



# Executive Summary






The following is an executive summary of The Loring Park Neighborhood Master Plan, beginning with statements of community identity and vision, followed by a list of immediate actions, major strategic goals and summaries of the recommendations found in the five chapters of the plan.

What We Are

Neighborhood Vision

Major Strategic Goals

Master Plan Chapter Summaries:

-  1 Cultural Assets & Economic Development
-  2 Land Use & Built Form
-  3 Protecting Historic Resources
-  4 Public Realm
-  5 Sustainability

Developer's Checklist

The Loring Indicators

Implementation Priorities

## What We Are

The Loring Park neighborhood is blessed with a wonderful urban and natural setting. At its center is Loring Park, a beautiful mix of greenery, water and human activity. To the south of the park is the historic ridge known locally as Loring Hill. To the east and west are Nicollet and Hennepin Avenues, two of the city's most important commercial and civic corridors. And finally, to the north, the towers of downtown Minneapolis rise nearby. We comprise some of Minneapolis' most unique residential areas, some of the region's most important institutions and much more.

*We are a complex and interesting place...*

### We are both Historic and Contemporary

The structures in the neighborhood reflect the whole history of settlement in Minneapolis. Some of the mansions built when the area was first settled remain to this day and lend an aristocratic quality to the area. A number of large and beautiful churches define the neighborhood. Amongst the urban fabric are buildings reflecting the continuous history of development in Minneapolis, culminating with the ultra-modern Walker Art Center just across Hennepin Avenue.

### We are very Dynamic

Population flows in and out continuously: residents, daily workers, visitors, college students, school children, clientele, customers, conventioners, entrepreneurs, festival attendees, theater patrons and churchgoers. There are many people, whose starting point and destination are not here, but who must pass through the neighborhood to reach where they are going. This includes pedestrians, bicyclists, drivers and transit riders, all making us a very dynamic, ever changing community.

### We are very Public

City and region-wide festivals, park activities, destination restaurants, theaters, large historic churches, etc. make the Loring Park Community a very public place.

### We are very Diverse

The residents of Loring Park choose the area not only for its location, but also for its rich diversity. The neighborhood reflects all the diversity Minneapolis has to offer. People of all ages and incomes live and work in the neighborhood. The Park hosts the annual Gay Pride Festival and the Loring Art Fair, bringing thousand of people from around the region. Students at MCTC reflect the cultural diversity of Minneapolis' immigrant communities. The neighborhood is considered by those who reside there to be welcoming to all.

### We are highly Sustainable

We are diverse in our population, commerce, institutions, community enterprise and activity. We are highly compact, walkable, and transit oriented. These factors make us a highly sustainable community, now and going into the future.

### ...and, We are highly Unique

The Loring Park Neighborhood provides diverse residents, workers, and visitors a welcoming environment that is historic and contemporary, public and private, appealing and sustainable, walkable and transit-friendly, and can boast several characteristics unique in our region:

- largest & most diverse array of gathering places in the Midwest, including several major civic and cultural institutions, Loring Park, and Loring Greenway
- two-times average proportion creative sector businesses and a high rate of creative sector & self-employed workers
- center of GLBT heritage and community in "The Gayest City in America" *"Minneapolis:*

*Gayest City in America” – The Advocate (January 2011)*

- Hennepin & Nicollet, as mixed use corridors on the regional primary transit network, are centers of activity and gateways to Downtown’s Theater District & Nicollet Mall, making Loring the most easily accessible neighborhood for Downtown workers
- sustainable Victorian/Industrial Era block & street pattern supports a building fabric of wide array of architectural vernaculars & typologies, including a diverse mix of affordable to market rate urban housing options

## Neighborhood Vision

The shared vision for the Loring Park Neighborhood is to nurture, with care, its’ evolving identity as ...

***...Minnesota’s  
greatest gathering place  
and  
...Minnesota’s  
best urban living experience.***

Supporting these strengths will help our community stay competitive in a changing global, national and regional economy over the next twenty years.

Community members, working together, will continue to celebrate, protect and leverage the remarkable qualities and aesthetics of Loring Park Neighborhood’s urban and natural setting, its diverse array of urban living choices, and its opportunities for interaction, learning, and enjoyment of cultures.

## Major Strategic Goals

Strategic Goal #1

**Nurture the Neighborhood's role in the region's creative economy;**

Strategic Goal #2

**Guide infill development and strengthen mixed-use corridors;**

Strategic Goal #3

**Protect, preserve and enhance historic character and unique architecture;**

Strategic Goal #4

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

Strategic Goal #5

**Achieve sustainable buildings and infrastructure.**

## Master Plan Chapters



**Chapter 1**

**Cultural Assets & Economic Vitality**



**Chapter 2**

**Land Use & Built Form**



**Chapter 3**

**Protecting Historic Resources**



**Chapter 4**

**Public Realm**



**Chapter 5**

**Sustainability**

## Chapter 1 Summary

# Cultural Assets & Economic Vitality

*Strategic Goal #1 Nurture the role of the Neighborhood in the region's creative economy;*

The Cultural Assets and Economic Vitality chapter of the *Loring Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan* addresses how those two increasingly interrelated elements are mutually supportive and can be strengthened in these ways:

**Affirm Neighborhood Identity:** More clearly define the Neighborhood's role and identity. Prepare a plan for the locations and types of public art in the Neighborhood; several recommendations are offered.

**Invest in Creative Businesses and Residents:** Foster social and support networks among creative sector professionals who live and work in the Neighborhood. Identify funding for creative enterprises. Develop infrastructure for creative enterprises. Serve and connect students.

**Activate Public Places:** Support a culture of walking and interaction in public space. Implement a way-finding master plan. Grow community events. Promote walking tours. Coordinate institutional open houses. Create interactive maps.

**Strengthen Organization and Promotion:** Develop an inter-organizational network. Produce a calendar of programs for Loring's public spaces. Continue support for CLPC organizational activities. Form an art business district in Loring Village.

**Support a Diversity of People, Places and Opportunities:** Plan a full range of housing choices, retail businesses, services, schools and religious institutions. Broaden the range of

transportation alternatives. Continue to improve public spaces for gathering, entertainment and recreation.

## Chapter 2 Summary

# Land Use & Built Form

*Strategic Goal #2 Guide infill development, and strengthen mixed use districts.*

This chapter of the *Loring Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan* addresses the pattern of future land use along with the height, setback and frontage treatments of buildings, sometimes known as "built form." Included are a detailed map and description of the desired future pattern of land use across the Neighborhood, more detailed guidance for each of four Neighborhood districts and a checklist for prospective land developers.

**Amendments to the Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan:** Amendments to the *Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan* Figure 1.2a, Future Land Use, are recommended:

- **To Urban Neighborhood from Mixed Use:** Parcels facing Hawthorne Avenue, Yale and Spruce Place, the Loring Greenway (west of LaSalle Avenue and facing LaSalle Avenue south of 15<sup>th</sup> Street). These changes affirm the residential nature of the location.
- **To Mixed Use from Urban Neighborhood:** Parcels facing the Hennepin-Lyndale corridor. (These changes reflect current land use and the Commercial Corridor designation of the *Comprehensive Plan*.) Parcels along the south side of 15<sup>th</sup> Street including parcels along the southern edge of Loring Park. (These changes broaden the range of uses to possibly bring additional life to the park edge.)

- **To Public and Institutional:** The campus of the Minneapolis Community and Technical College, St Mark’s Church, the Minneapolis Convention Center, Westminster Church and Emerson School. These changes reflect current land use.

**Activity Center for the Loring Park Neighborhood:** It is recommended that part of the Loring Village district of the Neighborhood be guided in the *Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan* as an Activity Center. As defined by the *Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan*, an Activity Center should:

- Attract residents, workers, and visitors from throughout the city and region
- Support a wide range of commercial, office, and residential uses
- Support district and shared parking
- Be oriented toward pedestrians
- Maintain a traditional urban form and scale
- Be well-served by transit
- Encourage mixed use buildings, with commercial uses located on the ground floor and secure entrances for residential uses
- Encourage high- to very-high density housing.

**Building Heights:** The principal recommendation of the Built Form Plan is that there should be four building heights that range from three to ten stories.

- Intensity A: Up to three stories
- Intensity B: Up to four stories
- Intensity C: Up to six stories
- Intensity D: Up to ten stories

Buildings in the height range of six to ten stories should only be allowed in three locations: the Activity Center, along the Loring Greenway and along Hennepin Avenue. Residential towers, which are defined as being taller than ten stories, should only be allowed in the Activity Center and east of the Convention Center. In other areas of the neighborhood such as Loring Hill’s Lower and Upper

Terrace, there are parcels designated as Intensity A or B, limiting height to three or four stories in order to respect the predominant character.

To receive CLPC approval or an exception to the maximum building height allowed by zoning, the a developer must meet the conditions stated in the plan in addition to any other requirements normally required to receive a variance or a Special Use Permit.

**Zoning Ordinance and Map:** Bring the zoning text and map into conformance with the recommendations for land use and built form of this chapter.

**Existing Surface Parking Lots:** Throughout the neighborhood, advocate for the reduction of off-street surface parking and the gradual redevelopment of most off-street surface parking lots to other uses.

**Structured Parking:** Below grade (vs. above-grade or surface) parking solutions should be encouraged in all situations where new parking is developed. Special guidance is provided for structured, shared and district parking in the Loring Village Activity Center.

**Emerson School Building and Block:** Support through zoning the continued educational functions of the Emerson School building and block. If educational use should cease there, advocate to preserve the building and site for adaptive re-use as housing or another public use.

**Historic Apartment Area:** Zoning and redevelopment reviews in the Historic Apartment Area should strongly favor mid-density housing to a height of six stories (four stories at the front property line). Redevelopment proposals should include provisions for on-site parking for residents and visitors consistent with zoning regulations.

**Hennepin-Harmon District:** Through zoning and street redesign, seek to attract storefront professional offices, small shops, upper-story housing and continued college investment while protecting the integrity of the Harmon Place Historic District. Accomplish remodeling and development in a manner consistent with the height, setback, façade and other guidelines of the Historic District zoning overlay district. The relevance and importance of the *Harmon Place Historic District Design Guidelines* are hereby reaffirmed and supported.

**Minneapolis Community and Technical College:** Support implementation of the MCTC campus master plan that sets a course for future expansion to occur with the current campus boundaries.

**Loring Greenway District:** Maintain the present land use and built form of the Loring Greenway district through the Land Use Plan of the *Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan* and the Minneapolis zoning ordinance, as reinforced by the Land Use Plan and Built Form Plan in this document.

**Loring Hill Pattern of Land Use:** Plan the general future use of land in Loring Hill according to these categories from the *Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan* as illustrated by the Land Use Plan map: Urban Neighborhood, Mixed Use, and Public and Institutional

**Zoning in Loring Hill:** Conduct a study to adopt new zoning regulations for Loring Hill that implement the policies of this plan. The current OR-3 zoning classification is judged to be insufficient as a means of achieving the land use and urban design objectives stated in this plan for Loring Hill.

**Design Principles for Loring Hill:** Design principles for Loring Hill were adopted from the

Loring Hill Design Guidelines (CLPC, 2006) in these subjects:

**Foundation:** The basis for these recommendations is the *Loring Hill Design Guidelines*.

**Loring Hill Is Not Downtown:** Loring Hill should be planned and regulated much differently than Downtown.

**Relationship to Loring Park:** Development should reinforce the relationship between Loring Hill and Loring Park.

**Hillside Impression:** Development should reinforce the image of Loring Hill being a hillside neighborhood.

**Harmony:** Infill and redevelopment buildings should be designed to respect nearby structures.

**Relationship of Buildings to Streets:** Frontage design and the relationship of buildings to the public sidewalk and street should follow the principles established in the *Loring Hill Design Guidelines*.

**Architectural Standards:** Building architectural design should follow the examples provided in the *Loring Hill Design Guidelines*.

**Mixed Use Development:** Buildings located in the Mixed-Use land use plan designation (which lines Loring Park, as illustrated by the Land Use Plan map) should include spaces for retail, service, office or hospitality businesses in combination with housing. Completely non-residential combinations are not desired on Loring Hill.

**Parking:** New development in Loring Hill should accommodate all of its parking demand on site and not expect to use the overburdened street parking system.

**Greenery:** Plantings should be maintained and enhanced among the buildings on Loring Hill in order to soften the density, improve

aesthetics and connect the Hill visually to the Park.

**Personal Security:** Buildings should provide “eyes on the street” through the generous use of windows and transparent doors that face streets, parking and other walkways, both at street and upper levels.

## Chapter 3 Summary

### Protecting Historic Resources

*Strategic Goal #3 Protect, preserve and enhance historic character and unique architecture:*

A detailed historic resources survey conducted of the Neighborhood in 2008 identified several properties worthy of additional study and possible historic designation.

Loring Park may be included in the Grand Rounds National Scenic Byway if that designation occurs. Otherwise, there are no districts in the Neighborhood that currently would qualify for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

**Landmark Properties:** Support the local or national historic designation of specifically named properties that are not already designated.

**Historic Districts:** Explore the potential of Loring Hill as a local historic district. Follow the policies in the Land Use and Built Form chapter of this plan that address Loring Hill as a means of protecting its distinctive scale and character.

**Conservation Districts:** Explore creating a formal mechanism that would enable establishing “conservation districts” in Minneapolis, which would require adding a provision to the zoning or preservation code. A potential location for a

conservation district may be the Loring Park Apartment District (refer to the Land Use Plan chapter for the boundaries).

**Adaptive Re-Use of Buildings:** Support efforts to re-use and retain shop-front mixed-use buildings; support efforts to overcome obstacles preventing re-use of Neighborhood mansions.

## Chapter 4 Summary

### Public Realm

*Strategic Goal #4 Cultivate an exceptional urban pedestrian experience and enhance connections to destinations in surrounding neighborhoods;*

The Public Realm chapter addresses municipal facilities and services with a focus on circulation. Recommendations are presented in the following subjects:

**Transit:** Support efforts to build a streetcar line on Nicollet Avenue. Advocate for commercial car-sharing service in the Neighborhood.

**Streets:** Ensure that every street is designed as a “complete street.” Promote the reconstruction of Harmon Place to calm traffic and improve bicycling and walking. Promote short-term and long-term improvements to the Hennepin-Lyndale corridor to soften its impact on the Neighborhood and better link the two sides. Advocate for the two-way conversion of La Salle and 1st Avenues.

**Auto Parking:** Advocate for reduced off-street surface parking. Require structured parking design that protects appearances and the walking environment. Facilitate shared and district parking. Maximize on-street parking.



**Walking:** Build a mid-block stairway between 15<sup>th</sup> and Oak Grove Streets. Improve the pedestrian crossing at 15<sup>th</sup> and Oak Grove Streets. Build a mid-block pedestrian crossing of 15<sup>th</sup> Street. Improve the pedestrian crossing of the Hennepin-Lyndale corridor. Improve pedestrian connections to the North Loop District, Van White Boulevard and the Elliot Park Neighborhood. Install a sidewalk on the Willow and 15<sup>th</sup> Street edges of Loring Park. Improve the visual, physical and psychological connection among the Nicollet Mall, the Convention Center, Nicollet Avenue, Loring Park and the Walker Sculpture Garden. Ensure that all buildings have an appropriate architectural relationship to the public sidewalk. Improve wayfinding to the skyway system. Enhance the walking and bicycling environment of the bridges over I-94 at the time they are rebuilt.

**Bicycling:** Rebuild Harmon Place with bicycling lanes. Improve the bicycling route from the southwestern corner of Loring Park to Harmon Place. Extend the Hennepin Avenue bicycling lanes south to Lyndale Avenue. Improve bicycling connections to the North Loop District, Van White Boulevard, the Elliot Park Neighborhood and the Stevens Square–Loring Heights Neighborhood.

**Parks and Open Space:** Continue to improve and maintain Loring Park. Help ensure that the Loring Greenway remains a premier urban space. Prepare and follow a plan for the locations and types of public art in the Neighborhood. Promote community gardens.

## Chapter 5 Summary



### Sustainability

*Strategic Goal #5 Achieve sustainable buildings and infrastructure.*

This chapter of the *Loring Park Neighborhood Small Area Plan* addresses sustainability of urban systems and the natural environment. The first section addresses the Neighborhood within the context of the City’s sustainability policy, the *Greenprint*, the second presents the results of an analysis based on LEED for Neighborhood Development, and the third presents seven measurements of progress.

**Toward a Sustainable City:** Publicize and promote the City’s Sustainability Indicators, which address the topics of a healthy life, environmental protection and a vital community.

**Measuring Progress in the Neighborhood:** Use the measurement system of the US Green Building Council known as Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) to assess progress toward sustainability. Analysis in 2010 and 2011 revealed that the Neighborhood ranks well in the categories of location and linkages, and in neighborhood pattern and design. However, there is much room for improvement in building design for energy conservation because of the Neighborhood’s many older buildings.

**LEED for Neighborhood Development:** Set objectives for neighborhood-wide improvements in the subjects defined in the LEED-ND rating system; measure progress toward those objectives; seek certification of the Neighborhood through a pilot project.

**The Loring Indicators:** Adopt and measure seven indicators of progress toward sustainability. Several strategies from throughout the Neighborhood plan are presented in the subjects of energy efficiency, transit, walking, recycling, green surfaces, parking lots and income diversity.

# Checklist for New Construction

Developers of building projects in the Loring Park neighborhood are encouraged to pursue the standards that are identified below. For large projects requiring special allowances, including conditional use permits, variances, and alternative compliance in site plan review, these standards will be considered as a basis for neighborhood support.

## Sustainability

- ✓ Measurably contribute to each of the *Loring Park Neighborhood Sustainability Indicators*, (aka the **Loring Indicators**) - the set of neighborhood-wide sustainability benchmarks set forth in Chapter 5, Sustainability.
- ✓ Verify sustainable design, construction and maintenance through LEED certification (or equivalent).

## Historic Preservation

- ✓ Preserve, restore or adaptively re-use historic structures and landscapes.

## Context Sensitive Design

- ✓ All new construction in the neighborhood should be *context sensitive* (sensitively designed to fit within the surrounding urban context). To ensure this, developers and architects of all new construction projects, whether or not the project is located within a designated historic district or is covered by an existing set of design guidelines, should be prepared to address the following:
  - How would the proposed design appropriately incorporate or respond to the surrounding historic assets?

- How would the proposed design maintain or strengthen the existing street edge, side setbacks and landscaping of the surrounding area?
- How would the massing of the building (height and width of component parts) be an appropriate response to the neighborhood context?
- How would the building composition and architectural vocabulary relate to the existing context, or how would it create a meaningful juxtaposition?
- How would the building materials be attractive and complementary to surrounding buildings?
- How would the scale, placement and character of building elements such as windows doors and roof line be complementary to surrounding buildings?
- Does the building comply with the following **upper story step-backs** required in the Built Form Plan:
  - Fifth and Sixth Stories: Set walls a minimum of 10' (ten feet) from all property lines.
  - Seventh Story and Above: Set walls no closer than 20' (twenty feet) from all property lines.

## Parking

- ✓ Participate in coordinated auto parking planning efforts and strategies, including the accommodation of public and/or neighborhood parking as part of new parking accommodations.
- ✓ Provide care share service to building occupants either through member discounts for local service and/or by adding a car share vehicle(s) on site.

# The Loring Indicators

The Loring Park Neighborhood Sustainability Indicators are measurable goals See Chapter 5 Sustainability to see 2012 baselines and recommended strategies for each indicator.

Loring Indicator #1

## Energy Performance of Buildings

Increase by ten the number of buildings that demonstrate an average improvement (10% improvement for new buildings, 5% improvement for existing buildings) over ASHRAE Standard 90.1 – 2007, *and* meet the standards within one of the following or their equivalent: LEED-NC, EB or ND; State of Minnesota B3 Guidelines; EPA's ENERGY STAR.

Loring Indicator #2

## Mixed-Income Diverse Community

Achieve and retain maximum points for diversity of unit size and diversity of income, using the following as the standard:

*LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) 2009, Neighborhood Pattern & Design, Credit 4: Mixed Income Diverse Communities*

Loring Indicator #3

## Walkability & Connectivity

Achieve and retain 8 of 12 possible points for walkability and connectivity within the neighborhood, using the following as the standard:

*LEED for Neighborhood Development (LEED-ND) 2009, Neighborhood Pattern & Design, Credit 1: Walkable Streets*

Loring Indicator #4

## Green Surfaces

Increase green surfaces through-out the neighborhood by an equivalent of the building footprint of the Minneapolis Convention Center (17

*acres or 750,000 squ.ft.*). Green surfaces may include grass or native landscaping, permanent community gardens, seasonal container gardens, pocket parks, green roofs and green walls.

Loring Indicator #5

## Transit Supportive Development

As a neighborhood-wide goal, double\* the total built square footage of properties of the Loring Park Neighborhood reachable within one-quarter mile pedestrian shed (five minute walking distance) from the Primary Transit Network at Nicollet Avenue\*\*. *To understand the desired limits on development intensity, see Built Form Plan in the Land Use & Built Form Chapter of this plan.*

Loring Indicator #6

## Surface Parking Lots

Move below ground, transfer into structures, or eliminate, one-half (1,000) of the parking spots located in surface parking lots throughout Loring Park Neighborhood.

Loring Indicator #7

## Recycling, Composting & Waste

Work to achieve 4:1 ratio\* of recycling-to-waste by 80% of neighborhood buildings. \* *The desired ratio is based on meeting the Hennepin County long range (per household) goal.*

Loring Indicator #8

## Water Efficiency

Increase by ten the number of buildings (new or existing) that demonstrate compliance with reducing an average of 20% less potable water for indoor water usage based on the Energy Policy Act of 1992/2005 and 2006 UPC/IPC, *and* meet the standards within one of the following or their equivalent: LEED-NC, EB or ND; State of Minnesota B3 Guidelines.

# Implementation Priorities

Located in the Appendix ([www.loringpark.org/docs](http://www.loringpark.org/docs)) is the most recent Implementation Plan. The plan is a list of priorities, formatted into a detailed matrix including short term and long term actions. The plan also identifies partnering agencies responsible for each action. The following are several of the initial priorities listed in the Implementation Plan at the time of Master Plan approval:

## **UNDER DEVELOPMENT:**

### **Conduct Neighborhood Re-Zoning Study**

*See Chapter 2 Land Use & Built Form.*

### **Establish Safe Crossings to Loring Park**

*See Chapter 4 Public Realm.*

### **Pursue LEED-ND Certification and Improvements to the Neighborhood's Long-term Sustainability**

*See Chapter 5 Sustainability.*

### **Re-Design Harmon Avenue**

*See Chapter 4 Public Realm.*

### **Protect Historic Resources**

*See Chapter 3 Protecting Historic Resources.*

### **Support Public Art Planning & Public Space Programming**

*See Chapter 1 Cultural Assets and Economic Vitality.*

### **Continue Work for a Safer and More Socially Interconnected Neighborhood**

*See Chapter 1 Cultural Assets and Economic Vitality.*

*See Chapter 4 Public Realm, Livability section.*