range from stairways in Stillwater, MN (downtown) (pictured above right) and St Paul, MN (above left, off Grand Avenue near Ramsey Hill). More grand terraced public spaces such as the Spanish Steps in Rome, Italy (below) were an example preferred by many.



Figure above is cropped from the *Loring Hill Design Guidelines* (2006). There are four desired Street Types S1-S4 specified in the *Loring Hill Design Guidelines*.





Bicycling

The bicycle can be used to greatly extend the range of a trip by transit, to conveniently complete short trips and to accomplish longer trips, particularly on this region's network of off-road paths.

Thus, one of the issues addressed by this section is what should be done to improve bicycling to and from the Cedar Lake Trail, the chain of lakes, the planned Van White Boulevard and the planned Southwest Corridor Light Rail Transit stations?

Similarly, an important connection is proposed along Harmon Place between the Loring Park Bicycle Path and the Downtown bicycling system at 12th Street.

Finally, the bicycling lanes installed in 2011 for 15th and 16th Streets are acknowledged and should be maintained.

Recommendations

4.32 Harmon Place Bicycling Improvements: The bicycling route should be extended from Loring Park along Harmon Place northward to the neighborhood boundary at 12th, then further north to 10th Street. These proposed bicycling improvements will link the Loring-Lyndale bicycle path to the eastbound striped lanes along 12th Street. The bicycle route across Loring Park is routed along the western side of the park, so Harmon Place should serve as a connection from the park to the north. (Please refer to public realm design guidelines for *Harmon Place Streetscape* earlier in this chapter.)

4.33 Bicycling across Loring Park: Maintain designated bicycle trail that runs through the north and west sides of the park. Support enhancements that encourage safe separation between cyclists and pedestrians.

4.34 Hennepin Avenue: Extend the Hennepin Avenue bicycling lanes south to Lyndale Avenue.

4.35 LaSalle and First Avenue: Add bike lanes to both avenues within the neighborhood.

4.36 11th & 12th Streets to North Loop: Improve bicycling between the Loring Park Neighborhood and the North Loop Neighborhood by adding striped pedestrian crossings, better lighting, street trees and pedestrian friendly building frontages that provide more “eyes on the street”.

4.37 Connections to Van White Boulevard: Sign and mark routes for bicyclists and pedestrians to access the planned Van White Boulevard and the LRT station planned near that road. These routes should basically follow 15th Street, Vineland Place, Kenwood Parkway and Parade Stadium Drive to pass under I-394 to Van White Boulevard. *Note: Further formal study and design will be required in order to set policy for safe, adequate mitigations to bike (and walking) connections through I-94 underpass at Dunwoody Blvd and onto Dunwoody itself north of the Sculpture Garden in the Lowry Hill Neighborhood. (See 3.47 Connections to Adjacent Neighborhoods and Districts)*



4.38 Bicycling Connections to Adjacent Neighborhoods and Districts: The recommendations listed above for improved pedestrian connections to the North Loop, Stevens Square, and Elliot Park neighborhoods would also benefit bicyclists.

CLPC will work closely with the City and Lowry Hill neighborhood to develop safe transit along Vineland Place and Dunwoody Boulevard to The Parade facilities, Kenwood Parkway and Lake of the Isles, Cedar Lake Trail, and Van White Boulevard/LRT Station. Although bicyclists should not use sidewalks, the sidewalk along the northern side of Dunwoody Boulevard might be the only safe route for bicyclists to move between the Parade Stadium parking lot and the Cedar Lake Trail, Van White Boulevard and the proposed light rail transit station. The return trip along Dunwoody Boulevard is especially hazardous because a freeway off-ramp merges into Dunwoody Boulevard. Advanced riders who use Dunwoody Boulevard must exercise great caution there.]



4.39 Bicycle Parking: Encourage the City and private entities to install bicycle locking or storage facilities at key locations along streets, in parks, at retail or office buildings and inside residential buildings.

4.40 Bicycle Sharing – Maintain current bicycle sharing service and support the addition of new bicycle sharing facilities at locations across the neighborhood. (*Nice Ride facility pictured below.*)





Parks and Open Space

Parks and other open space are essential for livability in a high density urban location such as the Loring Park Neighborhood. Fortunately, the neighborhood is served by several fine public spaces including Loring Park, the Loring Greenway, the Walker Sculpture Garden, the Convention Center pedestrian mall, Nicollet Mall and Peavey Plaza. Each are unique destinations, but also critical links in a green corridor connecting Downtown and the Convention Center to the Walker, to The Grand Rounds and neighborhoods to the west.

This section describes several improvements to the park and open space that build on past accomplishments.

Recommendation 4.41 (a-p)

Loring Park Improvements



While this plan does not focus on the park itself (see the Loring Park Master of 1996), the importance of Loring Park in planning for the surrounding neighborhood is clearly evident. The Park serves the entire city as a very green central square, with important civic and cultural events happening there throughout much of the year. Movement through the neighborhood and crossing to the park is a critical issue for visitors and residents alike.

On a daily basis Loring Park serves as a major crossroads for pedestrians and cyclists, connecting area residents to jobs, and both residents and visitors to the major cultural institutions that face the park. The natural beauty of the park is a major reason that both residents and visitors are drawn to its edges. Public space along the edge is important for the movement of pedestrians, cyclists and automobiles. The edge also offers wonderful opportunities for developing public space across from the park that capitalizes on the green relief of the park view. For residents and visitors alike that view is invested with cultural significance. As a community driven plan,

recommendations are also provided that give direction to future art installations that would be in fitting with the natural landscape and with the planning of the MPRB.

While this plan does not comprehensively address all the issues critical to Loring Park, there are several important recommendations, generated by planning for the larger neighborhood, that are important to community members:

- a. **Funding Mechanisms:** Continue community/park discussions regarding the development of relationships to assist with capital expenditures and improvements to Loring Park.
- b. **Year-round Activity:** Enhance programming to ensure that facilities serve residents and visitors year-round.
- c. **Crossings to the Park** - Improve pedestrian crossings to the park at all key points. See *Recommendation 4.30 Safe Crossings to Loring Park* earlier in this chapter.
- d. **Perimeter Sidewalk** (on the park side of perimeter streets)– Where feasible, install and maintain a continuous sidewalk along the edge of the park. This will enhance the access to the park along its edge, affording improved views of the park for pedestrians, as well as to ease the entering and exiting of vehicles. Along the south edge (15th Street), various terrain related issues may make a sidewalk technically and financially prohibitive along several portions. Further study would be required.
- e. **Insterstate Impacts** - Protect Loring Park from the noise and salt of I-94 and Hennepin/Lyndale corridor by improving the berming, plantings and structures along its western edge.
- f. **Cattails** - Partner with MPRB to develop an ongoing program to minimize the growth of invasive cattails along the shore of Loring pond in favor of a diverse range of sustainable native species.
- g. **Commuter Bike Routes** - Clarify bicycle route across the western edge of the park by adding shoulder and centerline stripes.

h. **Path System & Walking Routes** - Continue to maintain and improve the pavement, landscaping and continue to refine the path system.

i. **Park Entries:** Improve the following park entrances with way-finding, public art, updated landscaping, and to enhance safety:

- Harmon Place & Maple Street
- Connections to MCTC
- Willow Street & Yale
- Willow Street & Loring Greenway @ Berger Fountain
- Willow Street & Grant Street
- Willow Street & 14th Street
- Willow Street & 15th Street
- 15th Street & Oak Grove Street
- Hennepin/Lyndale corridor & Oak Grove Street



j. **Berger Fountain** (*pictured to left*): Renovate the Berger Fountain and redesign the plaza.

k. **Active Recreation:** Support the maintenance and upgrade of interactive sport and play facilities including but not limited to tennis, basketball, horseshoes, shuffle board, chess, playground and a public pool.

l. **Programming:** Support a broad range of programming that appeals to all ages and backgrounds.

m. **Connections & Way-finding:**

Strengthen physical connections and improve way-finding between Loring Park and the rest of the Minneapolis Park System including to the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, Kenwood Parkway, the Cedar Lake Trail, the chain of lakes, and the Mississippi riverfront.

n. **Conservation of Existing Public Art** – Develop a long-term plan to maintain existing works of art within Loring Park, such as

*Foreground: Berger Fountain.
Background: steeple of Hennepin Avenue
United Methodist Church.
Photograph by Bill Weber, Summer 2011.*

Berger Fountain. Utilize the Minneapolis Park Board program for maintaining works of art within parks.

o. **Urban Farming on Park Land:** pursue potential of community agriculture in the park such as urban orchards or urban farming. *Also see Chapter 5: Sustainability*

p. **Grand Promenade:** Develop walkway from the Loring Greenway across Loring Park to the Walker Art Center as a feature “promenade” for residents and visitors.



Above: The Basilica of St Mary from the south, looking across Loring Pond. Photograph provided by Master Plan Steering Committee Member Paul Hinderager.

Recommendation 4.42 (a-i)

Loring Greenway Improvements

The Loring Greenway is a pedestrian and bicycle-only landscaped corridor that runs from Nicollet Mall near Orchestra Hall to Loring Park at the Berger Fountain. It was designed by the noted Landscape architect M. Paul Freidberg in the 1970s as the centerpiece of the Loring Greenway Development District which added hundreds of new households to the neighborhood with new mid to high-density development that continued until the mid 1980s.

By the mid-2000s the walkways and other infrastructure were crumbling. The health and attractiveness of the landscape was in steep decline. As a result of strong leadership from neighborhood residents the City of Minneapolis committed \$2.8 million for a 2007 project that rebuilt walkways, fountains and the garden landscape.

Area residents and businesses formed the Loring Greenway Association (LGA) in 2008 in order to bring together volunteers and raise financial support to develop and implement a sustainable plan to maintain the greenway as top quality public green space, and in order to pursue the realization of a greater vision of an even more vital and beautiful greenway in the future.

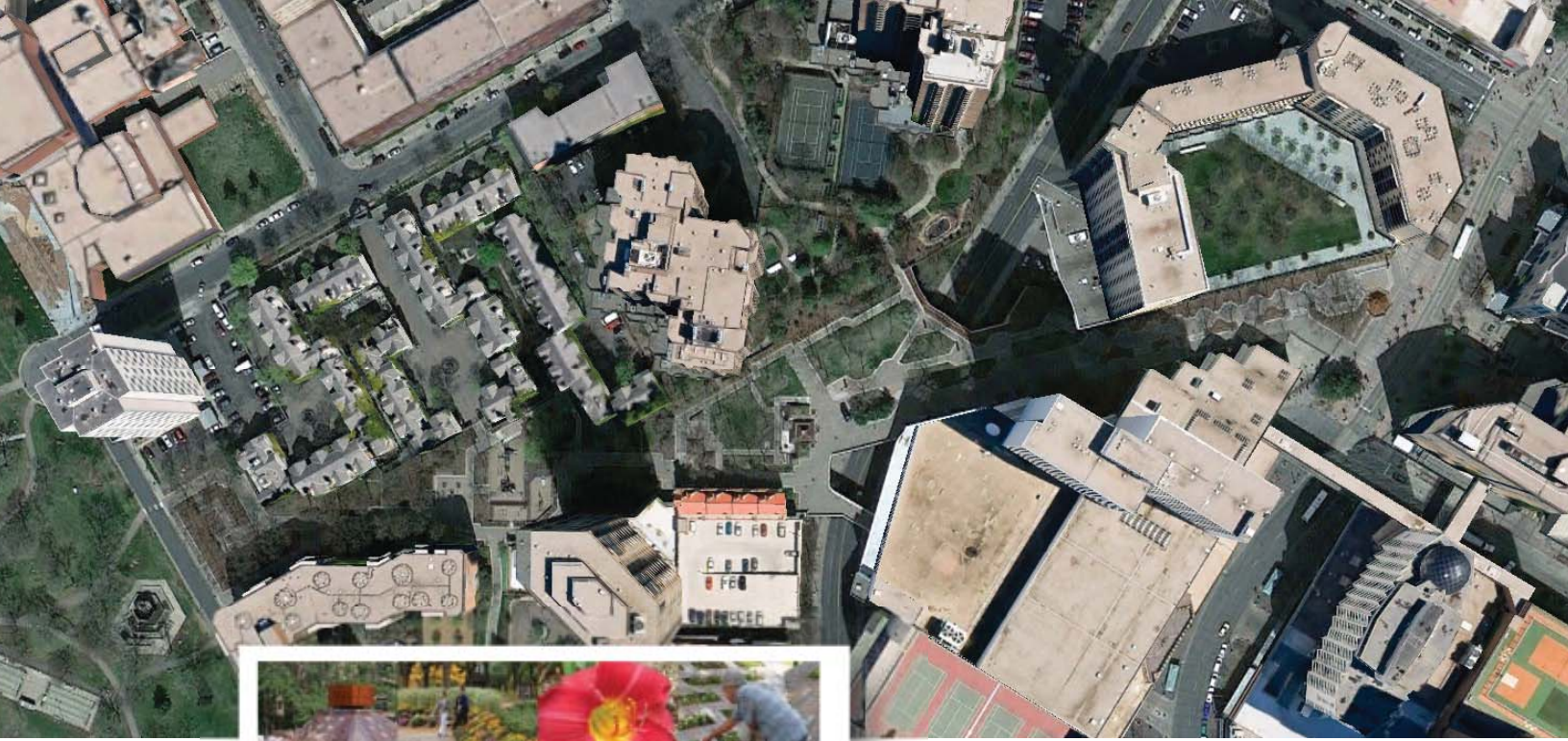
Following the vision of the downtown Minneapolis 2025 Plan the Loring Greenway Association hopes to create a Loring Greenway that is one of the most

beautiful and engaging walkways in the United States, providing a vital link in Minneapolis' green pathway stretching from the Mississippi River to the Walker Art Center and the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, and to draw on the many thousands of visitors who visit the Minneapolis Convention Center every year.



*Above: Loring Greenway in 2011.
Photograph by Bill Weber.*

*Source of aerial image
on following page: Google Earth*



Dedicated to preserving and beautifying the Loring Greenway, a premier urban walkway [View a Presentation](#)



The Loring Greenway Association is preparing a major campaign to enhance the Loring Greenway. The following pages detail the ideas that our Association has developed for what should be included within the Loring Greenway enhancement plan.

- Signage that provides direction & aesthetic appearance
- Colorful seasonal banners
- Creative seating placements
- Dynamic lighting schemes

"Finish the Plan"
LORING GREENWAY
ENHANCEMENT PLAN

"Finish the Plan" In 2011, with help of Damon Farber Associates, the Loring Greenway Association adopted a plan called the *Loring Greenway Enhancement Plan*, from which many of the recommended policies in this plan are based. Public Realm issues addressed in the plan include gathering nodes, seating, lighting, signage and banners. *The cover to the left and the plan graphics below are cropped from the PDF of the plan.* This document and information regarding the future of the Greenway is found at www.loringgreenway.org



Existing Conditions

The following recommendations address the Loring Greenway:

a. **Improvements** - Add attractive site improvements including new lighting for special summertime and wintertime effects, attractive seating, seasonal banners, and performance gazebo.

b. **Way-finding** - Add directional signage and other way-finding aids at key points along the greenway, and ensure that the Loring Greenway is included as part of way-finding aids along the Nicollet Mall and at the Minneapolis Convention Center.

c. **Cultural & Community Programming** - Add cultural and community programming including musical and artistic performances for neighborhood residents, visitors, shoppers and downtown workers.

d. **Marketing** - Use marketing strategies to heighten public awareness and to make the Greenway a sought after destination.

e. **Management** - Incorporate sustainable management.

f. **Maintenance** - Ensure quality control, safety and a solid long term financial structure to maintain improvements into the future.

g. **Connection to Loring Park** - Improve pedestrian crossing to Loring Park at Willow Street. Add striping, speed table and/or other improvements that are determined appropriate and available. Improve Berger Fountain plaza and coordinate pathways leading into and across the park.

h. **Stairway to LaSalle Avenue** - Pursue opportunities to create stair connecting the Loring Greenway with LaSalle Avenue.

i. **LaSalle Avenue under the Greenway** – During or before the transition of LaSalle from one way to two way vehicular traffic, advocate for a redesign of the LaSalle streetscape environment under the Greenway along LaSalle Avenue and implementation of stairway between the Greenway and LaSalle Avenue. CLPC will work through and support the Loring Greenway Association on this and all subjects related to the Greenway.



Existing connection to Loring Greenway at Grant Street.



Location of potential stairway connection to Loring Greenway at LaSalle Avenue.



Livability

Livability is of critical importance to successful urban communities like Loring Park Neighborhood. Livability can be a range of issues – adequate lighting, no graffiti, enhanced beautification and public realm, public art, eyes on the street through active use of public space. Real threats to safety and the perception of safety in a community can make or break a successful commercial corridor or a neighborhood. Livability can be negatively impacted when residents, property owners, businesses, and students feel that their safety is at risk. Risk factors for this may be drug dealing, gunfire, or prostitution.

Citizens for a Loring Park Community (CLPC) continues to partner with several agencies and organizations to develop a response to crime as it arises. Community partners and stakeholders are organized and solutions created. *(See links to the right.)*

To complement and support continuing community efforts, the following recommendations were developed, based on the community based goals of the Loring Park Neighborhood approved Neighborhood Revitalization Phase II Plan:



Community Forum: The **Livability Committee**

Citizens for a Loring Park Community (CLPC) hosts a community forum monthly:
Livability Committee
www.loringpark.org



CLPC also participates in projects such as:

Restorative Justice
www.rjca-inc.org

Downtown Court Watch, led by
Downtown Improvement District
www.minneapolisdid.com



Pedestrian comfort and walkability in Loring Park Neighborhood is an important issue for residents. The primary means of transportation are walking, bicycling or transit. In addition to good street design, it will be important to continue employing thoughtful greening and lighting to help ensure safety and the *perception* of safety.



Recommendations

4.43 Public Forums Provide public forums where residents can discuss public safety issues and brainstorm innovative solutions to identified obstacles within the criminal justice system. The forum should provide opportunities for interaction and collaboration with Hennepin County, Minneapolis Police Department, City Attorney, County Attorney, social service partners, housing providers, treatment resources, and reentry services.

4.44 Community Safety Network Continue to build a network between property owners, businesses, residents, institutions, social service partners, Hennepin County, City of Minneapolis resources, and Minneapolis Police Department to share and communicate information on a regular basis and more frequent as issues may demand.

4.45 Ending Homelessness Support efforts to end homelessness through outreach to provide shelter, treatment and job training to people who sleep outside or in inhumane places.

4.46 Collaboration between Neighborhoods Distribute and share information with adjacent neighborhoods on strategies, approaches, crime trends, projects, and activities.

4.47 Reduce Livability Part II Crimes Work to ensure prioritization for reduction of Livability Crimes within Hennepin County. the City of Minneapolis/Minneapolis Police Department, and Service providers. Examples of Part II crimes are as follows but not limited to prostitution, drug dealing, public intoxication, or aggressive panhandling.

4.48 Build Community Policing and Neighborhood Partnership with Minneapolis Police Department Develop annually a Neighborhood Policing Plan in partnership with Minneapolis Police Department, community partners, and residents.

4.49 Police Presence Ensure police presence across the neighborhood with a special emphasis in and around Nicollet Avenue and within the Activity Center.

Study of Chicago Finds Neighborhood Efficacy Explains Reduction in Violence

It is hypothesized that collective efficacy, defined as social cohesion among neighbors combined with their willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good, is linked to reduced violence. This hypothesis was tested on a 1995 survey of 8782 residents of 343 neighborhoods in Chicago, Illinois. In a major report from a large-scale study of human and community development, investigators show that lower rates of violence occur in urban neighborhoods characterized by collective efficacy.

The investigators argue that collective efficacy, defined as mutual trust and a willingness to intervene in the supervision of children and the maintenance of public order, offers a deeper understanding of the social mechanisms that have linked neighborhood poverty and instability, in many previous studies, with high crime rates. An active and shared willingness to monitor children's play groups, help neighbors, and intervene in preventing acts such as juvenile truancy or street-corner loitering are key examples of neighborhood collective efficacy.

According to Dr. Robert Sampson, "Instead of external actions (for example, a police crackdown), we stress in this study the effectiveness of 'informal' mechanisms by which residents themselves achieve public order.

"If you got a crew to clean up the mess," Dr. Earls said, "it would last for two weeks and go back to where it was. The point of intervention is not to clean up the neighborhood, but to work on its collective efficacy. If you organized a community meeting in a local church or school, it's a chance for people to meet and solve problems."

"If one of the ideas that comes out of the meeting is for them to clean up the graffiti in the neighborhood, the benefit will be much longer lasting, and will probably impact the development of kids in that area. But it would be based on this community action — not on a work crew coming in from the outside."

As for policy implications, Dr. Earls said that rather than focusing on arresting squeegee men and graffiti scrawlers, local governments should support the development of cooperative efforts in neighborhoods by encouraging neighbors to meet and work together. Indeed, cities that sow community gardens, he said, may reap a harvest of not only kale and tomatoes, but safer neighborhoods and healthier children and families.

4.51 Enhance Street Lighting Schedule with Xcel Energy an update of all neighborhood pedestrian level ornamental lighting.

4.52 Eliminate Litter in the Activity Center Develop partnerships and strategies to eliminate litter in and around Nicollet Avenue.

4.53 Promote Nicollet Avenue and the Activity Center Expand the Downtown Improvement District Safety Ambassadors through purchase of service south along Nicollet Avenue to the Freeway to enhance comfort level of visitors, students, and residents.

4.54 Cultivate New Leadership Continue to develop an Annual Outreach Plan to recruit and develop participation and leadership.

4.55 Activate Public Spaces To ensure a Livable Environment, create opportunities for more “eyes on the street” through occupied commercial spaces, public art, and public events in and along Nicollet Avenue and within the Activity Center.

4.56 Provide Safety Training Coordinate safety training in community apartment buildings with Minneapolis Police Department.

