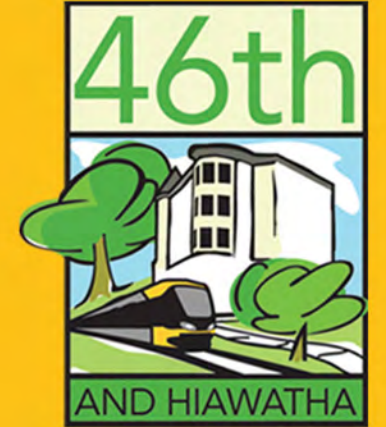


46th AND HIAWATHA

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY



Minneapolis
City of Lakes

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS

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ASSOCIATES

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



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Norm Bjornnes, President of Oaks Properties, authorized the use of the architectural drawing of the Oaks Station Place project prepared by Kaas Wilson Architects
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TOWN SQ 11



Survey — [ser-‘vā]

–verb (sur•vey)

Definition:

1. To view or inspect an area as from a high place.
2. To take measurements of land, buildings and improvements to determine their locations and relationships to other geographical features.

–noun (sur•vey)

Definition:

1. A general overview used to summarize topics such as public opinion, markets, or geographical areas.
2. A map drawn by a surveyor after measuring a piece of land

Changes that have been happening around the 46th Street LRT Station since 2004 reflect the new transportation choices, lifestyle changes and real estate and community-building opportunities created by the success of Hiawatha LRT. This Transit-Oriented Development Strategy is an action-oriented planning tool designed to steer these changes towards achieving the vision of a walkable and sustainable neighborhood center connected with the LRT station. The Survey chapter outlines the organization of the report and provides suggestions about how the report can be used by community stakeholders.

- **Change Is Happening Around the 46th Street Light Rail Transit (LRT) Station**
- **What Has Happened Since Planning for Hiawatha LRT Began in 1998?**
- **What Is Currently Under Way?**
- **What Have We Learned?**
- **What is a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Strategy?**
- **How to Use This Document**
- **Study and Report Documents**
- **Document Organization**
- **A Living Document**

SURVEY

PLACE

SUPPORT

IMAGINE

INVEST

GUIDE

BUILD



Barriers, infrastructure needs, and conflicting market forces must be actively managed to achieve quality development that benefits the surrounding community...

“Light Rail Transit (LRT) is only one of a number of factors exerting influence on the value of land and the direction of development in the study area. Unfortunately, if these different development forces are in conflict and are not coordinated they can’t reinforce the intended impacts of LRT.

Over the long run, the changes in land value resulting from LRT construction will eventually result in major changes in land-use along the corridor. However, the quality of the redevelopment and the speed with which it occurs will be hampered unless these conflicting land-use forces are understood and coordinated.”

Quote from the adopted 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan, 2001

Change Is Happening Around the 46th Street Light Rail Transit (LRT) Station

Neighborhoods, like the cities they are part of, continue to change and evolve over time.

In 1998, with strong community support, the decision was made by federal, state, and local leaders to pursue construction of the Hiawatha LRT line as the Twin Cities’ first 21st Century rail transit project. Since that time, a new generation of transportation and land-use changes and opportunities has come to the 46th Street LRT station area in Minneapolis and to the other sixteen original stations along the Hiawatha LRT alignment. LRT ridership has grown briskly since the line opened. Between 2004 and 2008, the emergence of a new market was reflected in the successful development of the first pioneering transit-supportive multifamily and mixed-use projects around the LRT stations in the Hiawatha Corridor. Initial investments in pedestrian improvements and lighting have also begun to integrate the LRT station and these new developments into the surrounding neighborhoods. However, some of this momentum slowed dramatically when the economy plunged into recession.

In late-2012, a renewed level of public interest in living, working, and investing in urban neighborhood centers developing around transit stations is gaining strength, and additional public sector actions are being implemented to support these new investments as the economy improves. The growth of the Twin Cities transit system to include the Northstar Commuter Rail line, the region’s first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) facilities along Interstate-35W, suburban Cedar Avenue and downtown Minneapolis, and the construction of the Central Corridor LRT project significantly increase the advantages of living and working near transit stations. At the same time, the economy continues to gradually recover from the deepest recession and financial crisis of the past seventy years.

Of course, land-use changes can be either positive or negative depending upon one’s viewpoint. However, one truth is certain. Change that is understood and actively managed according to a consensus plan and policies for improving an area is more likely to result in positive changes.

This planning study and implementation strategy builds upon the strong foundation created by the 46th and Hiawatha LRT Station Area Master Plan that was adopted in 2001. This new study, the **46th and Hiawatha Transit-Oriented Development Strategy**, reflects the continuing commitment of the City of Minneapolis to work

with community, public, and private partnerships to support the plans for this area. **The goal is to achieve the broad community vision to establish a pedestrian-oriented, sustainable neighborhood center connected with the 46th Street LRT station.**

The city will communicate and collaborate with property and business owners; neighborhood residents; community organizations; developers; Hennepin County; and other federal, state, and local jurisdictions and agencies to identify and implement policies, partnerships, programs, and projects that can influence and steer the changes that are currently under way near the 46th Street LRT station. Coordinated and complimentary private and public actions to support this positive vision for the future can build upon the strengths of the existing neighborhood; improve neighborhood livability and wealth; promote increased multi-modal transportation, housing, jobs, and business choices; enhance environmental quality and sustainability; and further strengthen the market incentives and momentum to implement the station area plan. **This TOD strategy provides flexible strategies and project recommendations that can support and promote this land-use transition.**

To steer neighborhood change effectively, it is important to review and understand what is already happening around the 46th Street LRT Station at this time.

What Has Happened Since Planning for Hiawatha LRT Began in 1998?

The list of projects completed and under way around the 46th Street LRT Station illustrates the numerous private actors and public agencies and the diverse range of implementation activities that contribute to the successful implementation of a land-use plan. This diverse list of projects also illustrates the role of market conditions and public projects in shaping the timing and sequence of station area improvements.

Hiawatha Light Rail Transit Attracts Growing Ridership

Construction began on the Twin Cities' first light rail transit line in 2001, with service beginning in June of 2004. The Hiawatha Line is a 12.3-mile route with 19 stations that connects downtown Minneapolis with the Minneapolis - St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America in Bloomington. In its first full year of operation in 2005, Hiawatha LRT carried 7.9 million riders. Since Hiawatha LRT opened for service ridership has exceeded all estimates. Ridership topped 10.5 million rides in 2010, a six percent increase over 2009 and the highest annual ridership in the line's seven-year history. On a typical

weekday, over 35,000 trips are taken on Hiawatha LRT. In 2010, more than 586,000 passengers boarded Hiawatha trains at the 46th Street LRT station, which was 5.61 percent of all Hiawatha LRT riders.

Strong Housing Demand Emerges to Live Near Hiawatha LRT Neighborhood Stations

The ability of Hiawatha LRT to attract demand for new transit-oriented housing development has been impressive. From 2003 to 2010, more than 900 housing units were constructed near the neighborhood LRT Stations in South Minneapolis that are located between Franklin Avenue and the Veterans Administration station. The housing units that have been completed near the neighborhood stations include a broad mix of market-rate apartments, mixed-use buildings with retail on the first floor, condominiums, mixed-income apartments, senior citizen buildings, and supportive housing. More than 500 additional housing units are under construction in 2012, including 104 new apartment units on the same block as the 46th Street LRT Station. At least six additional housing sites located in the neighborhood segment of the Hiawatha Corridor are in pre-development planning stages. Several of these proposed new developments are moving towards construction as the economy improves. Strong housing demand from individuals and households that want to live near LRT is now a proven market within the region. Demand for additional multifamily housing that is located near transit is expected to continue to grow as the regional transit system expands.

Hiawatha LRT System Expansion

In 2009, the 46th Street LRT Station platform and shelters, along with other stations along the Hiawatha alignment, were expanded to allow transit service to operate in the future with longer three-car trains that can carry 50 percent more riders. Service expansion can occur as LRT ridership increases and more LRT vehicles are acquired. An additional LRT station was also constructed in Bloomington at American Boulevard. Finally, in late 2009, the new Target Field LRT Station opened in Downtown Minneapolis to coincide with the start of Northstar Commuter Rail service connecting to that station. The Central Corridor LRT connection to Downtown St. Paul is under construction and is expected to open in 2014.

Appendix 1 contains more detailed descriptions of the following completed projects and significant events shaping land-use changes around the 46th Street LRT Station since 2001.

- 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan
- Community Rejects Auto Oriented Neighborhood Center Development



46th Street LRT Station



Oaks Hiawatha Station Apartments



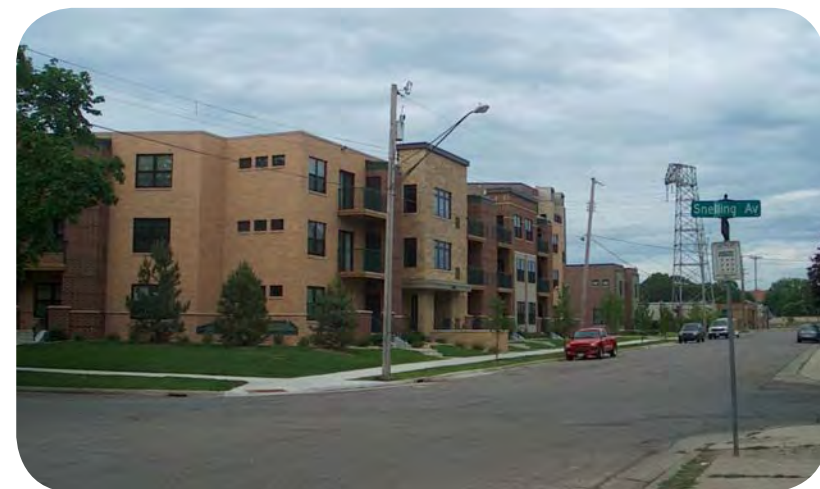
Station 38 Apartments Under Construction in the Fall of 2011 at the 38th Street LRT Station



Transit Patrons At The 46th Street LRT Station



Olin Crossing Condominiums near the VA LRT Station



Hiawatha Flats Phase 2

- Critical Parking Area
- Retail Property Renovations
- Car Sharing Established in LRT Station Area
- Traffic Signal System Improvements
- Oaks Hiawatha Station Development
- Minnehaha Park Master Plan Implementation
- Hiawatha Flats Phase 1 Development
- AIA Great City Design Team Workshop
- Acquisition of a Rail Corridor Property by City of Minneapolis
- Additional Station Area Policy Implementation
- Minneapolis Great Streets Business District Programs
- Hennepin County's Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership
- Hiawatha Flats Phase 2 Development
- Minnehaha Creek and Park Restoration Project
- 46th Street Lighting Project
- Riverlake Greenway

What Is Currently Under Way?

Several significant projects are currently under way in the 46th Street station area. Projects listed below were supported during the planning process for the 46th Street TOD strategy.

Oaks Station Place Project on the 46th Street LRT Station Site

In 2008, Oaks Properties, the co-developer of the nearby Oaks Hiawatha Station project, purchased the development rights for the excess publicly-owned land on the LRT station site from the Metropolitan Council. The mixed-use market-rate apartment building includes 104 market-rate rental apartments, about 9,000 square feet of retail space, and an outdoor plaza. The new building, with architecture modeled after the famous transit village at Forrest Hills, in Queens, New York, is designed to be a neighborhood landmark. The building includes bike sharing, an electric community car, and other green building elements. Construction of the project will be complete in 2013.

Minnehaha-Hiawatha Strategic Investment Framework

After several years of community consultation and technical studies, the Community Works Partnership has released its Strategic Investment Framework. The framework identifies priority projects for implementation in the middle segment of the Hiawatha Corridor in Minneapolis (between the Midtown Greenway and Minnehaha Park). Substantial agreement exists between the 46th & Hiawatha Transit-Oriented Development Strategy and the projects and goals identified in the Hennepin County Study.

Hiawatha Avenue Traffic Signal and Intersection Improvement Projects

Traffic and engineering studies of Hiawatha Avenue have recently been completed by Minneapolis, Hennepin County, and MnDOT. One project has improved the traffic signal system along Hiawatha Avenue for safer and more efficient vehicular and pedestrian movements at major intersections. Another project has identified new improvements for pedestrian and bicycle crossings at several major intersections in the corridor.

Reconstruction of Minnehaha Avenue between Minnehaha Park and Lake Street

Preliminary design studies and community meetings for the reconstruction of Minnehaha Avenue between Lake Street and Minnehaha Park began in 2012, and construction is proposed for 2015 and 2016. The street will be reconstructed as an active living and complete street that better serves all modes of transportation, including improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities.

Proposed Sale and Redevelopment of the Snelling Yards Property

The Snelling Yards, a 3.3-acre parcel bounded by 45th Street, Snelling Avenue, 44th Street, and the Canadian Pacific railroad tracks, was a Minneapolis Public Works maintenance yard since the 1950s. In 2010, the City of Minneapolis opened the new Hiawatha Yards facility, and operations have now been relocated to the new facility. The Snelling Yards property is identified as a future development site and was analyzed as a major TOD opportunity site in this study. It is anticipated that a Request for Proposals (RFP) for new development consistent with city plans will be issued by the City as market conditions improve in 2013 or 2014.

Snelling Avenue / Ford Parkway Arterial BRT

The Metropolitan Council has proposed to open a new arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service in 2015 connecting the 46th Street LRT Station to the Rosedale Shopping Center in Roseville by way of Snelling Avenue in St. Paul. BRT is a package of transit enhancements that includes specialized buses with train like boarding and fare payment, faster travel times and frequent service, and enhanced transit shelters with greater amenities.

What Have We Learned?

According to research completed at the University of Minnesota's Center for Transportation Studies, Hiawatha LRT has increased the value of both housing and commercial properties located near the LRT stations compared to other similar areas of the city without LRT. Homes located closer to LRT stations have experienced higher property values and sold at higher prices due to increased access to transit compared to similar housing in other nearby neighborhoods.



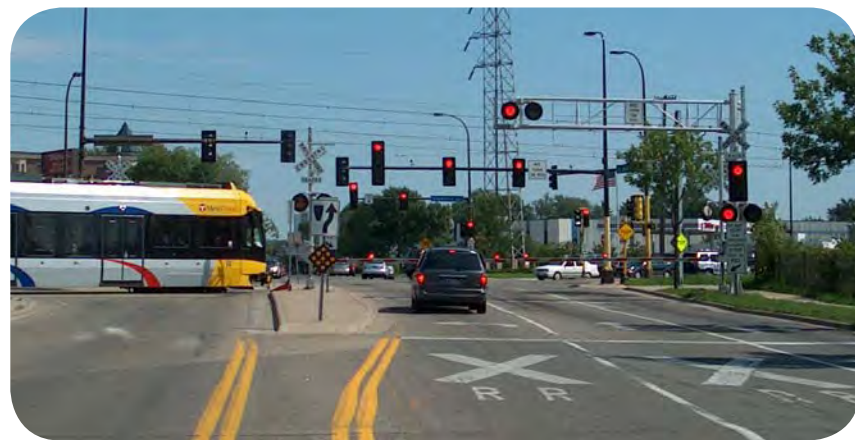
Corridor Flats near the Lake Street LRT Station

Constructing Hiawatha LRT has created a new market for transit-oriented development around the 46th Street LRT Station that is primarily focused on new well-designed multifamily housing. Since 2005, about 300 new housing units have been constructed within a 10-minute walk of the 46th Street LRT station, with an additional 100 units completing construction in 2013. These projects have added pedestrians, demand for retail services, and additional transit riders into the neighborhood. The new multifamily housing development has primarily occurred on either vacant publicly-owned land or sites with aging and dilapidated commercial buildings. Despite the recession and weak economic recovery, the demand for housing near the 46th Street LRT station has remained fairly robust. The recently constructed multifamily transit-oriented housing at Oaks Hiawatha Station and Hiawatha Flats is fully occupied in late 2011.



Oak Station Place under construction in Summer 2012

These new TOD development projects have been consistent with adopted plans, have created additional neighborhood housing choices, and have improved neighborhood appearances by removing blighted buildings and improving derelict land. However, establishing a transit-oriented and mixed-use neighborhood center will require additional multi-modal transportation improvements, new neighborhood amenities, recruitment of strong housing and mixed-use developers, and further redevelopment or revitalization of existing properties. An action plan that focuses on these issues can improve neighborhood livability and support the implementation of the adopted 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan.



LRT street crossing and traffic signals at 46th Street and Hiawatha Avenue

Many projects within the corridor and station area are occurring in response to changes generated by the Hiawatha LRT. These projects include new private development and property renovation as well as transportation projects that are responding to changes in local transportation demands. These projects involve many public agencies and private parties. Increasing communications and coordination between public agencies and private stakeholders around the station plan can improve the environment in the neighborhood and support the emerging market for transit-supportive development. However, public funding to more directly implement plans is likely to remain limited for the foreseeable future. It is increasingly clear that it takes a strong public, private, and community partnership to promote, prioritize, finance, and build a transit village.

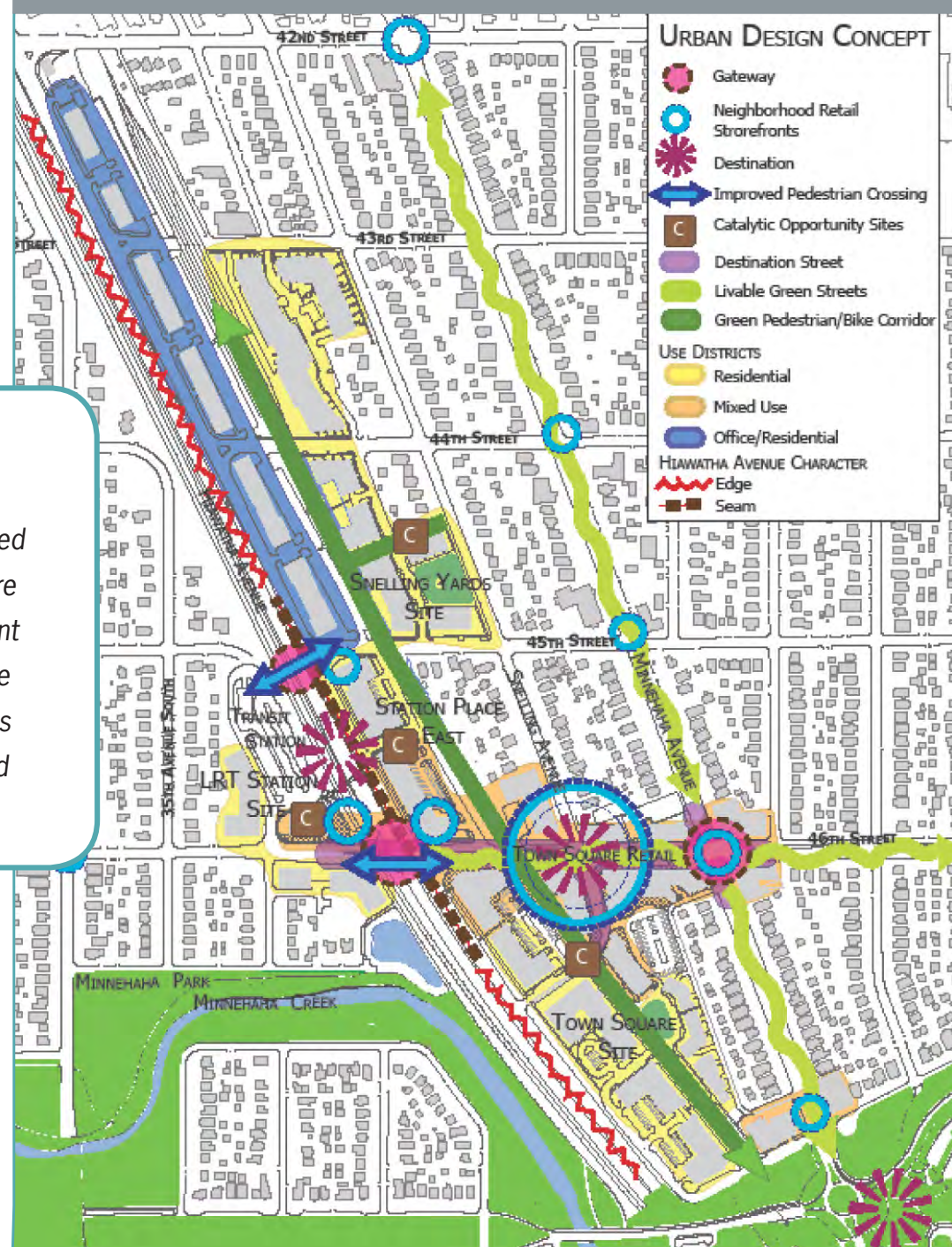
What is a Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Strategy?

This TOD strategy provides recommendations for a series of near term and longer term private and governmental actions focused on opportunities, projects, and partnerships that will help to realize the broad vision and policies in the adopted 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan. Such a strategy must be grounded in strong stakeholder input, community consensus and technical information, cost and feasibility assessments, and design concepts sufficient to motivate public and private investment decisions.

Typically, land-use and master plans, such as the adopted 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan, are implemented in two different ways:

- **Market-shaped actions by property owners, businesses, developers, consumers, and investors operating within the land-use regulatory framework.** These actions include utilizing, improving, selling, purchasing, or redeveloping existing properties. Typically, these actions are increasingly supported by local market conditions, property values, and emerging economic demand which strengthens and transitions over time to support the new proposed land-use plan.
- **Deliberate actions and investments by the city and its other governmental partners that are consistent with adopted plans, public investment programs, and other policies.** These actions include constructing, maintaining, and operating public infrastructure and facilities like parks and public buildings, as well as adopting policies, enforcing regulations, and operating housing and economic development investment programs. Public sector housing and economic development programs play a role in removing barriers to private investment and supporting public benefits from the planned land-use transitions.

What is the 46th and Hiawatha LRT Station Area Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Strategy?



What is a TOD Strategy?

It's an action plan, timeline and partnership approach for coordinated public sector policies, infrastructure projects and economic development investments that can guide change and encourage private investments that achieve the neighborhood and station area planning vision.

The 46th Street LRT Station Area Transit-Oriented Development Strategy is a coordinated strategy and partnership approach for aligning these two processes to better achieve the vision and goals of the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan.

A development strategy such as this serves as a bridge between planning and implementation that combines specific stakeholder input, cost and feasibility analysis, market analysis, preliminary conceptual designs of infrastructure projects, and preferred development scenarios for key development sites to recommend the phasing of implementation steps to achieve the plan vision. Specifically, this TOD Strategy provides a flexible 15-year action plan and timeline for policy actions, infrastructure, and development projects that can guide change, improve community livability and wealth, and encourage and attract new private investment that is consistent with the land-use plan and community vision.

The role of this TOD strategy is to provide information and propose actions that will enhance existing neighborhood assets, mitigate barriers to successful plan implementation, and inform and coordinate public and private projects that can build local competitive advantages for attracting new private investment that is consistent with the Station

TOD strategy tools include the following:

- Consulting with property owners, developers, policy-makers, and the community
- Developing preliminary conceptual designs of infrastructure
- Analyzing market potential
- Developing a strategy for improving market conditions
- Analyzing development feasibility and land costs
- Proposing development scenarios for major opportunity sites
- Testing traffic, fiscal, and market impacts of proposed development vision
- Preparing a 15-Year Action Plan
- Calculating preliminary cost estimates of infrastructure concepts
- Analyzing funding tools
- Developing partnerships
- Developing a phasing scenario for aligning development sites with infrastructure timing
- Analyzing barriers to private market implementation of station area plan

Area Plan. The goal is to create, over time, physical improvements and market conditions that can sustain a successful urban neighborhood center that supports and benefits from its connections with transit.

This study is not a crystal ball or a photograph of the future. Like all plans, this document will itself be amended by reality. In fact, future private and public projects will propose more detailed plans and investments that will require project-specific community engagement, governmental review and approvals. Developers will propose projects that reflect the actual market conditions, opportunities, and financial risks at the time they propose development on the specific property they control. Similarly, public actions that are proposed in this document will require additional evaluation, design development, review and approval by the implementing jurisdictions. Public resources are anticipated to remain limited with many competing priorities. Current property owners and businesses will make their own plans subject to existing policies and regulations.

A strong community consensus, TOD strategy, and action plan are the best vehicles for managing uncertainty and change while pursuing the specific projects and partnerships that support the station area vision.

How to Use This Document

Users of this document include many different individuals and groups with a variety of interests. These anticipated end users are shown below along with a list of roles and ways in which this document may be used to achieve the vision of the 46th and Hiawatha LRT Station Area.

Elected Officials

- Support and advocate for the plan and its vision and serve as champions.
- Recruit private participation in achieving the plan vision.
- Support multi-jurisdictional government partnerships to invest in the plan vision.
- Support priority infrastructure improvements.
- Encourage public, private, and community partnerships for priority projects.

Residents

- Be informed, and understand the Plan and its goals.
- Direct comments and questions to appropriate neighborhood organizations, public agency staff members and elected officials.
- Support public, community and private leadership to achieve the Plan vision.

- Participate in neighborhood meetings and events to advocate and promote the Plan vision.

Property Owners

- Understand the implications of the plan for your property.
- Understand current zoning regulations and land use policy if located in the change area.
- Direct comments and questions to appropriate neighborhood organizations, public agency staff members, and elected officials.
- Consider participating in the Plan vision by improving, selling, or redeveloping property.
- If planning to sell property, discuss plans with adjacent property owners to determine if cooperation and land assembly will add monetary value to the sale of the property.
- Consider becoming an investor in redeveloping your property.
- Monitor market conditions and the opportunities afforded by selling property in the change area.

Business Owners who Own Property

- Understand the Plan, monitor market conditions, and consider whether your current location will serve your business goals in the future.
- Direct comments and questions to appropriate neighborhood organizations, public agency staff members, and elected officials.
- Participate in and support business associations.
- Understand how the Plan will influence future property improvements and business opportunities.
- Consider opportunities to participate in Plan implementation at current or alternate locations.
- At the appropriate times, consider opportunities to work with other business owners to create a special service district to fund and maintain Town Square district and streetscape amenities that can attract business and improve district quality.
- Communicate business and property needs and plans to elected officials.

Neighborhood Groups

- Communicate priorities to policy makers.
- Strengthen community consensus around the Plan.
- Advocate for the Plan with property owners and the development community.
- Invite developers to forums to discuss available opportunities in the neighborhood.

- Secure grants and co-invest neighborhood resources in small projects, programs, and priority projects.
- Prioritize and champion key infrastructure projects.
- Participate in a neighborhood review of development projects, and support general Plan guidelines and objectives.
- Participate in and distribute information about the Minnehaha Hiawatha Community Works process and other public projects.
- Participate in project advisory committees for public infrastructure projects.
- Learn about the strengths and limitations of neighborhood and public sector implementation tools.

Development Community

- Understand the Plan vision, and communicate this to the development team.
- Work with interested property owners to acquire or assemble sites.
- Understand land-use policies, regulations, and design guidelines.
- Communicate preliminary development plans to elected officials, neighborhood organizations, and Minneapolis community planning staff members.
- Be familiar with public funding programs for brownfield remediation, mixed-income and affordable housing, and development-supportive infrastructure improvements.
- Understand priorities, plans, and timelines for proposed capital improvements.
- Propose and construct high-quality, pedestrian oriented development that is consistent with the Plan vision.

Public Agency Staff Members

- Understand and champion the strategic plan vision.
- Align technical roles and responsibilities with the Plan's objectives.
- Identify opportunities to achieve integrated project benefits that incorporate infrastructure, environmental, and land-use benefits.
- Provide updated information to stakeholders as plan implementation and the market place evolves.
- Help property owners and developers understand business opportunities associated with the plan.
- Coordinate infrastructure and development investments.
- Update the Plan and technical studies as necessary.



Staff Contacts with the City of Minneapolis

The City of Minneapolis is placing increased emphasis on Transit-Oriented Development and is steering growth, investment, and renewal into those parts of the city that are effectively served by transitway investments. The 46th Street LRT Station area is located in the South Sector in Minneapolis, one of five geographical sectors in the city. The Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) has sector liaisons with responsibilities in community planning, multifamily and single-family housing, and business development to respond to and assist with inquiries regarding plans and programs in these areas. These liaisons serve as entry points for identifying more specialized information and providing direct contacts with other city departments and technical staff. Their contact information is available on the City of Minneapolis website at the CPED department site. The City of Minneapolis website also contains extensive information about the city plans, programs, policies, and projects administered by all city departments.

Study and Report Documents

Information developed during the 46th and Hiawatha Transit-Oriented Development Strategy has been prepared in several different formats, one of which is this report. This document details the process, findings, and community recommendations for the main topics investigated with the citizen advisory committee, the technical advisory group, elected officials, the consultant team, focus groups, and community residents.

Because this study was designed to move planning toward implementation, it also produced technical memos and preliminary engineering design studies that are not included in the published report. Findings in these technical studies were presented in the Citizens Advisory Committee and Technical Advisory Committee meetings and summarized at community meetings. These studies were used to develop and test key parameters of the concepts presented in this report, such as transportation impacts; development potential and financial feasibility, stormwater hydrology, strength of retail demand, parking requirements for housing and retail, and infrastructure costs and phasing.

These technical studies support the general recommendations of the TOD development strategy and also provide a point of departure for the more detailed processes of project planning, alternatives analysis, concept refinement, feasibility analysis, design development, regulatory review, and community involvement that will occur for any project recommended in this study that moves forward to either public or private implementation. Any of the public capital projects proposed in this study will evolve significantly after they are programmed for construction through additional technical studies and community involvement. In a similar manner, private development projects near the 46th Street LRT station will be proposed and developed by property

owners and development teams that will be influenced by the ideas in this strategy, while responding most directly to the specific economic conditions, design challenges, regulatory requirements, and financing issues present at the time their projects are developed.

The role of information and recommendations presented in this study is to promote complimentary public and private actions that support the development of a high quality sustainable transit-oriented neighborhood center that increases neighborhood livability and provides valuable opportunities and services for existing neighborhood residents, property owners, and businesses as well as for new residents, developers, and businesses.

Document Organization Survey –

The Introduction describes the purpose of the 46th and Hiawatha LRT Station Area Transit-Oriented Development Strategy. Changes that have taken place since the original master plan was adopted in 2001 are discussed, and this document is described in terms of its overall use, role, and timing.

Place –

This section summarizes the context and existing conditions in the project area and sets the stage for the remainder of the report. Land-use, urban structure, access and mobility, infrastructure challenges, and zoning are all reviewed and evaluated, serving as a starting point for change.

Support –

The recommendations of this document are supported by the concept of a transit-oriented neighborhood center that was developed in the 2001 LRT station area master plan for this area. The Support section also discusses the core principles, community involvement, public infrastructure systems, policies, and technical analysis that collectively serve as the foundation for the transit-oriented vision.

Imagine –

The Imagine chapter develops the plan vision and supports its realization through urban design, development, and infrastructure recommendations. In addition, the characteristics of the station area sub-districts, development scenarios for catalyst sites, and infrastructure concepts that convert station area barriers into opportunities are illustrated through graphics and text. The Imagine section integrates the core physical elements of the station area plan by focusing on projects and action steps to strengthen and enhance the multi-modal transportation system, establish a complete neighborhood center, and promote a sustainable neighborhood.

Invest –

The Invest chapter provides a framework for understanding the market potential of the 46th Street change area, focusing primarily on the housing and retail markets. The role of the market strategy is to identify barriers to private investment and evaluate market-based strategies for increasing the competitive advantages within the station area to attract private development consistent with the plan. The Invest chapter also presents a phasing scenario for aligning public infrastructure projects and investments with the market timing of new development.

Guide –

The purpose of the Guide chapter is to outline eleven general transit-oriented development strategies that were developed during this study. These strategies represent the goals and objectives of the community; inform the prioritization of action items for public and private partners; and can guide or shape the implementation of infrastructure, public policy, and private development projects within the study area.

Build –

The Build chapter discusses the toolbox of infrastructure projects, policy steps, and development actions intended to remove barriers and stimulate growth to implement the transit-oriented development vision and strategies. These projects are described in terms of timeline, location, incorporated strategies, and other factors and are meant to provide tools and metrics through which to implement the 46th and Hiawatha LRT Station Area Transit-Oriented Development Strategy.

The role of this study is to identify opportunities to implement the land-use plan, communicate stakeholder priorities, and facilitate the significant additional public and private commitments that will be necessary for these projects to occur. It should be recognized that each project proposal and approval process will initiate additional and more detailed project planning and engineering design that will further test, refine, or alter the concepts presented in this study.

Release of Document

The 46th and Hiawatha Station Area TOD Strategy document was originally intended to be completed in late 2008; however, several unforeseen factors have contributed to delaying its release. The following list describes these factors:

1. 2007-2009 Recession and the Sluggish Economic Recovery

Beginning in late 2007, the U.S. underwent an acute economic recession and financial crisis that increased in intensity considerably

after September of 2008. As of late 2012, the U.S. is still recovering slowly and unevenly from this recession.

2. Business Impacts and Staffing Changes in the Consultant Team

As the effects of the recession of 2007 - 2009 took hold, business decisions in the consulting firms, including the loss of key local staff members and closing of offices in the Twin Cities, considerably affected project momentum and the completion schedule.

3. Coordination and Concurrence with Other Significant Planning Studies

In mid-2008, Hennepin County Community Works launched a three-year process to develop a Strategic Investment Framework for the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor. The Community Works Partnership, a broad community partnership that formally includes the City of Minneapolis, will serve as the implementation partnership for coordinating multi-jurisdictional investments within this corridor, which includes the 46th Street LRT Station area and two other nearby stations. Many of the study recommendations presented in 2008 from the 46th Street TOD Strategy have been embraced and incorporated by the Community Works partnership and the Strategic Investment Framework. This report has been drafted to acknowledge and support that 2011 planning document, as well as to align with additional citywide transportation and comprehensive planning that has been undertaken during the past three years.

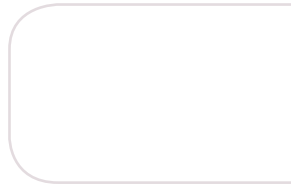
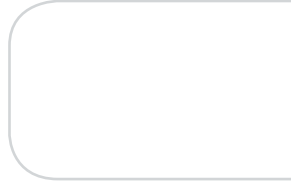
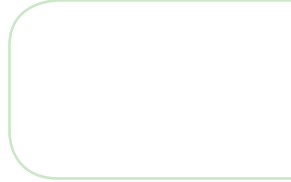
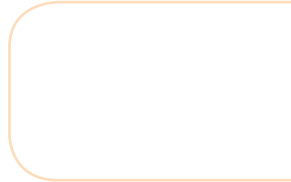
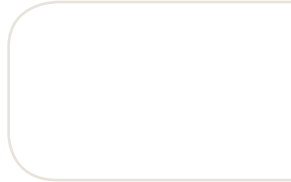
A Living Document

Although four years have passed since the Citizen Advisory Committee reviewed the report recommendations, the 46th and Hiawatha Transit-Oriented Development Strategy is a living document and action plan. Policy recommendations, infrastructure concepts, and development scenarios prepared as part of this study have been used to shape and prioritize projects that have been under way since the original technical work was prepared. The status of these projects has been updated whenever possible throughout this report.

Due to the factors discussed above, especially the depth of the global recession and economic slowdown, the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area TOD Strategy includes updated market projections and implementation timelines for key projects. These project timelines will continue to change as local conditions evolve and should be monitored and revised as necessary in the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works partnership process.

All recommendations considered by the Citizens Advisory Committee in the 46th Street LRT Station Area TOD Strategy have been preserved. In several cases, implementation of early projects is already under way or even completed – perhaps the true measure of a successful planning process.

Carefully aligning the 46th Street TOD Strategy with the Strategic Investment Framework prepared for the Minnehaha Hiawatha Community Works Partnership, which is the corridor implementation partnership that includes the 46th Street, 38th Street, and Lake Street LRT Station areas, will generate ongoing progress toward achieving the goals and objectives of this study.





46th Street
APR 25 2007
7 54 PM

EMERGENCY
←

← TICKETS



Place — [playss]

–verb (place)

Definition:

1. To put or arrange something in a particular location.
2. To classify and treat a location or something as having particular characteristics or features.

–noun (place)

Definition:

1. A location, site or building with a distinctive and memorable character or identity.
2. An area, site or location in a space that buildings and people can occupy.

The 46th Street LRT Station area and its adjoining neighborhoods have a distinctive history and an environment that occupies a unique place within the Twin Cities metropolitan region. The Place Chapter explores these diverse physical, economic and environmental features; and describes how these factors will influence the future landscape and character of the emerging transit-oriented neighborhood.

- **Station Area History and Background**
- **Land-Use Summary**
- **Existing Urban Structure**
- **Mobility and Access**
- **Infrastructure Challenges**

SURVEY

PLACE

SUPPORT

IMAGINE

INVEST

GUIDE

BUILD

Section 2: PLACE



Market conditions, public policy factors, stakeholder goals, and the characteristics of the natural and built environment all affect the mix of land-uses, and the scale, quality, and timing of new development within a transit-oriented neighborhood. All must work in concert to achieve the desired outcome of a sustainable, pedestrian-friendly, and successful urban place.

Residents, property owners, and retailers frequently acknowledge that the 46th and Hiawatha LRT station area is an excellent “location” with convenient access to downtown Minneapolis, Saint Paul, University of Minnesota, Mall of America, and the airport. However, it is not yet a great “place” in the true sense of the word. Despite the presence of valuable attributes like the LRT station, strong traditional urban neighborhoods, significant natural and regional park amenities, several recent well-designed multifamily transit-oriented developments, and some retail services, the LRT station area lacks a clear identity as an emerging neighborhood district that integrates these features into a coherent place.

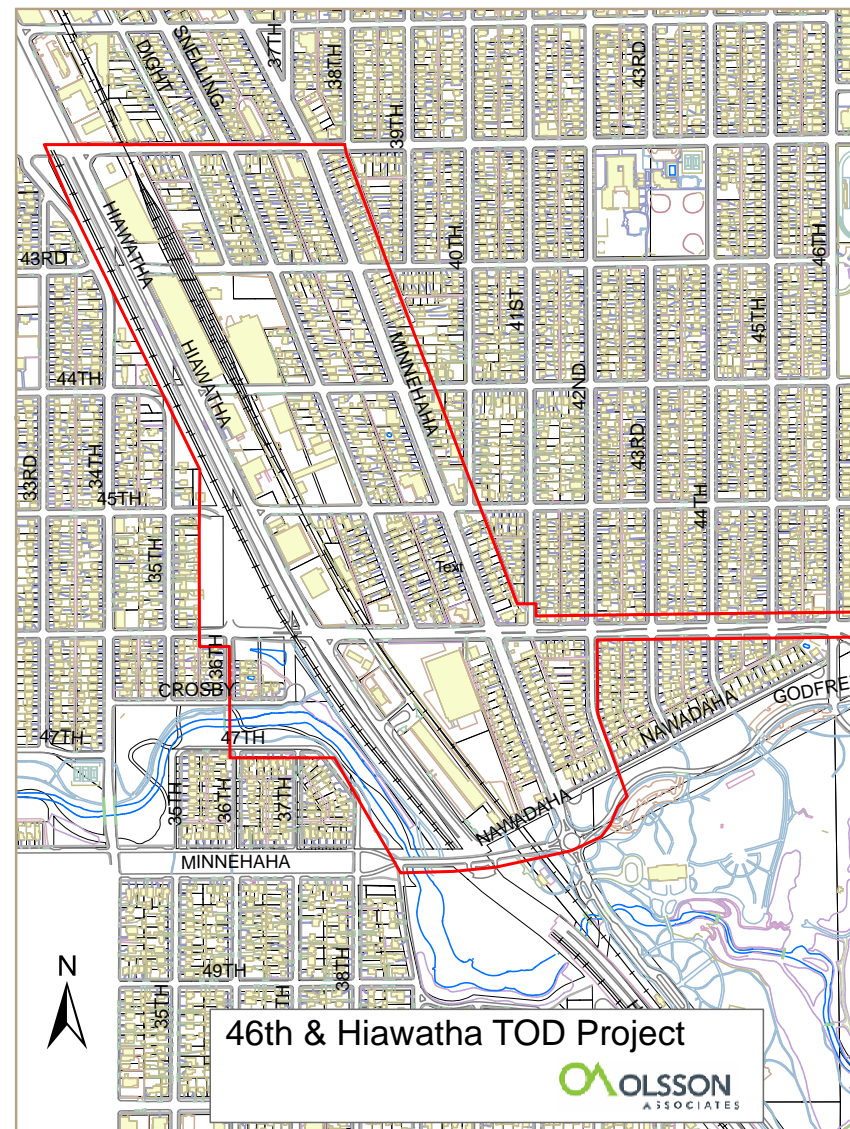


The 46th Street LRT Station is only 10 minutes away from the Airport or Downtown Minneapolis

Instead, some of the diverse and sometimes conflicting aspects of the LRT station area, including the current mix of land-uses, irregular street grid, aging rail and utility corridor, and uneven condition of buildings and pedestrian facilities, still reflect the past of the station area more than the future that has been envisioned by the community.

Conditions, however, are starting to change. This study builds upon the considerable work completed in 2001 by the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan, which studied the area around the LRT station and explored how it can be reshaped and encouraged to develop into a transit- and pedestrian-oriented neighborhood. The study area for the 46th and Hiawatha Transit-Oriented Development Strategy is primarily the land-use change area identified in the City’s adopted Station Area Master Plan.

The primary role of this chapter is to evaluate existing land-uses, buildings, transportation conditions and infrastructure constraints that support or inhibit achieving the transit-oriented development vision. An understanding of the existing conditions of this area can then serve as a starting point for successful change strategies to implement the station area plan.



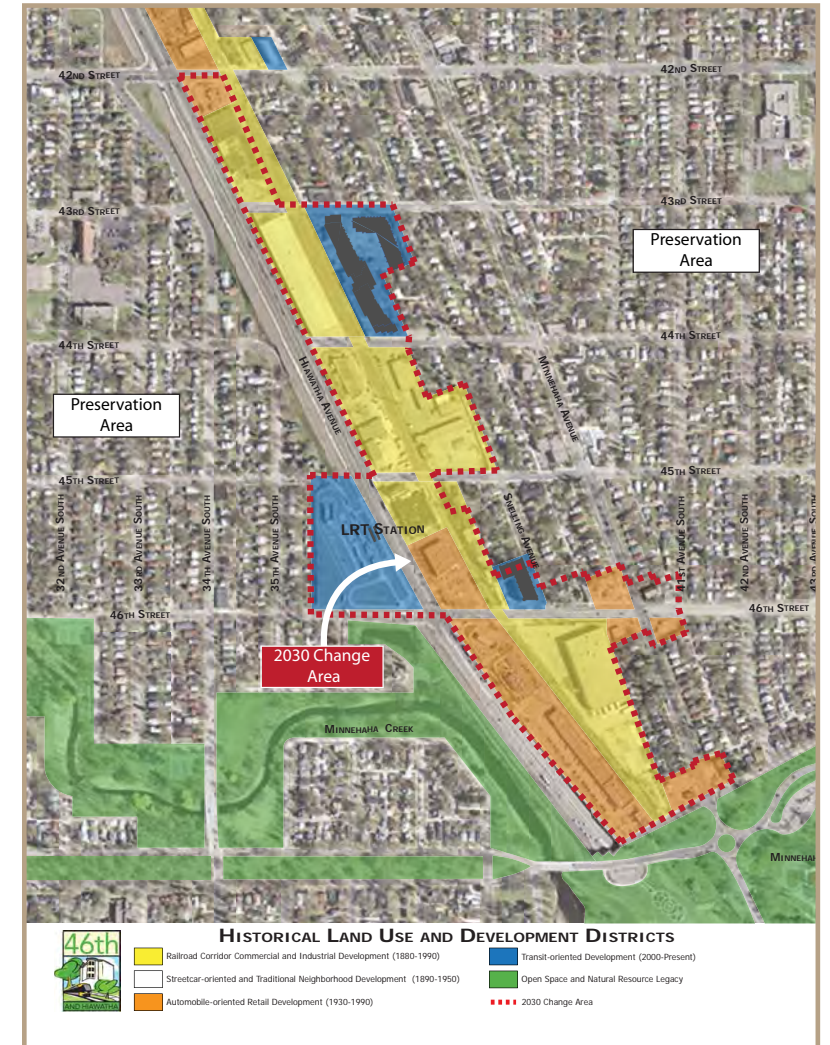
Every city, it seems, has a street or two that throws things off kilter, a diagonal slant or a loop against the neat plaid of north-south-east-west. They can upset equilibrium. They are often the extensions of the old highways in and out of the city, trunk roads, Indian hunting paths, or parallel companions of rivers and railroads.

Hiawatha Avenue, A Recollection (2003)

Station Area History and Background

Existing land-uses at the 46th Street and Hiawatha Avenue station area reflect the diverse historical, environmental, transportation, economic, and demographic “drivers” that created this urban environment. These historical forces have produced a mix of land-uses and building types that are not always compatible with each other or with the surrounding single-family neighborhoods. The 46th Street LRT station area lies at the intersection of five major environmental “districts” that emerged historically as settlement and urban development occurred. These five environmental districts include the following:

1. The Mississippi River gorge and Minnehaha Creek profoundly shaped the settlement of the area. Their role evolved over time from natural resources, energy sources, and commercial travel-ways into what they are today: primarily natural amenities and ecological systems that are integrated into active ecological preservation, restoration, and open space recreational uses within a growing metropolitan area. The Mississippi River is still a “working” commercial river through portions of the metropolitan area, although on a much reduced scale.
2. Railroad construction created the earliest phase of industry driven urbanization in the Hiawatha Corridor; with a mix of grain storage and milling businesses, farm implement manufacturers, and lumber yards moving southward from downtown toward Minnehaha Creek. Industrial land-uses along the late nineteenth and early twentieth century railroad corridor were intermingled with adjacent streets of worker housing and nearby dairy farms.
3. The surrounding middle-class single-family residential neighborhood was built primarily during the first three decades of the twentieth century around an urban framework provided by the expanding city street grid, small apartment buildings, and streetcar-supported local retail nodes.
4. A conspicuous edge of auto-oriented retail and light-industrial businesses and warehouses evolved along the highway and nearby arterial streets in the mid-twentieth century.
5. New multi-story development, consistent with the emerging transit oriented neighborhood center, recently began to be constructed near the LRT station, replacing some of the aging commercial and industrial buildings.



Back to the Future. Minnehaha Station reflects the role of streetcars and local train service in shaping the neighborhoods around Minnehaha Park



Preservation Area: Single Family Housing



Preservation Area: Traditional Neighborhood Storefronts outside the change area



Preservation Area: Parks and bike trail along Minnehaha Creek near the LRT Station

Land-use Summary

This summary of land-use characteristics refers to the area located within a one-half mile circle around the 46th and Hiawatha LRT station, and draws upon the land use categories described in the 46th Street Station Area Master Plan adopted by the City of Minneapolis in 2001.

The station area remains primarily residential in nature, with diverse retail and industrial uses concentrated in a narrow strip of land along Hiawatha Avenue and 46th Street, surrounded by established single-family neighborhoods. While land-uses in the area currently reflect this diversity, it is apparent that the appeal of light rail transit, station area planning initiatives, and new development and investments around the station is contributing to the transition towards a more coherent land-use pattern now and into the future.

One critical policy role of the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan was to identify the commercial areas closest to the LRT Station as a change area that would be steered by market conditions, land use regulations, property owner opportunities, developers, and public infrastructure and investments to transition over time into a transit and pedestrian oriented neighborhood center. Outside this designated change area, most of the land located within walking distance of the LRT station was identified as preservation areas, where public policies support retaining existing single-family housing, strong natural and park amenities, and scattered traditional neighborhood retail storefronts and commercial nodes.

Preservation Area

The following land-uses, while constituting portions of the overall study area, are community strengths to be retained and enhanced

- Approximately 57 percent of the study area is made up of residential uses, most of which consist of single-family, small-hot housing in strong neighborhoods characterized by tree-lined streets
- Open space covers about 19 percent of the study area, and includes Minnehaha Park which is nearly 200 acres in size. Located in the southerly portions of the study area, Historic Minnehaha Park is a major regional destination that is strongly identified by residents of adjacent neighborhoods as the community's most significant cultural, recreational and natural asset.

Change Area

The area closest to the 46th Street LRT station is a mixture of residential, retail, and manufacturing uses. Industrial and commercial land-uses comprise most of the key redevelopment or “change” area of the study.

- Industrial uses cover about five percent of the study area, including light industrial and manufacturing uses along the east side of Hiawatha Avenue and the former Minneapolis Public Works Snelling Yards site. Many of these older industrial properties will serve as future redevelopment sites. One example is the former Tiro Industries property, located at the corner of 43rd Street and Snelling Avenue, which has been redeveloped as the Hiawatha Flats development.
- Approximately three percent of the study area is devoted to retail uses. Most of these retail businesses are clustered around the east side of the 46th Street and Hiawatha intersection, including a strip mall, gas stations, fast food restaurants and a drug store. Over time the lower density auto-oriented retail sites located nearest the LRT station are expected to convert to newer mixed-use developments or multifamily housing. Some of the new development will include replacement space for ground-floor retail uses.

Since the opening of the Hiawatha light rail line, additional multifamily housing has begun to develop throughout the Hiawatha LRT corridor. These new transit-oriented housing developments reflect the growing demand for housing options located near transit and other urban amenities. The new housing provides high-quality housing choices close to transit for neighborhood residents as well as new arrivals to the neighborhood. The new development strengthens the neighborhood housing and retail markets, in addition to enhancing the physical appearance and property conditions within the overall station area. Both of these trends attract additional transit and pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center development on other nearby redevelopment sites.



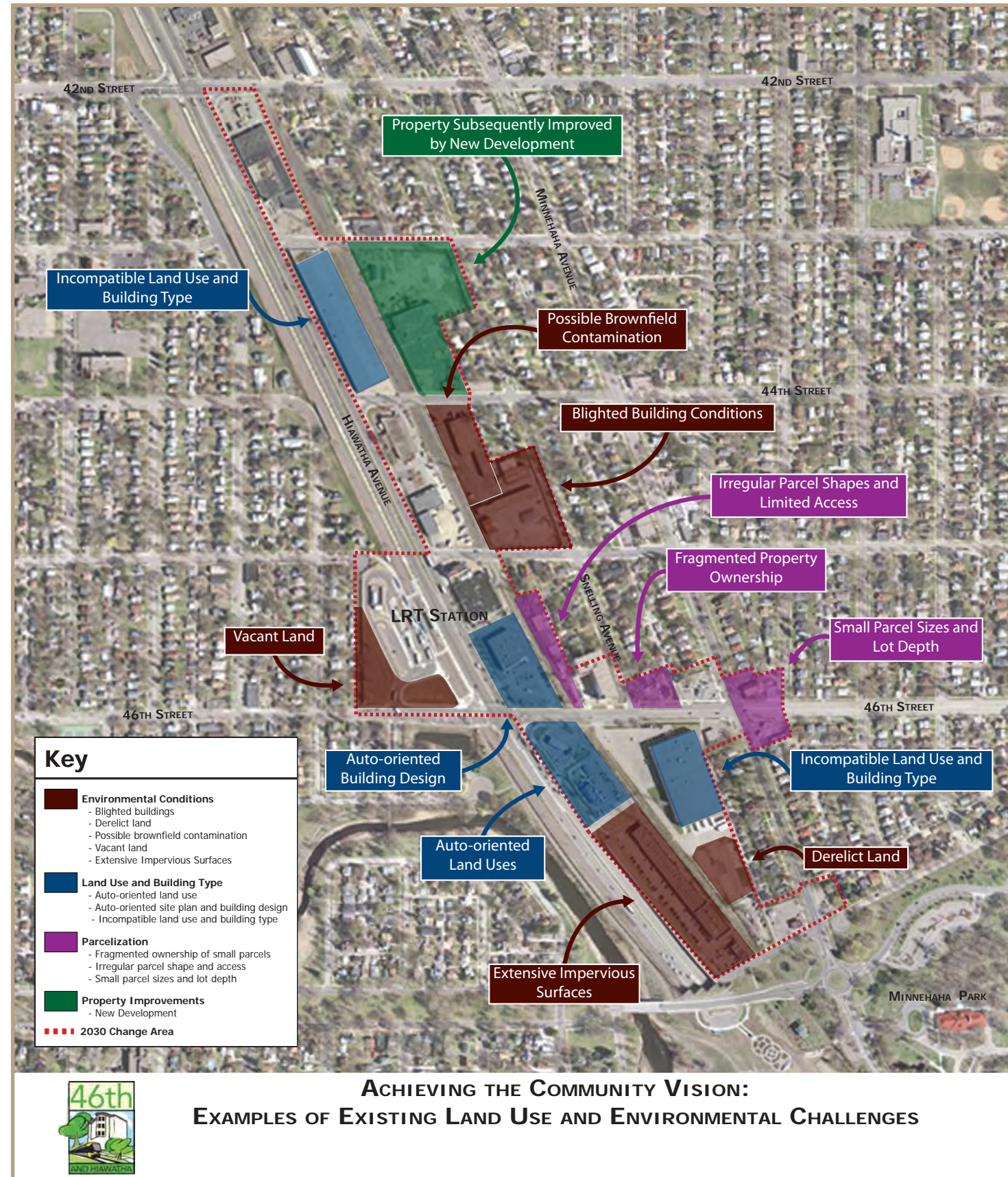
Change Area: Derelict Industrial Land



Change Area: Vacant Snelling Yards property will be sold by Minneapolis for transit-oriented development



Change Area: Lower density auto-oriented commercial properties will transition over time to more valuable mixed-use and multifamily development



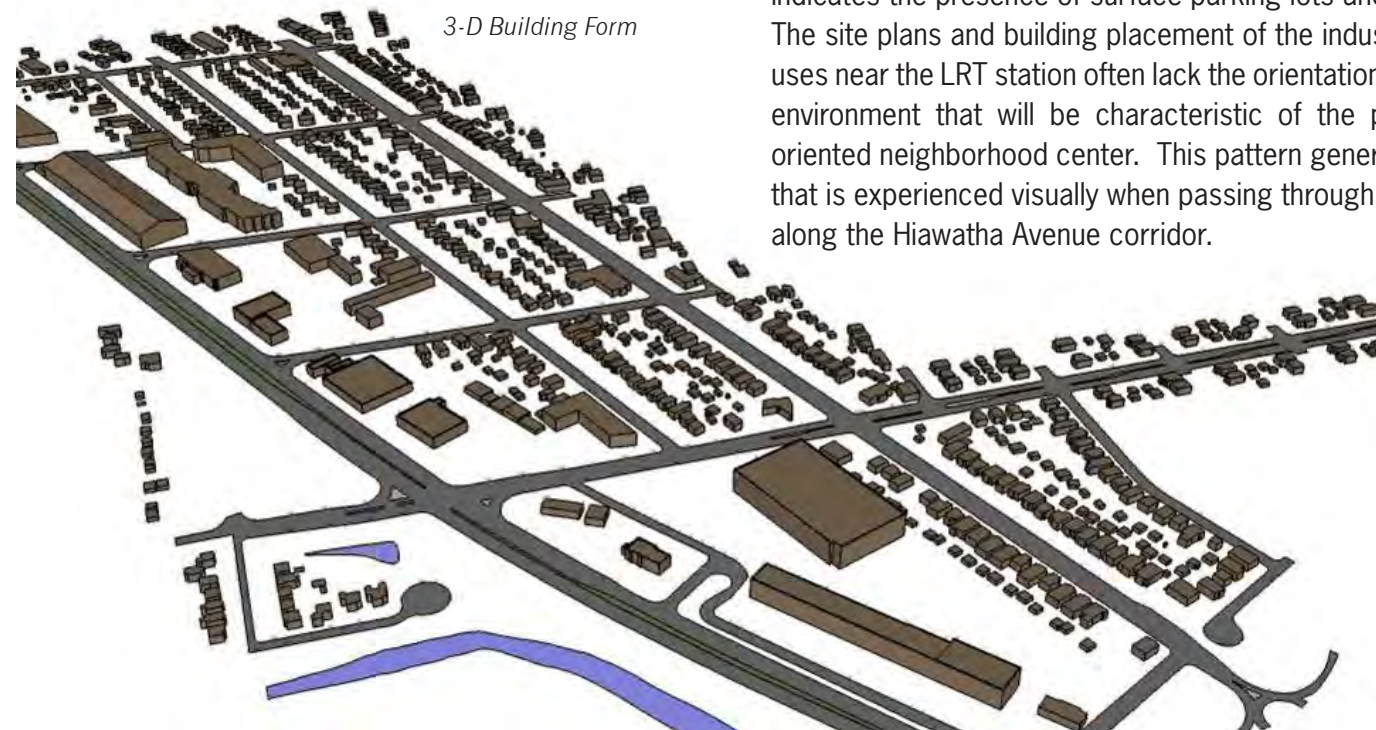
PLACE



Figure Ground



Block Pattern



3-D Building Form

Existing Urban Structure

Other aspects of the 46th and Hiawatha station built environment will serve as either assets or barriers during the transition to a transit and pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center. In addition to the land-uses, there are recognizable patterns in the built environment that include the physical quality and organization of buildings, streets, utility corridors, and transportation facilities.

The 46th and Hiawatha Station Area is characterized by a strong dichotomy between the preservation and change areas; where clearly defined boundaries exist between the consistent pattern in the residential neighborhoods and the fragmented railroad and highway-oriented commercial uses. This irregular pattern of commercial development contributes to a sense of “placelessness” at 46th and Hiawatha that is reflected in the physical pattern of buildings and blocks. The following is a brief analysis of the “urban structure” of the study area.

Pattern of Built Form

The built form of the station area as seen from above in the “figure-ground” diagram illustrates the historic development of the area. The consistent pattern of the existing residential neighborhoods to the east and west of the highway corridor is strongly established and fine-grained. This is indicative of neighborhoods built during the first half of the 20th century, especially in Minneapolis where a regular grid pattern exists.

This fine-grained, regular pattern breaks down along Hiawatha Avenue – particularly at the blocks along the east side of the highway. The primarily automobile- and rail-oriented urban form is reflected in building footprints that are much larger and irregular, and the negative space that surrounds them indicates the presence of surface parking lots and underutilized land.

The site plans and building placement of the industrial and auto-oriented retail uses near the LRT station often lack the orientation to the street and pedestrian environment that will be characteristic of the proposed future pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center. This pattern generates the irregular landscape that is experienced visually when passing through the auto-oriented properties along the Hiawatha Avenue corridor.

Block Pattern

The diagram of the block pattern highlights the change near the LRT station in the regular street grid that exists to the east and west of the highway corridor. Hiawatha Avenue and the adjacent rail and utility corridor slices through the grid on a diagonal, and results in larger and irregular blocks east of Hiawatha Avenue. Access to these blocks is challenging due to their size, orientation, and the barriers created by the highway and railroad corridor. The change area along the east side of Hiawatha has a distinct zone that is inhospitable for pedestrians and is characterized by irregular block sizes and parcel shapes that host larger railroad and auto-oriented commercial buildings and surface parking lots. To improve access to these parcels, something must be done to break down their scale for both pedestrian and vehicular access.

Existing Building Fabric

New development often takes its cues from the existing scale, land-use characteristics, and architectural features of adjacent buildings, both reinforcing and enhancing the adjacent properties. However, the change area around the 46th Street LRT Station lacks buildings with historic character, consistent land-uses, or aesthetic features that support transitioning to a more urban scale, walkable, and transit-oriented neighborhood center. Only a few commercial buildings provide “good urban bones” that might be retained and integrated into the future neighborhood center. Property owners will eventually embrace opportunities to sell aging commercial buildings or assemble these sites with adjacent property for profitable redevelopment. Because most of the properties located within the change area have viable existing commercial uses and the markets for transit-oriented development are still emerging, this redevelopment process and transition to a vibrant neighborhood center will take many years.

Future redevelopment within the station area will take the form of “refill” rather than “infill” development. In refill redevelopment, existing buildings are removed, and the new buildings transform rather than complement the character of the existing commercial district. Eventually, pioneering transit-oriented development projects will establish a critical mass in the visual quality and building character of the emerging transit-oriented neighborhood center. The Imagine chapter describes the various sub-districts within the LRT station area and the gradual process of integrating these into a cohesive neighborhood center.

Mobility and Access

Public Transit

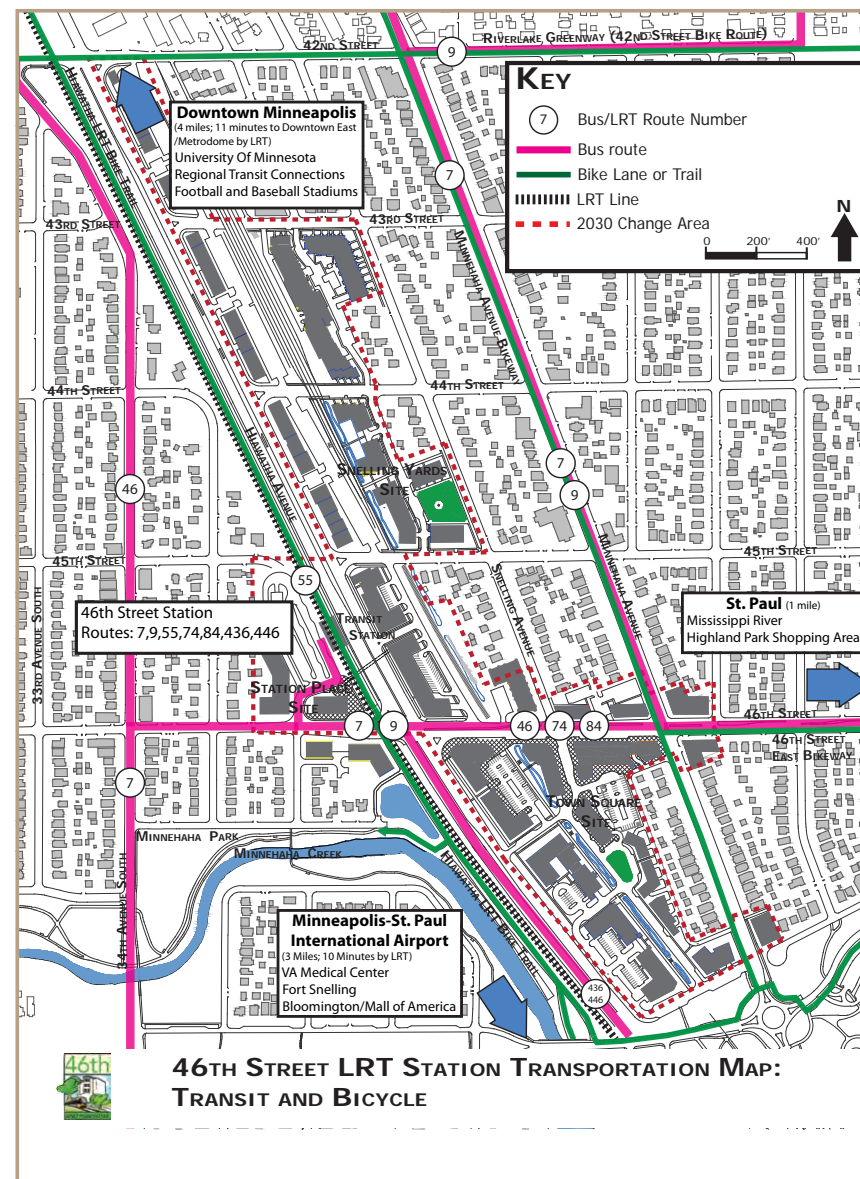
The 46th Street Station is one of the central hubs around which future development will occur and the primary catalyst for redevelopment and land-use changes within the Station Area. The 46th and Hiawatha Station area is a transportation crossroads between downtown Minneapolis to the north, Saint Paul to the east, and the outlying suburbs to the south. As a boarding point for light rail service between downtown Minneapolis and the Mall of America in Bloomington, the station also serves as a transfer point for eight separate bus routes feeding the station from origins as diverse as St. Paul, Roseville, Maplewood, Edina, Mendota Heights, and Eagan. The Metropolitan Council is evaluating the feasibility of creating an arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route that would run primarily north/south along Snelling Avenue in Roseville and St. Paul, before traveling east/west along Ford Parkway and terminating at the 46th Street LRT station.

In 2005, the first full year of LRT operations, 7.8 million riders used the Hiawatha LRT. This number increased to 10.2 million riders by 2008, a year marked by unusually high fuel prices, before climbing further to 10.5 million riders in 2010. In 2010, more than 586,000 passengers boarded Hiawatha trains at the 46th Street LRT station, which was 5.61 percent of all Hiawatha LRT riders.

The 46th Street Station was designed as a multi-modal transit hub and as a pedestrian accessible station. The LRT station site has been designed with plentiful bike racks and efficient sidewalk access. Transit riders are encouraged to access the LRT station by bus transfers, walking, bicycling, and a small “kiss and ride” drop-off area. The planning goal for the station is for new high quality development and improved public spaces on the station site to knit the station into the fabric of the community. Oaks Properties, the owner of the Oaks Hiawatha Station Apartments located across Hiawatha Avenue, acquired the development rights for the LRT station site and commenced construction in late 2011 on a new multifamily development named Oaks Station Place.

The LRT station has a “kiss-and-ride” area with short-term parking that is intended for vehicles dropping off or picking up riders. No long-term commuter parking is available at the station. An authorized commuter Park-and-Ride facility is available at the nearby Fort Snelling LRT Station. Transit patrons that drive to the 46th Street station generally park on streets in the surrounding neighborhood. Some residential streets exclude long-term parking and permits are required to park within the established critical parking area.

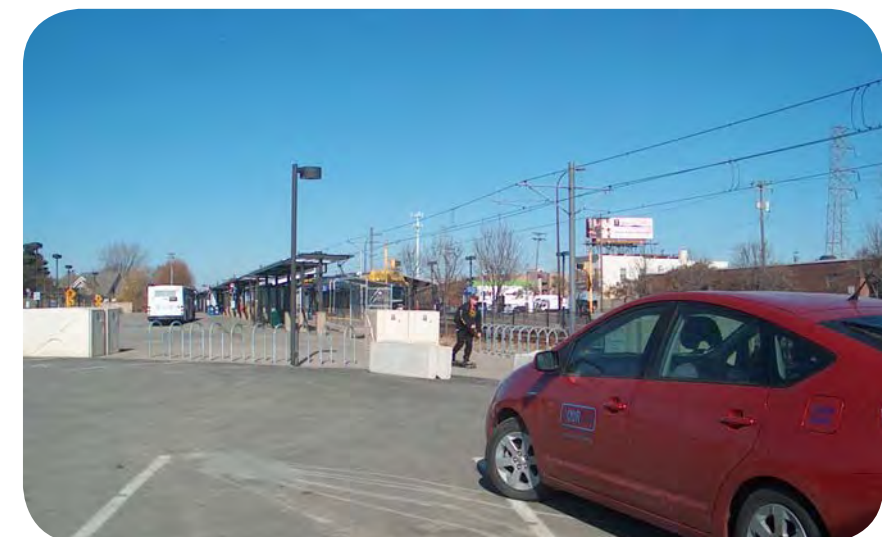
An “HOURCAR” is available at the 46th Street station. The HOURCAR is a community car sharing program. The HOURCAR program enables individuals who need access to a car only periodically to use transit for most trips, thus reducing family transportation costs. The new multifamily housing developments within the station area also have share cars available for building tenants.



46th Street LRT Station



The 46th Street LRT Station is a major transit hub for connecting bus service



An HOUR CAR is also available at the 46th Street LRT Station

PLACE



Bike storage at the 46th Street LRT Station



Pedestrian crossing Hiawatha Avenue mid-block near the LRT Station



Unimproved railroad crossing area on pedestrian route to LRT station

Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation

Until very recently, the newer land-uses established within the Hiawatha corridor have been predominantly auto- and truck-oriented. However, since the opening the LRT station the dynamics of land use and transportation demand have changed near the LRT stations. In three rider surveys completed by the Metropolitan Council between 2005 and 2008, boarding passengers were asked the question, “When you began your commute today, how did you get to the train station?” Between 2005 and 2008, the number of LRT riders that either drove to a park-and-ride or other parking before boarding the train declined from 54 percent to 37 percent of the survey respondents. During the same period, the percentage of respondents that indicated they arrived by bus increased from 23 percent to 27 percent. Also, during that period, the number of survey respondents that walked to stations increased from 16 percent to 26 percent, suggesting that a significant portion of the increased ridership on the LRT came from transit patrons that walked to the stations, a growing portion of whom were living in new transit-oriented housing units located nearby.

Residential development is attracted to an environment that provides multi-modal transportation options. However, the public and private infrastructure necessary to create a more walkable and bikeable neighborhood environment is only starting to emerge. New multifamily housing development is occurring first on the larger sites available in the commercial and industrial area located on the opposite side of the highway from the station, generating many additional pedestrians and bicyclers.

One major challenge for accessing the LRT Station is crossing the busy state highway and passing through the rail corridor and industrial or commercial land-use district located between Hiawatha and Snelling avenues, which also separates the established east-side residential areas from the LRT station. Improved pedestrian facilities within the change area, provided either as rebuilt street frontages by new development, as area-wide public infrastructure improvements, or as more limited local retrofit improvements and repairs, also serve the surrounding single-family neighborhoods whose residents gain access to the LRT station by walking through the zone of commercial land-uses and new transit-oriented developments closer to the station.

Sidewalk conditions within the commercial and industrial district located on the east side of Hiawatha Avenue are poor, and the narrow sidewalks often need repair or replacement. There are few street trees in the commercial land-use area. The area has inadequate pedestrian facilities at the railroad

crossings, and street lighting is insufficient in many areas of growing pedestrian use. These challenges will become increasingly apparent as both LRT and new housing development generate significant growth in demand for pedestrian and bicycle travel.

Bicycle routes exist on several of the north to south corridors but are not as clearly defined or frequently spaced on east to west routes within the station area. Unlike significant auto routes, where vehicle corridors will suffice every few blocks or even every quarter mile, pedestrian and bicycling routes need to be more frequent and better connected to the LRT Station. The LRT bicycle trail along the west side of Hiawatha runs parallel to the LRT tracks and is connected to the station platform and nearby regional bike trails at several points. Bike facilities within the station area are characterized by strong commuter and local routes along Hiawatha and Minnehaha Avenues, as well as trails and recreational facilities associated with the parks and parkways.

Street Classifications and Design Typologies

The streets in and around the 46th and Hiawatha LRT Station area significantly influence the functionality of the TOD environment. The balance between through traffic movements, local traffic circulation and property access within the station area will continue to evolve as redevelopment occurs. Preliminary technical studies prepared for this report included a traffic analysis of the existing street system and the impacts of the development proposed within the study area.

Hiawatha Avenue

Hiawatha Avenue is a north/south four-lane divided roadway extending through South Minneapolis from downtown Minneapolis in the north to State Highway 62 (known as Crosstown) in the south. Hiawatha Avenue is under the regulatory jurisdiction of the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) and is designated as Trunk Highway 55. Hiawatha Avenue is functionally classified by MnDOT as a principal arterial roadway, defined as a high volume roadway serving major centers of activity.

The segment of the highway located between Nawadaha Avenue and East 31st Street was reconstructed between 1988 and 1991. This was ten years before the decision to construct Hiawatha LRT along the west side of the highway. The next highway segment to the south, between 54th Street and Nawadaha, which includes the land bridge and the tunnels for LRT and the highway, was constructed between 1999 and 2002.

The City of Minneapolis’ Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan is called Access Minneapolis classifies the street design of Hiawatha as a “Commuter Street”:

Commuter Street

A high capacity street that carries primarily through traffic, serves longer trips, and provides limited access to land-uses.

The average daily traffic (ADT) projection for 2015 on the segment of Hiawatha Avenue near the LRT station is 26,400 vehicles. ADT is the standard method for measuring traffic loads on a section of road and refers to the average number of vehicles traveling two ways passing a specific point during a 24-hour period throughout a year. All average daily traffic (ADT) projections included in this chapter are taken from The Access Minneapolis Citywide Transportation Action Plan that was approved by the Minneapolis City Council in 2009.

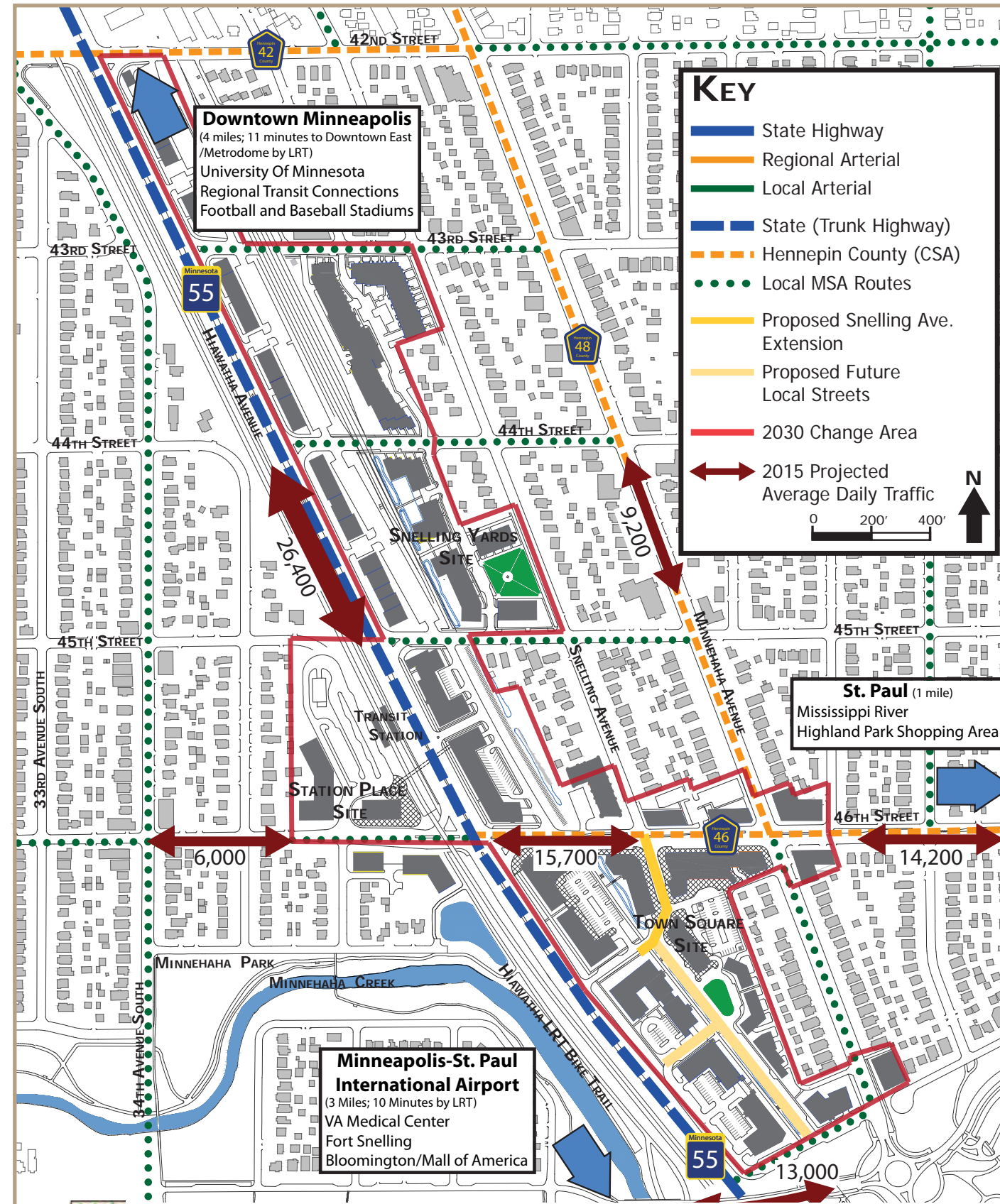
46th Street East of Hiawatha Avenue

On the east side of Hiawatha Avenue, 46th Street is under the regulatory jurisdiction of Hennepin County and is designated as County Road 46. This segment of 46th Street is a four-lane divided roadway designated as a County State Aid minor arterial roadway. 46th Street continues at the Mississippi River Gorge across the Ford Bridge to a significant community shopping district known as Highland Park, located across the river in St. Paul. In St. Paul, 46th Street becomes Ford Parkway. The Ten-Year Transportation Action Plan classifies the street design of this segment of East 46th Street as a "Community Connector":

Community Connector

A medium capacity street (usually under Hennepin County or city jurisdiction) that connects neighborhoods with each other, connects neighborhoods with commercial corridors and other districts, connects districts with each other, and serves as the main street of neighborhood commercial node.

The projected year 2015 ADT for the segment of 46th Street located between Hiawatha and Minnehaha Avenues is 15,700 vehicles.



PLACE



Winter walking conditions can be difficult near the 46th Street LRT station



46th Street West of Hiawatha Avenue

On the west side of Hiawatha Avenue, East 46th Street is a two-lane city street that terminates at 28th Avenue South near Lake Hiawatha. Land-uses along this segment of the street are predominantly single-family residential housing. West of Hiawatha Avenue this street is under the regulatory jurisdiction of the City of Minneapolis. The projected 2015 ADT for this segment of the street network is 6,000 vehicles. The segment of 46th Street located between Hiawatha Avenue and 34th Avenue South is classified in Access Minneapolis as a “Community Connector.” And the segment of 34th Avenue extending southward to the Crosstown has the same designation because of its higher traffic volumes.

Minnehaha Avenue

Minnehaha Avenue supports two lanes of traffic in each direction plus parking along the curb. Striped bicycle lanes are installed on Minnehaha between the 29th Street greenway and Minnehaha Park. Inline skating and other pedestrian uses are prohibited on the bike lanes. The bicycle lanes extend far enough from the curb to allow cars to park along Minnehaha. Access Minneapolis classifies the street design of Minnehaha Avenue as a “Community Connector.”

Minnehaha Avenue north of 46th Street is a County State Aid route that is designated as County Road 48. Projected 2015 ADT on the segment of Minnehaha Avenue located between 42nd and 46th Street is 9,200 vehicles. Hennepin County is proposing to reconstruct Minnehaha Avenue, beginning in 2013. The segment of 46th Street between 46th Street and Minnehaha Park, which is a local Minneapolis street, may be reconstructed at about the same time.

Snelling Avenue

Snelling Avenue is a two-lane street located one block east of, and running parallel to, Hiawatha Avenue. Between 46th Street and 43rd Street, Snelling Avenue is characterized by a mix of single family homes, new multifamily housing, and light industrial uses. Snelling Avenue is a local street under the regulatory jurisdiction of the City of Minneapolis. Snelling currently terminates at 46th Street on the south end. Extending Snelling Avenue south of 46th Street has been proposed to facilitate traffic access and development of the Town Square opportunity site.

Local Streets

The remaining streets in the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area are under the regulatory jurisdiction of the City of Minneapolis and fit into an irregular grid pattern created by the major streets. These streets function as local streets and provide access to primarily residential and some commercial and light industrial uses.

Winter Pedestrian Access and Mobility

In northern cities like Minneapolis, winter weather conditions greatly affect the

mobility of pedestrians and bicyclists. Developers of new multifamily housing located near the Hiawatha LRT stations have stated that although transit, bicycle, and pedestrian demand is significantly higher at these locations, this does not necessarily translate into increased transit ridership year-round. A significant number of residents in new multifamily housing located near the LRT stations still elect to drive their cars to work, especially in the winter. A key contributing factor is the walkability of the neighborhood and the condition of basic pedestrian facilities such as lighting, street trees, and sidewalks. Unless measures are taken to mitigate “winter barriers” for accessing the LRT station, pedestrian and bike traffic to and from the LRT station will be lower than it otherwise might be.

Mid-block pedestrian crossings of Hiawatha Avenue between 44th and 46th Streets, while not encouraged, do take place on an increasingly regular basis. For several months of the year, ice and snow impede crossing Hiawatha Avenue to and from the LRT Station. Snow and ice from plowing and shoveling mounds up along the street and sidewalk edges, and corner pedestrian ramps are not always reliably shoveled by property owners, making walking and biking somewhat messy or dangerous. These wintertime conditions are exacerbated by the relatively long distances between signalized crossings on Hiawatha Avenue and the necessity to cross the railroad tracks within the poorly maintained rail and industrial corridor. Better maintenance of public sidewalks and more passable and frequent pedestrian routes between residential neighborhoods and the LRT station during all seasons will not only result in increased transit ridership but will also support additional housing development, and higher property values, sales, and rentals within the area.

Current Parking Management near the LRT Station

Parking issues in the areas adjacent to the LRT station – especially in the residential neighborhood directly to the south and west of the station – is one of the most often-cited concerns of residents who live in those affected areas. The problem arises because of drivers parking in the residential neighborhood and boarding the light rail to commute to and from work (often dubbed “hide-and-ride”). Some commuters are also parking in the commercial and industrial areas located immediately to the east of the station across Hiawatha Avenue.

In response to this, some neighborhood residents filed a petition with Public Works, which conducted a study that determined that the area meets criteria for a Critical Parking Area. After City Council approval, a Critical Parking Area was established (CPA #27) to provide relief to neighborhood residents from parked vehicles by people who have no association with residents or businesses in the neighborhood. Affected areas are signed “no parking” between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. and between 7 p.m. and 9 p.m. daily, except by permit. Only drivers who are residents and businesses at qualified addresses may receive permits.

Infrastructure Challenges

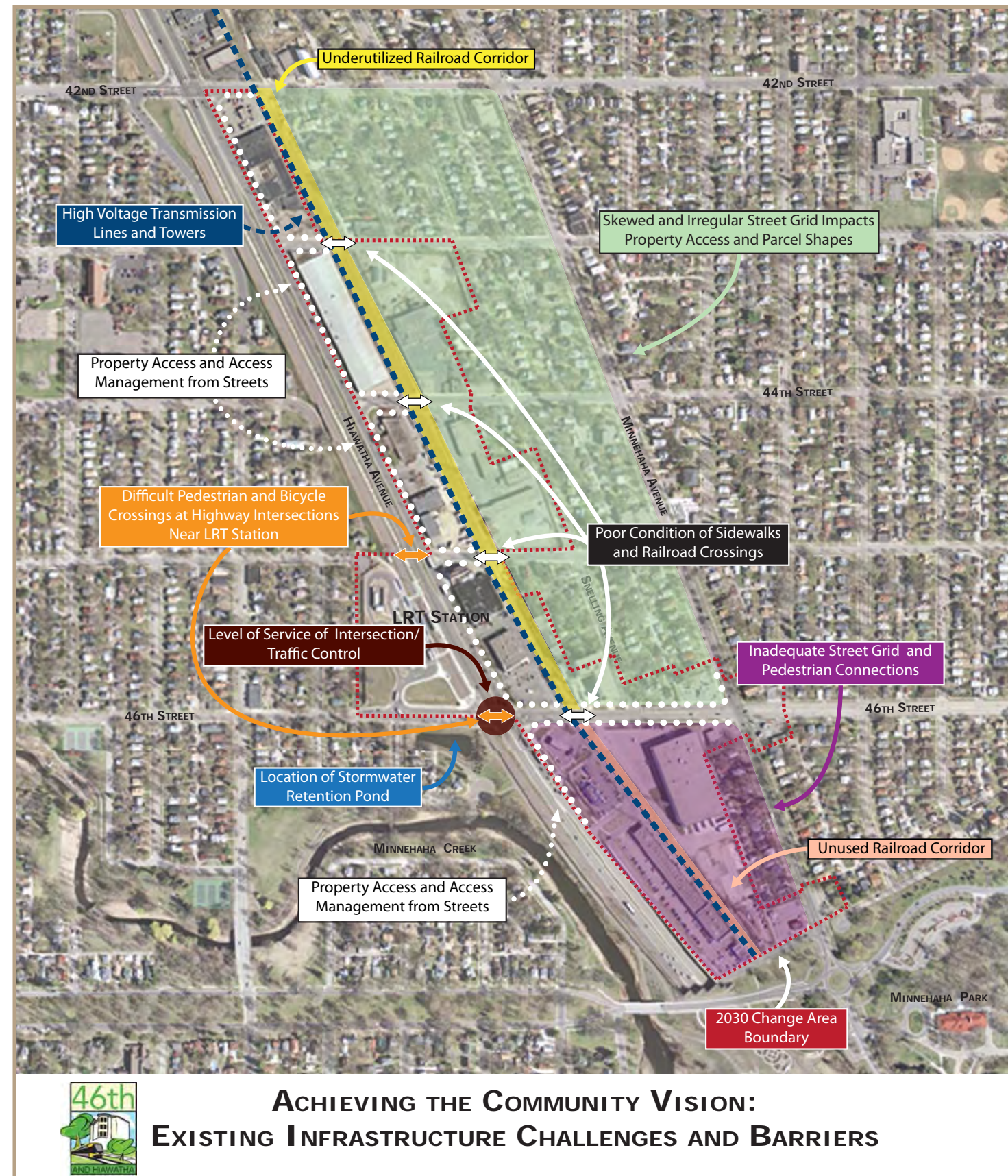
Existing Infrastructure

Infrastructure barriers that exist within the 46th Street Station Area will limit and delay the emergence of a transit-oriented urban environment unless mitigated by timely and strategic interventions similar to those recommended in this study. These infrastructure challenges include the underutilized segment of the commercial railroad corridor that parallels Hiawatha Avenue, the overhead high voltage power lines that run alongside the railroad corridor, and pedestrian crossing and traffic issues associated with Hiawatha Avenue and 46th Street. These infrastructure deficiencies limit the pace and character of neighborhood revitalization and transit-oriented development near the station

Market research in transit-oriented developments indicates that retail establishments are frequently patronized by local residents within walking or biking distance. However, the existing patterns of development within the 46th Street Station area make pedestrian and bicycle access difficult, perpetuating existing development that is primarily auto-orientated. South of 46th Street, the large super-block bounded by Hiawatha Avenue, Nawadaha Avenue, Minnehaha Avenue, and 46th Street is poorly integrated into the local street grid and lacks the connections necessary to provide property access and circulation for pedestrians, bicyclists, and cars. The limited street grid also fails to create blocks and parcels that are configured appropriately for new neighborhood center development.

The existing aboveground and belowground infrastructure (roads and utilities) also pose some barriers to new development because of their age, capacity, condition, and design features. Significant costs may also be incurred to replace or relocate utilities and change designs to accommodate the new higher valued land-uses envisioned in this plan. The remaining value of the existing infrastructure depends primarily upon its age and condition. Some of the existing infrastructure has already exhausted most of its physical, economic and functional value.

Reconstructing or modifying existing infrastructure systems may be fully warranted if doing so upgrades the functionality and sustainability of transportation and property services while attracting significant new private investment and tax base. Growth related infrastructure investments, especially in an area undergoing a significant land-use transition like the 46th Street LRT station area, need to be carefully coordinated and phased with new private investment and funded from a mix of both public resources and private funds. Through strategically-





Unused Railroad Corridor

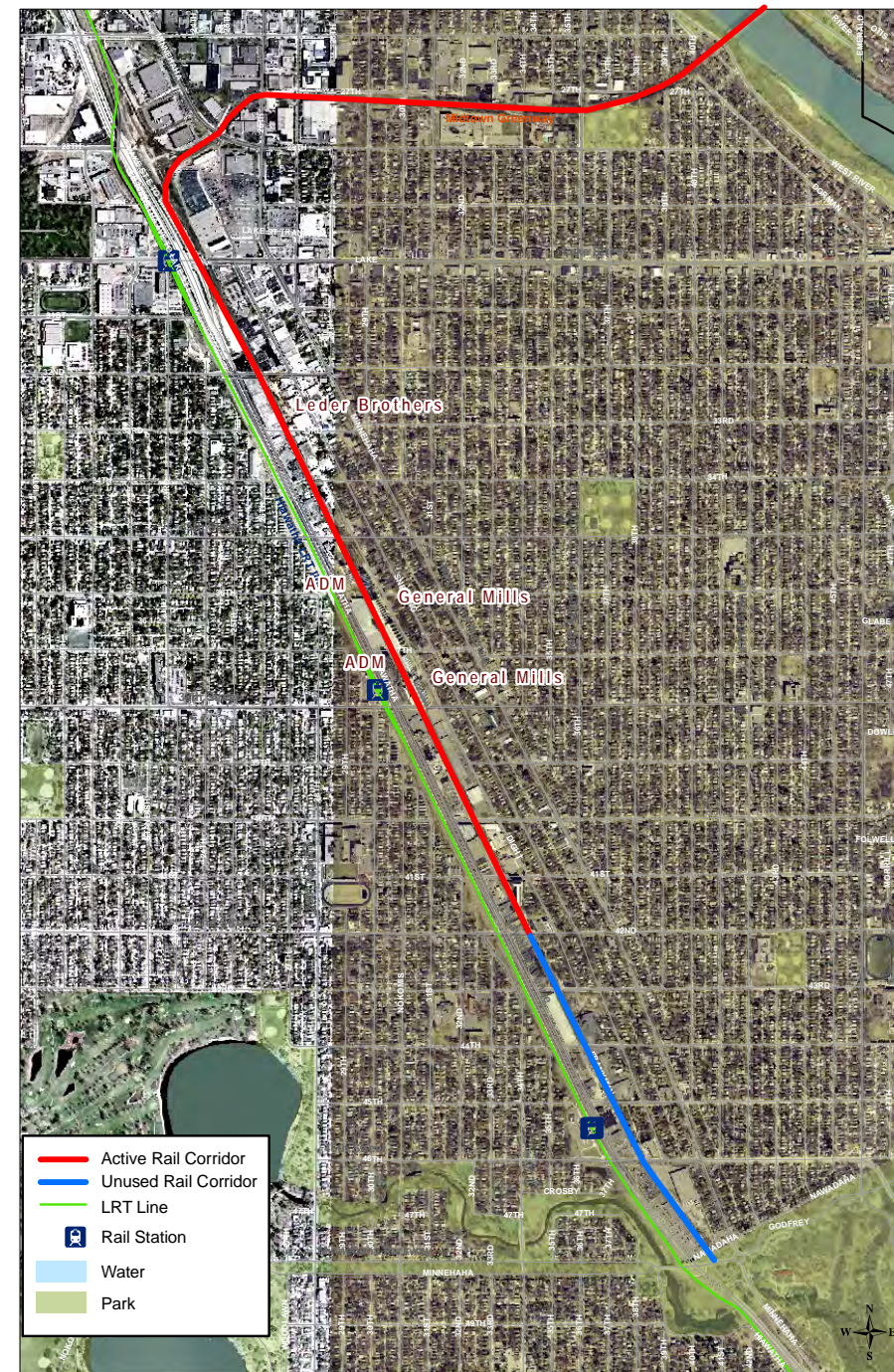


High Voltage Powerline



Powerline transitions from double row of Trellis Towers to Monopoles at Minnehaha Park

Minnehaha - Hiawatha Community Works - Rail Corridor



Railroad Corridor Map

Railroad Corridor Challenges

- According to consultants, there aren't any essential railroad operations located south of 42nd Street. Current users are located north of 38th Street, although the switching yards between 38th Street and 42nd Street support operations further north.
- The only active rail connection is to the north, and the railroad terminates to the south at Minnehaha Park.
- South of 46th Street, the city owns the land, but the Canadian Pacific (CP) Railroad maintains a permanent easement. CP Rail owns the remainder of the rail corridor north of 46th Street.
- Existing tracks and railroad crossings are deteriorating and need to be better maintained for pedestrians, vehicles and environmental quality.

phased infrastructure improvements the opportunity exists to mitigate or remove marketplace barriers to transit- and pedestrian-oriented development near the 46th Street LRT station.

Canadian Pacific Railroad Corridor

The Canadian Pacific railroad corridor that runs parallel to Hiawatha Avenue about one-half block to the east was once a mainline, making connections both north and south of the Twin Cities and providing service for numerous railroad corridor businesses. Now, the only rail access to the line is from the north, via a large truss bridge over the Mississippi River near 26th Street. All other rail connections have been removed, and the remaining tail track extending through the study area now terminates at Minnehaha Park.

With the assistance of Hennepin County Housing, Community Works, and Transit, the project team met with a railroad consultant to discuss issues surrounding the Canadian Pacific (CP) railroad and to receive feedback regarding potential improvements within the railroad corridor. The railroad consultant was hired by Hennepin County as part of the Minnehaha Hiawatha Community Works Project to evaluate the market for the railroad services, including patterns of use, customer prospects, current condition of the rail facilities (age, maintenance), and possible time frames for reducing or eventually abandoning rail service or facilities in different segments of the corridor as business needs change. In addition, this consultant provided valuable information about options or reconstructing railroad crossings within the rail corridor.

About fifteen years ago, CPR leased operating rights in the Hiawatha Corridor to a St. Paul based operator of railroad short lines, the Minnesota Commercial

Railway, which operates trains on an as needed basis for its clients in the Hiawatha Corridor. In recent years, this has meant as many as two or three trains moving into the corridor south of Lake Street daily, serving businesses located north of 38th street. Several active long-term users of the rail line remain, including extensive grain storage and milling operations by General Mills and Archer Daniels Midland, which are located just north of 38th Street. However, switching yards are located in several areas between 45th Street and 38th Street that permit rail cars to be parked until needed for delivery or loading and that enable cars to be assembled into larger trains.

Hennepin County's consultant determined that there are no essential railroad operations south of 42nd street. Evidence indicates that the tracks are unusable south of 46th Street. The City of Minneapolis now owns the land under the tracks south of 46th Street, although the railroad maintains a permanent easement for rail operations. In 2012, Canadian Pacific Railroad began working with Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis to authorize abandonment and removal of the railroad tracks located between 46th Street and Minnehaha Park.

High Voltage Powerline Corridor

The railroad corridor also serves as the alignment for a high voltage 115-KV transmission line that is owned, operated, and maintained by Xcel Energy. This corridor provides essential electricity distribution to South Minneapolis and the region.

The segment of the utility corridor extending between the 39th Street substation to Minnehaha Park is the only segment of the powerline that was not modernized from steel trellis towers to monopoles when Hiawatha Avenue was reconstructed in the 1990s. The single circuit trellis towers straddle both sides of the rail corridor, creating a much wider impact zone than the taller, double circuit steel tubular monopoles.

This study reviewed options for relocating, modernizing, or burying the high voltage powerline. Modernizing the powerline onto monopoles was identified as the most feasible option. This was primarily because of for the challenges of identifying an alternative connecting utility alignment, the high cost of burying the entire line, and the necessity to stage powerline modifications with other changes happening in the rail corridor. Consequently this study has focused on identifying options for modernizing this service and phasing the improvements to coincide with other infrastructure and development changes occurring in the station area. This approach is presented in the Imagine chapter of this study, which includes preliminary design concepts, cross-sections, and plans for the proposed future greenway corridor.

Powerline Corridor Challenges

- *The 115-KV transmission line is owned, operated, and maintained by Xcel Energy.*
- *This segment of the powerline between 38th Street and Minnehaha Park was not modernized to a single monopole system like elsewhere in the corridor.*
- *The two separate transmission lines result in a much wider impact area that weakens the market for redevelopment.*



Large building footprints and impervious parking lots at many industrial sites near the LRT station increase runoff to storm sewers



PLACE

Stormwater Management

The stormwater infrastructure within the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area primarily captures runoff in storm drains and catchments; channels the water into underground storm sewers; and then discharges the stormwater into nearby water bodies with minimal treatment or control of discharge rates. The major exception to this is stormwater from the recently reconstructed segment of Hiawatha Avenue, which is captured in a detention pond that is directly across the street from the LRT

station along 46th Street. This storm sewer system is charged with handling the runoff from much of the project area, which is substantial given the amount of impervious surfaces in the area. Analysis shows that 54 percent of the study area is impervious (covered by buildings or pavement), and that the designated redevelopment area is 70 percent impervious.

Stormwater is collected within two different watersheds; Minnehaha Creek and the Mississippi River. The amount of impervious surface in the station

area increases the rate and volume of stormwater discharging at storm sewer outfalls into these waterways. Any future improvements to the stormwater system in the area, either by private development or public infrastructure improvements, should slow down or eliminate a significant amount of the water being discharged to these water bodies. This will help reduce stream bank erosion and give the runoff an opportunity to drop out pollutant loads before entering the receiving water.

New development within the area, including Hiawatha Flats and Hiawatha Oaks, have been held to higher stormwater management standards by regulatory agencies than was applied to previous older developments. Stormwater management techniques used by these developments have included underground infiltration and rate control, vegetated swales and infiltration trenches, permeable pavements, and other Low Impact Design (LID) techniques. However, new development that conforms with or exceeds current stormwater standards will significantly improve stormwater quality and better protect the banks and water quality of these waterways.

Soil Contamination

An in-depth analysis of brownfields or soil contamination was beyond the scope of this study. However, environmental information has been collected by Hennepin County for the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works project area to facilitate a preliminary environmental review and assessments. The report indicates that some sites located within the railroad corridor may require additional testing and environmental remediation to accommodate the construction of new retail and housing structures. Several public programs managed by state and local agencies provide technical assistance and funding to assist property owners, businesses and developers with environmental investigation, testing and remediation.

The Imagine chapter will explore the ways that many of these challenging infrastructure and environmental barriers can be mitigated or converted into new opportunities during the development of a transit-oriented neighborhood center around the 46th Street LRT station.



Impervious Building Area

Aerial photograph of 46th Street LRT station area looking towards the south.

The intersection of Hiawatha Avenue (Minnesota State Highway 55) and 46th Street is located at the center of this oblique aerial photograph that was taken looking south in 2009. The LRT Station and transit hub are visible in the northwest (lower right) corner of the intersection. Three major transportation facilities cut diagonal paths through the city's rectangular street grid. These include the Hiawatha LRT alignment, Hiawatha Avenue, and the commercial railroad and powerline corridor located one-half block to the east.

The area included in the photograph includes both planned preservation and change areas. Preservation areas include the extensive parklands located along Minnehaha Creek, the established urban single family neighborhoods, and several small storefront commercial nodes. The change area consists primarily of the LRT station hub, and the two block wide belt of aging industrial buildings and automobile-oriented retail uses located on the east side of Hiawatha Avenue.

Three new transit-oriented development projects have been developed since the LRT opened in 2004, adding about 400 housing units close to the LRT Station. Two of the projects, Oaks Hiawatha Station and Hiawatha Flats are located on the east (left) side of the commercial railroad and powerline corridor. Oaks Hiawatha Station is located near the center of the picture, at the corner of 46th Street and Snelling Avenue. One of the Hiawatha Flats apartment buildings is partially visible at the bottom of the photo. The newest transit-oriented project is Oaks Station Place, which is under construction in 2012 on the two vacant lots that face 46th Street on the south side of the transit hub.



PLACE



Support — [suh-‘pohrt]

–verb (sup•port)

Definition:

1. To reinforce a structure or building.
2. To champion a policy or promote an outcome through advocacy and action.

–noun (sup•port)

Definition:

1. A foundation, beam or other building part that bears the weight of the building and keeps it from falling down.
2. A person or object that provides critical aid and assistance.

The 46th and Hiawatha TOD Strategy has been guided by two sets of principles. One set of principles are the design guidelines that define the major physical characteristics of a transit-oriented environment. The other primary direction is provided by the Guiding Principles that were recommended by the Citizen Advisory Committee for this study. These principles, together with the input provided by the Technical Advisory Committee, Public Workshops, Elected Officials and Consultants forms the supporting foundation for all of the development scenarios, projects and actions steps that are recommended.

- **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Principles**
- **Community Input and Involvement**
- **Adopted City of Minneapolis Policy Supports TOD**
- **Adopted Land-Use Regulations at the 46th Street LRT Station Area**
- **Core Guiding Principles of the Citizens Advisory Committee**

SURVEY

PLACE

SUPPORT

IMAGINE

INVEST

GUIDE

BUILD



Any successful community building project begins with laying the proper support and foundation. An effective strategy to implement a transit-oriented environment is rooted in core planning principles; active public involvement; input from property owners and developers; analysis of land-use, economic development and infrastructure policies and regulations; the realities of the private marketplace; and sound technical analysis and counsel.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Principles

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) is defined by the Transit Cooperative Research Program of the U.S. Government as “one pattern of development consistent with livable communities within urban settings. Specifically TOD land-use is: (1) moderate to higher density development; (2) a mixture of residential, employment, shopping, and civic uses and types; (3) in walkable proximity to a major transit station; and (4) oriented principally to transit, pedestrian, and bicycle travel from the surrounding areas, without excluding automobiles.”

While the specific features of transit-oriented development can vary depending on its location, a consistent set of principles can be applied around each transit station to achieve a concentration and mix of complementary, well-integrated land-uses within walking distance of the transit station. Successfully implemented, the emergence of a transit-oriented neighborhood center will also enhance the livability and desirability of the surrounding lower density residential districts that are planned for preservation rather than change. Each of the following general TOD principles is important. However, the relative emphasis placed upon each will vary depending on the specific features of the urban region, city and neighborhood, as well as the site characteristics of the transit station.

The following general TOD principles, as well as the Citizens Advisory Committee’s Core Guiding Principles for the study that are discussed later in this chapter, were applied at the 46th Street station area and were localized to guide this planning process:

- **Mix of complementary transit-supportive land-uses:** Provide a range and mix of housing types, office uses, service-oriented retail uses, and civic uses that increase trip options for transit users, and provide a complete mix of neighborhood choices.
- **Increased land-use intensity:** Encourage moderate to higher densities for new development, and concentrate them closest to the LRT station.
- **Extensive pedestrian and bicycle system:** Provide a pedestrian and bicycle system throughout the station area that improves walking and bicycle facilities and connects efficiently to surrounding neighborhoods and local destinations.
- **Interconnected street network:** Design multi-modal streets around a block system that is integrated with the transit, pedestrian, and bicycle systems.
- **High quality design in private buildings, public facilities, and infrastructure:** Use public art and place-making techniques to create architectural gateways, public gathering places, and building facades and streetscapes that create a memorable place while reinforcing neighborhood identity and existing assets.
- **Carefully designed, integrated, and managed parking:** Minimize large surface parking lots, and emphasize well-landscaped and designed parking structures and shared facilities. Reduce parking requirements and costs to reflect the increased availability of multi modal transportation choices.



Oaks Hiawatha Station

- **Pedestrian-oriented and scaled buildings, site design, and streetscapes:** Design and locate buildings to front public streets and open spaces, and include active uses on the ground floor to encourage pedestrian activity.
- **Public open spaces:** Protect existing parks, and establish additional open spaces that are focal points and act as development catalysts and centers of activity. Park areas should be accessible and extended with landscaped walkable streets and greenways that serve as “green fingers” that connect into the adjacent urban neighborhoods.
- **Sustainable urban environments:** Build upon the beneficial environmental impacts of transit-oriented neighborhoods by incorporating high-performance infrastructure and green buildings. Innovative low impact development and district stormwater management techniques play a positive role in protecting watersheds and repairing adverse impacts from existing infrastructure systems and land-uses.

These principles provide the definition of what a transit-oriented environment is and how it is intended to function.

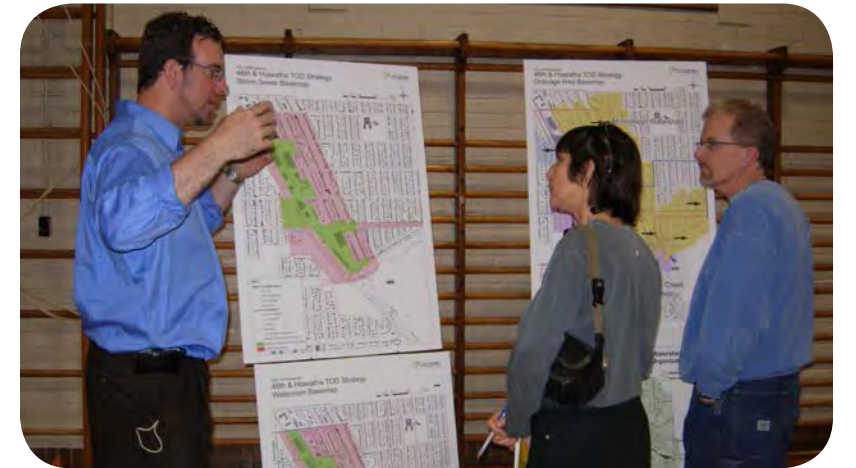
The Benefits of Transit-Oriented Development

The social, economic, and environmental benefits of transit-oriented development are significant and are often evaluated through different lenses such as sustainable environment, multi-modal transportation choices, and more livable and complete local neighborhoods. One of the greatest benefits offered by transit-oriented neighborhood development is to provide opportunities for blending these benefits together through urban growth and new development, revitalizing existing properties and enhancing infrastructure systems. Some of these potential benefits include the following:

- *Incentives to conserve land and use existing infrastructure more efficiently*
- *Higher and more efficient transit service usage*
- *Convenient access to local and regional employment centers*
- *Reduced transportation costs and greater household spendable income*
- *Increased housing and commercial property values*
- *More transportation choices*
- *Less driving to meet daily needs*
- *Increased customers and foot traffic for local stores and services*
- *More affordable and life cycle housing choices appropriate for different demographics*
- *More incentives and opportunities for compact and mixed-income and life cycle housing development*
- *Better places to live, work, and play*
- *Reduced pollution or dependency on foreign oil*
- *Healthier, active, and less stressful lifestyles that include more walking and bicycling*
- *More time for family life*
- *Safer and more active pedestrian environments*
- *Convenient access to daily shopping needs and services*
- *Higher and more stable property values*



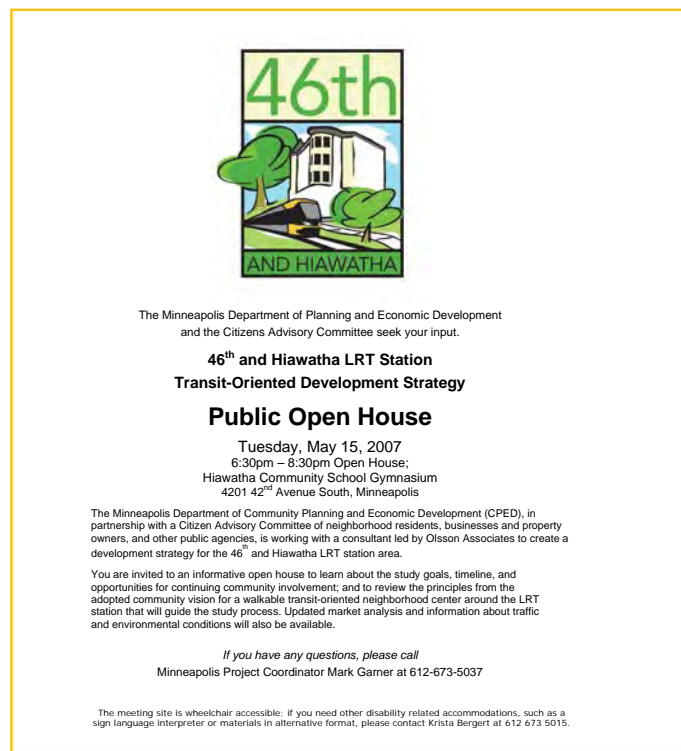
Hiawatha Flats is a well-designed transit-oriented development that complements the single family housing located across Snelling Avenue



Public Open House for 46th Street TOD Strategy

Community Input and Involvement

The planning process for the 46th Street TOD Strategy continued the high standard set by the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan for strong community and stakeholder engagement. This section describes the community engagement process utilized to obtain extensive input from residents, developers, business and property owners, and city and county technical staff members.



46th-Hiawatha public meeting flyer

Citizens Advisory Committee

Developing this analysis and strategy has incorporated significant involvement from key members of the community. A thirteen-member Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) was appointed by neighborhood organizations and city and county elected officials to guide the planning process using their in-depth knowledge of the area and valuable neighborhood and stakeholder perspectives. The group included several neighborhood representatives from the Longfellow Community Council, Standish Ericsson Neighborhood Association, the Longfellow Business Association and other local business and property owners, a Hennepin County representative appointed by Commissioner Peter McLaughlin, and Minneapolis City Council Member Sandy Colvin Roy. The CAC met ten times during 2007 and 2008, developing a vision and a set of principles to help guide the future of the station area. CAC roles and responsibilities included the following:

- Promoting community involvement
- Providing professional and personal insights and judgments
- Balancing competing perspectives
- Maintaining policy support and continuity of the original plan, and identifying necessary revisions or refinements
- Representing neighborhood organizations, residents, and stakeholder groups
- Evaluating input from public meetings
- Identifying priority opportunity sites
- Reviewing alternative infrastructure concepts and development scenarios
- Prioritizing projects, strategies, and action steps
- Supporting ongoing partnerships to implement the TOD strategy
- Touring the station area
- Visiting new developments
- Promoting multi-jurisdictional collaboration
- Linking the TOD strategy to other community issues, projects, and goals
- Expanding informal discussions about the 46th Street LRT Station Area
- Serving as ongoing plan champions and implementation stakeholders

Public Meetings

Active and direct input from the community was a key component of the TOD Strategy Plan. Community participation drove the development of opportunity site redevelopment alternatives and provided an input mechanism for members of the community. Four public meetings were held at key points during the study process where members of the community were invited to participate in and

receive information about the planning process. Turnout for the meetings was mobilized with postcards mailed to all nearby property addresses and notices placed in neighborhood group newsletters and bulletins. Public meetings were held at either a neighborhood school or a community center located within ten blocks of the 46th Street light rail station.

- The first meeting was an open house held in May of 2007 to introduce the project goals, the consultant and community team members, and the study methodology. The brief presentation was followed by an open house where members of the public browsed information on display boards and directed questions to project team members.
- The second public meeting was a presentation and workshop held in September of 2007. The purpose of the meeting was to inform participants about the existing infrastructure, land-use, and market conditions in the project area and to encourage participation in a small group exercise designed to solicit community input on alternative redevelopment concepts at several key sites within the study area.
- The third public meeting, held in December of 2007, presented innovative concepts about green infrastructure and sustainable development and updated the technical findings on transportation impacts, market support, and financial feasibility of neighborhood center development. Revolving topical discussions were organized for small groups and facilitated by members of the Citizens Advisory Committee. The workshop focused on redevelopment options for several major “opportunity sites” that could anchor neighborhood center development.
- The final open house meeting was held in February of 2008 to review the proposed transit-oriented development strategies and preferred development and infrastructure scenarios for the study area. As in the first public meeting, members of the public could browse information on display boards, ask questions of project team and Citizens Advisory Committee members, and provide written input.

Many participants from early meetings continued to attend the later meetings.

Local Business, Property Owner and Developer Involvement

The project team met at several points throughout the study process with owners of local businesses and commercial properties to discuss their attitudes about the emerging market around the 46th Street LRT station for transit-oriented development. Individual in-person and phone interviews were conducted in July of 2007 with twelve business or commercial property owners within the study area. Almost all of the property owners indicated that new housing development was replacing blighted commercial buildings and improving the quality and appearance of the neighborhood. These stakeholders expressed concerns about traffic flow on Hiawatha Avenue, traffic delays at major signalized intersections, and pedestrian safety at major street crossings near the LRT station. Individual property owners expressed varying opinions and levels of interest about future opportunities to sell their properties for transit-oriented neighborhood center redevelopment.

The consultant team also met twice with developers to discuss market trends, opportunities for property acquisition, and the feasibility of the development concepts prepared for strategic opportunity sites within the study area. Focused workshops were held in July of 2007 and January of 2008 with developers who had previously developed land within the study area or were developing urban projects similar in scope to those that were being proposed for the 46th Street LRT station area in the future. Input from the developers was taken into account when refining redevelopment scenarios and recommendations. The developers agreed that the 46th and Hiawatha station area is emerging as a stronger market for redevelopment because of LRT.

Additional Sources of Technical Information and Input

Technical Advisory Group

A Technical Advisory Group (TAG) met four times during the study process to provide technical and policy guidance and direction for the project team. The TAG included members from the following jurisdictions:

- Hennepin County Transportation
- Hennepin County Housing, Community Works, and Transit
- City of Minneapolis Public Works
- City of Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED)
- Metropolitan Council
- Metro Transit

Evaluation of the Railroad Corridor

With the assistance of Hennepin County Housing, Community Works, and Transit, the project team met with a railroad consultant to discuss issues surrounding the Canadian Pacific (CP) railroad and receive feedback regarding improvement options within the railroad corridor. The railroad consultant was hired by Hennepin County as part of the Minnehaha–Hiawatha Community Works Strategic Investment Framework to evaluate the market for the railroad services, patterns of continued use, customer prospects, and time frames for discontinuing rail service and facilities in different segments of the corridor. The consultant also assessed the current condition of the rail facilities (age, maintenance, and capital needs), including railroad crossings. A written report has subsequently been prepared for Hennepin County and is available on the Minnehaha Hiawatha Strategic Investment Framework website.

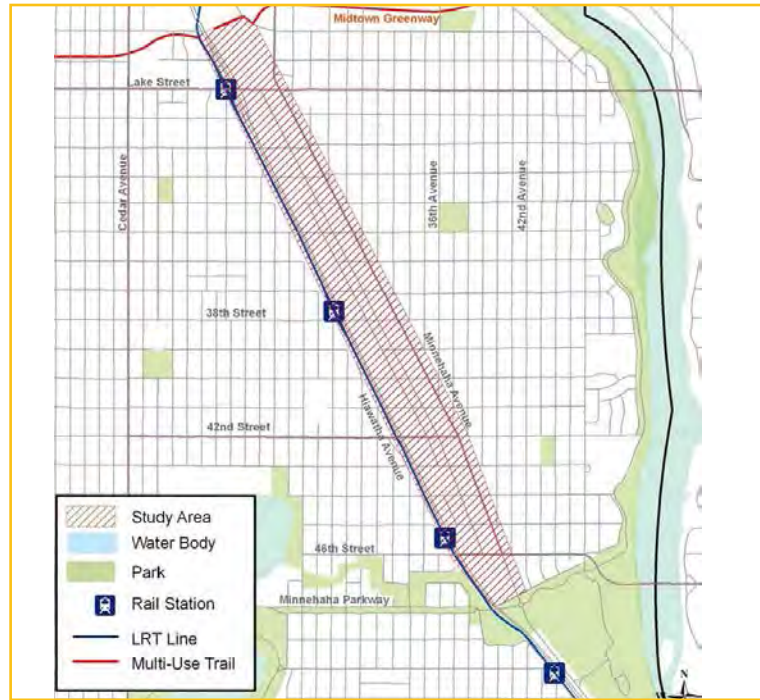
Evaluation of the High Voltage Powerline Corridor

Xcel Energy provided a preliminary scoping estimate of the cost of modernizing the high voltage powerline corridor between Nawadaha Avenue and the 39th Street substation. The utility company provided information about converting the existing system from twin single circuit lattice towers onto double circuit monopoles similar to the poles that are installed further to the south through Minnehaha Park.

AIA Great City Design Team Workshop

In May of 2007, the Longfellow Community Council and the Minneapolis Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) hosted a community design “charrette” to develop urban design concepts to improve the environment along 46th Street as a Gateway to Minneapolis between the Mississippi River and Hiawatha Avenue. Neighborhood residents and key agency stakeholders were invited to participate in this workshop where ideas for future projects were expressed through drawings. The AIA design team concepts were shared with the 46th and Hiawatha Citizen Advisory Committee and the project team, contributing valuable ideas, many of which were incorporated into this study.

SUPPORT



Minnehaha Hiawatha Community Works Project Area



Future Land Use Map for the South Sector in Minneapolis, taken from the Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth

The Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership

The City of Minneapolis is a formal partner in the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership, which is a corridor-wide planning and implementation partnership that was initiated by Hennepin County in 2008. The Minnehaha-Hiawatha project area includes most of the 46th Street Station Area, as well as areas further to the north around the 38th Street and Lake Street stations. The Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership has published valuable reports on cultural and historical resources in the corridor and a market study for the project area. The Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works planning has also incorporated infrastructure and land use concepts developed during the 46th Street TOD Strategy. The Strategic Investment Framework for the Minnehaha-Hiawatha corridor was adopted by the Hennepin County Board in November 2011.

Adopted City of Minneapolis Policy Supports TOD

The 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan was adopted by the Minneapolis City Council in 2001. The plan is one of many small area plans that are now part of the city's comprehensive plan and is enforced and implemented with the mechanisms and tools identified in that plan. Therefore, by definition, all current and future actions taken by the city will be guided by the policy and land-use recommendations contained in the 46th Street master plan while preserving the rights of private citizens and property owners. The primary purpose of the current planning effort – and this document – is to guide and support the implementation of that plan.

Additionally, the 46th Street LRT station area poses a significant opportunity to demonstrate and implement new and evolving city policies. This study, the 46th and Hiawatha LRT Station Area TOD Strategy, supports (and is supported by) several key policies and recent initiatives at the City of Minneapolis. These include the 2009 Comprehensive Plan update, the Access Minneapolis Transportation Policy Plans, and the growing sustainability programs and initiatives of the city.

This plan also aligns closely with initiatives and partnerships at the Hennepin County Community Works Department (such as the Minnehaha Hiawatha Strategic Investment Framework and Active Living policy) and the Transportation Division (Complete Streets policy). Similar well-aligned program and policy initiatives also exist at higher levels of government, such as the Metropolitan Council's Livable Communities Program, the recent Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development's (DEED) Transit Improvement Area (TIA) initiative, and the emerging federal "Interagency Partnership

for Sustainable Communities" that includes three federal departments - Department of Transportation (DOT), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The brief discussion below highlights some relevant areas of the new city policies. These initiatives, several of which were completed after the primary technical work for this study, will further refine, shape, and inform project concepts that have been developed in the 46th Street TOD Strategy beyond the preliminary conceptual designs provided by this study.

The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth

In 2009, the City of Minneapolis updated its Comprehensive Plan to provide a policy framework for growth and land use changes occurring within the City. The plan consists of chapters organized in ten topical areas, with each chapter including goals, a context analysis, policies, and implementation steps. The Land-use chapter introduces the future land-use map and land-use designations showing how the city intends to grow. The Transportation chapter emphasizes integration between land-use and the city's multi-modal transportation system, with recommendations that emphasize additional access for pedestrian and bicycles, transit and rail service, and automobiles.

The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth recognizes Transit Station Areas (TSAs) as important land-use features for market building and future city growth. Density, urban design and infrastructure are especially critical in these areas. Transit Station Areas are designed with the pedestrian and bicyclist in mind and are intended to serve individuals who are more likely to use transit. Accordingly, in the 46th Street Hiawatha LRT station area, the City of Minneapolis will encourage both density and a mix of land-uses that supports ridership for transit and benefit both users and neighborhood residents. To implement this policy, the 46th and Hiawatha LRT Station Area TOD Strategy strives to do the following:

- Explore and pursue opportunities to integrate development with the transit station.
- Concentrate the highest densities of mixed-use and multifamily housing development nearest the LRT station along 46th Street between the LRT station and Minnehaha Avenue and along Hiawatha Avenue and segments of Minnehaha Avenue (a Community Corridor) that are located near neighborhood commercial nodes.
- See that new development density is well integrated with existing neighborhood character by transitioning the scale of development and paying attention to design.

The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth also identifies a portion of the change area identified in the 46th Street LRT Station Area adopted small area plan as an emerging activity center, to reflect that a mixed-use neighborhood center is being developed at this location. The Plan describes activity centers as the following:

“Activity Centers are the places that shape Minneapolis’ urban identity. They attract residents, workers, and visitors from throughout the city and region. Activity Centers support a wide range of commercial, office, and residential uses. They typically have a busy street life with activity throughout the day and into the evening. They are heavily oriented toward pedestrians and maintain a traditional urban form and scale. Activity Centers are also well served by transit.”

The Comprehensive Plan focuses on three broad areas of urban sustainability: environmental, economic, and social.

Minneapolis Sustainability Initiative

The Sustainability Initiative was launched in 2003 when the City Council established the Minneapolis Sustainability Program and initiated the use of sustainability principles to guide city decision making. Progress since that time has occurred each year, beginning with identifying sustainability indicators and targets, which have been incorporated into the business plans and performance measures of city departments. Annual reports note progress for 26 sustainability indicators grouped into three main themes: fostering healthy lives, managing the “greenprint” of the city, and promoting a vital community. Strategies and indicators that are directly supported by the 46th Street Transit-Oriented Development Strategy include promoting active living and alternative transportation, reducing automobile emissions, increasing the tree canopy, improving stormwater management, increasing the supply and diversity of affordable housing choices, remediating brownfields, creating complete green streets, and expanding bikeways.

Access Minneapolis

Begun in 2005, Access Minneapolis is the City of Minneapolis’ multi-year transportation planning process that addresses a full range of transportation options and uses, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, automobiles, and freight. In addition to Citizen Advisory Committees, work on the Access Minneapolis plans has included strong participation by other state, regional, and county partners

that deliver transportation services or manage regional elements of the transportation system in Minneapolis. The Access Minneapolis process has six components, which focus on developing action plans and design guidelines to steer the next ten years of Minneapolis transportation investments:

- Downtown Action Plan, approved in 2007
- Citywide Action Plan, approved in 2009
- Design Guidelines for Streets and Sidewalks, was initially prepared in 2008 and was revised to incorporate additional detail on pedestrian facilities, bicycle facilities, and tree and boulevard design
- Streetcar Plan, with a recommended long-term streetcar network adopted in 2010
- Pedestrian Master Plan, completed in 2009
- Bicycle Master Plan, completed 2011

Access Minneapolis plans focus on comprehensive multi-modal transportation planning, the role of the primary transit network in city growth, place-based street design, street and sidewalk design guidelines, and the importance of complete and connected streets. This document provides a policy framework that aligns with several recommendations contained in the TOD implementation strategy. Policies, design standards, and priorities established in these plans establish a more detailed framework for proposed new transportation facilities.

The following transportation policies from the Minneapolis Plan are supported by the Access Minneapolis Plan:

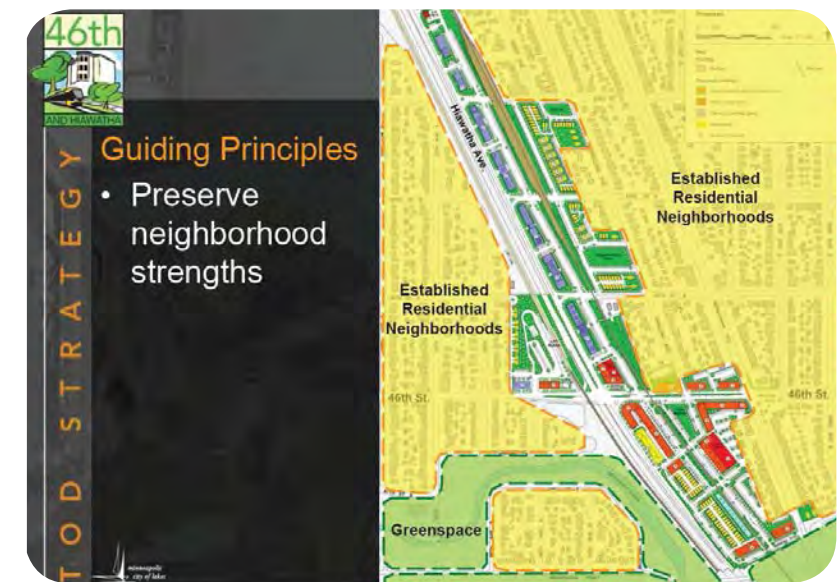
- Building the city through multi-modalism
- Balancing the needs of all modes of transportation with land use policy
- Creating a walkable city
- Creating a bicycle friendly city
- Managing vehicle traffic and parking



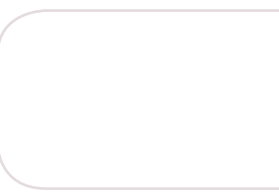
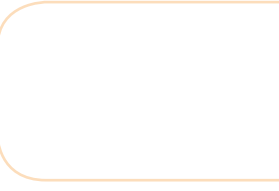
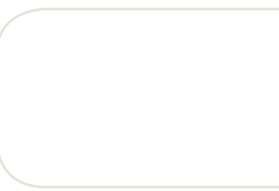
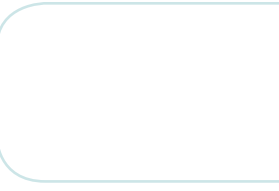
Pedestrians walking to the 46th Street LRT station



Single Family neighborhoods are Preservation Areas



Preserve Neighborhood Strengths



46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan

The 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan is the foundation for this study, which focuses upon refining and implementing the general land-use proposals contained in this plan. The master planning process for the 46th and Hiawatha light rail station area began in July of 2000, with the plan completed a year later in June and adopted in December of 2001. The study included a significant public involvement process, incorporating nearly 30 events and meetings, including public workshops; Community Steering Committee meetings; Technical Advisory Committee meetings; and meetings with elected officials, local utilities, developers, and regulatory agencies.

The plan study area was defined as the area within a 10-minute walking distance (one-half mile) of the 46th and Hiawatha light rail station. This area encompasses about 500 acres of land in parts of three well-defined neighborhoods: Nokomis East and Standish Ericsson to the west of Hiawatha Avenue and Longfellow to the east. In addition to the residential neighborhoods, parts of Minnehaha Park and Minnehaha Creek and commercial businesses along Hiawatha Avenue, 46th Street, and Minnehaha Avenue were included in the study area.

A Dynamic Vision Framework

Three key factors shaped the plan:

- 1) Physical limitations imposed by the site
- 2) Community input and preference
- 3) Current real estate market

The plan considered that each factor could change in time and, therefore, was developed as an illustration of a flexible framework within which the vision of the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area could develop. At the time of the study, the LRT station had not yet been constructed, and it was often difficult for the community to appreciate the transformative power of the transit system. The plan vision looked ahead to establish land-use and infrastructure priorities through 2020.

Proposed Land-uses

The Station Area Master Plan focuses a mix of uses at moderate to higher urban densities around a town square concept proposed just southeast of the 46th Street Light Rail Station. The station change area encompassed only about 50 acres of the 500-acre study area. Most of the land within the 46th Street LRT station area is identified as a preservation area.

Retail Land-Uses: Retail was proposed on the first floor of multi-story, multi-use buildings, allowing for approximately 145,000 square feet of new retail space, much of which proposed replacing and reconfiguring poorly located or more automobile-oriented existing commercial buildings. The retail was concentrated along a new Main Street and Town Square configuration centered on 46th Street and Snelling Avenue.



2001 Consensus Plan Map from the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan

46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan

Residential: The Master Plan paved the way for recognizing that multifamily housing development would lead the way in developing a TOD environment, proposing a diverse mix of new housing within walking distance of transit stops, including at least 550 new residential units expected to be built by 2020 in a variety of unit types, including apartments, condominiums, senior housing, and mixed-use buildings.

Office/Convertible Space: As a result of unfavorable neighborhood opinion toward office uses and the evolving and uncertain demand for office space during the first years of the century, the Station Area Master Plan proposed over 200,000 square-feet of what is labeled as “office space/convertible space.” This space is intended to be designed in a loft-style and to be used for either office uses or residential uses as the market dictates.

Open Space: New parks and green amenities proposed in the plan include a greenway in the railroad corridor and green spaces in the Town Square and proposed residential districts.

Infrastructure Needs

The Station Area Master Plan recognized the need for public sector involvement to stimulate development opportunities identified within the plan to go forward. The following public infrastructure investments were identified:

- Several new streets through the redevelopment area
- Public parking
- Pedestrian-friendly improvements to the intersection of 46th and Hiawatha
- New bike paths and bike storage facilities

Obstacles to Overcome

The Station Area Master Plan identified several obstacles that needed to be overcome and identified key public sector action

steps that needed to be implemented to realize the vision defined within the master plan. These obstacles and the resulting action steps were specifically studied later within the current 46th and Hiawatha TOD Strategy project:

1. Issue Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to sell the excess land that is owned by public sector agencies such as the Metropolitan Council’s station site and the Minneapolis public works site located at the northwest corner of Snelling Avenue and 45th Street.
2. Adopt a half-mile radius overlay zoning ordinance, and also modify regulations in the base zoning districts to reflect the land use plan. This overlay zoning ordinance should prohibit auto oriented uses near the station and support pedestrian oriented design standards.
3. Make pedestrian-friendly improvements at the Hiawatha Avenue and 46th Street intersection.

Recommendations for public sector role also included directly assembling land or coordinating with separate landowners to consolidate parcels to improve development feasibility; to construct streets to stimulate and prepare for redevelopment; and to work closely with existing landowners, new landowners, and developers to implement the development vision prescribed in the Station Area Master Plan.

The consultant team that worked on the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan was led by Farr Associates (Chicago) and included Parsons Transportation Group (Minneapolis) and ZHA, Inc. (Annapolis). Two of these consultant groups – Farr Associates and ZHA, Inc. – have been part of the consultant team that prepared the 46th and Hiawatha TOD Strategy and have provided important continuity with the original Master Plan study.

Adopted Land-Use Regulations at the 46th Street LRT Station Area

Land-use planning envisions what types of development are better suited for certain areas than others. The zoning code regulates land-uses based upon these adopted land-use plans. Zoning regulates the use of land, including the height, massing, and design of structures. It serves to balance the rights and responsibilities of property owners regarding using and modifying their properties, regulates the allowed impacts of properties on adjacent properties, and guides the economic assumptions of future property owners about using and redeveloping property.

Zoning regulations constitute the strongest implementation tool available to encourage and support the private implementation of the City’s adopted Station Area Plans. New zoning often grants greater development rights and promotes the emergence of market support for new preferred land uses and development. Owners of properties with established nonconforming uses may continue to operate and maintain their properties until evolving market conditions, physical obsolescence of their property, opportunities to expand or relocate to other appropriately-zoned sites, and economic opportunities to sell or redevelop become attractive to current owners. Developers and property owners should review the most current zoning maps available on the City of Minneapolis website.

Zoning regulations in Minneapolis are applied at two levels: base zoning districts, which regulate land-use and intensity by area, and zoning overlay districts. Overlay districts add another layer to zoning that can further regulate elements such as setbacks, density, parking, building height and orientation, and land uses.

Applying new land-use policies and zoning regulations in transit station areas begins with recognizing that access to convenient light rail transit service is a valuable and geographically limited resource that will shape the evolution of the area around the station over time, just as the former streetcar system shaped the historic growth and settlement of Minneapolis. Transit-oriented development is often regarded as a type of traditional urban form that is compatible with many of the existing features of urban centers and historic neighborhoods.

Zoning controls are used to support several land-use and building features associated with transit-supportive environments, including the following:

- Appropriate urban land-use intensity for neighborhood location and to support transit investment (building height, bulk, and residential density)
- Human-scaled architectural design that provides visual interest and supports active pedestrian-oriented public spaces and streets

SUPPORT

- Vertical mixed-use near stations
- Pedestrian-oriented building form and placement
- Pedestrian-oriented land-uses
- Small-scale neighborhood supporting retail uses
- Limitations on auto-oriented uses and drive-through facilities
- Limitations on low employment intensity commercial land-uses
- Off-street parking and vehicle access designed to minimize impacts on the pedestrian experience
- Reduced parking requirements
- Additional bicycle facilities
- Transitions in building height and scale from established neighborhoods
- Site plan review requirements

State statutes require that municipalities develop consistency between their comprehensive plan policies and zoning. In April of 2004, the Minneapolis City Council adopted a formal resolution directing the Planning Division to undertake a rezoning study to implement adopted station area master plans around the Hiawatha LRT Stations. The process has been completed in two stages, beginning with approving a zoning overlay district.

In April of 2005, the City of Minneapolis added a Pedestrian Oriented (PO) Overlay District in the transit station areas. According to the Minneapolis zoning code, the Pedestrian Overlay District is established to preserve and encourage the pedestrian character of commercial areas and to promote street life and activity by regulating building orientation and design and accessory parking facilities and by prohibiting certain high impact and automobile-oriented uses. Further regulations exist for those PO Districts in and around transit station areas, including the 46th and Hiawatha study area. Among the features of Transit Station Area PO districts is a minimum floor area ratio of 1.0 in mixed-use districts, preventing prime property near transit stations from being underused.

In 2008, the Citizen Advisory Committee for the 46th Street TOD Strategy recommended that the city complete the rezoning study for the 46th Street LRT Station Area. Later in 2008, the 46th Street LRT Station Area became the fourth LRT station area to be reviewed for changes to the base zoning districts, with modifications approved in early 2009. Changes made to base zoning incorporate policy direction from adopted land-use plans as well as a detailed analysis of existing zoning and land-uses. Amending the zoning map follows rigorous due process requirements that enable stakeholder participation and protect property-owner rights. In some cases, existing uses become legally nonconforming so that future uses will be consistent with adopted plans. In most cases, zoning changes increase the development potential of properties to realize the density and use objectives of the plan and support the emergence of private market incentives for redevelopment over time.

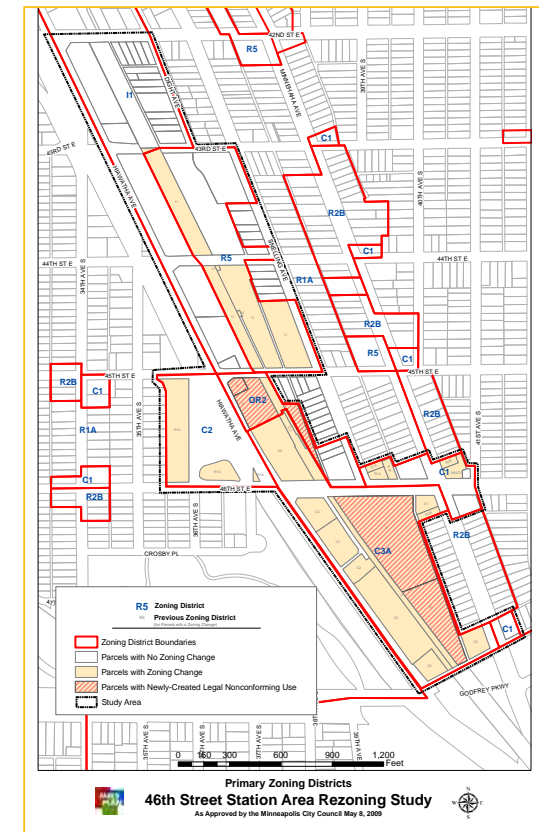
Zoning modifications achieved several outcomes that will support private market implementation of the adopted land-use plan. These outcomes include the following:

- Development rights were increased for properties located within the Activity Center portion of the station area to support transition to more intensive mixed-use, commercial, and housing development.
- Properties located within portions of the change area anticipated to transition to higher density residential uses (the block located northwest of Snelling and 45th Street containing the city-owned Public Works facility) were rezoned appropriately.
- Some low-employment commercial and industrial uses, auto oriented service, and drive through businesses located within the near-term change area closest to the station became legal non-conforming uses.
- Properties containing commercial businesses located along Hiawatha Avenue north of the LRT Station that are expected to transition over the long-term were rezoned to allow both industrial and residential uses.
- The pedestrian overlay district boundary was adjusted to allow future locational opportunities for auto-oriented businesses that provide important retail services to the neighborhood. These businesses may locate in the future around the 42nd Street intersection with Hiawatha Avenue (halfway between the 38th and 46th Street LRT Stations), rather than at 46th Street where a more walkable neighborhood center is envisioned around the LRT Station.

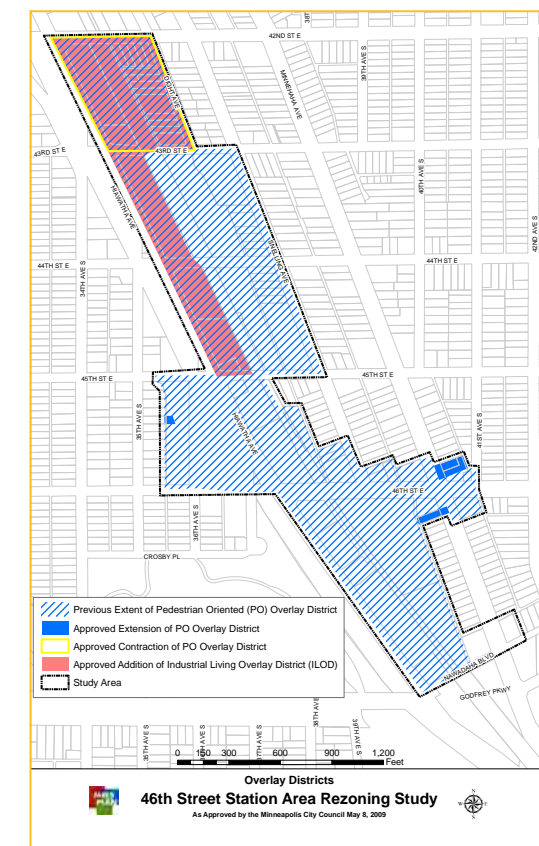
In addition to the PO District, a Shoreland (SH) Overlay District covers a portion of the 46th Street Station area.

Core Guiding Principles of the Citizens Advisory Committee

Nine core guiding principles developed by the Citizens Advisory Committee during the early stages of the study provided the lens through which all concepts and recommended actions generated by the study were examined. The guiding principles were developed to take general transit-oriented development principles and create an overarching framework within which these TOD characteristics could be applied to meet the specific needs and character of the 46th and Hiawatha station area. Following are the principles for this study developed by the CAC:



46th Street Station Area Map of Approved Zoning Districts



- Preserve neighborhood strengths and assets.
- Create a walkable and connected place.
- Integrate a vibrant mix of retail with development.
- Promote multi-modal access and transit use.
- Increase housing opportunities and choices.
- Celebrate Minnehaha Park, and enhance the natural amenities.
- Construct sustainable infrastructure and development.
- Build a neighborhood center with character and identity.
- Coordinate partnerships and community participation.

Eleven strategies were subsequently identified to translate these principles into concrete implementation initiatives (see Chapter 6. Guide). These principles and strategies also provide a valuable framework for evaluating and shaping private development proposals, public infrastructure projects, and public development initiatives within the station area.

Creating a Livable and Sustainable Neighborhood Center Connected with the LRT Station

One important commitment from the community members, the elected officials, the advisory committee, and the consultant team working on this project was to focus planning efforts on creating an implementation strategy for a **sustainable neighborhood center that gained market strength from its connection to the LRT Station**. Inspiration and support in this effort was taken from the ideas and standards being developed for the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) for Neighborhood Development program of the U.S. Green Building Council and its national partners, the Congress for New Urbanism and the Natural Resources Defense Council. This approach integrates the technical understanding from several different planning and design traditions to recommend solutions for where, what, and how a more sustainable and livable urban environment can emerge.

Where: Because of its proximity to the LRT station, regional accessibility to employment concentrations, established urban character, brownfield land-uses in need of repurposing and redevelopment, existing urban infrastructure, and park amenities, the 46th Street LRT Station area is a smart location for sustainable growth -- **embodying the principles of smart growth**.

What: The station area plan supports creating a neighborhood center that is urban and compact; preserves and supports the strong



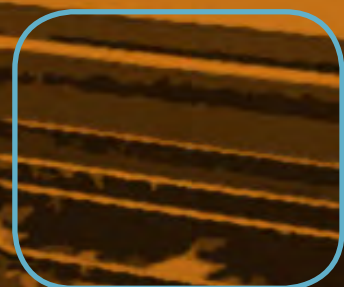
existing neighborhood assets; provides a complete range of diverse housing choices and neighborhood retail services; is well connected to transit, neighborhood destinations, and amenities; and is walkable and bikeable -- **embodying the principles of new urbanism**.

How: New improvements to the station area are recommended to be constructed with smart, energy efficient building materials and technologies, using low impact site planning and site development techniques and including high performance public and private infrastructure systems that are multifunctional, efficient, and sustainable -- **embodying the principles of green development**.

As will be illustrated in the "Imagine" chapter of this document, the recommended land-use and development changes around the 46th

Street LRT Station area will support a sustainable transit-oriented neighborhood center that provides a high quality of life for both new and established residents and a supportive environment for many neighborhood serving retail businesses. By applying principles of sustainable development, the construction of this neighborhood center over the next twenty years can also integrate the process of restoring the ecology of Minnehaha Creek and the Mississippi Gorge directly into the fabric of the neighborhood and promote greater resource, water and energy conservation.

SUPPORT



Imagine— [ih-‘maj-in]

–verb (i•mag•ine)

Definition:

1. To form a mental image of things not immediately present to the senses; to use the imagination.
2. To visualize and ascertain changes that will happen in the future based upon a general understanding of both current trends and social preferences.

–noun (i•mage)

Definition:

1. A mental construction of the future that reflects both goals and anticipated patterns of change.
2. A picture, daydream or vision of the future

The Imagine chapter refines the land-use and urban design vision for the 46th Street LRT station area as an environmentally sustainable neighborhood center that is well connected with transit. This chapter builds upon previous land-use plans, refines development scenarios for the most important redevelopment sites that will define the character of the station area in the future and provides infrastructure concepts that can remove barriers and establish the framework for future growth.

- **Station Area Transit-Oriented Development Vision**
- **Guideposts for Transit Supportive Change**
- **46th Street LRT Station Area Urban Design Concept**
- **Station Area Districts**
- **TOD Strategy Consensus Plan : Putting it All Together**
- **Opportunity Site Development Scenarios**
- **Station Place West Opportunity Site**
- **Snelling Yards Opportunity Site**
- **Station Place East Opportunity Site**
- **Town Square Opportunity Site**
- **Turning Barriers into Opportunities**
- **Stormwater Story**
- **Picture This: A Multi-Modal Environment, Complete Neighborhood, and Sustainable Place**

SURVEY

PLACE

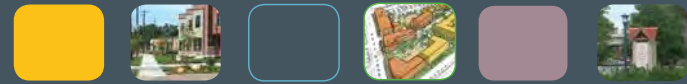
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INVEST

GUIDE

BUILD



Station Area Transit-Oriented Development Vision

The 46th and Hiawatha LRT station area is unique in that it marks a shift in the Minneapolis urban continuum from a landscape that feels more suburban in the south to a more urban condition in the north, as the downtown skyline become visible exiting the tunnel under Minnehaha Parkway along northbound Hiawatha Avenue. Just ahead, 46th Street, the east-west main street of the station area, provides a significant connection across the Mississippi River to and from Saint Paul. Moving westward away from the Mississippi River along 46th Street, the neighborhood context changes block by block as you approach the Hiawatha Avenue crossroads, where the parks and single family residential neighborhood give way to the commercial and industrial land uses along the rail and highway corridor.

Thus, the 46th and Hiawatha LRT station area serves as a gateway to Minneapolis, where the natural beauty of Minnehaha Park, the Parkway, Minnehaha Falls, and even the Mississippi River bond with signs of urbanity such as enhanced transit service, an evolving highway and railroad corridor, new mixed-use transit-supportive redevelopment, and established urban residential neighborhoods.



Looking north from the Minnehaha Park land bridge over Hiawatha Avenue towards 46th Street and downtown Minneapolis



Minnehaha Falls

The community vision for the change area identified around the 46th Street LRT Station is to establish a pedestrian-friendly and environmentally-sustainable urban neighborhood center that is connected with the transit station. The 46th Street LRT station area is envisioned as an emerging neighborhood center scaled walkable urban place and activity center with significant regional attributes due to its highway access; its proximity to Minnehaha Park and the Mississippi River; and its convenient connections to downtown Minneapolis, Saint Paul, and the Hiawatha LRT system. The built form and physical environment envisioned by this plan are supported by the key urban design, land-use, development, and infrastructure recommendations discussed in this chapter.

This chapter integrates the urban design vision of the 46th Street LRT Station area with the physical and functional aspects of its land use, transportation, infrastructure, and environmental systems. The land-use plan presented in this chapter, combined with the investment and market analysis in the next chapter, forms the foundation of the Transit-Oriented Development implementation strategy. This approach facilitates identifying the action plan and project list that can be implemented to support and achieve the plan vision. This refined strategy helps focus efforts to recruit new public and private investment and implementation partners that support the plan.

Guideposts for Transit Supportive Change

Three essential characteristics of this vision will remain critical touchstones for recruiting implementation partners and shaping public and private projects over the next twenty years. Establishing and strengthening these features in a flexible manner will promote the successful implementation of this plan.

Following are the three key features of the physical plan:

- **Enhanced Multi-Modal Transportation:** Motorized (i.e., trains, buses, and automobiles) and non-motorized transportation (i.e., walking and bicycling) will be accommodated and encouraged throughout the Plan. A high quality walking environment will link important transit, shopping, and recreational destinations in the neighborhood. Ultimately, it is the quality of the pedestrian and bicycle network between the LRT Station, Minnehaha Park, and the future neighborhood mixed-use retail concentration along 46th Street

that will provide the mix of urban amenities that support neighborhood livability, integrate the neighborhood center with the surrounding neighborhood, and establish the economic feasibility necessary to attract further investment and stakeholder participation in the plan.

- **Complete Neighborhood Center:** The 46th and Hiawatha station area will not only include a mix of residential, commercial/retail, and open space uses but also a variety within each that will provide diverse life cycle multifamily housing choices, recreational and entertainment opportunities, employment and employment access, and shopping and service choices for many of the daily needs of its residents. The concept of a transit-oriented neighborhood center

situates the vision of the 46th Street LRT station area within a hierarchy of local and regional places, and it locates the neighborhood center along a typology of medium density urban building types and scales of development.

- **Sustainable Neighborhood:** High-performance, efficient and ecologically-sound public and private infrastructure, natural amenities, transportation choices, and sustainable resource efficient development will meet the needs of today's community while enhancing the neighborhood and improving the lives of future residents and visitors.



Illustrative drawing of mixed-use neighborhood center environment



46th Street LRT Station Area Urban Design Concept

Urban design focuses on the character of the public spaces – the streets, parks, and plazas that everyone shares and that are framed by the private buildings and land uses to create a vital and recognizable urban place. Urban design focuses on the characteristics of the urban environment that shape the pedestrian experience, the local identity, and the quality of an urban setting.

The LRT station and the real estate market create market potential for multifamily residential and retail development that can be strengthened if combined with a strong public environment to create a vital urban place. The Urban Design Concept for the 46th and Hiawatha station area illustrates and maps the core guiding principles and land use features and opportunities within the station area. **Cultivating a multi-modal, complete, and sustainable neighborhood is based on the following key “place-making” aspects and urban design features:**

Three Connected Local Destinations

The urban design features of the plan are driven by the desire to establish and strengthen the pedestrian connections between three primary local destinations and activity generators and to improve their integration with the surrounding community, where the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts. These local destinations consist of the two existing amenities as well as a third emerging destination that is promoted by this plan:

- **Light Rail Transit Station** – As a central component of this plan, the LRT station serves as both a destination for local residents using transit to access regional jobs and services and as a point of entry into the neighborhood. The LRT station is a neighborhood landmark that must be connected into the physical fabric of the neighborhood and must be accessible to bikes and pedestrians coming to and from the surrounding neighborhood, the growing concentration of multifamily housing, and the future neighborhood retail center located east of Hiawatha Avenue.
- **Minnehaha Park** – The Park and Minnehaha Falls offer an abundance of natural features and recreational opportunities as well as serving as a gathering place for people in and around the Twin Cities. Planned connections to this popular destination include an improved Minnehaha Avenue and improved pedestrian and bicycle circulation on a future greenway in the existing railroad corridor.
- **Town Square Retail** – A new vibrant, pedestrian-oriented mixed-use destination is proposed around the intersection of 46th Street and Snelling Avenue, which will be extended to the south into the Town Square site. It is anticipated that this new retail “main street” concentration will serve as a focal point for the existing community and will stimulate additional residential development in the quadrant of the station area located between the LRT Station and Minnehaha Park.

Station Area Districts

The Urban Design Plan focuses primarily on the land use change area identified in the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan that was adopted in 2001. While many urban design recommendations apply to the study area as a whole, several distinctive sub-areas with specific market and future land use characteristics have been identified based upon their proximity to the station, location relative to major streets and utility corridors, and anticipated timing of development. These districts, which are described in greater detail later in this chapter, are referred to as:

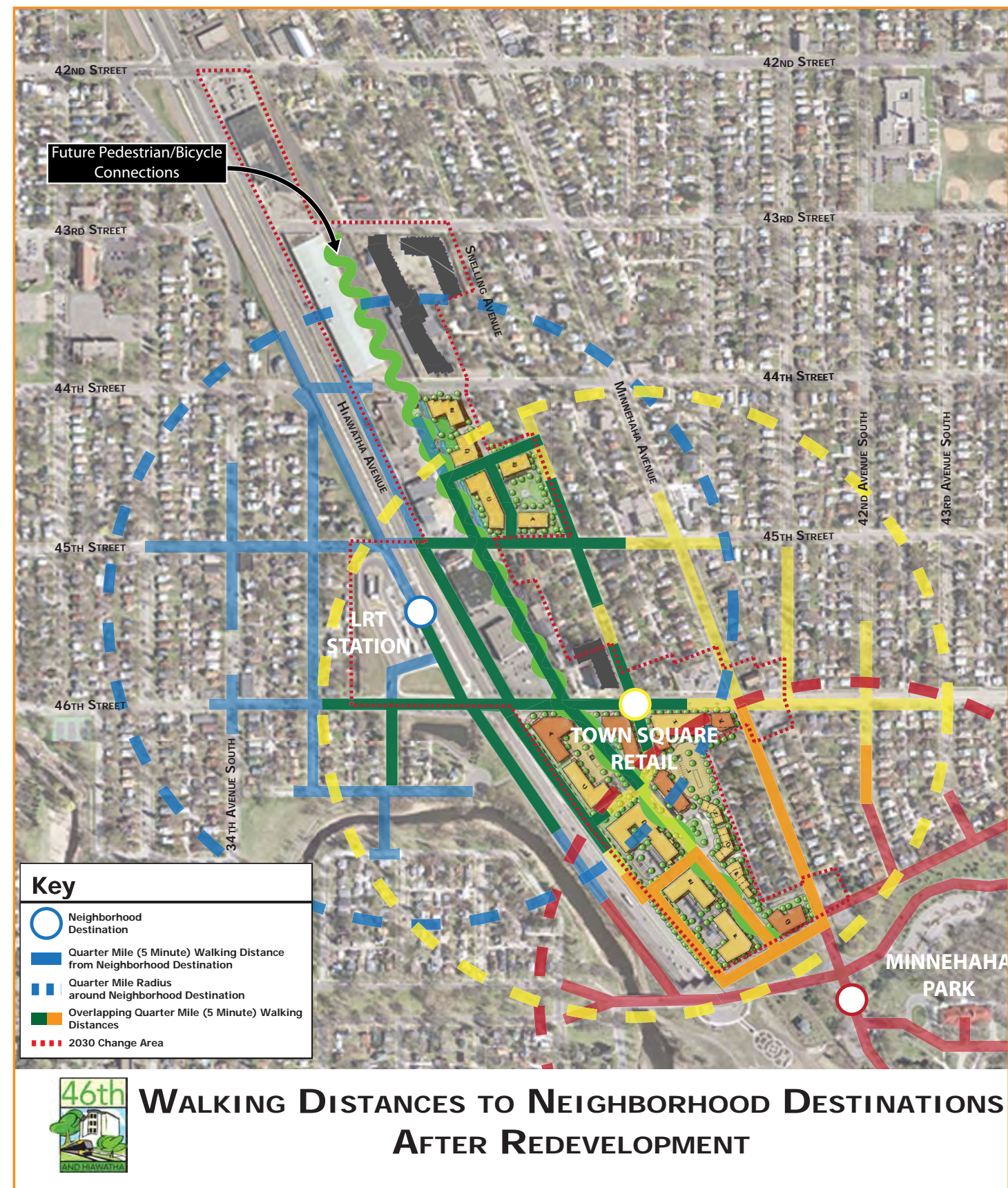
- **Station Place,**
- **Station View,**
- **Town Square,**
- **Park View, and**
- **The TOD Transition District.**

One major goal of this strategy is to support the emergence of a pedestrian-friendly and sustainable urban neighborhood connected to the 46th Street LRT station. This transition is expected to occur over a twenty year period in which market evolution, infrastructure investments, and new development occurring in each district will establish a pedestrian and transit-oriented neighborhood center.

Catalytic Opportunity Sites

Several of the key redevelopment locations – referred to as “catalytic opportunity sites” – have been identified within the change area at 46th and Hiawatha. These sites, which are positioned to anchor transit-supportive land use changes and spur additional redevelopment throughout the station area, are discussed in detail later in this chapter. They include the LRT Station site (part of Station Place West), the City of Minneapolis owned Snelling Yards property, the Town Square sites located south of 46th Street, and the Hiawatha Avenue frontage located across the street from the LRT Station (referred to as Station Place East). Development on these sites is anticipated to occur over the next ten-to-fifteen years. New development that is broadly consistent with the development scenarios identified in this plan will anchor the longer-term land use changes within the LRT station area. These sites will play a key role in knitting together the nodes of new development within the station area sub-districts, establishing a cohesive character and identity for the neighborhood center and connecting the sub-areas and surrounding neighborhoods to the station through an active and vital urban environment.

Appropriate new development at these sites will demonstrate visible progress toward achieving the station area vision, promote revitalization and new investment throughout the neighborhood, and increase the momentum for additional market-driven change that is consistent with the plan vision. These catalytic development projects can play a key role in reinforcing the emergence of an urban “transit and pedestrian-oriented district” within the station area and can begin to overcome the current pattern of conflicting and inconsistent land uses.



IMAGINE



Gateway Marker at Minnehaha Park



Illustrative drawing of Hiawatha Avenue approaching 45th Street, looking south towards the LRT Station

Neighborhood Center Retail Concentration

Over time the market and development trends initiated by LRT construction will increase the feasibility of new neighborhood center mixed-use and retail development. These favorable trends include new multifamily residential development, increases in the number of households and household income located within the station and trade areas, and improvements in the quality of the neighborhood environment and pedestrian vitality. Retail viability will continue to be driven by the achievable sales volumes for retail stores, which depend on factors such as trade area and local household income and demographics, drive-by traffic, and the visibility and configuration of retail sites and parking. A successful retail concentration requires both store density and an effective mix of retail services. The emergence of the 46th Street LRT Station area as a recognized urban destination capable of attracting both local and nonlocal shoppers will play an important role in achieving the critical mass necessary to successfully establish the retail component of the proposed mixed-use, walkable neighborhood center. The proposed mixed-use main street retail concentration along 46th Street will be the most challenging feature of the station area plan to achieve.

Improved pedestrian paths to the LRT station also promote stronger small business vitality for existing neighborhood storefronts, many of which are located along walking routes to and from the LRT station. Improving existing storefront properties will also strengthen the market for new development by demonstrating growing retail market demand and eliminating vacant and blighted storefronts.

Gateways

As part of the urban design concept for 46th and Hiawatha, strong community preference was expressed for “gateway” features to be included at key locations throughout the station area. By definition, the function of these gateways is to make a physical “announcement” that someone has arrived at the 46th and Hiawatha area and to celebrate a unique neighborhood identity. Gateway features may include elements such as plantings, signage, public art, pavement patterns, special lighting, murals, gateway structures, and “signature” buildings or building features. Gateway strategies can be used publicly and privately in buildings, open space, and infrastructure programs that affect the “public realm.”

Potential locations for district gateways include the following intersections:

- **46th Street and Minnehaha Avenue,**
- **45th Street and Hiawatha Avenue,** and
- **46th Street and Hiawatha Avenue.**

Other gateway markers, plantings, and kiosks can integrate Minnehaha Park more directly into the surrounding neighborhood and facilitate wayfinding to and from the LRT station and Park.

Hiawatha Avenue: Transitioning the Highway Edge and Establishing an Urban Seam

One of the most challenging issues raised by members of the community is the difficulty encountered by pedestrians and bicyclists crossing Hiawatha Avenue to and from the light rail station. Crossings occur primarily at the 46th Street traffic signal and at numerous unmarked mid-block locations between 44th and 46th streets when pedestrians shoot the gaps in highway traffic. Crossing conditions are especially difficult in the winter when icy snow drifts, inconsistent snow removal, reduced hours of daylight, and treacherous driving conditions may compound pedestrian risks. Highway crossing conditions are especially inhospitable for seniors, children, and the disabled. This issue must be balanced with community concerns about improving the efficiency of vehicular traffic moving through the intersection at 46th Street, avoiding travel delay, improving signal system efficiency, and supporting efficient transit operations.

The roadway design, traffic speeds, and peak traffic volumes on Hiawatha Avenue currently act as a hard edge – dividing the land uses and neighborhoods on either side of the highway and discouraging pedestrian crossings despite the presence of the LRT station. Recent transit-oriented housing development within the 46th Street LRT station area has already generated significant increases in LRT transit ridership and additional pedestrian trip generation. New residents have chosen to move near the LRT to use transit services. Established neighborhood residents have also embraced LRT. Over time, the urban scale and character of new transit-oriented development at sites on both sides of the highway can also reshape driver perceptions and behavior around the LRT Station.

This TOD Strategy advocates following a coordinated multi-jurisdictional approach for integrating the land use transition and emerging transit-oriented activity center with multi-modal transportation improvements and policies that are appropriate for a transit station located adjacent to an urban highway. Over time, improvements associated with new development and growing pedestrian and LRT travel demand will establish a more urban seam that is focused primarily around the intersections near the LRT station at 46th and 45th Streets, bringing land uses and neighborhoods together on either side as one moves into the central part of the station area. A primary long-term urban design goal of this Plan is to “stitch the seam” more tightly at that location, uniting the community and creating an active and accessible urban place that is readily apparent as one emerges from the land bridge from the south or approaches 45th Street from the north.

Hiawatha Avenue is a state highway that must move larger volumes of both regional and local traffic – including large trucks – than other nearby streets. However, it will acquire a more urbanized character that better accommodates additional transit, pedestrian, and bicycle crossings over time at this location. Moreover, creating better facilities for pedestrians, bikes, and transit should not prevent the efficient movement of vehicular traffic through the area. Several concepts for improving pedestrian crossings while maintaining vehicular and transit movements have been discussed, including building larger pedestrian refuges, using channelized turning lanes, improving pavement markings in crosswalks, improving signal systems and coordination, and adding a signalized at-grade pedestrian crossing at 45th Street. Each solution requires careful study and an implementation approach that is carefully timed with the growing LRT and pedestrian travel demand and applied consistently within the corridor and around other LRT stations.

Improved Pedestrian Environments

In addition to improved pedestrian crossings for Hiawatha Avenue, this Plan encourages improving the overall pedestrian environment of the 46th and Hiawatha station area. This includes emphasizing connections between local destinations, improving the condition and completeness of existing sidewalks and lighting, improving pedestrian facilities at railroad crossings, promoting future retail center streetscape enhancements, promoting pedestrian-friendly building design features, greening street boulevards and pedestrian connections to Minnehaha Park, and establishing a stronger network of safe and well-lighted pedestrian routes to greatly improve the walkability of the area.

46th Street: Destination Street

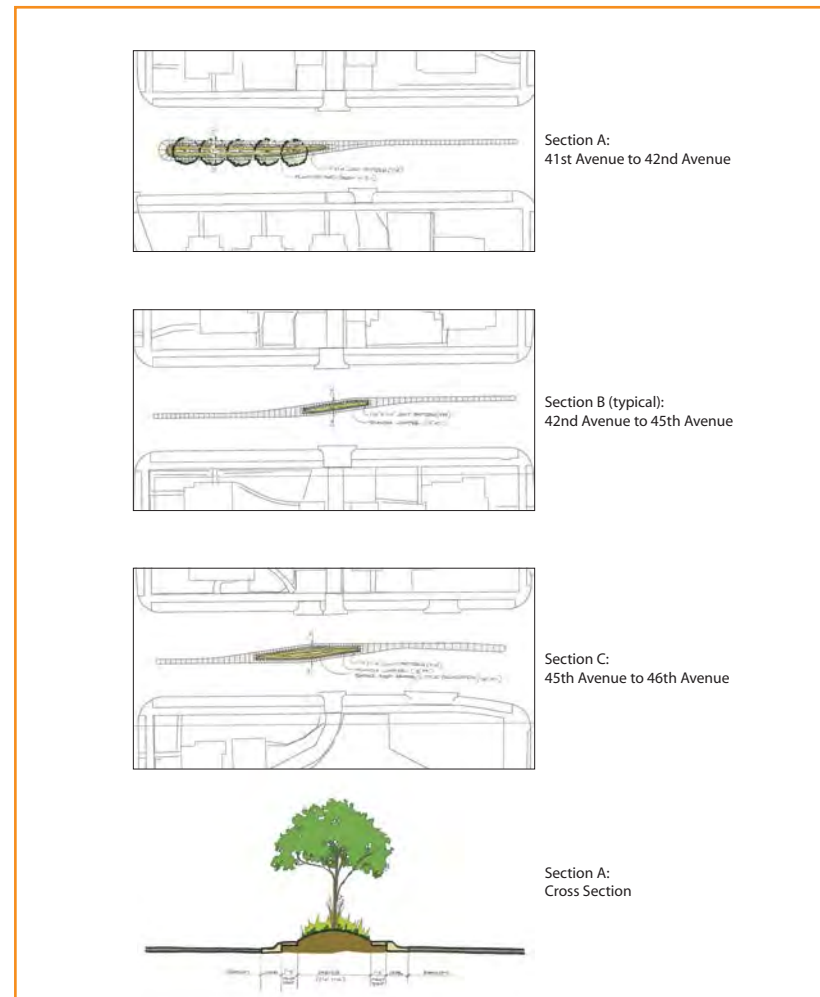
A primary component of the urban design concept for 46th and Hiawatha involves creating a “Destination Street” along 46th Street from the light rail station east to its intersection with Minnehaha Avenue. It can also be referred to as a Green Complete (multi-modal) Street. This walkable, urban environment would also extend south along the extension of Snelling Avenue into the new mixed-use retail concentration. A Destination Street is defined as a multi-modal main street that serves automobiles, transit, bikes, and pedestrians within a mixed-use activity center, with a high performance design that incorporates both natural streetscape amenities and ecological functions. At 46th and Hiawatha, the Destination Street is envisioned as the following:

- A **Regional Street** – 46th Street within the Town Square area will be a regional street, meeting the mobility needs of people from around the Twin Cities area while also serving the needs and characteristics of the emerging pedestrian-oriented TOD district. This requires facilitating regional and local traffic movement, local circulation and access to property, in addition to serving the growing pedestrian, transit, and bicycle demand.
- A **Commercial Street** – Ground-floor retail on both sides of 46th Street in a “Main Street” configuration will serve local and regional needs and increase the vitality of the area while taking advantage of automobile and pedestrian traffic. A mixture of on-street and off-street parking options will eventually be needed.

- A **Pedestrian Street** – The Destination Street will be pedestrian-oriented, where ground-floor retail oriented to pedestrians, amenities such as street trees and landscaping, benches, signage, and other pedestrian-focused facilities invite and encourage non-motorized transportation and activity.
- A **Green Street** – In addition to the visible “green” landscaping aspects of the future 46th Street, the Destination Street can incorporate sustainable design elements such as pervious pavement in parking lanes and infiltration of rainwater under and within the right-of-way.
- An **Urban Place** – When functioning as an integral part of the evolving urban neighborhood, this regional, commercial, pedestrian, and green street will become a true urban place where residents and visitors alike will want to be.



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Median Planting Concepts



Green medians on Ford Parkway in St. Paul

Livable Green Streets

Livable Green Streets are roadways that incorporate elements of nature and sustainable design. Green Streets both “re-green” the neighborhood by incorporating street trees and landscaping that enrich opportunities to experience nature and also “re-nature” the city by repairing and improving ecological systems, such as improving air quality, reducing the urban heat island and atmospheric CO₂, increasing groundwater recharge, and improving habitat.

The specific design will reflect developing engineering standards, community preferences, funding tools, and local and regional transportation needs. Green Streets incorporate elements such as ample street trees, planted boulevard strips or medians, stormwater planters in curb extensions at intersections, native plantings, and other sustainable stormwater management practices such as tree uptake, rain gardens, and permeable pavement in parking bays. Following are the livable green streets proposed within the station area:

- **46th Street west of Minnehaha Avenue** (the Destination Street segment described above)
- **Minnehaha Avenue**, where Hennepin County is currently involved with neighborhood stakeholders in a corridor study to create a more complete, livable, and context-sensitive roadway, and
- **46th Street east of Minnehaha**, which is proposed in this study to include new plantings and stormwater management within the existing concrete medians as a low-cost neighborhood livability improvement.

The green and complete streets approach acknowledges that streets are public spaces and improves both the pedestrian experience and the ecological performance of the urban environment. This is true for small right-of-way retrofit and gateway projects (such as greening the 46th Street medians) and also for green street improvements completed as part of larger street reconstruction projects (such as the Minnehaha Avenue reconstruction). Along urban streets, trees and other vegetation can promote stormwater capture and uptake, as well as evaporative cooling and transpiration, while providing shade and habitat.

Greenway in the Railroad Corridor

As the use and condition of the railroad declines south of 42nd Street, this unused segment of the railroad corridor creates significant derelict land and blight that can be improved over time into a green neighborhood amenity as trackway segments are formally abandoned by the railroad. Proposed future

amenities such as pedestrian and bicycle paths, plantings, rain gardens, interpretive features, and linear district stormwater management facilities can connect the station area from north to south, serving as a greenway amenity and non-motorized local circulation spine through the higher density residential core of the neighborhood center while still providing an improved electrical transmission corridor. Improved pedestrian and bicycle circulation can be provided in the future by a mid-block system of trails in the railroad and powerline corridor through the project area.

Station Area Districts

The 46th and Hiawatha study area will emerge over time as a recognized neighborhood center along the Hiawatha light-rail transit line in South Minneapolis. However, distinct differences in existing conditions can be observed between the various subareas of the study area that will require special attention to integrate them into a neighborhood center. Districts that were identified in the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan have been refined to reflect additional information about their current and proposed future land use characteristics, infrastructure issues, proximity to the station, and anticipated timing of development. Identifying sub-districts allows more specific strategies and projects that are targeted to the desired urban characteristics and market conditions of each subarea. The primary land use features of these districts are described below.

Station Place District

At the heart of the “Station Place” district is the 46th and Hiawatha light rail transit station. Station Place development plays an important role in establishing a neighborhood district that incorporates the LRT station as a central destination and integrates development on both the east and west sides of Hiawatha Avenue.

The Station Place district consists of the LRT station site, the property facing the station along the east side of Hiawatha between 45th and 46th streets, and the MnDOT retention pond site on the south side of 46th Street across from the station. The district is characterized by immediate proximity to the station as well as a vibrant mix of automobile, bus, train, pedestrian, and bicycle traffic. The west side of the district also benefits from easy access to existing bike paths, Minnehaha Creek, and, further to the south, Longfellow Gardens. In the future, new multi-story buildings located on both sides of Hiawatha Avenue will announce to transit and vehicular passengers their arrival at an active urban district and pedestrian zone. These buildings and active land uses will visually and functionally knit together the two sides of the highway into a neighborhood center.

The Soo Line Corridor: A Unique Greenway Opportunity

The freight railroad and high voltage powerline corridor running through the 46th Street LRT Station area just east of Hiawatha Avenue offers the long-term opportunity to create a unique urban greenway within the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor. This greenway will be referred to here as the Soo Line Corridor. The Soo Line is the name of the U.S. operating subsidiary of the Canadian Pacific Railroad which owns most of this historic corridor.

The railroad corridor was constructed in the late-1860s. Over the next forty years, grain milling, storage elevators and other industrial businesses moved away from St. Anthony Falls and into the Hiawatha corridor in South Minneapolis with the widespread adoption of steam powered machinery. Although formerly a mainline railroad connection all the way to Chicago, the tracks now terminate on the south end of the corridor at Minnehaha Park.

Rail service from the north is still provided by the local short line operator Minnesota Commercial Railroad to several major clients within the corridor, including the General Mills and ADM elevators and

ADM grain mill located just north of 38th Street, which are expected to remain in operation for the foreseeable future. Active rail classification yards are located further to the south, with some yards containing as many as six parallel tracks and switches, but the tracks decline in condition and use moving southward towards Minnehaha Park. According to consultant studies, the railroad south of 42nd Street is rarely used, and the one-block segment of track south of 46th Street is no longer used at all. It is recommended in this report that Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis pursue opportunities to negotiate with CP Rail to abandon segments of the corridor in phases when they are no longer needed for rail operations. This will allow a public greenway amenity to be established in portions of the corridor as this transition occurs.

The Soo Line Corridor will be unlike other greenways in the Twin Cities but can draw inspiration from several local and national models, such as the Midtown Greenway in Minneapolis and the High Line Park in New York City.

The Midtown Greenway is part of a 5.7-mile long partially active railroad corridor in South Minneapolis that runs parallel to Lake Street at the north end of the Minnehaha-Hiawatha corridor. The Midtown greenway connects the Mississippi River with the Chain of Lakes across the midsection of South Minneapolis, and is integrated into the regional network of Twin Cities bike trails. Constructed in three major phases between 1999 and 2007, the greenway is a major recreational and commuter bike facility, includes pedestrian facilities, and has been proposed to incorporate express rail-transit services operating alongside the trails in the future. The Midtown Greenway is owned by the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority, and the trails are maintained by the City of Minneapolis.

Unlike the Soo Line corridor south of Lake Street, most of the Midtown Greenway is grade separated from cross streets. This allows bicyclists to safely and quickly travel through the busy Lake Street Corridor and connect with other regional bicycle



Midtown Greenway east of Hiawatha LRT



Midtown Greenway



Gateway to Midtown Greenway at West River Road

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The Soo Line Corridor: A Unique Greenway Opportunity



High Line Park in Manhattan



The High Line Park is an Urban Greenway Amenity

trails, including the Hiawatha LRT bike trail. The Midtown Greenway has proven to be a major amenity that has attracted significant new multifamily housing development alongside the corridor that respects and adds value to this urban greenway. A strong community-based organization, the Midtown Greenway Coalition, champions the continued improvement of this significant public amenity.

The High Line Park on the lower west side of Manhattan is another example of a recent park and greenway project that has contributed to the redevelopment and revitalization of an urban neighborhood. The High Line project converted an unused section of an historic elevated freight rail spur into an urban amenity. In 1999, a non-profit organization was established to support preserving and reusing the former West Side Line as public open space. The project was funded by New York City in 2004, and the first phase of the park was opened in 2009 on the southerly portion of the elevated spur. Construction has recently been completed on the second section of the park. The heavily landscaped park provides an elevated walking trail and greenway through the heart of revitalizing urban neighborhoods, with a design that celebrates the former history of rail operations. Many of the rails and other railroad artifacts have been retained during park construction and have been integrated into the plantings, pathways, and park furnishings. The High Line Park is integrated into several former loft manufacturing buildings that were formerly served by the rail spur and that now provide public access points to the park. Recycling the railway into an urban park has spurred significant real estate development in the former Meatpacking District and Chelsea neighborhoods, which lie along the line, including the adaptive reuse of many older commercial buildings. Similar projects have recently been proposed for former railroad viaducts in Chicago and Philadelphia.

For several reasons, a **Soo Line Corridor Greenway** is likely to be developed as a mid-block green amenity and local bike and pedestrian circulation corridor, rather than as a major north-south bike commuting facility:

- The corridor crosses all local east west streets at grade, less than one-half block from their intersection with Hiawatha Avenue, necessitating frequent stops at mid-block street crossings for greenway users. Several of these cross streets carry significant local or regional traffic volumes.
- The corridor is likely to remain a high voltage transmission corridor in the segment between 38th Street and Minnehaha Park.
- Railroad operations are expected to continue in much of the corridor for the foreseeable future, requiring that the greenway be implemented in short segments beginning at the south end of the corridor.

Despite these limitations, phased greenway improvements within this corridor, including landscaping, short segments of shared-use trails, powerline modernization, linear stormwater infiltration basins, and urban pocket parks, can accomplish the following:

- Create a functional amenity for higher density multifamily residential and commercial development within the change area located between Minnehaha and Hiawatha Avenue, promoting additional high quality residential development
- Create new local pedestrian and bicycle connections through the proposed 46th Street neighborhood center to Minnehaha Park.
- Improve green space, environmental quality and stormwater infiltration within the aging railroad corridor.
- Provide a public amenity for the surrounding neighborhoods.

The diverse characteristics of each block, in terms of the varying width and function of each segment of the rail corridor, create local design opportunities to creatively incorporate unique features and historical references from the railroad corridor and Milling District into the proposed greenway amenity.



Oblique aerial photo of Station View District and Snelling Yards site looking north

46TH & HIAWATHA LRT STATION AREA DISTRICTS

Station View District

The “Station View” district is located northeast of the 46th Street and Hiawatha Avenue intersection and primarily on the east side of the railroad tracks fronting Snelling Avenue. Transit-oriented development in this district will manage its location between the single-family neighborhood to the east and Hiawatha Avenue to the west. Other issues confronted by redevelopment in the Station View district are irregular parcel shapes and sizes, challenging interior site access and circulation, and the largely inactive railroad tracks that are occasionally used to store rolling stock.

Significant transit-oriented residential development has already occurred in the northern portions of the district at the Hiawatha Flats development, with two new apartment buildings located between 43rd and 44th streets. Completed between 2006 and 2009, the Hiawatha Flats is an example of a high quality, transit-oriented development project benefiting from its location across Hiawatha Avenue from the nearby light-rail station. Directly to the south of Hiawatha Flats and in the center of the Station View district is the Snelling Yards site. Redevelopment at this city-owned property, which is also identified as an “opportunity site” for this planning process, is expected to resemble the Hiawatha Flats project, with several multi-family residential buildings. Both development sites reinforce the emerging need for an improved bike and pedestrian crossing environment along Hiawatha Avenue north of 46th Street, potentially to be established at the 45th and Hiawatha intersection and providing access at the north end of the LRT station platforms.

Town Square District

The “Town Square” district is likely to experience some of the most dramatic change in the coming ten to fifteen-years. This area was identified in the 2001 Master Plan as a mixed-use main street for the station area, and its location fronting 46th Street between Hiawatha Avenue and Minnehaha Avenue ideally suits it for future redevelopment and infrastructure investment. 46th Street also serves as the connection across the Mississippi River to Saint Paul and the Highland Park neighborhood.

Over time, the Town Square district will be characterized by a vibrant mix of residential and commercial uses. On both sides of 46th Street ground floor retail uses will front a “destination” complete green street with several floors of apartments or

condominiums located above these shops. The retail and housing uses will be woven together by high quality, pedestrian-focused urban streetscape. Amenities such as storefront shops, awnings, outdoor dining, pedestrian-scaled lighting, and signage will blend seamlessly with sustainable stormwater management techniques expressed through street trees and native plantings, resulting in a unique, place-based retail and mixed-use environment with direct connections across Hiawatha Avenue to the light rail station. This mixed-use center will stretch to the south along the Snelling Avenue extension, with perhaps a grocery store, structured parking, and other neighborhood retail anchors and commercial destinations like restaurants.

This “main street” neighborhood mixed-use retail center is the centerpiece of the adopted plan vision for the area and the most difficult longer-term land use transition and development outcome in the Master Plan to achieve.

Park View District

The “Park View” district includes the southwesterly portion of the “superblock” bounded by 46th Street, Minnehaha Avenue, Nawadaha Avenue, and Hiawatha Avenue and is currently characterized by suburban-type retail and warehouse development that includes large areas of surface parking, resulting in a dearth of urban or environmental character. Nonetheless, its location - which is both adjacent to and connecting with Minnehaha Park, the future Town Square retail district, and the nearby light rail station - ideally suits the Park View district for a unique mix of residential redevelopment types. Proximity to Minnehaha Park and greater insulation from arterial streets and traffic will enable this portion of the change area to attain a mix of higher value multifamily ownership and rental housing development while providing convenient access to the LRT station and nearby retail services.

Urban and transit-oriented residential densities will be accommodated by a mix of multifamily buildings that may orient to a new “spine” street and greenway connecting the mixed-use core at 46th Street and Snelling with Nawadaha Avenue and Minnehaha Park to the south. Parallel to the local street will be a proposed greenway with stormwater infiltration basins, native plantings, pedestrian and bike trails, and consolidated high voltage transmission poles that will be located in the current railroad right-of-way. The greenway will serve as an amenity for residents of the townhomes, apartments, and condominiums located along this linear corridor.

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TOD Transition District

The “TOD Transition” district, which is located to the north of 45th Street between Hiawatha Avenue and the railroad tracks, is likely to evolve more slowly toward transit-oriented development than properties located closer to the core of the station area. As the district evolves, these properties may attract a mix of office employment or retail uses that benefit from proximity to LRT, the highway, and the mixed-use neighborhood center. Another possibility is that the transition district may attract additional multi-family or mixed-use residential development. The market timing of new development in the TOD transition district is likely to occur later than other competing sites within the station area.

TOD Strategy Consensus Plan: Putting it All Together

The TOD Strategy Consensus Plan combines the land use and infrastructure concepts first developed in 2001 for the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan with a technical review of key development sites, more refined conceptual designs for priority infrastructure projects, and additional community input. It also incorporates information about projects that have been completed since 2001 and recent projects like the LRT station site, which is currently under construction. The TOD Strategy Consensus Plan also integrates lessons learned about the transit station area during the years since Hiawatha LRT started running.

The TOD Strategy Consensus Plan is presented in this section to clarify the overall station area planning context before presenting the more detailed analysis for specific opportunity site development scenarios and infrastructure concepts. This overview is facilitated by reviewing the continuity of the TOD Strategy Consensus Plan with the 2001 Master Plan. Subsequent sections of this chapter will provide a descriptive overview of the technical analysis and the community input for the opportunity sites and infrastructure projects.

TOD Strategy Consensus Plan Process

One of the first steps in the TOD strategy process was to review and reaffirm the core vision and policies adopted in the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan. That plan was prepared in 2000 and 2001 in response to the commitment to build Light Rail Transit in the Hiawatha Corridor and to locate a station at 46th Street. The adopted Master Plan was the first planning study to engage the community around evaluating the land use changes that would accompany opening Hiawatha LRT, and it established the broad vision, framework plan, land use policies, and urban design objectives to manage that change into a more transit-supportive environment around the LRT station.

The TOD Strategy Consensus Plan builds upon the previous planning efforts to establish a distinct character and identity for the 46th and Hiawatha station area as a neighborhood scale “Town Center” while reinforcing and enhancing the livability and economic vitality of the surrounding neighborhoods. The TOD strategy shares the same general goal identified in the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan as stated in that adopted 2001 policy document:

“The purpose of this study is to plan the redevelopment to maximize its quality and its benefits to the surrounding community.”

The TOD Strategy Consensus Plan is **consistent** with the 2001 Consensus Plan, **refines** the adopted plan, and identifies **new ideas** and **future issues** to be addressed as the plan is implemented and the station area evolves over time. By refining the 2001 plan, a list of specific strategies, actions, and projects can be identified to secure the desired growth and development.

Stays Consistent with the 2001 Master Plan

It has been clear throughout the TOD Strategy planning process that the TOD Implementation Strategy is not a new plan; rather, it builds on and strengthens the considerable planning efforts that contributed to the adopted 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan. As such, the recommendations, strategies, and projects proposed within this plan are consistent with the themes and major policies of the 2001 plan and serve to realize its vision.

- The **“change area” identified in the TOD Strategy Consensus Plan is consistent** with the project boundaries identified in the 2001 Adopted Station Area Master Plan and continues to focus on redevelopment within that area. The 2001 Master Plan identified a change area where properties are steered by public policies, market advocacy, zoning regulations, and public and private investments toward redeveloping into a neighborhood center containing more pedestrian and transit-oriented land uses and urban building forms over a twenty-year period.
- Surrounding **single-family neighborhoods are “preserved”** in the current plan and are enhanced by their proximity to high quality neighborhood center redevelopment, the LRT Station, additional nearby retail services, and pedestrian improvements and other amenities indicated within the plan.
- The **neighborhood retail center concept** that was proposed in the 2001 Consensus Plan is central to the character and success of the 46th and Hiawatha LRT station area as a complete neighborhood center. This land use feature has been analyzed in greater depth in this plan and

retains its focal point at the intersection of 46th Street and Snelling Avenue. It has been identified as the most difficult feature from the 2001 Plan to establish through incremental market driven development.

- The **land uses of the Consensus Plan are largely unchanged** from the 2001 plan. However, the new Oaks Hiawatha Station and Hiawatha Flats developments demonstrate that residential densities will be somewhat higher than anticipated in the 2001 Master Plan. These higher residential densities reflect the strength of regional demographic growth and market demand to live in housing located near transit. Multifamily or mixed-use housing developments similar to the recent projects will allow this additional development demand to be steered into the same change area that was identified in the 2001 consensus plan.
- **Sustainability and environmental stewardship are key tenets** of the 2001 adopted Master Plan as well as the current TOD Implementation Strategy, where it is strengthened by a new focus on high performance infrastructure designs and stormwater management.

Refines the 2001 Master Plan

While maintaining consistency is key to the success of a plan, so too is recognizing and learning from the changes that have occurred since the original land use plan was adopted. The original 2001 plan has been updated based on changes in existing conditions as well as the additional technical studies and community and advisory committee input generated during this study.

- **Lessons learned** and changes within the project area since adopting the original plan are identified and used, along with **national best practices**, to craft a set of general and specific implementation strategies in the current plan.
- A **deeper analysis of the market, redevelopment potential, and infrastructure challenges** was undertaken by this planning study, resulting in a set of flexible strategies, infrastructure concepts and designs, development scenarios, and action steps outlined to implement the vision.
- Greater attention has been paid to the **specific actions, infrastructure concepts, partnerships, and project phasing** that will be required to overcome, mitigate, or



Transit-Oriented Development supports neighborhood retail storefronts.

accommodate the various barriers to transit-oriented development without compromising the community vision for a walkable and sustainable neighborhood center that is connected with transit.

- **The Town Square site, which was identified in the 2001 Master Plan as both the anchor and the most challenging land use transition** supported by the plan, is the focus of significant additional analysis. The current study identifies key concepts for infrastructure and utility modifications, local street connections, and phasing of development that, with strong general economic and market conditions, can reduce the barriers for attracting market interest by developers and businesses and property owner participation in this significant development opportunity.
- **Recognition of additional households and housing units, greater purchasing power, and a larger variety of housing options** is evident in this refined plan, which leverages this increased housing density against a stronger mix of urban amenities, retail services, and residential unit types throughout the plan. These additional rooftops and households generate the increases in local retail demand, transit ridership, public resources, and land values that help create the economic feasibility necessary to establish the pedestrian-oriented neighborhood retail center envisioned in the plan.

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Oaks Hiawatha Station and nearby single family homes along Snelling Avenue

- The **green space network** identified in the original plan is given more attention in the 2008 TOD Strategy Consensus Plan and plays an even greater role in implementing sustainable stormwater treatment practices and valuable neighborhood amenities. The concept of green space is expanded to include the landscaping and ecological performance of street right-of-way, especially the parking lanes, boulevard strips, and medians of major neighborhood center and pedestrian district streets. By focusing on the role of permeable surfaces, landscaping, and stormwater management in creating sustainable urbanism while designing and reconstructing infrastructure and new development, this process can “re-nature” and “re-green” the neighborhood center environment, supporting both natural ecological systems and natural amenity.

Identifies New Ideas and Future Issues

In addition to respecting and updating the adopted plan, this Transit-Oriented Development Strategy has identified several new ideas that can contribute to the success of this plan.

- During the planning process, the Citizen Advisory Committee recommended “**branding**” the project and the station area as one centered on **sustainable development and high-performance infrastructure**. This concept of sustainable development had been effectively introduced in the 2001 plan document. However, this concept became front-and-center in the Consensus Plan, not only for the urban design of the station area but also all for its development and high performance infrastructure design concepts, priorities, and implementation strategies.
- The 46th and Hiawatha TOD Strategy plan identified and **built stronger partnerships with key agencies to work toward implementing** the recommendations and strategies contained herein. One such partner is **Hennepin County**, whose Minnehaha Hiawatha Community Works project is consistent with many key recommendations of this report and will serve as one key participatory multi-jurisdictional and community partnership for implementing public infrastructure projects and development priorities within the 46th Street LRT station area.
- The clearly-defined **local street grid of the Town Square site** and the recommended phasing approach to overcome the existing utility and railroad infrastructure barriers is also a new refinement of the original plan, allowing for more accessible and developable sites that can support a significant pedestrian-friendly neighborhood retail and housing center that provides public connections between the retail center, the LRT station, and Minnehaha Park.
- Conceptual design studies for key infrastructure projects and preferred development scenarios for major opportunity sites have been prepared to provide additional technical information about community preferences, to guide public and private implementation partners, and to facilitate moving from planning to implementation. These preliminary design studies were used to test the broad economic feasibility, sequence, costs, and transportation and environmental impacts of the most significant project concepts.
- Another new idea formulated during the current planning effort is the potential for **relocating the MnDOT retention pond to the south**, allowing a key site to be developed on the south side of 46th Street directly across from the LRT station, establishing a more amenable pedestrian environment on both sides of 46th Street near the LRT

station and a gateway to the bike trail and park system extending to the south.

Issues that will require additional analysis in the future include:

- Pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Hiawatha Avenue. The ability of pedestrians to safely and comfortably cross Hiawatha Avenue at 46th Street and at 45th Street near the LRT station is a key concern for residents and will intensify as additional housing and retail development occurs near the LRT station. This issue will continue unless corridor-wide solutions can be identified and implemented at the appropriate times as the LRT Station areas develop. Progress is underway on several approaches that were identified for further investigation:
 - Improvements to signal system technology, since traffic signals support the safety and timing of both vehicular and non-motorized movements at key intersections.
 - Modifications to crosswalks, pedestrian refuges, and medians.
 - Determining the viability of a signalized at-grade bike and pedestrian only crossing (45th Street) coordinated with the nearby signalized automobile intersections (46th Street and 42nd Street).
 - Policies identifying the Hiawatha LRT Corridor as a unique multi modal corridor within the State Transportation system that has unique multi-modal requirements that distinguish it from other State Highways.
 - Further evaluation of pedestrian tunnels or bridges.

The Minneapolis Pedestrian Master Plan provides guidelines and priorities for pedestrian improvement projects around transit stations. Additional engineering studies undertaken by consultants to the City of Minneapolis, MnDOT, and Hennepin County have identified potential corridor-wide improvements. While many technical approaches and community suggestions were collected and evaluated for the 46th Street station area, it is now recognized that this is a corridor-wide issue that involves important safety, technical, and policy issues for several governmental jurisdictions. Advocating specific technical solutions at one station area alone will not succeed. Some of the options will evolve as the Hiawatha LRT corridor evolves into a more developed urban environment and significant growth and investment area within the Metropolitan area.

- **Railroad corridor.** The Canadian Pacific railroad corridor has been identified by Hennepin County as largely unused by the railroad south of 42nd Street, with growing deterioration of the railroad infrastructure as the tracks move closer to Minnehaha Park. In the future, CP Rail will probably abandon small segments of the railroad corridor. Progress has been made toward identifying the segment south of 46th Street as the first segment that will be abandoned

by Canadian Pacific Railroad. When this occurs, an approach will be needed to manage this right-of-way until it is possible to convert portions of it into a mid-block greenway and network of local pedestrian and bicycle trails.

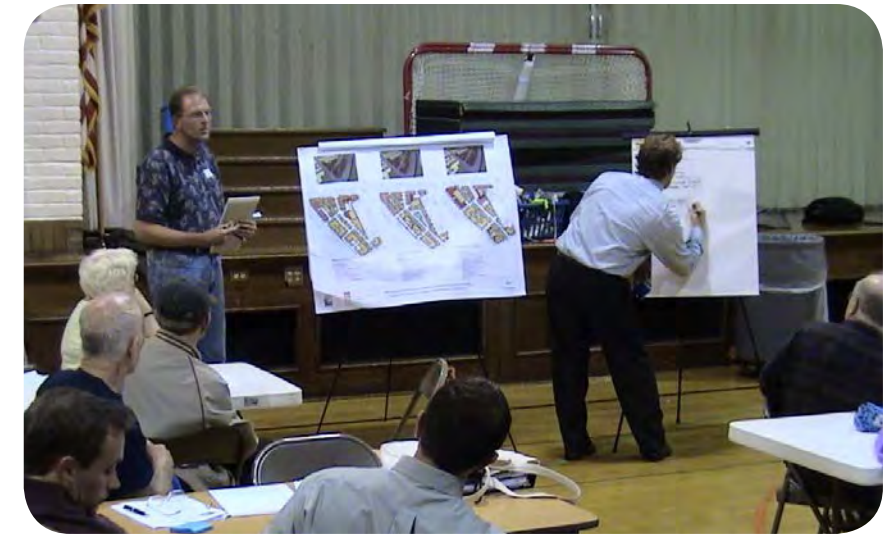
- **High-voltage electrical transmission line.** A high-voltage powerline runs through the railroad corridor from 39th Street to Minnehaha Park. This is the only segment of this powerline in Minneapolis that has not been modernized from dual trellis towers to steel monopoles, which have significantly less impact on the adjacent land uses. Further study and work with the utility company will be necessary to determine the appropriate timing and approach to modernizing this facility. Work with the railroad will also be necessary to secure property and easements necessary for the footings and pole placements for a new utility alignment through the corridor.
- **Development on the north side of 46th Street east of Snelling Avenue.** Main Street development along this segment of 46th Street will be challenging due to the size and angular shape of parcels fronting on 46th Street and their relationship to the single family residential lots and alley to the north. Because of the limited parcel depth, parking and access will be major issues unless larger sites are acquired through private transactions. It is anticipated that these smaller sites may be redeveloped in a later phase of the neighborhood center development.
- **Improved bicycle network within the station area.** Minneapolis has a rapidly growing network of on-street and off-street bikeways. The network includes commuter, local, and recreational facilities, some of which are shared facilities with pedestrians. Further definition of this network is needed in the 46th Street station area, especially for east west movements between Saint Paul and the LRT station. Ongoing planning will be necessary to refine solutions in this area and to coordinate with other proposed infrastructure improvements, such as the proposed “Destination Street” design for 46th Street through the proposed mixed-use neighborhood center between Minnehaha and Hiawatha Avenue.
- **Parking management.** As redevelopment occurs in the neighborhood center shared parking solutions and partnerships will be necessary to efficiently use limited space

for parking facilities. Strong leadership and cooperation among property owners, businesses, and developers will play a key role in achieving optimal local solutions.

- **Future conversion of the stormwater pond site across from the LRT station into a development site.** Converting this site to development will require conducting additional engineering analysis, consulting with MnDOT and the Park Board, and attracting strong developer interest. This is likely to occur after other nearby sites have been successfully developed.
- **Special services district.** In order to maintain enhanced streetscapes, public spaces, and shared services and facilities, a new special services district may be proposed by Town Square commercial property and business owners. Business owners in the station area would manage and contribute to a fund set aside for improvements, maintenance, and upkeep to provide a vibrant commercial streetscape.
- **Flexible change area boundaries.** The boundaries of the change area are not completely rigid. Property owners and buyers will make their own decisions when selling and acquiring property. Developers may look beyond the district boundary in the adopted plans and acquire properties from willing private sellers that are located immediately adjacent to properties in designated change areas. This is done to expand the size and quality of the available development, a process that has already occurred with several new developments at 46th Street. This TOD strategy continues to prioritize steering demand for new housing and commercial development into the identified change area from the 2001 Plan consistent with the adopted land use policies and zoning.

Scale and Timelines for Neighborhood Center Development

The change area identified in the **46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan**, adopted in 2001, included sites that were anticipated to support 20 years of demographic growth and development in the station area. As noted previously, since that plan was adopted, new multi-family housing development in the station has occurred more rapidly and at a larger building scale than originally planned. When the Oaks Station Place is completed in late 2012, a total of about 400 additional housing units will have been developed near the station since 2005. This new development has occurred on only four building sites near the station.



Public meeting comments on preliminary development scenarios for Town Square site

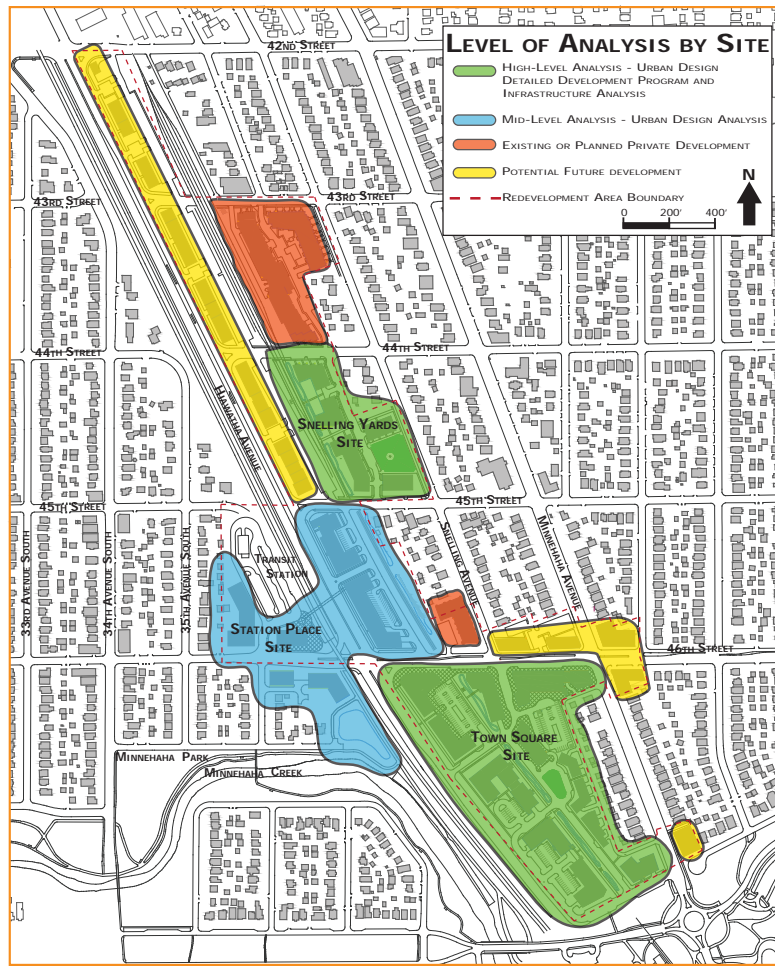
The TOD Strategy Consensus Plan recognizes that the sites in the identified neighborhood center change area can be anticipated to support developing an additional 1,000 housing units and approximately 75,000 square feet of net additional retail and commercial space during the next 15 to 20 years. The additional housing development can support a more vibrant neighborhood retail center and additional urban and environmental amenities. Information about the market demand for transit-oriented development at the 46th Street LRT Station is included in the Invest chapter.

Defining Opportunity Sites

In the 46th Street TOD Strategy, the term “opportunity site” is used in several ways to capture the importance of specific development sites or larger geographic areas for achieving the long-term land use and environmental goals of the plan. Four different types of opportunity sites are discussed below:

- Early private opportunity sites are properties that were vacant and available for sale when the LRT line was under construction. The first two transit-oriented development projects completed at the 46th Street LRT station occurred primarily on early private opportunity sites (Oaks Hiawatha Station and Hiawatha Flats).
- Public opportunity sites are excess publicly-owned property that can be sold for new transit-oriented development. One example is the excess 46th Street LRT station property that was acquired by Oaks Properties from the Metropolitan Council in 2008. The Oaks Station Place mixed-use

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development began construction on this site in late 2011. Another example is the City of Minneapolis' Snelling Yards property, a former Public Works vehicle maintenance facility that became redundant when the new Hiawatha Yards opened in 2010. Both properties are considered "catalytic opportunity sites" because of their strategic locations for achieving the land-use objectives in this plan. A request for proposals (RFP) for the Snelling Yards property could be issued as soon as late 2013 or 2014.

- Market-driven opportunity sites are properties that become available for sale either because an existing property has become vacant and economically obsolete or because the market for transit-oriented development has become sufficiently established for a developer to acquire viable property at a competitive price from its existing owner.
- A strategic or catalytic opportunity site is a property that, because of size, proximity to the LRT station, scale of new

development, visibility, role in anchoring new land uses, and other factors, will play a critical role in implementing the station area Master Plan.

Strategic opportunity sites have received a greater level of attention because they have been identified as sites that will play very significant roles in achieving the overall long-term land-use vision of establishing a sustainable, pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center that is connected with the 46th Street LRT transit station. However, general market conditions and the timing of property owner decisions to sell specific properties cannot be determined in advance, and additional opportunities to achieve the land uses envisioned in this plan should be encouraged as additional opportunities arise.

Opportunity Site Development Scenarios

The following opportunity site development scenarios played a key role in refining the land use plan, infrastructure concepts, and conceptual plans for preferred future station area development. The purpose of development scenarios is to communicate community preferences to the development community and property owners and to work out technical issues regarding the relationship of sites to infrastructure, transportation impacts, the phasing of public investments, and the market feasibility of new development. The redevelopment scenarios facilitate designing and programming public improvements in the station area that can be coordinated with new private development and reinforce the market for high quality transit-supportive development that is consistent with the community vision.

The opportunity site redevelopment scenarios are meant to provide examples of the types of redevelopment that are both desirable and feasible, given both market opportunity and community and policy expectations. They are conceptual in nature and illustrate the planning process. They are intended to provide development teams with a preliminary framework to consider as they pursue more detailed pre-development planning and design development for specific development sites. They are also intended to provide information for property owners to consider regarding opportunities to cooperate with other property owners and developers to provide profitable and high value sites for redevelopment. It is expected that private developers and property owners will propose their own development plans and scenarios that will differ in details from these preliminary scenarios and renderings.

Concept Development Process and Methodology

The 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan identified several high priority sites where additional preparation could provide stakeholders with information to increase the likelihood of successful redevelopment consistent

with the station area vision. This additional work included conducting a technical analysis of infrastructure issues, evaluating alternative development scenarios, developing concept designs for new infrastructure, and analyzing market feasibility. A successful primarily market-driven land-use transition is also inter-related with the design and phasing of infrastructure improvements that can provide improved multi-modal access to key sites in the station area and also mitigate the existing environmental barriers to new private investment. A key component of preparing the 46th Street Transit-oriented Development Strategy was analyzing and crafting the alternative redevelopment scenarios for several catalytic opportunity sites within the project area.

Four opportunity sites were selected for analysis following input from the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The adopted Master Plan indicated redeveloping at each location within the "change area." This Implementation Plan revisits these sites and analyzes them in greater depth. The opportunity sites were chosen based on several factors, including the following:

- Their relative importance and strategic locations as identified in the original Master Plan,
- The anticipated availability of publicly-owned land for redevelopment,
- The role of parcels for anchoring, demonstrating or catalyzing the market for transit-oriented development within the various station area sub-districts,
- The role of the proposed opportunity sites in overcoming infrastructure barriers within the station area,
- Input received from the Citizen Advisory Committee and public meetings, and
- Input received from property owners and potential developers.

The preferred development scenarios illustrate how the Guiding Principles and TOD Strategies can be implemented. Several opportunity sites include more than one privately-owned property or include several future building sites. Preliminary development scenarios were prepared after reviewing urban design concepts, development programs and pro-forma studies. Consultants also evaluated the traffic and infrastructure impacts of the development concepts. Because of the size and complexity of the Town Square site three preliminary concepts were developed for that area and two were prepared for the Snelling Yards site. Each of the four opportunity sites received varying levels of analysis for this study. The Town Square and Snelling Yards sites were analyzed at a high level of detail due to their importance and the complexity of their property access and parking needs, street connections, and railroad corridor issues. The level of analysis at the Station Place West and Station Place East sites focused primarily on urban design, property access, and stormwater management issues. Concepts were presented to the CAC and refined before being presented to the community at a public workshop.

Station Place West Opportunity Site

Station Place is the sub-district within the change area that is located closest to the LRT station on both sides of Hiawatha Avenue. These sites were identified in blue on the Level of Analysis Map. Station Place West refers to the sites that are located on the west side of Hiawatha Avenue and centered on the LRT Station.

Developing the LRT Station Site

The most important Station Place West site was the former publicly-owned excess property at the LRT station. The 46th Street Station site plan was designed to include two development pads adjacent to the station. These sites were identified as key locations to establish the TOD character and market for future station area growth because of their high visibility and direct access from the LRT station and Hiawatha Avenue. Successful urban-scaled transit-oriented development on this site is important to visibly connect the LRT station site with new neighborhood center development located across Hiawatha Avenue. The TOD strategy analyzed this site carefully and prepared concept drawings and design priorities for the site.

Status Update

In 2008, the Metropolitan Council auctioned the two development pads on the LRT Station site, receiving purchase offers from three multifamily housing developers. Materials prepared by the City during the Station Area and TOD Strategy planning processes were provided to the interested developers to inform them about City land use policies and community preferences. Oaks Properties acquired the development rights to the LRT station excess property.

Oaks Properties, which was the co-developer of the nearby Oaks Hiawatha Station project, is constructing their second high-quality mixed-use apartment building near the 46th Street LRT Station. The Oaks Station Place project, which is consistent with the station area plans, includes 104 rental apartments, with about 8,500 square feet of first floor commercial space located at the southeast corner of the property nearest the LRT platform. The design includes a plaza, underground parking, bicycle storage, permeable pavements and underground tanks for stormwater infiltration, and a share car for building residents. The Oaks Station Place project has a signature design that draws upon the legacy of the historic Forest Hills Gardens transit village in Queens, New York. Oaks Station Place includes gateway architectural features that will make it a neighborhood landmark along the light rail corridor. Construction on the new development commenced in late 2011 and will be completed in early 2013.



Oak Station Place rendering



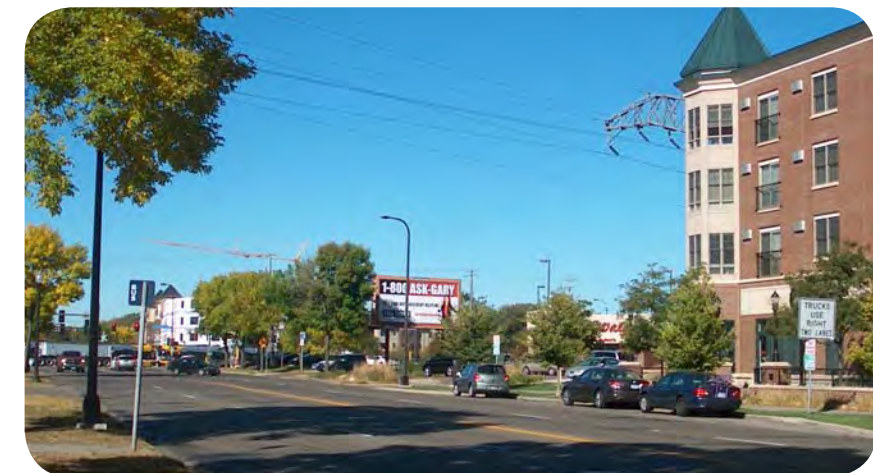
Oaks Station Place site prior to start of construction



Oaks Station Place under construction summer 2012



Oaks Station Place under construction on the west and south sides of the transit hub



Oaks Hiawatha Station (foreground) and Oak Station Place under construction (background)

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Primary Design Drivers

An urban design analysis and preliminary evaluation of stormwater and access management issues for the excess LRT station property was completed by this study in 2008. Key drivers that were identified for the design of the LRT Station site, which incorporated community input and preferences for the property, included:

- Because this is the only readily available site on the west side of Hiawatha Avenue, and it is located immediately adjacent to the LRT station, the preferred plan seeks to **take full advantage of this property for transit-oriented development by increasing residential densities and adding a retail component to the site.** It is important to establish the urban features of the transit oriented neighborhood center adjacent to the LRT station on the west side of Hiawatha Avenue.
- **Incorporate a “transit plaza”** adjacent to the light rail station where residents, visitors, retail patrons, and transit riders can commingle and add vitality to this important transit node. Improve the quality of pedestrian and bicycle access to the station and integrate the transit hub into the neighborhood.
- **Preserve optimal bus access to the station transfer and layover areas.** Parking for residents can be located below the structures, while short-term retail parking is accommodated by a small surface lot that also serves LRT station drop-offs and pick-ups.
- **Extend Destination Street concepts to the site** by fronting pedestrian-oriented retail and residential buildings along 46th Street, completing streetscape improvements, and also orienting retail to the transit plaza and LRT station.
- **Be sensitive to and enhance the adjacent single-family neighborhood** to the west and south by decreasing the height and massing of new buildings adjacent to single family housing and by using pedestrian-scaled design elements and materials. New development can screen single family houses from the activity, sound, noise and lights at the LRT station.
- **Utilize low impact stormwater management approaches to develop this property.**

These concepts are consistent with the development plan for the Oaks Station Place project.

Redeveloping the Pond Site in the Future

Across 46th Street from the LRT station is a MnDOT stormwater retention pond that was built to treat stormwater from Highway 55 when it was reconstructed during the late-1990s. Relocating the stormwater retention pond further to the south can create a new high quality site for transit-oriented residential development that fronts on 46th Street and establishes a gateway to Minnehaha Creek along the existing bike path. Preliminary engineering analysis of the existing pond has demonstrated the capacity to replace this facility at the new location.

There are several important reasons for relocating the pond and developing the current pond site:

- Transit-oriented development will establish an active pedestrian edge on 46th Street near the LRT station.
- Increases transit-oriented housing supply. Market potential exists for senior, rental or ownership housing at this location, with less potential for mixed-use because of access and parking constraints.
- Opportunity to create gateway trailhead and kiosk on 46th Street for the bike paths, Minnehaha Gardens and Parks. New housing has direct access to the bike trail and enhances safety.
- Site can accommodate parking under building.
- Eliminates the large asphalt cul-de-sac and preserves alley access for adjacent residential uses.
- No retaining walls are required. However, if retaining walls are used, the capacity of the pond can be increased. A new pond can also incorporate better landscaping and fencing that is more appropriate for an urban neighborhood setting.

This study assumes that the pond site is likely to be redeveloped after other easier to develop sites have been developed within the station area. A strong private developer and high quality development proposal will be required. Developing this site will probably require agreements with both MnDOT and the Minneapolis Park Board, with the retention pond replaced prior to new development. Stormwater management and access to the local parks and bicycle trails can be enhanced by any new development that is allowed.

Station Place Opportunity Sites 3 and 4



Stormwater retention pond across 46th Street from the LRT Station

Snelling Yards Opportunity Site

The Snelling Yards property is a 3.3-acre site located on the block bounded by the rail corridor to the west, 44th Street to the north, Snelling Avenue to the east, and 45th Street to the south. The site is about one block northeast of the LRT station on the east side of Hiawatha Avenue in the Station View district. The site does not include the single family houses located on the northeast corner of the block, adjacent to the intersection of 44th Street and Snelling Avenue. The Snelling Yards site has been a Minneapolis Public Works vehicle maintenance facility and storage yards since the late 1940s, and the real estate at the Snelling Yards site is publicly-owned excess property. The property includes several small single story maintenance, office, repair and storage buildings, as well as outdoor storage yards. Redevelopment of the vacant and aging property is a high priority for the City and surrounding community.

The key factors considered during the planning process to determine what uses could be supported here are the site's close proximity to the transit station and its lack of frontage along Hiawatha Avenue. As a result of its location, the site lacks the visibility and traffic counts necessary to support retail; however, it is an ideal site for higher-density transit-supportive housing. The site is similar in neighborhood context, size and shape to the former Tiro manufacturing property that was redeveloped into the Hiawatha Flats apartments. Hiawatha Flats (224 units) was constructed in two phases between 2006 and 2009 and is located one block further to the north on the block adjacent to the Snelling Yards site.

In 2009, the City adopted new zoning within the station area to support the implementation of the approved station area plan. The Snelling Yards property was rezoned R5 and is located within the Pedestrian Overlay zoning district that surrounds the 46th Street LRT station. R5 zoning is a common multifamily zoning district in transit station areas and is one of the higher density housing districts. The pedestrian overlay allows for density bonuses associated with structured parking or affordable housing that can increase the number of units and floor area ratio entitled for this property and support densities in the range of 50 – 80 dwelling units per acre.

In the preferred development scenario, the Snelling Yards site is multifamily residential, with four- and five-story multi-unit buildings located along the west side of the site with courtyards that open onto the future greenway in the rail corridor. Three- or four-story residential buildings are located closer to the existing single-family neighborhood to the east side of the property and could face a new pocket park or courtyard open space. This preferred development scenario is consistent with the adopted zoning. Parking for all housing units is located belowground, with visitor parking located on-street or along an internal access drive.

Status Update

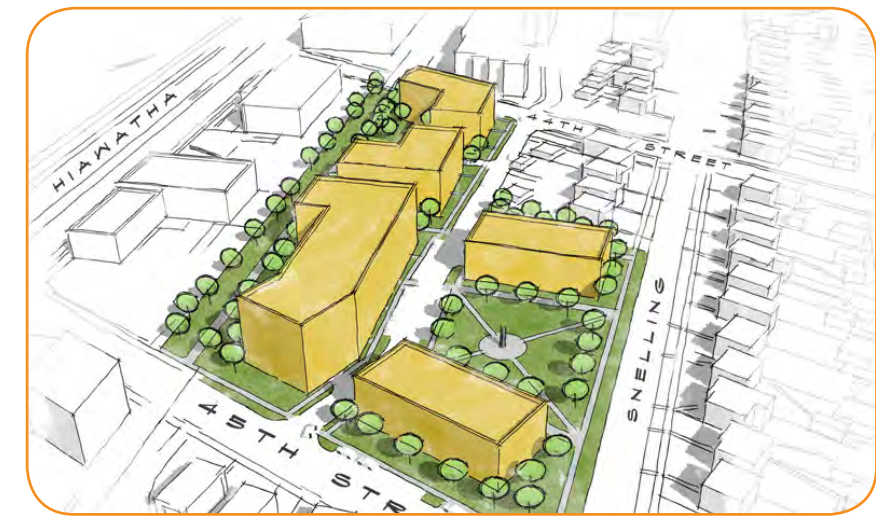
The Minneapolis Public Works operations on the Snelling Yards site were transferred to the new Hiawatha Public Works Facility located at 26th Street and Hiawatha Avenue when that building opened in 2010. The City has determined that the Snelling Yards property



45th Street looking east towards the fenced Snelling Yards site



Oaks Station Place under construction in early 2012



Snelling Yards bird's-eye view

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Primary Design Drivers

is no longer needed for City operations and it will be offered for sale as a future private development site. **The Snelling Yards parcel is expected to be offered for redevelopment through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, most likely in 2013 or 2014.** The City of Minneapolis will use the sale of this property as an opportunity to influence the character and quality of development on the parcel through the development disposition process and redevelopment agreement.

A request for proposals process will be used to market the development opportunity and to establish criteria for evaluating purchase offers. Opportunities to incorporate open space into the development site will be investigated during the property disposition process. The property will be marketed for transit-oriented residential development proposals that are consistent with the adopted multi-family residential zoning and with the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan and TOD strategy. A citizen participation process will be utilized to provide community input during the property disposition process.

In addition to the uses outlined in the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan and the urban design concept discussed above, the following were key drivers for planning and designing the Snelling Yards site:

- Because the site is excess publicly-owned property, an opportunity exists to exercise more control over how the land is redeveloped through the property disposition process.
- The master plan called for higher-density residential on the Snelling Yards site. Current zoning and development trends support denser multifamily residential development. The preferred development scenario from this study accommodates at least 180 dwelling units, which is comparable in density to Hiawatha Flats.
- Proposed building heights range from three to five stories on the site, with lower heights to the east, transitioning in scale with the adjacent single-family neighborhood across Snelling Avenue Buildings incorporate pedestrian-scaled and ground-oriented architectural design features.
- An open space is envisioned to be one of the features for the Snelling Yards site. This green space, which was envisioned in the 2001 adopted master plan, could eventually connect to the proposed future greenway along the west edge of the property.
- The single parcel could be developed as several smaller development

sites. This creates the opportunity for one or more developers to participate in realizing the vision for the site. Depending on the policy direction, community input, market conditions, and development objectives, it may be possible on this large site to achieve a mix of rental and homeownership units or to achieve targets related to a mix of household demographics or income levels.

- Surface parking is minimized while accommodating parking for residents on site. All residential parking is underground within the building footprints, and on-street visitor parking is available.
- New development at this parcel features green building designs, energy efficient building systems and appliances, low impact site design, innovative stormwater management, share cars, and other sustainable development practices.
- Finally, new multifamily residential development on this site will primarily attract households that choose to locate near Hiawatha LRT to gain access to housing near transit services. Redeveloping the Snelling Yards property provides additional reasons to implement timely sidewalk and crossing improvements to 45th Street and Hiawatha Avenue to facilitate safe and amenable access to the LRT Station by transit patrons.



Snelling Yards Site (background) from Snelling Avenue



44th Street looking south down the future Greenway Corridor



Snelling Avenue at 45th Street looking northwest into new development on the Snelling Yard site



Station Place East refers to the block frontage located directly across Hiawatha Avenue from the LRT station

Station Place East Opportunity Site

The third opportunity site explored during this planning process is located on the east side of Hiawatha Avenue, between 45th and 46th streets and bordered on the east by the rail corridor. Prominently located along Hiawatha Avenue, directly across from the LRT station, future redevelopment potential includes new mixed-use buildings located closer to Hiawatha Avenue and 46th Street than the existing industrial building or the suburban-style drug store. By sharing curb cuts and locating parking and vehicular circulation behind the buildings, a safer and more active pedestrian environment can be created.

Because there are viable commercial uses located in all three existing properties, market driven redevelopment is likely to occur later at the Station Place East opportunity sites than at the Snelling Yards

and LRT station sites. The block is also likely to be redeveloped in several different building projects. Cooperation among property owners is strongly encouraged, since decisions by property owners will shape the market timing, value and quality of the new development opportunities. Redevelopers are encouraged to work closely with the existing Walgreens drug store at the corner of 46th Street and Hiawatha, which is a highly desirable tenant to retain for the proposed mixed-use neighborhood center. The new Longfellow Station project, located near the 38th Street LRT station, illustrates the market feasibility and design features of transit-oriented development along the Hiawatha Avenue frontage across from the LRT station.



Station Place Opportunity Sites

Primary Design Drivers

In addition to the Master Plan and the urban design concepts discussed above, the following ideas were key drivers of the conceptual planning of the Station Place East opportunity site:

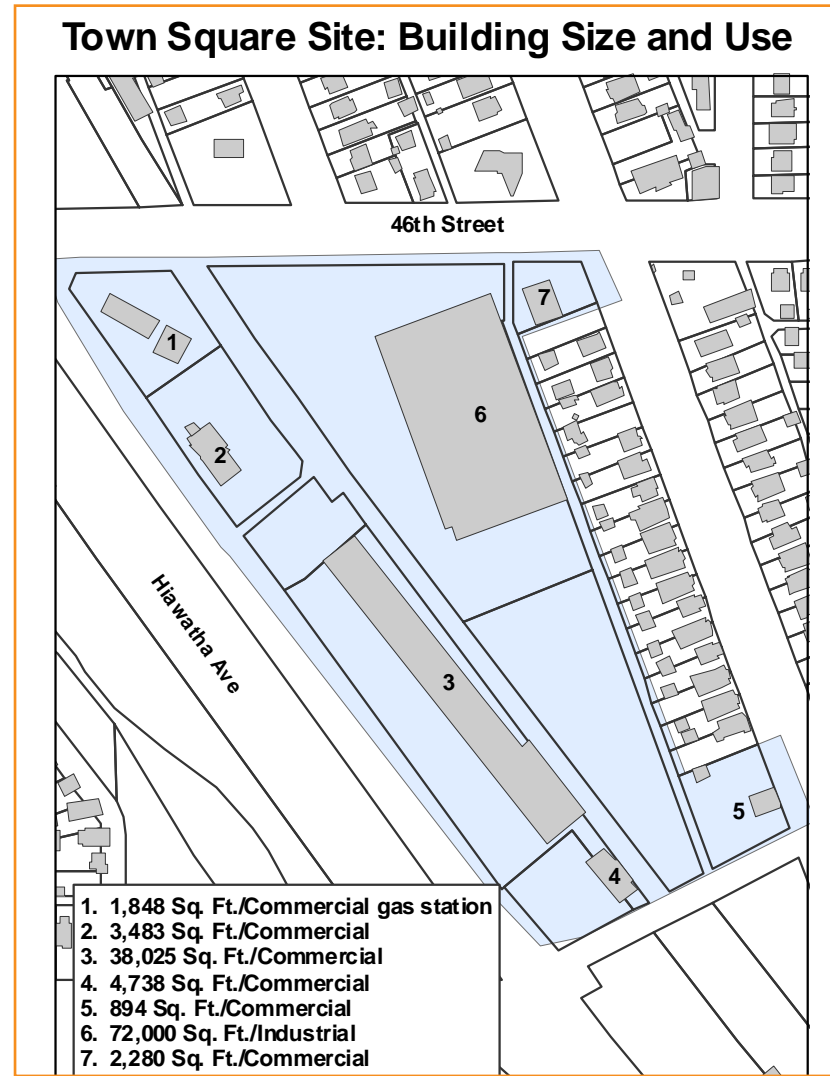
- **Buildings should be oriented toward Hiawatha Avenue and the LRT station to reinforce a more active pedestrian environment, urban streetscape and building wall.** Four or five-story buildings along both sides of Hiawatha Avenue at the LRT station will establish an urban node and reinforce the neighborhood center character and identity. Urban scaled development can visually impact driver perceptions of the highway environment and encourage lower vehicle speeds within the developed neighborhood center area. Vertical building elements, landscaping, and streetscape features can reinforce driver vigilance and reinforce safer pedestrian crossings to the LRT station at both 45th Street and 46th Street.
- **Shared mid-block automobile access and connected vehicular circulation north to south behind the buildings** are encouraged to manage traffic impacts and reduce curb cuts on Hiawatha Avenue as much as possible while improving pedestrian safety. This is important for parking, service, and delivery access to new buildings.

- Surface **parking lots will be located behind buildings** to the rear of the properties.
- Ground floor **retail is focused on the corners at the north and south ends of the block**, near the points of heavy pedestrian crossings to the LRT station, with the greatest retail concentration at the south end of the block. Most of the retail focus will be along 46th Street – the “destination street.”
- Sites facing Hiawatha Avenue provide the opportunity to **use parking podiums constructed behind ground floor lobbies, common areas, and storefronts** to reduce the impacts of Hiawatha Avenue traffic on upper floor living spaces.
- Developers and the property owner at the north end of the block may consider opportunities to preserve or incorporate portions of the former Fire Station #24 (4501 Hiawatha Avenue) into new development.
- Continue to evaluate the feasibility of incorporating a skyway type pedestrian bridge across Hiawatha Avenue from new development on the east side of Hiawatha Avenue, connecting it to the transit station site. However, a skyway would not replace most pedestrian crossings at improved street level crossings.

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Aerial Photograph of Town Square Opportunity Site



Size of Town Square commercial buildings prior to Dairy Queen (5) renovation

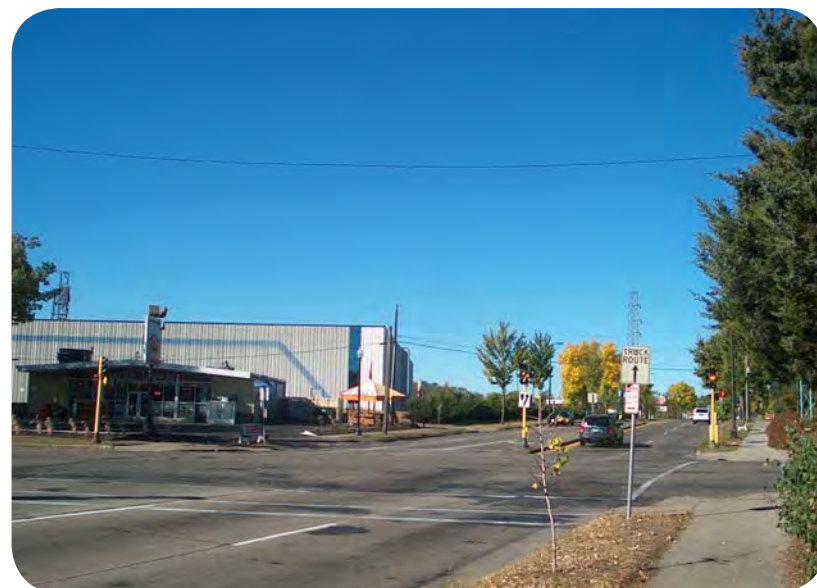
Town Square Opportunity Site

Because of its size and location, the Town Square Opportunity Site will play a critical long-term role in establishing one of the central features of the land use plan: a mixed-use neighborhood center that is connected with transit. The Town Square Opportunity Site includes eight private commercial properties and three city-owned parcels, occupying more than 12 acres of land, located on the large “super-block” bounded by Hiawatha Avenue to the west, 46th Street to the north, Minnehaha Avenue to the east, and Nawadaha Boulevard to the south. The site is currently occupied by a large warehouse building, a strip commercial center, a gas station and fast-food restaurants, and other stand-alone auto-oriented retail establishments. The single family homes and duplexes that face onto Minnehaha Avenue are not included within the designated land use change area or the opportunity site boundary.

The Town Square site includes the south side of 46th Street between Hiawatha and Minnehaha Avenue, which is proposed to serve as the mixed-use east-to-west main street for the LRT station area. The southerly portion of the opportunity site, referred to in this study as the Park View district, is close to Minnehaha Park, and can provide future redevelopment sites for higher-value multi-family housing development close to the LRT station, parks, and neighborhood retail services.

For several reasons, establishing a pedestrian-oriented mixed-use neighborhood center at this opportunity site will be especially challenging:

- Property ownership on this block is highly fragmented with eight different property owners, and the parcels are irregularly shaped. Each block frontage has significantly different established land uses, parcel sizes and configurations. The established land uses are inconsistent with the future vision for the transit station area.
- Several auto-oriented retail uses occupy prominent locations, enjoy market support, and command land prices that will initially limit transit- and pedestrian-oriented redevelopment until a stronger TOD market emerges that can provide financial incentives for current owners to consider property sale and private business relocation.
- The block is poorly connected with the surrounding street grid, limiting vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle access and circulation. Property located in the interior of the super-block is underutilized and difficult to access. Transit-oriented redevelopment of this site will require the construction of a new local street grid.
- The Town Square “super-block” is bisected by an unutilized railroad track that has not been formally abandoned and by an active high voltage powerline corridor.



Town Square site looking west along 46th Street at Minnehaha Avenue



Town Square site looking south along Snelling Avenue

Because of the size and significance of this site and the complexity of the infrastructure and market barriers to redevelopment, the Town Square site was analyzed in greater detail than other opportunity sites. The remainder of this section documents the technical analysis of the infrastructure, land uses and market potential of this site. It is important to note that these conceptual designs and development scenarios are illustrative concepts rather than development plans. They are intended to illustrate community preferences, identify potential solutions for complex infrastructure challenges, and provide starting points for design development by private development teams proposing private development projects or engineers working on public capital projects. They are also intended to support market advocacy by the community to attract development interest, property acquisition and development proposals consistent with community preferences.

Planning and graphic materials developed for the Town Square Opportunity Site are presented in the following order. After reviewing information about the existing buildings, land uses and infrastructure conditions; a general concept for organizing the land uses, local streets and the proposed greenway corridor is presented. This general development plan was utilized to prepare three different development scenarios, which were presented at advisory committee meetings and a public workshop. Comments and feedback received at these meetings was utilized to identify the primary design features that were important to the community. Technical design was completed on the utility corridor and local street grid to identify and refine right-of-way and phasing requirements. Finally, a preferred development scenario was prepared for opportunity site and utilized to test traffic and parking impacts, as well as economic feasibility.

The 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan identified the extension of Snelling Avenue across 46th Street as a key infrastructure project for providing access to the Town Square properties. Snelling Avenue and the proposed local street grid establishes the size and configuration of parcels suitable for higher density multifamily and mixed-use neighborhood center development. Identifying viable design concepts for the local street grid and the utility corridor (after the removal of the railroad tracks) also shaped the alternative development scenarios that were proposed to the advisory committee. The unbuildable area underneath the high voltage powerlines provides a proposed multipurpose right-of-way corridor and greenway amenity with linear rain gardens and retention ponds, multi-purpose pedestrian and bicycle trails, and a local street. The design and location of structured parking ramps to support a significant mixed-use retail concentration along 46th Street and Snelling Avenue, including potentially a small grocery store, also significantly shaped the design of the preferred plan.

The Snelling Avenue extension is a critical step in developing a TOD environment within the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area. The right-of-way necessary for the extension of Snelling Avenue to the south crosses through the building footprint of the warehouse owned by Capp Industries located at 3939 46th Street East. This means that the property either needs to be acquired by the city or the right-of-way acquisition needs to be coordinated with the private redevelopment of this property to allow this street project to be implemented.

Sale of Private Property for Redevelopment will be Determined by Property Owners.

The Town Square site includes eight parcels that are privately owned, with many sites hosting successful commercial businesses. The city will work with interested property owners, businesses and the community to achieve the vision of the Station Area Plan while minimizing adverse effects on current tenants and business owners. Some current owners may choose to participate in the redevelopment either as property owners, investors, or tenants in new developments or to relocate to other nearby locations as the station area evolves.

Over time, it is anticipated that market opportunities will arise for many current property owners to benefit from the sale of their properties for more profitable new land uses that are consistent with this plan. Cooperation among property owners and developers can provide the most financially beneficial approach for assembling larger sites for redevelopment. Property owners interested in selling their properties are also encouraged to inform local elected officials.

Local government jurisdictions will communicate directly with any impacted property owners about the status and timing of new infrastructure projects. The extension of Snelling Avenue south of 46th Street is the only project identified in this plan that may require the acquisition of significant private property to provide right-of-way for a new public street at some time in the future. Construction of a new street is likely to be coordinated with new development after the property has been sold for redevelopment. The railroad corridor property, proposed to transition over time into a mid-block greenway amenity, cannot be acquired for other uses until after Canadian Pacific discontinues railroad operations and railroad abandonment



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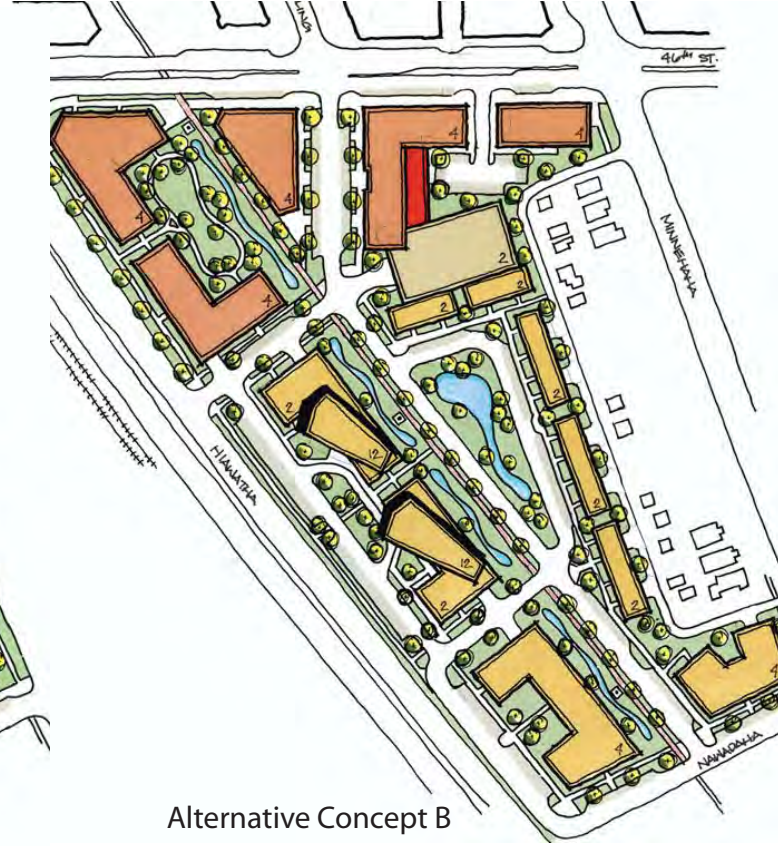


Alternative Concept A

Size: 12.9 acres
473 apartments/condos
97,000 s.f. of retail space

Highlights:

- Snelling extension at a slight angle, with parallel parking
- Grocery store at southeast corner of 46th & Snelling oriented to 46th
- 2 parking structures: one to the east wrapped with retail & housing, 1 smaller structure to the northwest
- No buildings higher than 5 stories
- Stormwater and power infrastructure aligned east of the trail (existing RR tracks)

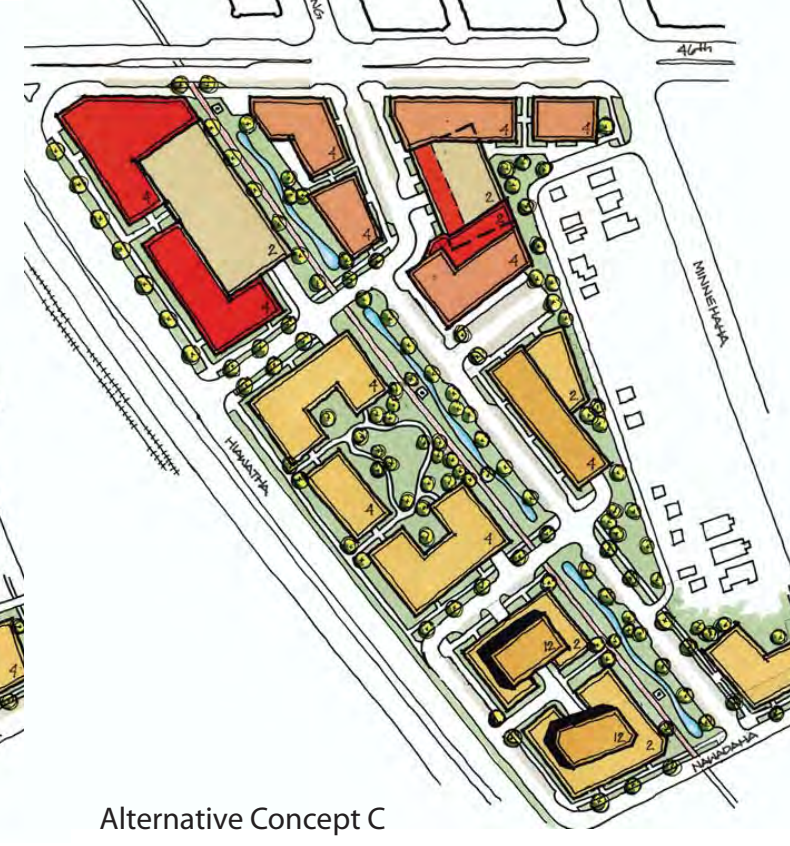


Alternative Concept B

Size: 12.9 acres
427 apartments/condos
26 townhomes
89,000 s.f. of retail space

Highlights:

- Snelling extension at greater angle to get "spine road" next to trail/RR, with diagonal parking
- Grocery store at southeast corner of 46th & Snelling oriented to Snelling
- 1 parking structure shown wrapped by grocery store and housing
- Two "point towers" near center of development (condominiums)
- Stormwater and power infrastructure aligned west of the trail (existing RR tracks)
- Townhomes facing stormwater treatment/amenity, parked from alley
- Mixed-use building to the southeast w/ 6,000 s.f. of retail



Alternative Concept C

Size: 12.9 acres
476 apartments/condos
94,000 s.f. of retail space
116,000 s.f. of office/corporate space

Highlights:

- Snelling extension aligned with existing, with parallel parking
- Grocery store located at "bend" in Snelling
- 2 parking structures: one to the east (closer to 46th) wrapped by grocery store, retail and residential
- Large office/corporate use shown with integrated parking structure
- Two "point towers" at south of development (condominiums)
- Stormwater and power infrastructure aligned east of the trail (existing RR tracks)
- Residential building adjacent to existing alley stepped down in height facing existing single-family homes



- Retail/office building
- Mixed-use building (residential above retail)
- Residential building
- Parking structure

46th & Hiawatha LRT Station Transit-Oriented Development Strategy Opportunity Sites: Town Square Redevelopment Alternatives



Primary Design Drivers

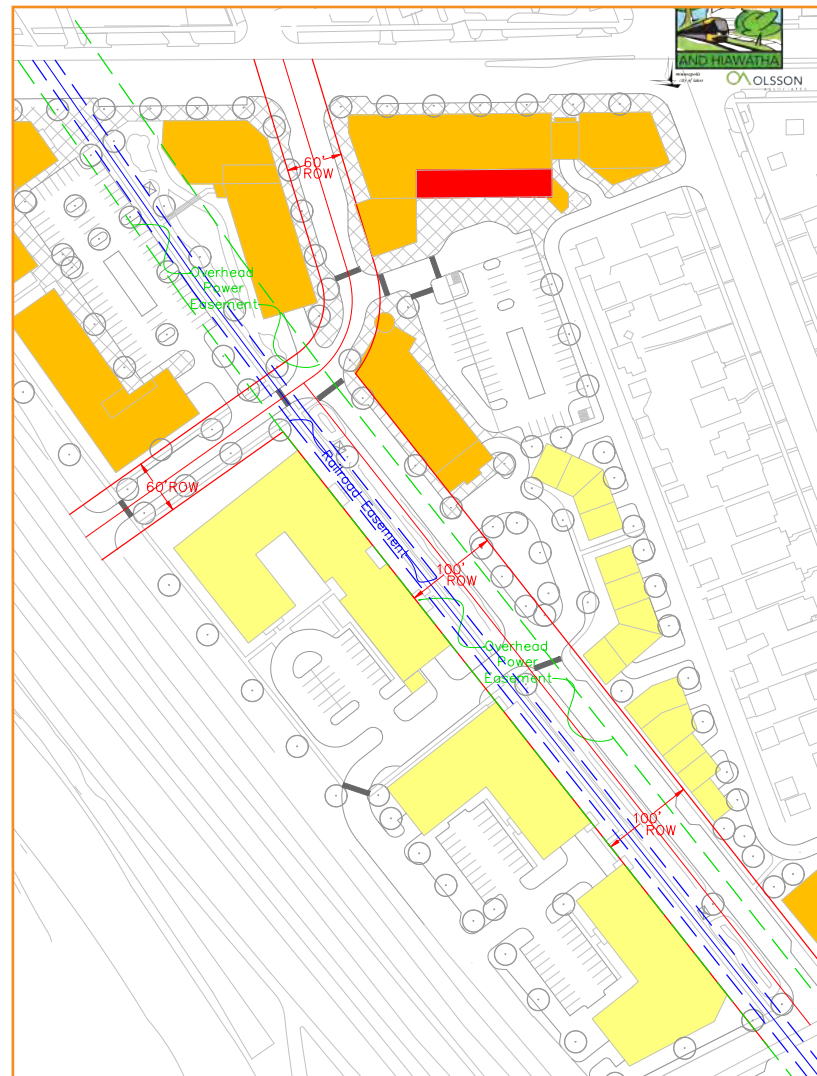
In addition to the uses outlined in the existing Master Plan and the urban design concept discussed above, the following were the key drivers for planning and design of the Town Square opportunity site:

- The extension of Snelling Avenue into the Town Square site is a significant capital project that was proposed in the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan. **The design objectives for the proposed street project are to improve existing traffic conditions; support pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access and movements in and through the station area; and establish a street grid, parcel configurations, and property access** that support transit-oriented development in the Town Square “super-block.”
- **The final design of the Snelling Avenue extension should be coordinated and/or consistent with the designs for several other local infrastructure projects**, including reconstructing Minnehaha Avenue and implementing medians and a complete destination green street design for 46th Street through the neighborhood center.
- The extension of **Snelling Avenue creates access to new development sites on the interior of the “super-block” while providing alternative access to existing retail businesses** located west of the railroad tracks. The extension of Snelling Avenue allows center medians to be installed on 46th Street that can reduce turning conflicts and safety issues created by curb cuts located too close to the intersection of 46th Street with Hiawatha Avenue. The extension of Snelling Avenue provides residents with a safe alternate access to existing businesses along Hiawatha Avenue.
- **Preserving options for flexibly staging redevelopment and infrastructure projects played a key role in how the Town Square opportunity site and infrastructure concepts were planned and designed.** The site is envisioned to redevelop in phases, starting at the intersection of Snelling Avenue and 46th Street. Development phases are expected to proceed from the northeast to the southwest and finally to the northwest quadrant of the block.

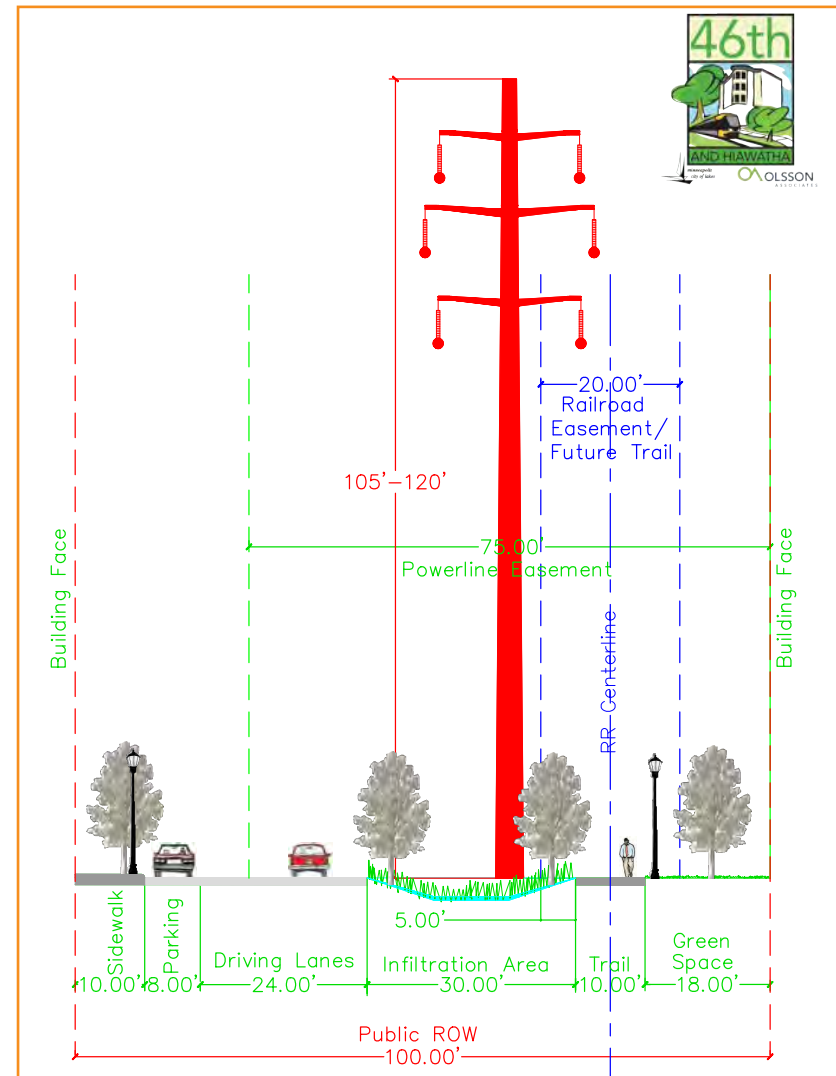
- **The Town Square infrastructure plan was configured to work with new and most existing uses on the block over several years of market transition.** It is anticipated that the strongest auto-oriented retail properties on the block are likely to redevelop only after a vigorous market for transit-oriented development has been established by the early phases of development and when property owners have a stronger financial incentive to sell their properties.
- The concept of **linear infiltration basins along the east side of the railroad tracks** (part of the proposed future greenway, pedestrian, and bike connections) preserves the alignment of the utility corridor and provides stormwater management services. This “green infrastructure” corridor can serve as a functional amenity for new development and the surrounding community and can establish the future greenway connection to Minnehaha Park. The corridor should be designed and implemented in a strategic and flexible manner to allow additional elements to be added as railroad abandonment, high voltage powerline utility modernization, and private development of the surrounding property occurs
- **Focus retail uses to the north along 46th Street.** To take advantage of visibility and traffic, most retail and commercial uses are located along 46th Street or the Snelling Avenue extension, where access and parking are more easily navigated.
- **Establish a Main Street pedestrian-oriented ground floor retail concentration** centered on the intersection of 46th Street and Snelling Avenue. Developers and market consultants have recommended that **at least 45,000 square feet of mixed-use retail space be included in the first phase of redevelopment to anchor a neighborhood shopping destination** at this location that has pedestrian-oriented design features. The neighborhood retail center will become stronger over time as additional retail properties are revitalized, as new retail businesses locate or relocate along 46th Street, and as mixed-use redevelopment occurs at other sites along 46th Street between Hiawatha Avenue and Minnehaha Avenue. Successfully

- achieving the neighborhood center redevelopment vision will require favorable general economic conditions, as well as strong markets for mixed-use housing and retail development.
- Findings from several market studies have identified market potential for a **grocery store to be recruited to provide a potential anchor for neighborhood center redevelopment** at this location, which is the stated community preference. Thus, a neighborhood-scaled 20,000-square foot grocery store is accommodated in a mixed-use building along 46th Street. Other strong neighborhood center anchors could include destination restaurants, a drug store, a liquor store, and other retailers.
- **Maintain building heights of primarily four- or five-stories.** This plan acknowledges the neighborhood’s desire to limit building heights in this area, especially adjacent to the existing homes along Minnehaha Avenue. In the future, allowing some taller buildings might be reconsidered for very well-designed multi-family housing on the sites adjacent to Hiawatha Avenue.
- **Minimize surface parking lots** while accommodating parking for residents, visitors, and retail customers. All residential parking is accommodated within the building footprints and underground. Additionally, on-street parking, structured parking, and limited “screened” surface lots accommodate parking for visitors, retail customers, and employees. The illustrative site plan was designed to accommodate retail parking ratios of more than three stalls per 1,000 square feet of retail space in a “park once” pedestrian friendly shopping environment.
- Minnehaha Park is an amenity that can add value to residential units via proximity. To take advantage of this amenity, **residential densities are focused to the southern half of the site** closer to Minnehaha Park.
- Along the east side of the proposed local street connection between the Snelling Avenue Extension and Nawadaha Boulevard, the preferred development scenario includes lower scale urban townhomes that share alley access with the single family homes and duplexes that front Minnehaha Avenue.

IMAGINE



Illustrative Plan of potential right-of-way easements for Town Square local streets and Greenway corridor



Illustrative Crosssection of potential right-of-way easements for Town Square local street and utility and Greenway corridor

is approved by the federal Surface Transportation Board. It is likely that the railroad corridor will be abandoned in small sections. If so, the inactive southerly portions of the railroad corridor that are located within the 46th Street LRT station area are likely to be the first segments of the corridor that are abandoned and made available for other uses. In 2012, Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis are engaged in active discussions with CP Rail to secure the abandonment of the segment of railroad track located on the Town Square site south of 46th Street.

Preferred Town Square Development Scenario

The preferred development scenario for the Town Square site features ground-floor retail (and perhaps a grocery store) in four or five-story mixed-use buildings located along 46th Street and along the new extension of Snelling Avenue on the south side of 46th Street. The significant retail concentration at 46th Street and Snelling Avenue anchors the Main Street pedestrian-oriented commercial node. Small parking structures provide commercial and retail parking for much of the site. Four and five-story residential buildings, with underground parking for residents, are concentrated along Hiawatha Avenue and near Minnehaha Park. The scale of new development steps-down to townhomes on the southeast end of the site. This is across the alley from the pocket of existing single-family homes and duplexes along Minnehaha Avenue. The overall site plan is organized along a proposed greenway amenity that includes the high voltage powerline corridor, linear stormwater infiltration basins, a local street, and a bicycle and pedestrian pathway connecting 46th Street to Minnehaha Park through the site's core.

Additional information about the market support for a mixed-use neighborhood retail center along 46th Street is provided in the Build chapter of this report. That chapter also provides a phasing analysis that illustrates how infrastructure projects can be coordinated and implemented with phased market-driven private development of the Town Square opportunity site.

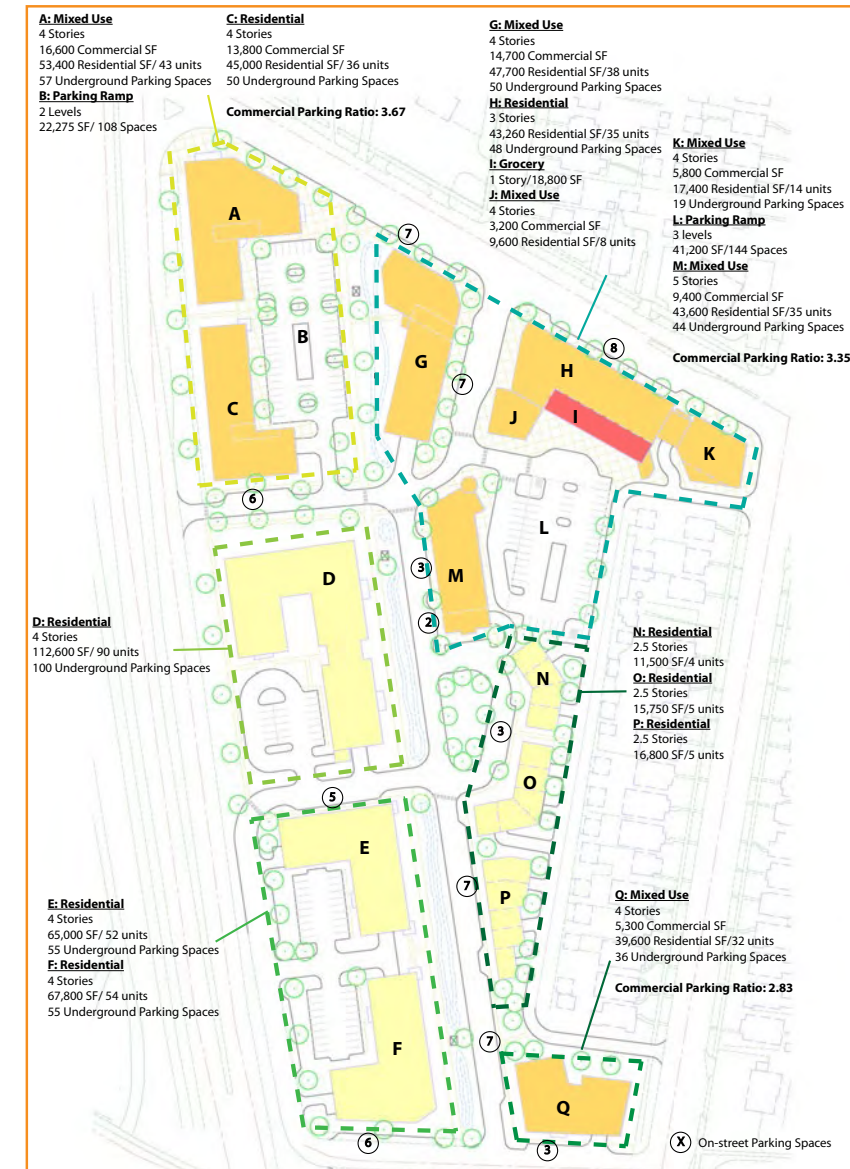


Rendering of scale and character of future neighborhood center development looking west along 46th Street towards the Town Square site (background)



Rendering of scale and character of future neighborhood center development looking east along 46th Street towards the Town Square site (right background)

Town Square: Opportunity Site No. 1



Illustrative bird's-eye drawing of Town Square scale and building character

IMAGINE



Bicycle crossing Hiawatha Avenue at 45th Street after leaving LRT station

Turning Barriers into Opportunities

One role of the station area plan and the projects recommended by the TOD action plan is to overcome the physical, environmental, and market barriers to transit-oriented development that exist in the station area. Addressing these barriers directly can turn them into opportunities for realizing the shared vision of the city, community, and region. This report has proposed specific design concepts and projects that can transform and integrate these features more effectively into an emerging transit-oriented neighborhood center. The following section briefly reviews the major physical barriers at 46th Street and Hiawatha Avenue and discusses how urban design and functional infrastructure considerations can be combined to transform these barriers into facilities that contribute toward creating a more sustainable urban, pedestrian-focused, and transit-oriented place.

Hiawatha Avenue Pedestrian Crossings and Traffic Congestion

Both Hiawatha Avenue and Hiawatha LRT serve important regional transportation functions. When Hiawatha Avenue (State Trunk Highway 55) was reconstructed between 1988 and 2002 the cross-section through South Minneapolis was transformed into a divided road, with four through traffic lanes, dedicated turning lanes, and breakdown lanes. This significantly affected the highway character of the roadway and the connection between the neighborhoods through which it passed. The new road now often functions more like an urban highway than an urban boulevard. At 46th Street, this barrier is exemplified by the perceived difficulty of crossing Hiawatha to and from the LRT station.

While changing the cross-section, width, and speeds of Hiawatha Avenue is well beyond the reach of this study, options were evaluated to better mitigate traffic volumes and integrate Highway 55 into a more balanced multi-modal urban environment. First, it should be recognized that Hiawatha Avenue is a commuter street. The high level of automobile traffic brought to and through the station area by Hiawatha Avenue is very attractive to retailers and employers when considering potential locations for their businesses. This plan recognizes this and combines visibility and access from Hiawatha Avenue with traffic from 46th Street and Minnehaha Avenue to establish a busy, vibrant location for successful community serving retail businesses and services that are configured into a more pedestrian-oriented – rather than exclusively automobile-oriented – shopping, housing and employment district.

The land use plan and zoning regulations call for pedestrian-oriented but urban-scaled buildings to address Hiawatha Avenue instead of turning their backs to

it, which helps to create a more comfortable place for walking and for crossing the street. A stronger urban-scaled node at 46th Street will visually cue drivers to the changing urban character, more frequent pedestrian crossings, and lower vehicular speeds that are appropriate for an urban arterial. Signal, median and crossing improvements will result in safer routes for pedestrians. Over the past five years, elected officials have approved complete streets policies for MnDOT, Hennepin County, and Minneapolis transportation facilities. Improvements will need to be implemented over time as the corridor evolves, as transit supportive land uses continue to demonstrate the market support to replace many of the existing automobile-oriented land uses near the LRT stations. Changes to the highway corridor environment need to be implemented consistently throughout the corridor, after conducting careful technical evaluations for their impacts to movement and safety, in order to uniformly shape driver expectations and behavior.

Two current engineering studies and projects are under way involving Hennepin County, the City of Minneapolis, and MnDOT. These projects are focused on 1) improving the traffic signal system to reduce delays at signals on cross streets, and 2) making improvements to pedestrian crossings at several key intersections.

Railroad and Powerline Corridor

Corridors that provide locations for utilities and infrastructure form integral parts of the urban environment. However, historically these corridors have often been designed and constructed in ways that result in negative impacts to local land uses, adjacent properties, or the pedestrian environment.

In the case of the aging railroad and powerline corridor that runs through the station area just east of Hiawatha Avenue, pedestrian conditions are often very poor at the railroad crossings, and property maintenance within the wide “unbuildable” zone created by switching yards and powerlines has been lacking. Although the railroad corridor formerly provided southbound through-connections to St. Paul, Chicago, and beyond; the tracks now terminate at Minnehaha Park. No railroad customers are located south of the grain mills and elevators at 38th Street, although some railroad operations and switching yards that support those customers are located further to the south, at least as far as 42nd Street. Over time, as sections of the rail track are abandoned south of 42nd Street, opportunities will arise to transform segments of this corridor from rails to trails, creating a green amenity that can enhance both neighborhood livability and the market for new multifamily housing near the station.



Powerline corridor and proposed future Greenway alignment through the Town Square site



Linear stormwater infiltration facility and trail in North Minneapolis

This plan recognizes the continuing importance of this utility corridor but also proposes to improve its efficiency by consolidating the dual power lines onto monopoles. This plan also supports the future conversion of abandoned segments of the railroad corridor into a mid-block greenway that includes landscaping and shared pedestrian and bicycle trails. The width of the powerline and transportation corridor can be narrowed significantly and improved so that it will serve as an amenity for those who live, work, and walk or bicycle through the area. Nearby developable land can be increased while the area is also improved aesthetically for higher value development .

Stormwater Management

Managing stormwater runoff is more challenging in established urban neighborhoods for many reasons including deficiencies in the older conventional underground storm sewer systems; the enforcement of recent and higher water quality standards than when neighborhoods were first developed; and higher development densities and greater building coverage in urban centers that increases the amount of impervious area. Stormwater retention ponds are often not a suitable use of urban land and are difficult to integrate into established traditional neighborhoods. This challenge is clearly present at 46th and Hiawatha, where valuable land located near important regional transit facilities would have to be used for stormwater ponds if alternative green infrastructure techniques were unavailable.

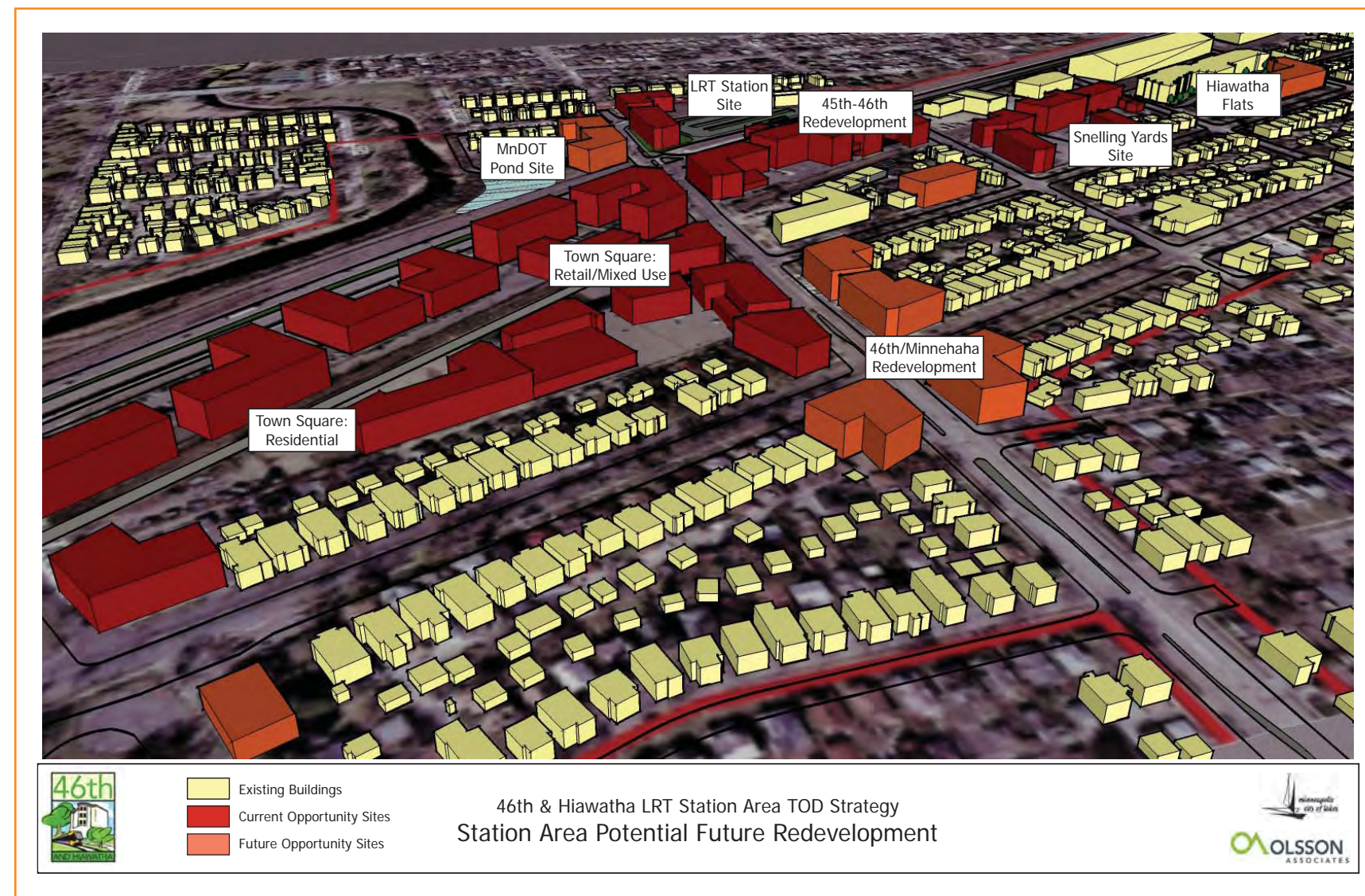
Green infrastructure provides a network of decentralized stormwater management techniques that can capture, clean, and infiltrate water near where it falls. Techniques include planting trees, installing rain gardens, bioretention and infiltration basins of varying sizes, using permeable pavements, using green roofs, and harvesting water for alternative uses. These techniques can deliver significant environmental, economic, and social benefit. Green infrastructure projects can be implemented as part of public or private building and development activities or as part of high performance street projects.

The adopted 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan calls for using innovative low-impact stormwater management techniques within the station area, starting with treating rainwater and runoff on development sites. This study recommends several additional infrastructure projects that integrate the challenges of urban

stormwater management directly into multi-functional urban green streets and streetscapes. As the railroad and utility corridor transitions toward an urban greenway and pedestrian and bicycle trail amenity, this study also proposes integrating stormwater infiltration basins, potentially managing runoff from both public and private sites, into the greenway corridor. This type of public-private district stormwater management facility, if implemented as a demonstration project, will require significant additional research and policy innovation as well as cooperation and financial participation from developers. These stormwater management concepts are presented and illustrated in greater detail in the text box that describes the 46th and Hiawatha stormwater analysis.

Picture This: A Multi-Modal Environment, Complete Neighborhood, and Sustainable Place

Renderings and architectural sketches were prepared for this study to illustrate the general characteristics and scale of walkable and sustainable urbanism connected to transit that is envisioned by this planning process. The drawings are collected in Appendix 2, along with photographs and a map to clarify their locations and the respective vantage points of the drawings within the study area.



IMAGINE

The 46th and Hiawatha Stormwater Story



Minnehaha Creek before stream reclamation



Rain gardens are a Parking Place for Rainwater



Green medians in Ford Parkway entering St. Paul

Where we started:

Sustainability is a core guiding principle of the 46th and Hiawatha TOD Strategy, and the sustainable management of stormwater is a high priority for all future development within this station area. Over the past several years, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and other government agencies have repaired extensive damage to Minnehaha Creek and historic Minnehaha Park facilities caused by poorly managed stormwater runoff from surrounding urban areas within the watershed.

This study has evaluated the capacity and functionality of existing stormwater infrastructure and proposed additional solutions that can be implemented while developing the transit-oriented neighborhood center. While this study describes several larger project concepts that can be implemented to provide area-wide benefits and amenities, these recommendations presume that property owners and developers will implement additional low-impact development approaches to effectively manage stormwater as a resource rather than a waste product on their properties.

What we had to work with:

The 46th and Hiawatha study area is located within a unique hydrological zone. Located on a high point straddling both the Minnehaha Creek and Lower Mississippi watersheds, stormwater runoff within the study area flows in multiple directions and is regulated by different governing bodies depending upon its final receiving waters. The existing infrastructure is a conventional urban collection system where storm runoff is collected along the curb and gutter-line of streets, channeled into catch-basins and underground sewer pipes, and discharged into Minnehaha Creek or the Mississippi River. Since the storm sewer in this area is fairly old, relatively few provisions exist for managing the discharge rate of water, providing volume control, conducting water quality treatment and reducing environmental degradation. One exception is the stormwater retention pond that was constructed on the south side of 46th Street across the street from the LRT Station. This pond collects stormwater from several blocks of Hiawatha Avenue (Highway 55) located to the north of the LRT Station. The pond improves water quality and controls runoff rates from the highway, although it is also an underutilization of scarce urban land located adjacent to a transit station.

What we did and why:

The project team evaluated stormwater management issues and proposed general solutions that can be adapted within the study area as private redevelopment occurs or public infrastructure is replaced. The project team:

- Reviewed the existing hydrology and stormwater infrastructure of the area to determine if capacity upgrades were needed.
- Reviewed stormwater management options that can support transit-oriented development; provide additional amenities for the neighborhood; improve stormwater treatment, volume and rate control; and promote sustainability.
- Examined the feasibility of moving the poorly-located stormwater retention pond to open up the southwest corner of 46th Street and Hiawatha Avenue for transit-supportive development.
- Examined the costs, construction and maintenance issues, and phasing necessary to implement the proposed stormwater improvements; considering issues such as development timing, land and funding availability, and opportunities to shape high quality redevelopment.

What we have recommended:

Stormwater management recommendations have played a significant role in shaping proposed development scenarios for several major redevelopment opportunity sites investigated in this study. Stormwater infrastructure initiatives have the potential to influence the quality of new development that can be achieved in all of the station area districts. Three project recommendations relate to significant public or public-private infrastructure opportunities that have area-wide implications. In addition to these larger-scale projects, the study also encourages developers to implement low-impact development techniques on a site specific basis as development occurs. This study recommends integrating the best available approaches for addressing stormwater runoff through a combination of natural drainage, conventional infrastructure, and innovative infiltration, landscaping, infrastructure, site design and green building practices.

The 46th and Hiawatha Stormwater Story

High-Performance “Green Street” Design Concepts

City streets pose significant stormwater challenges because of their impervious paved surfaces, the limited size and multiple functions of the right-of-way, and the quantity of urban pollutants. Yet, over the past decade, experts have increasingly recognized that streets and their edges provide the opportunity to create “Green Streets” that can integrate stormwater management functions into parking lanes, medians, boulevard strips, and landscaping while providing an improved range of multi-modal and “complete street” transportation functions.

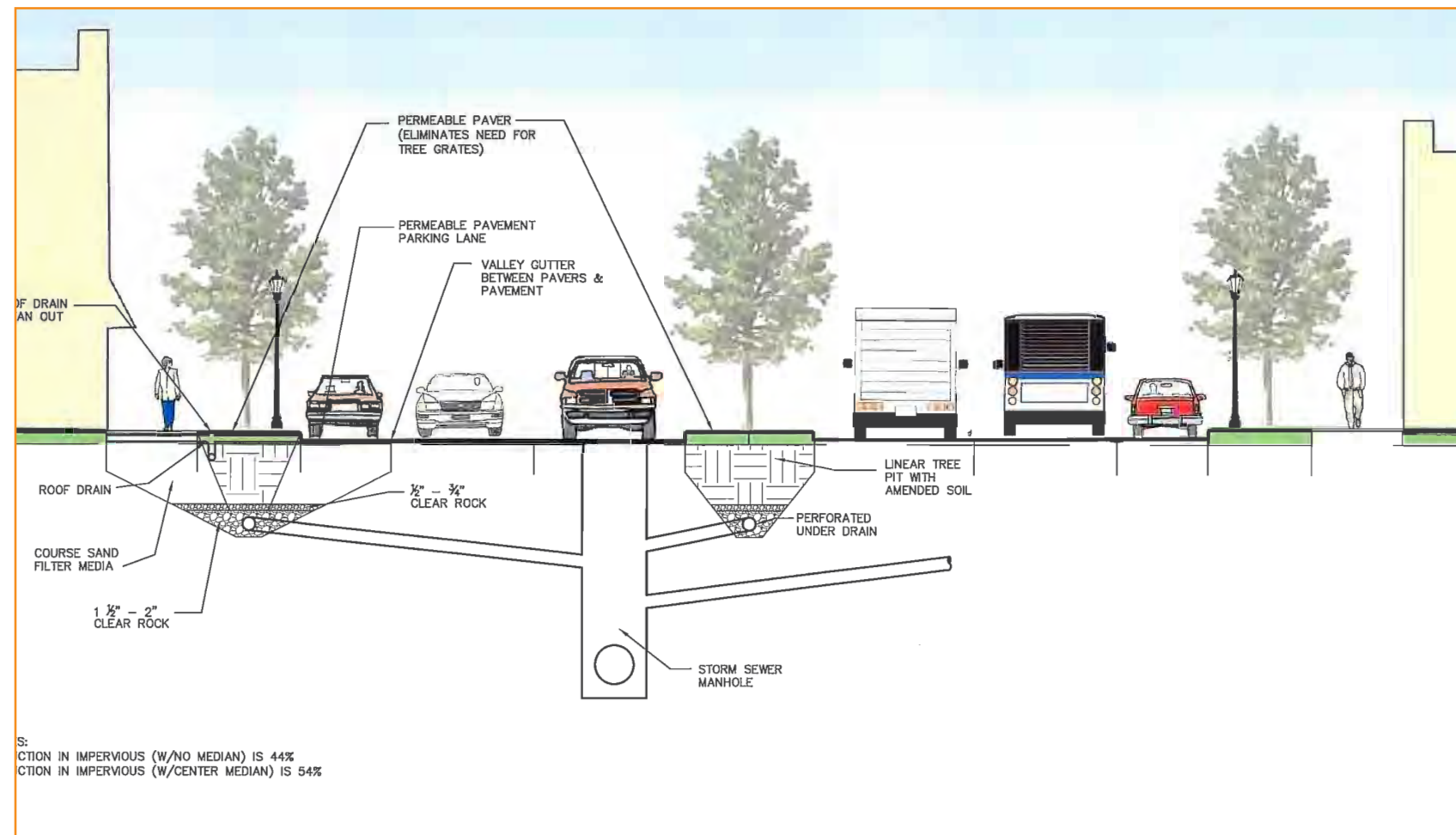
Green street designs “re-green” the urban environment by providing additional street trees and landscaping amenities that promote walking and active living in urban settings. These street designs also “re-nature” the city by reinforcing and making visible ecological approaches to stormwater management. Green street designs increase the infiltration of rainfall and rely less on underground storm sewers. For instance, by using permeable pavement within the parking lanes on the street, enough pervious area is created to infiltrate water for most storm events. Linear tree pits can connect catchments to infiltration areas with porous soils, allow street trees to uptake infiltrated water, and filter pollutants from the street. Drainage from adjacent sidewalks can be incorporated into the system, discharging rainwater into the tree pits, flushing high concentrations of salts accumulating around the tree roots from the street runoff, and providing an additional source of water for trees surrounded by wide sidewalks.

This plan proposes using a “Main Street” green street design for 46th Street between Minnehaha Avenue and Hiawatha Avenue and also on the Snelling Avenue extension through the Town Square development site. These improvements also serve as streetscape improvements that support retail store frontages and mixed-use development, and also use the existing storm sewers to provide redundancy for larger storm events. By creating infiltration opportunities adjacent to urban-scaled development sites, green streets offer a better growing environment for trees and plantings

necessary to create a sustainable, pedestrian friendly “Main Street” environment. The “green streets” design approach can be fine-tuned to the different street types, cross-sections and street-frontages proposed within the station area. Activity center or commerce streets will have a different menu of specific high-performance improvements than community and neighborhood connector streets, where green boulevard strips and existing street canopies are easier to maintain.

Some opportunities, such as the green median improvements proposed for 46th Street east of Minnehaha Avenue, are projects that can be constructed as small retrofit projects if other major street improvements are not programmed for the foreseeable future. As

pointed out in the High Performance Infrastructure Guidelines published by the Design Trust for Public Space, “designing a roadway with a diversely planted center median that functions as both a traffic calming device and a stormwater bioretention area will improve pedestrian safety, minimize stormwater runoff, dampen street noise, and improve air quality.” Design options need to be evaluated carefully to consider life cycle project costs, transportation impacts, maintenance challenges, neighborhood aesthetics, interfaces with other proposed future infrastructure projects, and the timing and phasing of neighborhood center development.



Design Concept for Green Streets

IMAGINE

The 46th and Hiawatha Stormwater Story

Linear Infiltration Basins within the Rail and Powerline Corridor

One significant recommendation included in this study is to gradually convert the underutilized freight railroad and utility corridor running through the station area into a greenway corridor, and to create linear infiltration basins underneath the electrical transmission lines. The railroad corridor is largely unused south of 42nd Street and it will eventually be abandoned as the tracks deteriorate and changes continue to occur in railroad operational needs and the adjacent land-uses. Railroad abandonment will start with the segment of tracks located south of

46th Street. The high voltage transmission corridor will likely remain in place, although it should be modernized onto a monopole system to reduce its adverse impacts on adjacent properties. The timing and phasing of both of these transitions will significantly affect the timing and feasibility of integrating district stormwater management facilities into this future greenway corridor.

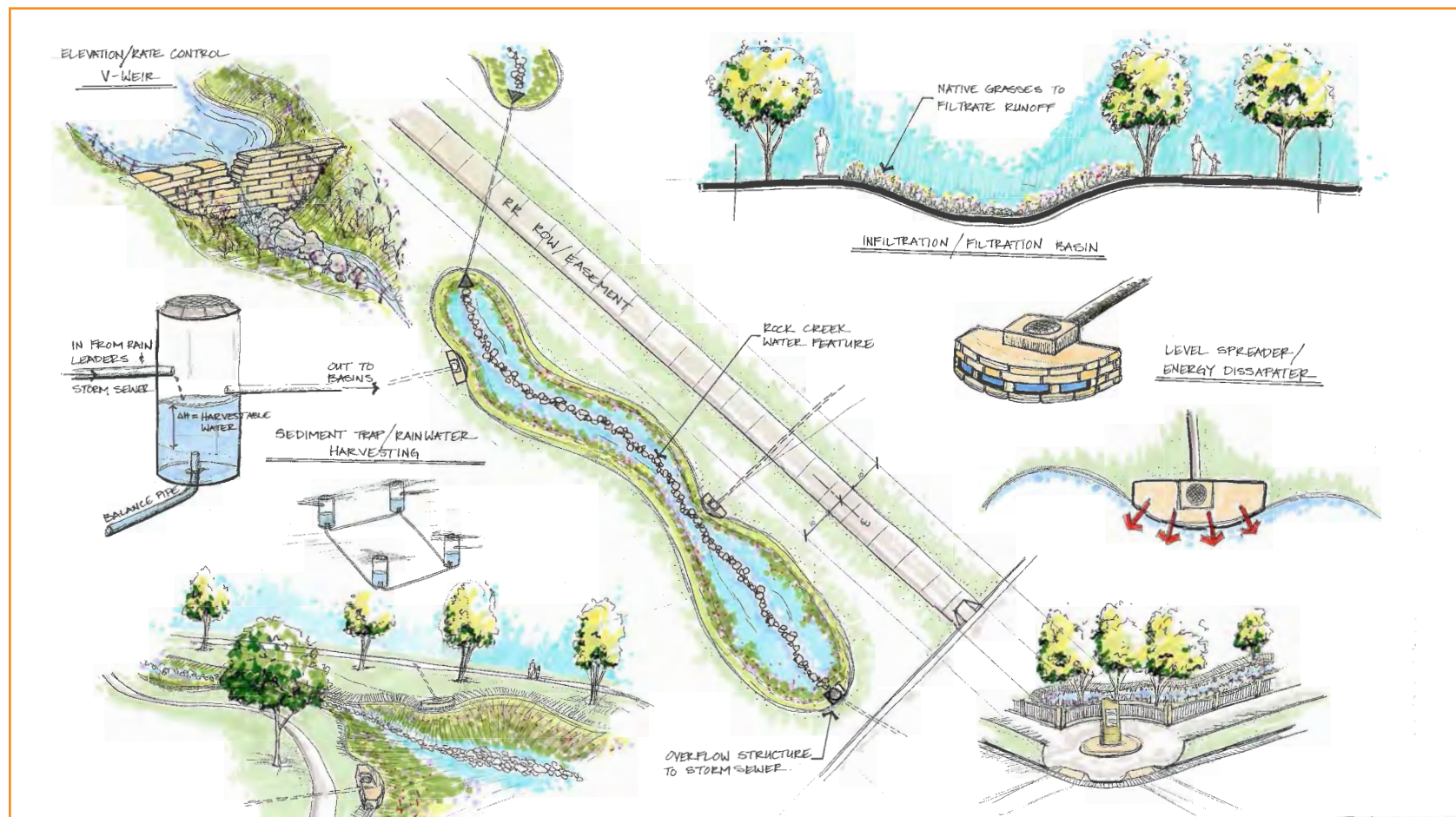
The area beneath the transmission wires, otherwise unusable for development, creates an opportunity for a greenway amenity that includes naturalized infiltration basins into which stormwater can discharge and filtrate. These basins create a series of infiltration cells that can be connected over time into a low maintenance linear district stormwater facility. The basins provide stormwater detention time so that infiltration can occur or, in the case of soil

contamination areas, so that water can bypass contaminated areas and filtrate pollutants through native grasses. The storage in these basins also provides an opportunity to hold water and control the rate at which it is released between connected basins. These basins could supplement the use of on-site BMPs for the development parcels themselves. These basins can create an attractive amenity for adjacent development and form the backbone, along with walking and biking paths, of a green corridor through the station area. Water features and weirs provide an architectural character to the greenway spine. A district infiltration feature may allow development to build at higher densities, thereby creating the market opportunity for higher quality transit-oriented development with adjacent amenities that support residential uses.

Relocating the Existing MnDOT Stormwater Retention Pond

Evaluating development opportunities on and near the LRT station on the west side of Hiawatha Avenue was one significant issue examined in this study. Because of their proximity to the station, development on these parcels will shape the image of the station area and determine the degree to which the transit station is perceived as integrated into the neighborhood center, which will be located primarily on the east side of Hiawatha Avenue. Successful new development near the station reinforces the market position and visibility of transit-oriented-redevelopment within the entire station area.

The MnDOT retention pond was built during the reconstruction of highway 55, on a site selected prior to the decision to construct the LRT station immediately across 46th Street. Consequently, this study has investigated options for reconstructing the MnDOT pond a short distance south of its current location, opening up the 46th Street frontage for transit-oriented development. The pond is owned by MnDOT and the property to the south of the pond is owned by the Minneapolis Parks Board. Policy commitments from these agencies and very strong developer interest would be required for this pond relocation to occur in the future. Moving the pond creates a significant redevelopment opportunity that can reinforce an active pedestrian environment around the LRT station. Moving the pond also provides an opportunity to create a trailhead for the bike and pedestrian paths leading to Minnehaha Creek and Longfellow Gardens and to reduce impervious area by removing the existing over-sized cul-de-sac.



Design concept for linear infiltration basins in railroad corridor

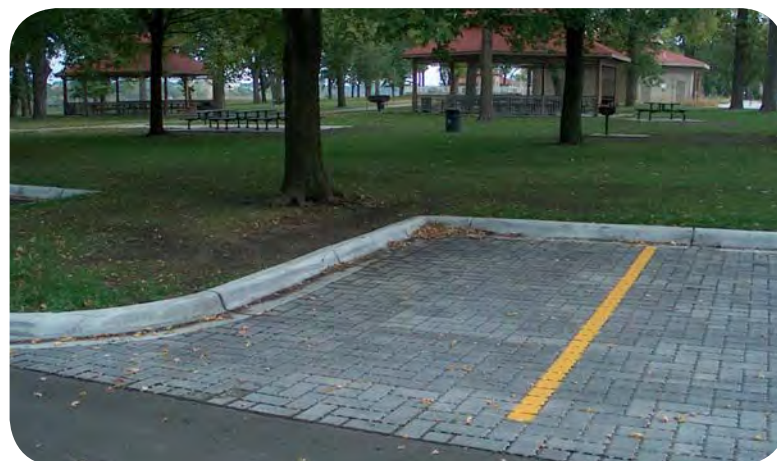
The 46th and Hiawatha Stormwater Story



Linear Infiltration Features at Heritage Park in North Minneapolis



Parking Lot Plantings at Minnehaha Park



Permeable pavers in parking lot at Minnehaha Park

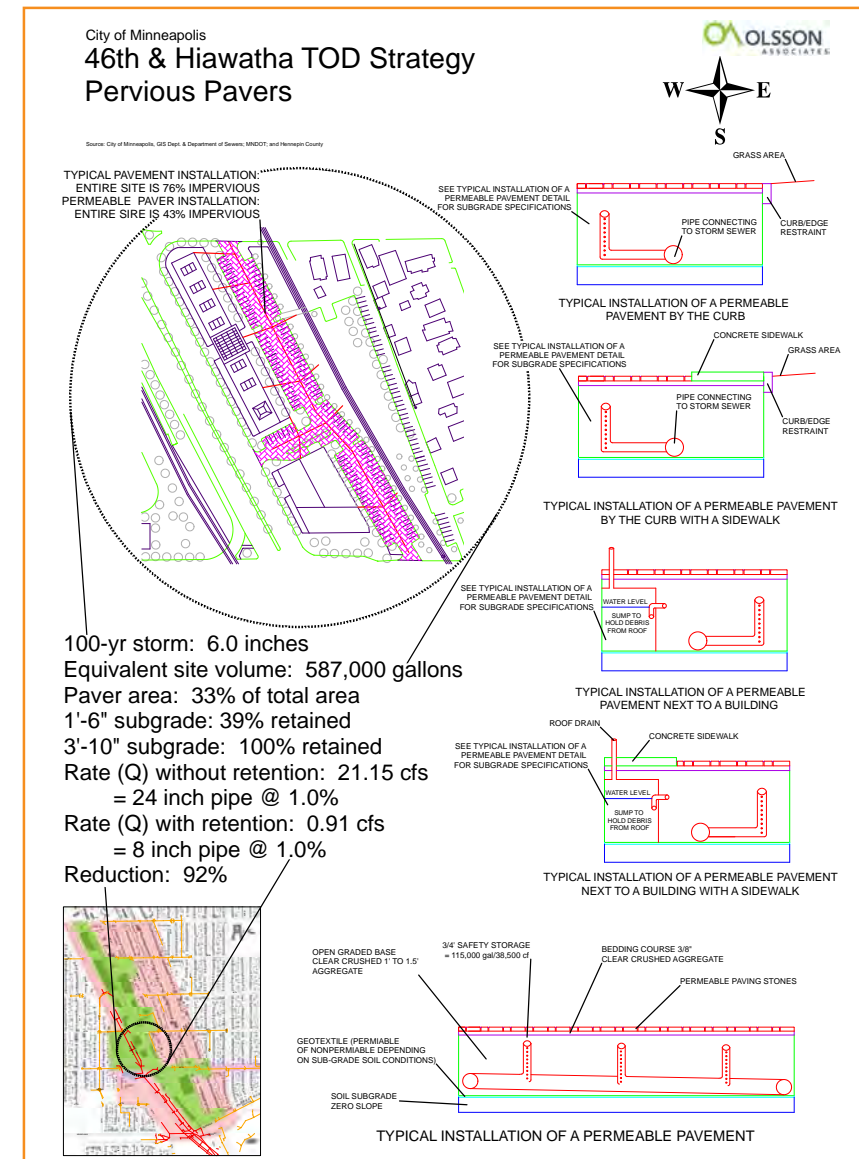
Other Stormwater Management Recommendations

The projects described above are significant district stormwater improvements, but they only provide a portion of the overall stormwater management needed to meet regulatory standards and sustainability goals in the study area. A central premise of low-impact stormwater design is to manage rainwater in incremental steps as near the point where the water fell as possible. Consequently, other water quality, rate control, and volume reduction techniques will be implemented on a site by site basis as development occurs.

The change area identified in the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan includes existing commercial properties that have extensive impervious surfaces and high building coverage, and that rely almost exclusively on the public storm sewer system to manage stormwater. Redeveloping these properties will provide a major opportunity to incorporate current best practices in both green building and low-impact site design. A partial list of solutions that should be considered for development sites includes:

- Landscape preservation and soil amendment
- Landscaping and treebox filters
- Swales, rain gardens, and bioretention basins
- Permeable pavements, pavers and underground storage
- Green roofs, rain barrels, and cisterns
- Reductions in building footprints and impervious surfaces by increasing building height rather than width

Site specific development improvements and area-wide infrastructure solutions, when combined, can dramatically increase stormwater quality and achieve high sustainability goals.



Design concept for pervious parking lots

IMAGINE



Invest – [in-‘vest]

–**verb** invest (in•vest)

Definition:

1. To devote time, effort or energy to undertakings that are expected to generate worthwhile outcomes.
2. To put money into use with expenditures that create business opportunities and physical improvements that generate the potential for economic gain.

–**noun** investment (in•vest•ment)

Definition:

1. An improvement to infrastructure or the built environment that generates future benefits and income.
2. A commitment of time, energy or support to achieve a desired result.

The Invest chapter analyzes how market conditions and public and private investment strategies will impact the 46th Street LRT station area. It focuses on the ways that neighborhood revitalization, new transit-oriented development, infrastructure projects and market building investments can work together over time to implement the station area plan and create a vibrant neighborhood center that is connected with transit.

- **Market Projections for Transit- and Pedestrian-Oriented Neighborhood Center Development**
- **Market Strategies for Transit-Oriented Development at the 46th Street LRT Station Area**
- **Phasing Model for Land Development at the 46th and Hiawatha LRT Station Area**
- **Stages of TOD Market Building at 46th Street**
- **Guiding the Market towards Neighborhood Center TOD**

SURVEY

PLACE

SUPPORT

IMAGINE

INVEST

GUIDE

BUILD

Section 5: INVEST



The fourth chapter in this report, titled *Imagine*, focused on integrating previous station area planning studies, refined urban design principles, detailed development scenarios for station area districts and opportunity sites, and preliminary design concepts for infrastructure and environmental improvements into an attainable vision of a walkable and sustainable neighborhood center that is connected with transit at the 46th Street LRT Station. This land-use plan was specific enough that it could be evaluated using the adopted community principles and shaped by preferences of the neighborhood stakeholders. The land-use plan was also analyzed by consultants for its impacts on traffic generation, transit ridership, infrastructure costs and phasing, parking demand, tax base growth, market feasibility, and environmental quality.

Cities and neighborhoods are more than physical environments. They are also major investments of public and private economic resources. To be successful, the land-use vision must be market-based, realistic, and flexible enough that it can accommodate the diverse private and public decision making processes that will determine future investments in the station area. A transit-oriented development strategy must be primarily market-driven and capable of leveraging the significant private and public investment that will be necessary to construct new development within the emerging neighborhood center.

Current property owners, businesses, and area residents are private decision makers and public stakeholders for future land-use changes, and they have already made significant investments in this evolving neighborhood. An implementation strategy is a planning tool that can help public, private, and community partnerships work together to share the benefits of the TOD land-use vision. The public investments in existing infrastructure systems are significant fixed investments in systems that must be upgraded or replaced gradually over time, primarily when their useful life is exhausted. Public officials and government agencies are the stewards for preserving and modernizing these public infrastructure systems, which must meet the needs of both the existing and the emerging land-uses and transportation patterns.

This chapter analyzes the TOD Strategy consensus plan as an investment plan in the broadest sense of the word. For this vision to be achieved it must obtain the political support of elected officials in multiple government jurisdictions and agencies; instill confidence in property and business owners, residents, and developers; and attract and coordinate significant new private and public investments.

This chapter evaluates market conditions and private and public investment opportunities at the 46th Street LRT Station area in four ways:

1. Summarizes market projections for housing and commercial development within the station area during the next fifteen years. Several market studies have confirmed that the demand for multifamily housing and retail services within the station area will be strong enough to support the land-use transition envisioned in the TOD plan.
2. Identifies public and private investment strategies that strengthen the market for new transit-oriented development at 46th Street that is consistent with the neighborhood center vision. Implementing an action plan that incorporates these market building strategies can attract and support higher quality development in this area.
3. Analyzes and maps a scenario for market-driven transit-oriented development within the station area change area. While property owners and developers will determine the actual sequence of private development, this market analysis tool is useful for organizing the action plan and proposing public infrastructure and investment priorities.
4. Finally, the chapter concludes with an analysis of the principal stages of market building for transit-oriented development at the 46th Street LRT station. These stages highlight the evolving role of new investments in development sites, emerging district-wide development patterns, and infrastructure project phasing in promoting the build-out of the station area consistent with adopted plans.

Market Projections for Transit- and Pedestrian-Oriented Neighborhood Center Development

This section evaluates the market potential and market support for new transit-oriented development consistent with the plan vision. It briefly summarizes major findings from several market studies completed during the past decade, as well as interviews with local developers and property owners.

The Market Profile for the 46th Street Light Rail Station Area provides a general demographic and economic summary of the population living within a one-mile radius of the 46th Street LRT Station. The economic and demographic characteristics of this population, along with regional growth trends, are among the main factors shaping market potential for multifamily and retail development within the station area.

Demographic analysis shows continued growth among the higher-income households in this area, particularly in empty nester households. Empty nesters are older adult households whose children have grown up and left home. Moreover, this growth is likely to continue for the next decade, as the future empty nester cohort (current 45 to 54-year-olds) will then become the largest in the market. This increased purchasing power will drive demand for new market-rate multifamily housing choices and additional local retail services. The number of younger adult households attracted to the area is also growing, increasing demand for both market-rate and mixed-income housing. As the 46th Street LRT station area continues to develop and improve, and the area acquires an enhanced visibility throughout the region, additional households can be attracted and will contribute significant market support for new developments in a well-planned development environment at 46th Street. Approximately sixty percent of the demand for transit-oriented multifamily development is likely to come from households comprised of younger adult singles and couples; with thirty-five percent of demand from empty nesters and retirees; and the remaining demand from small families.

Strong Market Demand for New Multifamily Housing

Hiawatha LRT has been described as a Corridor of Destinations. Hiawatha LRT provides efficient transit access to major regional job concentrations, educational and cultural facilities, hospitals, shopping, and entertainment venues that are located at Downtown Minneapolis, the University of Minnesota, Fort Snelling, Veterans Administration Hospital, Minneapolis - St. Paul International Airport, and the Mall of America. Consequently, the most significant initial development impact of LRT has been to stimulate the construction of new

Market Profile for the 46th Street Light Rail Station Area

The market profile in 2010 for households and housing units located within a one-mile radius of the 46th Street LRT Station describes a relatively affluent, aging, and growing residential neighborhood with a population of almost 16,700, distributed within about 7,800 households with an average household size of 2.11. The average median age in the neighborhood has increased from 38 to 41.3 in the past decade, an aging trend that continues as more households mature and the number of “empty-nester” and senior households increases. The neighborhood population and number of households are also projected to increase slightly during the next five years. Slightly over 20 percent of the population consists of children and youth below the age of 20. Slightly over 14 percent of the population is senior citizens, a percentage that is expected to increase to over 16 percent within five years. The combination of increasing population and decreasing household size means that additional new housing units will be needed.

In 2010, about 66.3 percent of all households within the one-mile radius had household incomes greater than \$50,000 and were classified as middle or upper income households, while 37.5 percent of all households were upper income, with incomes greater than \$75,000. Average household incomes increased by more than \$20,000 between 2000 and 2010, to a total of more than \$74,500 in 2010. Median household income was over \$64,700 in that same year. As more households include older adult wage earners in their prime income earning years, household income is expected to continue to increase by about four percent per year over the next five years.

Higher neighborhood incomes are driven at least in part by high educational attainment; 37.5 percent adults who are 25 years of age or older have an Associate, Bachelor’s, Graduate, or Professional degree, and only 6.7 percent of adults are without a high school diploma. As population increases and household size declines, a growing percentage of the population within the area is working adults.

The index of household spending potential indicates that a slightly lower amount of household spending is focused on apparel or household furnishings than the national average, while a higher amount of spending is targeted to food at home and away from home, entertainment, retail goods, health care, travel, and education. These figures reflect both the higher median age and the high average incomes of area households.

More than 8,000 housing units were located within the area in 2010. About 80.3 percent of all housing units were owner-occupied, which was only slightly lower than the percentage of single-family housing units (80.4%). Both the number of housing units and the percentage of rental units have been increasing in recent years, as new multifamily housing units have been developed within this area, primarily near the Hiawatha LRT stations.

The one-mile circle around the intersection of 46th and Hiawatha touches 38th Street to the north, the east bank of the Mississippi River to the east, 54th Street on the south, and embraces part of Lake Hiawatha on the west. Within this area, incomes tend to increase both to the east and the south, with the highest value housing located along the Mississippi River and the parkway system.

Increased market demand for local retail services, condominiums, and rental apartments is primarily being driven by the increases in income levels and the number of higher income households within the area, as well as the growing total number of households. However, the strength and impact of these overall trends has been weakened in the short-term by the economic recession and financial crisis, deflation in ownership housing markets, and the slow rate of economic recovery.



Oaks Station Place Apartments is currently under construction at the 46th Street LRT Station



Hiawatha Flats are a short walk from the 46th Street LRT Station

multifamily housing choices near neighborhood LRT stations, providing convenient access to these transit-connected regional destinations. Empty nesters and senior citizen households, entry level professional workers, young adults, and low and moderate income workers looking for affordable housing and transportation choices have been the principal market segments attracted to new housing developed along the Hiawatha Corridor.

In the “middle segment” of the Hiawatha LRT line, located between downtown Minneapolis and the VA station, about 1,100 new housing units have been built since 2003, with more than 200 additional units under construction in late 2011. Developers have consistently cited the LRT as the most important factor in choosing development sites near the Minneapolis neighborhood stations. These units include a broad mix of market-rate rental apartments and condominiums, mixed-use buildings with retail on the first floor, senior citizen apartments, mixed-income and affordable housing developments. Three hundred additional housing units began construction in 2012, reflecting both a surge in pent-up demand for apartment units and the significant pipeline of proposed development projects where construction had been delayed by the recession.

New transit-oriented multifamily housing has been constructed at every station located between Franklin Avenue and the VA stations. The availability of additional large development sites at Cedar Riverside, Franklin Avenue, Lake Street, 38th Street, and 46th Street, as well as infill development sites near the VA station, has increased competition between LRT station areas to capture market potential for near-term housing development around the Hiawatha Neighborhood Stations. The 46th Street LRT Station area competes with significant urban and transit-oriented housing development sites in St. Paul and Bloomington, as well as scattered infill sites along nearby Minneapolis commercial and community corridors. Hiawatha LRT Stations will also compete with Central Corridor LRT Stations for housing starts. Central corridor is currently under construction and will open for service in 2014.

Construction of additional regional transit projects (such as the Southwest LRT corridor that is proposed to open in 2018) will increase market support for TOD throughout the Twin Cities region, especially for station areas that have a significant mix of parks and green spaces, high-quality pedestrian facilities, convenient transit access, and local retail services that support urban living. The revival of significant job growth in downtown Minneapolis or other station locations accessible by LRT will increase demand for housing near stations, especially for younger adult households. Higher gas prices, lower rates of homeownership, an aging Twin Cities population, smaller households, and emerging lifestyle preferences that favor walkable urban neighborhoods will also increase the regional market support for multifamily housing units developed around the LRT Stations.

The most recent projections of housing demand in the neighborhood segment of the LRT corridor anticipate that the share of Minneapolis housing starts captured around the Hiawatha LRT stations will be at least 15 percent of all new housing constructed in the city, with stabilized demand of about 230 units annually through 2025. The three stations located within the Minnehaha Hiawatha Community Works project area – Lake Street, 38th Street, and 46th Street – are expected to share the market demand to add approximately 120 of these new housing units each year during the next 15 years. Since each station area has several available development sites, competition between station areas for new housing starts is likely to increase significantly. Private and public funding for affordable workforce housing, mixed-income housing, and supportive housing can broaden this market further to serve additional households and housing niches and to increase the number of units developed close to the LRT Stations.

By early 2013, when the Oaks Station Place project is completed, almost 400 market-rate rental apartments will have been constructed since 2004 in four well designed multifamily buildings located within three blocks of the 46th Street LRT Station. Since 2005, multifamily housing has been constructed and occupied at a rate of about 50 dwelling units per year at the 46th Street LRT station. Market analysis indicates that this number could double as the station area develops if public realm and infrastructure improvements and additional neighborhood amenities are coordinated with new development. These new housing units are likely to be constructed in several different multifamily housing niches.

Segments of the Multifamily Housing Market

The most robust segment of the multifamily housing market in 2012 is the **rental apartments** segment. In the local submarket bounded by I-35W on the west, I-94 on the north, the Mississippi River on the east, and the city limits on the south, vacancy rates are comparable to the overall Twin Cities market. Average rental rates within this area have historically been low despite normal occupancy levels primarily because of the age and condition of the existing apartment inventory of three-story walkup apartments and duplexes. Only in the past decade, especially since the construction of Hiawatha LRT, has a significant inventory of newer multifamily housing development occurred in this market area.

Over the past six years, the Hiawatha LRT has demonstrated a robust market for new rental housing development, including some projects like Hiawatha Flats that provide a relatively expensive product with extensive on-site amenities. Although the 46th Street LRT station will be unable to compete for the most expensive niche in the rental market (which is concentrated at high-amenity locations such as Downtown Minneapolis, the Uptown area in Minneapolis, and Excelsior and Grand in St. Louis Park), market rate apartments will remain a significant and feasible product for most market-rate tiers. The 46th Street Station area can support rents in excess of prevailing averages and will be able to attract new market-rate apartment development.

The **senior housing** market encompasses a wide range of concepts. While the broadly defined industry has gained popularity in recent decades, roughly 80 percent of seniors age 65 and older still choose to live in non-age-restricted housing. Decisions to move to senior housing facilities are typically motivated by events such as the death of a spouse or an injury that impairs mobility. Current senior housing concepts feature rental as well as various ownership arrangements, as well as varying levels of service and care, some of which include larger senior housing campuses. The 46th Street station is most likely to attract those concepts designed for still-active adults. These include independent living condominium or coop projects for active seniors as well as congregate housing facilities that limit services to meals and transportation for seniors who remain essentially independent. During the next decade, the market for new senior housing at the 46th Street station is approximately 50 units, which is approximately 20 percent of senior housing demand for this quadrant of Minneapolis.

Housing Market Summary

- *Market potential exists to add between 50 and 100 new multifamily housing units per year to the emerging neighborhood center around the 46th Street LRT station over the next fifteen years. Over the next 15-years, market demand will exist for a wide range of multi-family rental and ownership housing products.*
- *Proximity to the LRT Station and Minnehaha Park are significant inducements for multifamily housing development; especially if supported by improved pedestrian connections, landscaping and natural amenities.*
- *Substantial enhancement of the residential market to support higher value condominium and apartment developments requires convenient pedestrian access to a pedestrian friendly Main Street or neighborhood center retail concentration.*
- *Significant demographic, economic, environmental, and life style changes are increasing the demand for urban multifamily housing choices in walkable neighborhoods connected with transit.*

Over time, local and regional demand for condominium units is likely to revive, driven by increased numbers and affluence of the baby boom/empty nester market segment and ongoing regional professional employment growth. These demographic segments are especially strong within the 46th Street LRT station area. The recent decline in condominium development has occurred within a more general and prolonged ownership housing downturn, when housing foreclosures and price deflation have significantly affected the markets for both new and existing ownership housing choices. As a result, the “empty nester” segment of the condominium market has fallen most markedly as those households seeking to “downsize” their lifestyle have encountered unanticipated challenges selling their existing single-family homes. A strong recovery in the ownership housing market, which may still be several years away, is likely to revive this segment of the condominium market. In the meantime, the market for new housing development will be concentrated on rental apartments.

The declining condominium market has sharply defined condominium niches, indicating that access to light rail stations alone is only sufficient to attract lower and middle market tiers of condominium development as the market recovers. In neighborhood station areas along Hiawatha LRT, condominium sales prices before the recession have ranged from \$150,000 to the low 200,000s for one bedroom units and \$200,000 to

the high \$200,000s for two bedroom units. Units in this price range have tended to attract primarily younger professional employees and first-time homebuyers to the LRT corridor.

Significant additional area amenities are required to penetrate the housing market's higher price tiers. Only a limited number of sites within the station area are likely to attract condominium development. To penetrate higher price condominium tiers and attract higher income empty nester buyers, condominium development at 46th Street will need to offer the broader array of amenities that are more likely to be available in later stages of the station area build-out. These area amenities must include a coordinated neighborhood center retail presence of sufficient size and quality to enhance resident convenience and lifestyle. Other important area multifamily housing amenities include visibility and convenient pedestrian access to Minnehaha Park and to other environmental, recreational and aesthetic enhancements such as the proposed rail corridor greenway. Within the next five to ten years, after the general ownership housing market recovers, the station area's potential array of coordinated transit, retail, and recreational amenities should enable it to attract condominium development. In these circumstances, the potential exists for as much as 30 to 40 percent of future multifamily residential development to be ownership housing.

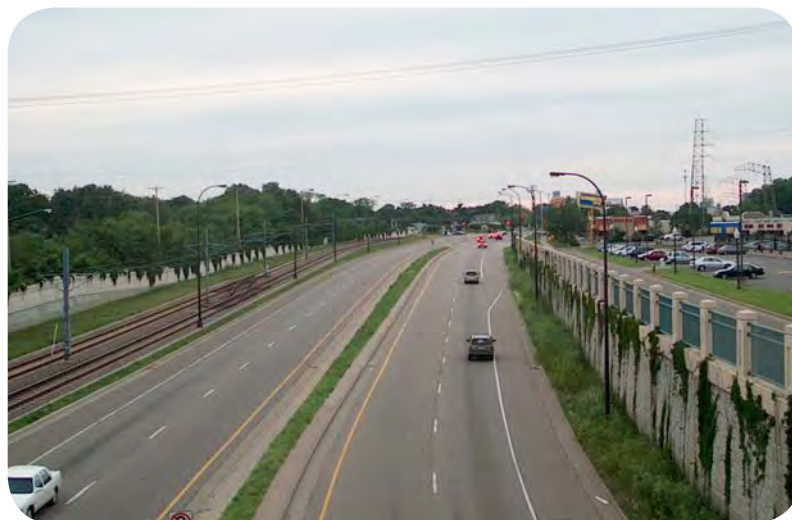
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Hiawatha Flats Apartments has a pedestrian-oriented design with accessible ground floor units.



Multifamily Housing near Minnehaha Park



Parkway Plaza Shopping Center has Poor Visibility from Hiawatha Avenue

Demand for Retail Services and Store Development

The strength and character of the **retail and store development** market at 46th Street is shaped primarily by three factors:

1. Trends shaping household growth, demographics and income levels within the larger trade area (market demand).
2. The current distribution, character, and merchandise mix of local stores (market supply).
3. Opportunities to provide additional retail sites within the 46th Street station area, especially the opportunity to create a significant mixed-use redevelopment site capable of supporting a more pedestrian- and transit oriented neighborhood retail center along 46th Street that is integrated with new transit-supportive and neighborhood center housing (unmet market demand and potential retail and development synergies).

Retail services within the station area and surrounding neighborhoods are currently provided by a wide range of retail shopping environments, store sizes, and building types. Within the City of Minneapolis, the neighborhoods south of Lake Street near Hiawatha Avenue are served primarily by small, neighborhood-oriented stores with only a few small automobile-oriented strip shopping centers. Larger community retail centers serving this market are located at Lake Street, Highland Park in St. Paul, and the Cedar Point Commons and Hub shopping centers in Richfield. Downtown Minneapolis and the Mall of America are accessible regional scale shopping destinations that also provide unique shopping and entertainment services.

Many small retailers are located in traditional urban storefronts that are clustered around neighborhood commercial nodes along Minnehaha Avenue or 34th Avenue South. Newer retail uses are concentrated in more automobile-oriented and suburban-styled stores, primarily along Hiawatha Avenue and nearby arterial streets. Extending southward from the intersection of 46th Street and Hiawatha Avenue, these businesses include Walgreens, a Holiday gas station, Burger King, stores located in the Parkway Plaza strip mall, and Bridgeman's. Most retail establishments are in good condition. Several have been recently renovated, including the Dairy Queen, Burger King, and Holiday gas station.

The area located between 42nd Street and Minnehaha Park contains more than thirty-five different retail stores and service providers and serves a larger trade area. However, few retail synergies exist among the geographically dispersed retail uses, and the area does not provide a full complement of neighborhood retail choices. The commercial mix and store locations confirm that few multi-purpose shopping trips are currently occurring within the station area. The Parkway Plaza strip mall (35,000 square feet), which is the largest existing retail concentration within the station area, suffers from poor visibility and access due to the reconstruction of Hiawatha Avenue in the 1990s, which has resulted in many retail occupants being replaced by service businesses.

The Town Square redevelopment scenario assumes that, over time, the Parkway Plaza strip mall will be redeveloped for more valuable multifamily residential uses that capitalize upon its location near Minnehaha Park and the LRT station. New and existing small retail uses will be able to benefit from other retail store locations within the area, including the envisioned neighborhood center retail concentration fronting 46th Street or existing commercial storefronts.

Since this transit-oriented development strategy is a goal driven plan, it is important to acknowledge that not all retail uses, store types, or merchandise categories are considered equally suitable for the station area. In considering retail development issues for the 46th Street Station Area, this study has proceeded under the assumption that larger-scale or big-box regional retail development, which requires greater levels of automobile access and parking, would not serve the interests of the local community. Within the Hiawatha LRT corridor, drive-through restaurants and automobile-oriented land-uses are guided by land-use policies and zoning to locate at highway intersections like 42nd Street and 35th Street that are located further away from the LRT stations.

Retail development and market absorption will be limited more by planning and site assembly issues than by market constraints. Strategically located anchor tenants will drive much of the potential for neighborhood center retail success. Given two or more substantial anchors (grocery store, drug store, bookstore, apparel, or office supplies) as well as several appealing destination restaurants, the market will support 100,000 to 150,000 square feet of retail and service space within the station area (including existing space), much of which could be located within the mixed-use neighborhood center. In planning for retail development, however, unanchored spaces on ground-floor levels of mixed-use residential buildings should be limited to those locations with easy access and high visibility, primarily along 46th Street or facing the LRT station. At least 25 percent of the retail space in the station area is likely to remain dispersed in existing storefronts, especially those located in neighborhood commercial nodes or along the principal pedestrian routes to the LRT station.

The study area will not support this larger volume of retail services if retail is only developed incrementally, store by store. To anchor a main street neighborhood retail concentration around the intersection of 46th Street and Snelling Avenue, an initial phase of at least 45,000 square feet is recommended. Ultimately at least 80,000 or more square feet of contiguous retail district space will be necessary to establish a complete neighborhood retail destination with strong retail synergies and market appeal. Significant underserved store categories like food, hobby, gift, book, music, sporting goods, eating and general merchandise have high potential demand relative to their lower current trade area capture rates. These retail opportunities are sufficient to anchor a viable neighborhood center. Market and community support exists for a small grocery store that should be compatible with a

walkable mixed-use neighborhood center, in the same range of store sizes as coops and smaller urban grocery chains (12,000 – 25,000 square feet). Alternatively, a cluster of smaller grocery-oriented businesses (butcher, bakery, liquor store, fresh produce store) could anchor a strong neighborhood center.

The commercial strength of the neighborhood retail center will be determined primarily by store density, tenant mix, store visibility, parking convenience, and the quality of the destination retail anchors. A strong concentration of multifamily housing will add additional vitality to the shopping district. The quality of the public realm and urban place-making will be important since a successful Main Street pedestrian-oriented retail center must create an environment that people will seek out and where they will choose to spend discretionary time as well as money. High quality pedestrian-oriented design is essential to promote transit and pedestrian based shopping trips as well as “park-once” visits to multiple stores by patrons that arrive by automobile or transit from locations within the larger retail trade area.

Office and Other Market Segments

Over time, office uses will become increasingly viable within this station area. The station area plan and market analysis suggests that significant office users are more likely to emerge much later in the station area build-out and to be located along Hiawatha frontage sites that may be several blocks from the station. In general, office developers seeking access to corporate clientele will pursue established corporate office locations that can provide good regional access and visibility, offer room for growth, and are convenient to existing retail services like restaurants and convenience stores that will serve employees. Most of these attributes will not initially be available at the 46th Street Station Area in the short-term.

Smaller office tenants serving primarily consumer (rather than corporate) clientele seek access to households. Such tenants include bank branches, medical clinics, insurance agencies, real estate brokers and financial, service businesses. These types of businesses often seek space in or near retail centers or in other locations offering good visibility. These categories businesses constitute a source of potential tenants for even near-term retail and mixed-use development at 46th Street.

In addition to office uses, a broad range of potential recreational- or entertainment-related uses may prove viable in the 46th Street Station area. Not all of these will be compatible with the desired character of the area and may be excluded based on those considerations. Strong community preference has been expressed for a pedestrian-

Retail Market Summary

- The 46th Street Station area can support a total of between 100,000 and 150,000 square feet of retail uses, including existing retail businesses.
- The 46th Street Station area is located within a retail trade area that is underserved in both the total amount and mix of retail services relative to local demand. Significant retail sales leakage is occurring in numerous merchandise categories as area residents shop outside the local market area. There have been only a small number of recent local retail developments and there is pent-up retail demand at the nearby Highland Park commercial district where few sites are available for expansion. The neighborhood is also adding additional housing units, households, and spendable income that support retail expansion.
- The 46th Street station area can provide a preferred location to serve this growing and underserved market if a catalytic neighborhood center development site can be assembled and retail anchors, a strong tenant mix, and store density are attracted to a mixed-use center with a strong pedestrian-friendly design.

and transit-oriented neighborhood center, rather than a larger regional shopping center. In all cases, a strong mixed-use neighborhood center will rely on visibility to major streets, a larger trade area, and convenient property access and parking that builds upon and supplements the growing but limited local retail demand created by nearby higher density multifamily residential development.

Summary of TOD Market Issues and Opportunities at 46th Street

From a market perspective, this analysis of demographic and market trends has identified local residential and retail market potential that significantly exceeds that which exists in this station area today. Even given the recent and planned development projects, the analysis identifies greater potential for relatively upscale, high-quality private developments as general market conditions improve and the economy recovers. This potential is derived from the area’s strategic location in relation to areas of pent-up market demand.

Market perspective, however, does not coincide with development perspectives. In seeking to align these two perspectives, the key to implementation revolves around an ability to integrate various uses and amenities with one another. Such integration is successful when residential developments can perceive and use convenient access to light rail transit, retail uses, and recreational amenities; when retailers can identify spaces oriented to provide good visibility and convenient access, parking and connections; and when developers can work with sites where different uses can be integrated to provide mutual benefits.

Market Strategies for Transit-Oriented Development at the 46th Street LRT Station Area

A market-based development strategy seeks to identify public policies and action steps that reinforce the private economic incentives in the marketplace to attract new investment that supports the station area land-use vision. A clear and effective plan and implementation strategy has the power to motivate actions by private, public, and community actors and to share broadly the physical and economic

Cities around the nation are learning that constructing a transit line is only one step in creating neighborhoods around these stations that work. High-quality, high-property tax generating development that best supports transit investment, and maximizes the return on that investment, doesn’t happen on its own. Public and private partnerships, cooperation between city agencies and the transit authority, coordinated development between landowners, and focused investments in the public realm around the transit station are necessary keys to successful transit-oriented development.

Building Houston’s Competitive Edge: Transit-Oriented Development, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 2006

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benefits of successful place-making and city-building. Because of the complexity of transit-oriented development and the significant changes in existing land-uses and public infrastructure that are often required, development strategies constitute an important tool for supporting orderly change in these areas.

A successful market strategy requires strong policy maker and community support and coordinated implementation roles by separate governmental jurisdictions and agencies. The public sector includes diverse jurisdictions and agencies that have distinct governance and priority setting processes, different geographic constituencies, and limited staff and financial resources, as well as specific roles, responsibilities, and legal authority. Overcoming jurisdictional fragmentation is one key role of land-use plans, public development strategies, and implementation partnerships. Since private investment often follows public commitments, an intentional plan that guides coordinated public investments and policies plays a critical role in achieving the community vision in areas that are undergoing complex land-use transitions over time. The Minnehaha Hiawatha Community Works partnership will serve as the coordination vehicle for aligning and promoting public, private, and community interests and investments within this corridor.

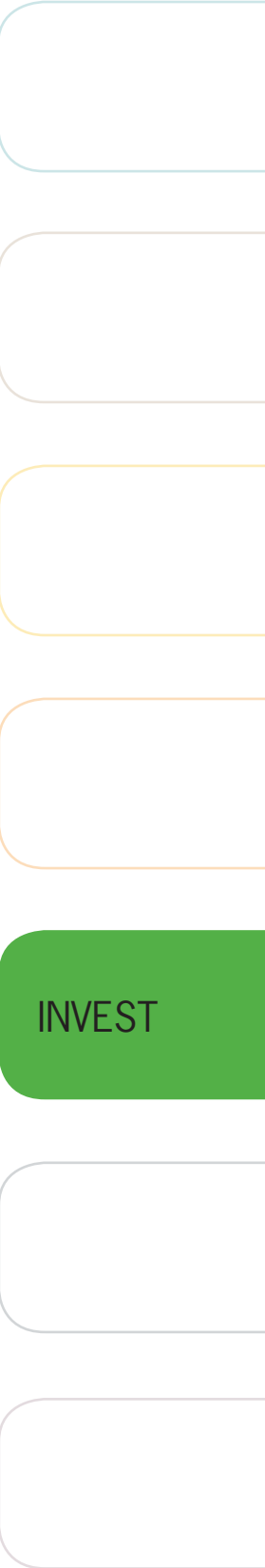
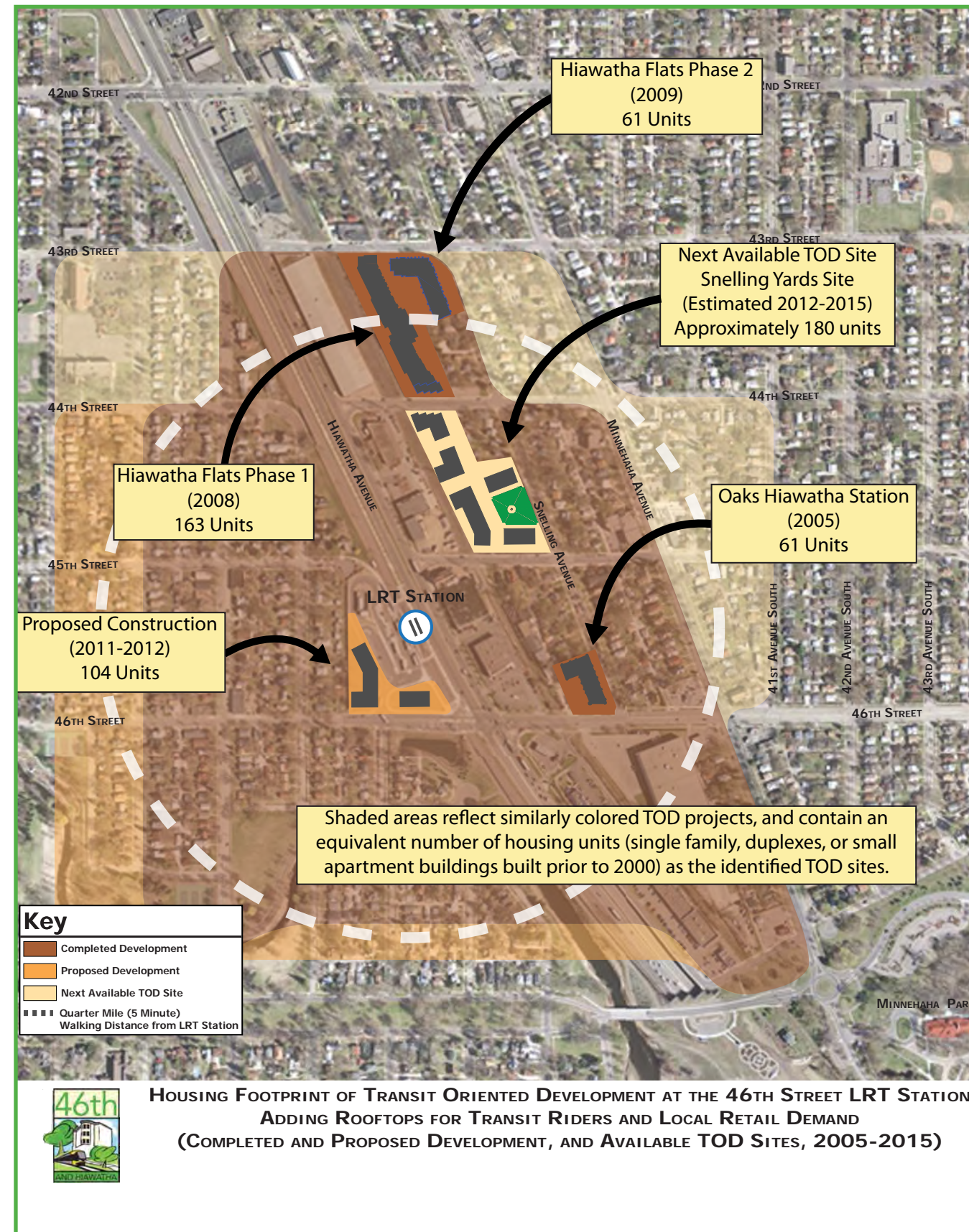
As pointed out in the **46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan**, one purpose of that study was to “plan the redevelopment to maximize its quality and its benefits to the surrounding community.” Achieving this goal requires specific public and private action steps that promote neighborhood livability; remove market barriers and blight, increase the local competitive advantages and market opportunities for new walkable and mixed-use urban development; and provide support for public, neighborhood, and private partnerships to implement the plan.

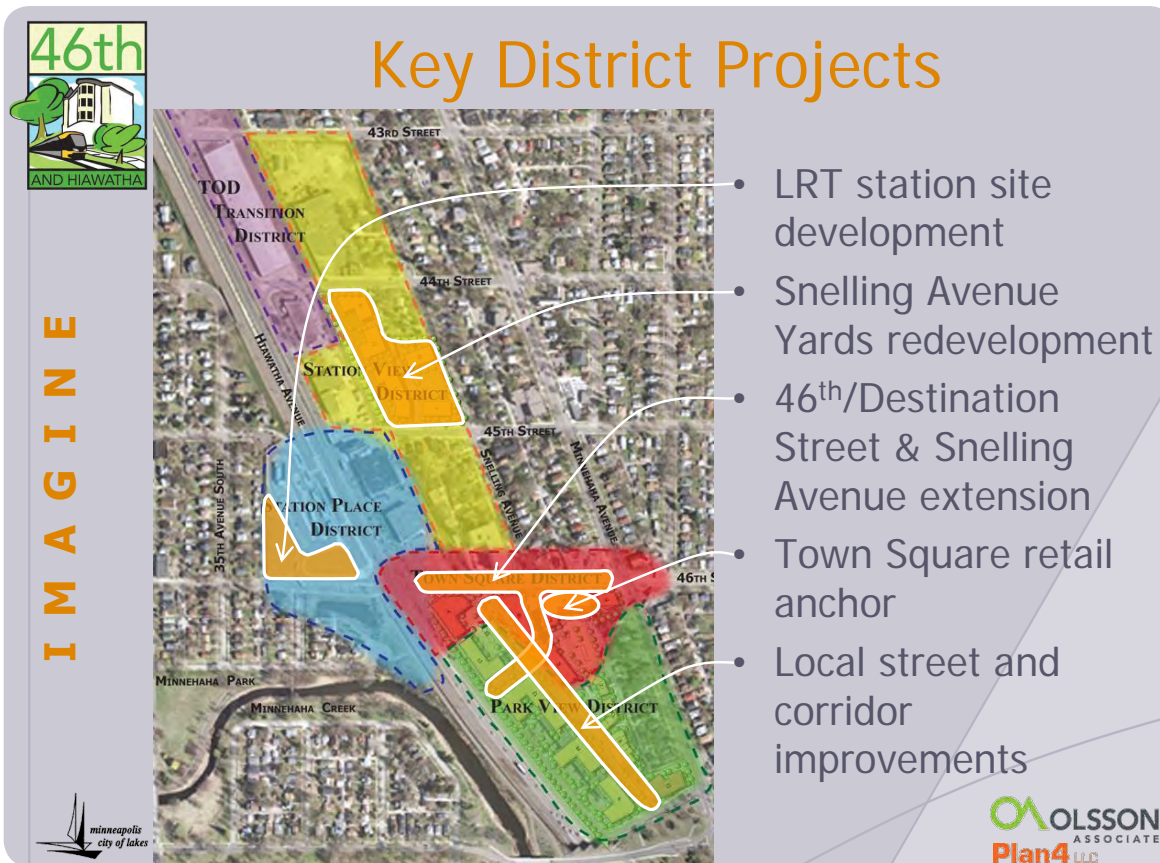
This transit-oriented development strategy is a goal driven, proactive, 15-year action plan to optimize the likelihood of achieving the core principles envisioned in the Station Area Master Plan. It is a public policy and investment strategy that seeks to maximize the public and private returns for investments that support the plan vision and protect and reinforce the unique neighborhood assets and competitive advantages that support pedestrian-oriented development within the study area.

The following development strategies are proposed as approaches to align physical improvements in the station area with market building that supports additional private investment in transit-oriented development:

1. Build upon the existing strengths of the area, and integrate asset-based neighborhood revitalization with the development of the pedestrian- and transit-oriented neighborhood center.
 - a. Encourage public and private activities that increase neighborhood pride and identity, green and improve derelict land, and enhance visual appearances and environmental quality. Small projects can make significant local contributions.
 - b. Reinforce infrastructure, site planning, and building design guidelines and standards that enhance neighborhood quality and identity. Use public planning, regulations, neighborhood review, and development review and approval processes to promote high-quality urban and architectural design.
 - c. Promote local shopping and living choices. Expand neighborhood livability and wealth by promoting housing, transportation, and shopping choices that increase local business opportunities as well as residential and commercial wealth and property values.
 - d. Preserve existing neighborhood assets, and steer growth and new development into the planned land-use change areas.
 - e. Well maintained buildings, active environments, and rising land values play a key role in attracting interest by new residents, businesses, and developers. Rising land values provide incentives and opportunities for property owners to sell or redevelop their property consistent with the station area plan.
2. The timing of the emergence of a walkable and sustainable transit-oriented neighborhood around the 46th Street LRT Station will be driven by a combination of market timing and TOD phasing.
 - a. Market Timing refers to the fact that constructing new residential and commercial development, as well as retail store investment, is private business activity that responds primarily to general economic conditions, business decisions by property owners and investors, and local market opportunities.
 - b. TOD Phasing refers to the fact that market timing is also influenced by the impact of existing infrastructure systems, new public infrastructure projects, and programmed capital investments. The availability of economic development programs and resources to support pollution remediation, utility relocation, and mixed-income or affordable housing also play a significant role in removing barriers to economic feasibility.
 - c. Significant examples of TOD phasing that will influence the market timing of new development at 46th Street include expanding the regional transit system (Central Corridor LRT), selling excess public property near the LRT station, improving intersections and the traffic signal system on Hiawatha Avenue, and reconstructing major streets like Minnehaha Avenue. Other significant projects such as improving 46th Street and extending Snelling Avenue should be coordinated with new private development on the Town Square site.
3. Strengthen the marketplace and competitive advantages for implementing the targeted transit-oriented development forms in the station area vision by investing in the physical and social “infrastructure” that supports walkable urban living.
 - a. Implement a phased district approach for improving pedestrian facilities that is coordinated with new development and provides safe and amenable access to key community destinations like the LRT station, the proposed 46th Street Destination Street environment, and Minnehaha Park, as well as around new concentrations of multifamily housing.
 - b. Promote gateways and signature buildings or public spaces at major neighborhood center entrances and key sites within the neighborhood. Encourage public art.
 - c. Use increases in residential households and spendable income to support additional urban retail services in both a new walkable neighborhood center and at convenient existing neighborhood commercial nodes. Promote retail revitalization of existing storefronts located along principal pedestrian routes to and from the LRT station.
 - d. Promote green improvements to boulevards, medians, and derelict land; connections to parks and the trail system; and additional open space to serve the growing neighborhood center.
 - e. Market research has confirmed that urban environments with walkable retail services, good pedestrian environments, access to premium transit services, bicycle trails, and local parks attract higher value development, greater development interest, and increased market visibility. This increases the economic feasibility of private development by attracting a larger consumer market that accelerates the sale and lease of new development. This “place-making premium” often means that projects can achieve rents and sales prices that are 20 percent greater than similar development projects located elsewhere, attracting additional new investment.
4. The earliest market for new transit-oriented development is focused on multifamily housing development at sites accessible to the LRT station.
 - a. Encourage well designed housing developments by experienced developers that are committed to the station area for the long term. Increase market advocacy efforts of elected officials, public agency staff members, and neighborhood organizations to link interested property owners with potential developers.
 - b. Encourage a mix of life cycle housing choices that reflects the demographic and economic diversity of the neighborhood, including senior citizen housing. Target market-rate housing development to a broad spectrum of housing tenants, including downtown employees, households with employment accessible by transit, and empty-nesters.

- c. Early rental housing development will play a key role in eliminating vacant and blighted commercial properties, promoting area pedestrian improvements, and increasing the prominence of the 46th Street LRT Station area in the local and regional housing markets.
 - d. Use the improved environment generated by successful high-quality multifamily apartment development to prepare the local market for future condominium development. Currently, ownership housing markets are depressed by the lingering effects of the recession, mortgage foreclosure crisis and housing deflation which discourage home owners, including higher income empty nesters, from selling their homes. A more balanced multifamily market may achieve future development ratios of 30 to 40 percent ownership housing units. These units are likely to be developed on sites located closer to park and local shopping amenities that are insulated from the highway and industrial uses.
5. Serve the rapidly growing market for diverse multifamily housing products that are located near transit, and use new households and incomes to support additional local retail services and transit ridership.
- a. Significant multifamily housing development around the LRT station, especially in the northeast quadrant of the station area between Hiawatha and Snelling Avenue, is a precondition for attracting significant mixed-use and additional retail development along 46th Street. Multifamily housing development in this area will also promote public and private investment in improved street and highway crossings, pedestrian level lighting, and other green amenities.
 - b. Fill existing storefronts with strong and diverse retail, food and service businesses that can demonstrate the demand for additional retail services that serve local shopping demand. Support business recruitment, façade improvements, and expanded neighborhood retail services with Minneapolis Great Streets and business finance partnerships and programs.
 - c. Encourage retail businesses to remain part of the neighborhood as redevelopment occurs, in some cases relocating to new sites or into mixed-use buildings.





- LRT station site development
- Snelling Avenue Yards redevelopment
- 46th/Destination Street & Snelling Avenue extension
- Town Square retail anchor
- Local street and corridor improvements

6. Consultants and local developers have identified the establishment of the mixed-use pedestrian friendly neighborhood retail center along 46th Street between Hiawatha and Minnehaha Avenues as the most difficult land-use component of the station area plan to achieve. The magnitude of this challenge is illustrated by the history of the Excelsior and Grand project in St. Louis Park, the most successful Town Center development in the Twin Cities region.
 - a. Support infrastructure solutions and parcel configurations within the Town Square district that can integrate significant concentrations of retail and housing while providing strong sight lines and store visibility, property access and circulation, accessible parking, and flexible and diverse retail space configurations.
 - b. Identify practical approaches to work with current and interested property owners, preferred high-capacity developers, targeted retail businesses, and stakeholders to identify the best market timing and approaches for creating significant neighborhood center mixed-use development coordinated with infrastructure investments.

7. Increase market advocacy efforts with local property owners, targeted retailers and capable mixed-use, multifamily and mixed-income developers and development teams to participate in implementing the station area plan as opportunities emerge.
8. Focus the efforts of the implementation partnership on promoting catalyst development and infrastructure projects within each of the station area districts, as the market opportunities for development projects mature in each area.
 - a. Strong catalyst development projects demonstrate the economic viability of the emerging market for TOD. Strong catalyst projects can shape the image and market position of the station area and overcome the stigma generated by conflicting existing land-uses, derelict land and infrastructure barriers. Successful catalyst projects, which may be either private development or public infrastructure investments, remove market barriers and attract additional land-use investments consistent with the station area land-use vision. Catalyst projects increase TOD market momentum, stakeholder participation, and community confidence in plan implementation.
 - b. Encourage successful catalyst projects that will become the anchors within each station area sub-district and that can be knit together over time by additional infill development to create a distinctive and connected urban place.

9. Promote high energy efficiency, environmental performance and design standards for new buildings, site plans, and public infrastructure investments.
 - a. Encourage developers to promote transit passes, share cars, and other alternative transportation options.
 - b. Identify, publicize, and support innovative public or private demonstration projects. Recruit green development. Target high performance infrastructure projects and design standards.
 - c. Evaluate and shape area development according to standards created by the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design for Neighborhood Development program (LEED ND) and other sustainable development performance monitoring and enhancement tools.
 - d. Work with developers and local stakeholders to develop a marketing plan to brand the 46th Street Station area and market a distinct neighborhood center identity rooted in local character, LRT access, park amenities, environmental sustainability, and walkable urbanism. Coordinate local station area branding with LRT corridor wide efforts.
10. Support or establish inter-governmental partnerships, project specific workplans, funding strategies, cooperation agreements, and timelines to mitigate, improve, or remove the public and private infrastructure barriers that inhibit the emergence of a walkable neighborhood center that is well connected to transit.
 - a. Support the priorities and workplan of the Minnehaha Hiawatha Community Works Partnership as the primary community partnership vehicle for implementing strategic investments within the 46th Street Station area.
 - b. Identify additional constructive partnership approaches to work strategically and consistently on issues associated with addressing the challenging pedestrian, environmental quality and land-use barriers generated by the railroad corridor, high voltage transmission lines, underutilized public property, and the state highway.

Excelsior & Grand: A Successful Town Center Development



Excelsior and Grand is an award-winning suburban town center development located on a 16-acre redevelopment site in the first-ring suburb of St. Louis Park, located just southwest of Minneapolis. This recent mixed-use development is constructed on five blocks located between Excelsior Boulevard, which is a major traffic arterial and bus route, and 30-acre Wolfe Park. The new development also enjoys convenient connections to the regional trail system and the proposed future Southwest Corridor Light Rail alignment.

Establishing a “Town Center” at this location was proposed in the “Vision St. Louis Park” plan in 1994 for a section of Excelsior Boulevard that included outdated strip commercial development. For almost fifteen years, Excelsior and Grand was the highest priority redevelopment project in St. Louis Park, a strong suburban single family housing and retail market area located near several regional job concentrations. After an initial developer failed to move forward, TOLD Development Company was selected as the developer in 2000 and completed all components of the project: apartments, condominiums, and retail. The project was successfully constructed in four phases between 2001 and 2008. Additional nearby spin-off development is now underway.

Public elements of the project included redesigning and reconstructing Excelsior Boulevard into a four-lane landscaped avenue with on-street parking and improving the regional trail system and Wolfe Park, which includes an amphitheater and a recreation center. A public green and street connection called Grand Way links Excelsior Boulevard to Wolfe Park through the center of the development. Public financial assistance included tax increment financing as well as grants from state and regional government programs that were targeted for environmental remediation, infrastructure improvements, affordable housing, and public spaces.

The mixed-use project includes 644 housing units and 88,000 square feet of retail space, most of which is in pedestrian friendly shop-fronts facing Excelsior Boulevard and Grand Way. Housing includes both rental and ownership, with some affordable units. The total development includes over 1,600 underground, structured, and on-street parking spaces, including free shared parking for retail businesses. The first phase of the project included all 338 rental apartments and a nucleus of 64,000 square feet of retail space. Subsequent phases added 306 condominiums with an additional 24,000 square feet of ground-floor

retail, including a 14,000-square foot Trader Joe’s grocery store. Other retail tenants included several destination restaurants; a coffee shop; convenience oriented retail and consumer services like a dry cleaners, a daycare, and a hair salon; and clothing stores, creating a neighborhood center that serves the local market provided by both new development and the surrounding neighborhood.

The following lessons have been learned from the Excelsior & Grand development:

- Establish a shared community vision and strong public private partnerships.
- Recruit a strong development team.
- Take full advantage of area amenities, site visibility and connections, traffic counts on arterial streets, and multi modal accessibility.
- Phase public street and infrastructure improvements that are designed to support the development vision.
- Complex mixed-use development takes time, phasing, site control of property, and very strong market conditions to integrate both housing and commercial elements.



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Phasing Model for Land Development at the 46th and Hiawatha LRT Station Area

One task identified for this study was to develop a phasing model for the station area. Since public resources are limited and new public infrastructure investments may need to be coordinated with the timing of new development, this phasing model provides a useful tool for evaluating the likely sequence of area development and the demand for future public infrastructure investments. Updating this analysis periodically as the market for neighborhood center development matures is one role of the corridor implementation partnership, which will also identify project priorities, design objectives, and funding strategies for public investments within the corridor.

This map incorporates a baseline analysis of the factors most likely to influence the availability and timing of development of near-term private transit-oriented development sites around the station. Key factors included in the analysis were zoning; current property values; the age, type, homestead status and condition of existing buildings; size of parcels and amount of building coverage; current uses, rents and building occupancy rates; adjacent properties; proximity to LRT; mitigation of infrastructure barriers; parcel visibility, traffic counts and property access; and the business disposition of current property owners and commercial tenants. This analysis has been informed by data from several market studies, discussions conducted over several years with most of the local commercial property owners, input from private developers, and the inventory of sites that are currently available for development.

The Role of Current Property Values in the Timing of New Development

The assessed market values for different property types located in the three geographic quadrants around the station (West of Hiawatha, NE of 46th & Hiawatha, and SE of 46th & Hiawatha) were also analyzed for taxes payable in 2011. Assessed market value includes the combined building and land values of existing land-uses. Since most properties are economically viable in their current uses, property values alone do not determine the disposition of individual property owners toward the future sale or redevelopment of their properties. However, in general, suitably zoned larger and less expensive properties are likely to experience greater market opportunities for early and financially viable redevelopment.

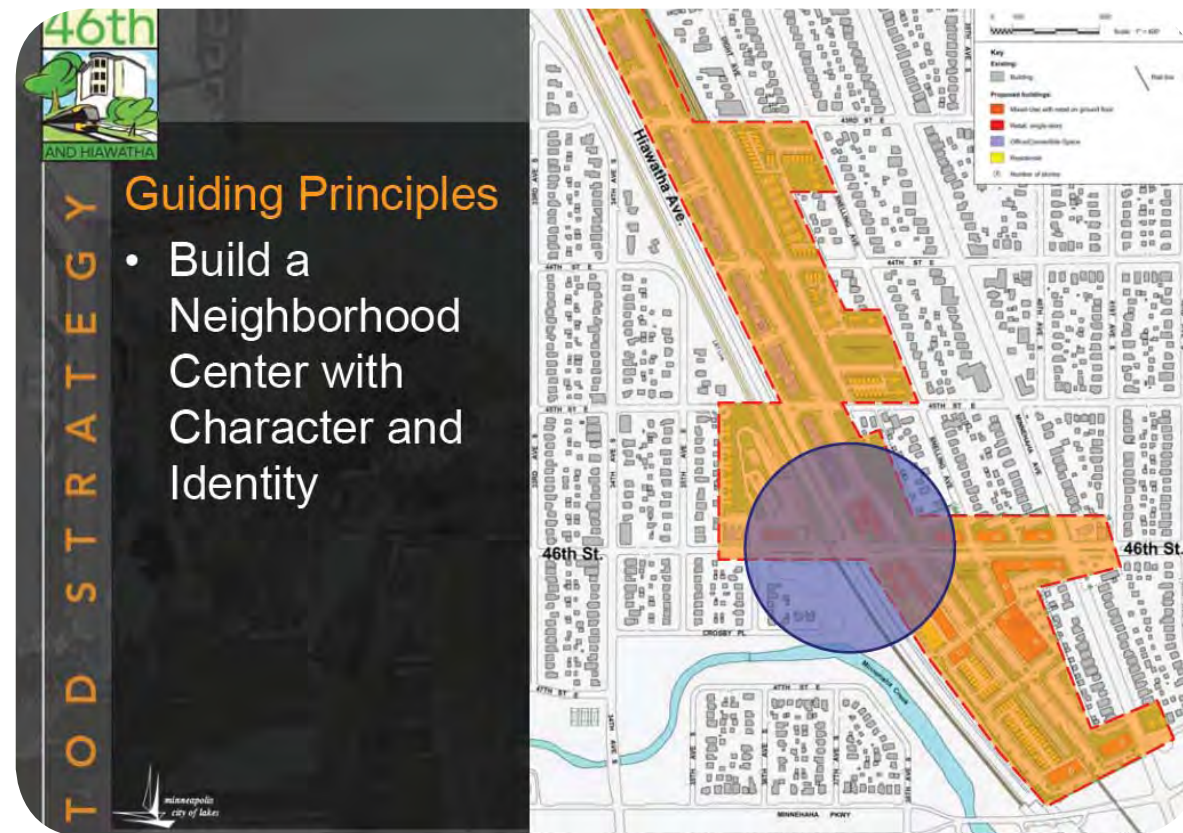


The market for multifamily housing development around the station area has emerged primarily because new apartment buildings constitute a much more valuable investment per square foot of land than any other existing property type because of proximity to LRT. New projects at the 46th Street Station (Oaks Hiawatha Station and Hiawatha Flats) are assessed for tax purposes with market values in the ranges of \$90 - \$120 per square foot of land. This is three or four times higher per square foot than most other property types located in the change area. These new transit-oriented development projects were constructed on some of the lowest cost vacant commercial sites around the station.

As the quality of the station area environment improves with the addition of new TOD development, infrastructure and amenities; the risks of acquiring more expensive sites for new projects will decline. Eventually a market tipping-point will be reached. At that point, although the value of properties may increase as the market grows, the attainable rents from new development as well as the pace and reliability of market absorption, will also increase. Planning, regulatory, and market factors will continue to steer future growth onto lower valued commercial properties located within the designated land-use change area that forms the core of the LRT station area.

For purposes of estimating land consumption, multifamily apartments have been constructed and occupied at a rate of about 50 dwelling units per year since 2005 and at a density of 57 dwelling units per acre. Market projections indicate that this station area can continue to absorb new housing development at this rate or higher (between 50 and 100 dwelling units per year) over the next fifteen years. Assembled sites for new multi-story projects that are consistent with the land-use plan typically need to be about one-half acre or larger, with larger sites being more desirable. Property owners may choose to cooperate with adjacent property owners to increase the value of their properties by working together.

The assessed market values in 2011 for typical older property types located near the LRT station are highest for duplexes and for single family homes closest to Minnehaha Park and the transit station. Single family residential lots in this neighborhood often range from 0.11 to 0.18 acres. Because single family homes, duplexes, and some retail properties are usually smaller lots, additional costs and risks exist for successfully assembling larger development sites from these smaller properties. Zoning regulations also discourage the assembly of development sites from existing low density housing parcels. Auto-oriented retail properties that have the best property access, traffic

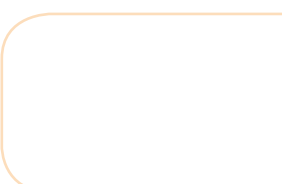
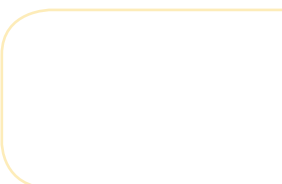
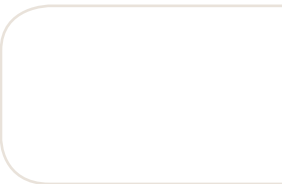
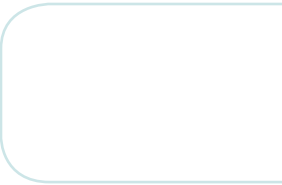


counts, and visibility are the next highest valued properties. Lower valued properties include the larger industrial sites, least valuable retail properties, and lower valued single family homes.

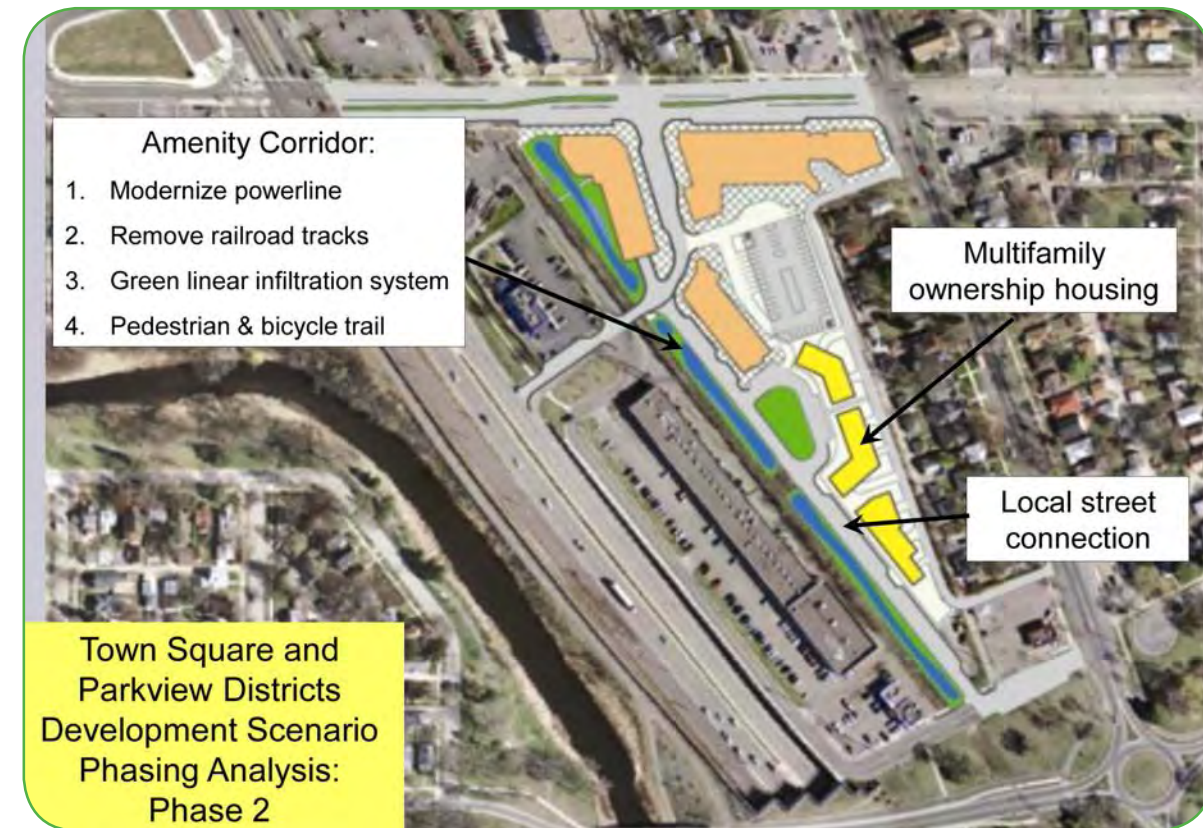
The map of the phasing scenario for the 46th Street LRT station area shows that initial development around the station occurred first on lower-valued vacant commercial and industrial properties located in the northeasterly quadrant of the station area (east of Hiawatha, west of Snelling Avenue and north of 46th Street). In some cases, development sites were expanded and improved by acquiring smaller adjacent properties, including lower valued single family homes, from willing sellers. The next generation of TOD development projects near the 46th Street LRT Station is occurring on excess publicly-owned properties. Oaks Station Place is currently under construction on the excess LRT station property that was formerly owned by the Metropolitan Council. The vacant Snelling Yards site, owned by the City of Minneapolis, is expected to be available for sale sometime in late 2013 or 2014. Since many of the largest lower valued commercial and industrial properties are located in the NE quadrant of the station area, it is likely that new multifamily development will continue to concentrate there as long as suitable development sites near the LRT station are available west of Snelling Avenue or along 46th Street.

The market timing scenario map suggests that development will focus primarily on the northeast quadrant of the station area until developer interest and market conditions becomes strong enough to assemble property on the Town Square site south of 46th Street. Development on this quadrant, which includes sites along 46th Street and closer to Minnehaha Park, will be greatly enhanced if property owners cooperate with each other in the redevelopment process. A separate market timing scenario for the town square opportunity site illustrates how solutions to existing infrastructure challenges will need to be integrated with the timing and phasing of private redevelopment. The quadrant of the station area located to the west of Hiawatha Avenue consists primarily of higher value residential properties located within the land-use preservation area and is zoned for low density residential.

Including property and business owners as stakeholders within the implementation partnership, monitoring property values and ownership, and providing information about capital projects and market and development trends in the station area are important public-private partnership activities for supporting the long-term development vision for the station area.



Town Square Market Timing and Phasing Model



The technical consensus about the most likely market timing for securing a Town Square retail concentration has evolved since the initial market studies occurred (between 1999 and 2007). These original planning assessments explored the idea that a city commitment to construct the Snelling Avenue street extension south of 46th Street could attract a strong mixed-use development team committed to the neighborhood center vision. The proposed new street would serve as an early catalyst for mixed-use development at the intersection of 46th Street and Snelling Avenue while providing access to high value residential sites for condominium construction closer to Minnehaha Park.

Before 2007, market trends, such as the rapidly emerging urban condominium market, the rising neighborhood household incomes, and the high levels of local income growth and retail demand leakage, all reinforced the idea that, from a strictly market perspective, the mixed-use neighborhood center could emerge as an earlier phase of station area development. The strength of the retail market was confirmed when several retail development teams explored options of creating a more conventional neighborhood retail center, including grocery stores, at this location.

Market perspective, however, does not always coincide with development perspectives, and a mixed-use neighborhood center poses significant market timing and infrastructure phasing challenges.

Development on the large town square block that is broadly consistent with the station area plan will be difficult to achieve for many reasons. These challenges include the presence of multiple property owners, the diversity of existing land uses, the high value of many properties in their current uses, the irregular sizes and shapes of parcels, the impacts of the utility corridor that bisects the large block, and the absence of an urban-oriented internal street grid.

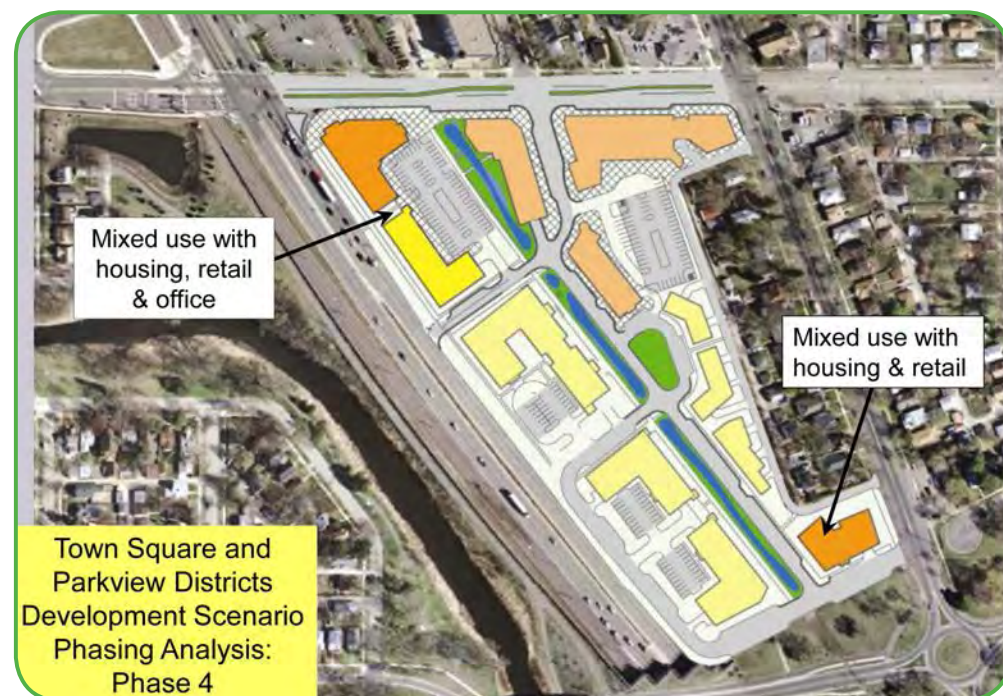
Overcoming these challenges will require a much stronger market for both housing and retail uses than a less difficult site would require. This market strength is now deemed most likely to emerge in the context of a strong overall economy and after

Town Square Market Timing and Phasing Model



early phases of significant multifamily housing development has reshaped the image of this area. Cooperation among property owners, developers, and local units of government can significantly improve the value of these properties and the quality of future development as opportunity for larger neighborhood center mixed-use development strengthens.

The Town Square development scenario is a conceptual plan that reflects community preferences for a walkable and sustainable mixed-use neighborhood center oriented to 46th Street between the LRT station and Minnehaha Avenue. It is not a proposed development plan. Because of the complex street and infrastructure needs, existing utility barriers, and fragmented land ownership patterns a phasing analysis was completed for the Town Square opportunity site. This phasing scenario illustrates how this station area quadrant could be redeveloped in phases with a development plan and street grid similar to the Town Square development scenario.



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Stages of TOD Market Building at 46th Street

This section summarizes the likely stages of station area development at 46th Street, based on national experience around LRT stations and activity centers that are similar to the 46th Street LRT station area. This land-use transition began in 2000 and will continue to evolve over the next twenty years.

The first stage of transit-oriented land-use change at 46th Street was constructing the successful development-supportive transit - Hiawatha LRT - between 2000 and 2004. An ongoing part of this transformation to multimodal transportation has been securing further improvements to transit services, area traffic movements and neighborhood pedestrian and bike connections around the LRT station.

The second stage of station area change was securing the pioneering TOD development projects that have tested and demonstrated the market for pedestrian- and transit-oriented development. Successful pioneering TOD has been critical to neighborhood and market confidence in the viability and desirability of the station area land-use plans. Projects like Oaks Hiawatha Station and Hiawatha Flats have provided high-quality development on blighted and vacant commercial sites that improve environmental conditions, enhance neighborhood livability, and increase property values for the surrounding property owners and community.

The third stage, which coincided with the onset of the recession and the financial crisis, focused on providing additional TOD policy support, creating stronger public funding tools, supporting existing businesses, and institutionalizing the Minnehaha-Hiawatha implementation partnership. The pipeline of additional TOD projects and sites was slowed and delayed as developers waited for financing and market conditions to improve.

The current stage of TOD market development focuses on adding residential rooftops that increase transit ridership and expand local retail demand as the general economy improves. The Oaks Station Place development will anchor one end of the

potential emerging neighborhood center with a landmark project at the LRT station, catalyze additional development, and begin to connect the east and west quadrants of the station area across Hiawatha Avenue. New residential developments will also stimulate additional investment in infrastructure and public realm improvements to major pedestrian corridors.

Of growing importance, as residential development increases, will be cueing up and coordinating new infrastructure improvements, both public and private, with the maturing market and the timing of specific TOD development projects. This includes greening the local derelict land and infrastructure systems, improving pedestrian and bicycle facilities and connections, promoting sustainable development, and mitigating or removing infrastructure barriers.

The future stage of TOD development at 46th Street that has been identified as the most challenging is to anchor the Main Street town center with significant new mixed-use retail development along 46th Street between the LRT station and Minnehaha Avenue. This phase will also be associated with significant new street and infrastructure improvements to both 46th Street and Snelling Avenue that should be coordinated with new development.

The final stages of station area development will involve adding additional infill development that connects and integrates the quadrants of the station area into a vibrant neighborhood center. This stage of development will provide the greatest opportunity for adding office development and daytime employment uses to the station area.

A key role of the implementation partnership will be to coordinate an action plan consisting of policy tools, investment programs, infrastructure projects, and development priorities with the various stages of neighborhood center development. This action plan for 46th Street is described in the **Build** chapter.

Depending upon the context, different development projects will play diverse roles as either:

- **TOD Pioneers** demonstrating the emerging market opportunities,
- **TOD Anchors** transforming key station area sites,
- **TOD market catalysts** stimulating additional private investment, or
- **Smaller TOD infill and revitalization** projects reinforcing TOD character and reducing blight within the station area.

In a similar manner, infrastructure projects may serve one or more roles towards achieving the TOD strategic land use vision, including:

- **Support** the functional needs of the area and new TOD development,
- **Prime** the market and attract new TOD investments,
- **Remove barriers** that impede transit access or neighborhood center development, or
- **Enhance** transit- and pedestrian-oriented neighborhood livability and environmental amenities.

Guiding the Market towards Neighborhood Center TOD

This chapter has summarized the market assessment that informs this implementation plan. It has focused on the role of private and public investment processes in implementing the plan successfully. Physical improvement strategies and market-building investment strategies work together to shape the recommended 15-year action plan for the 46th Street station area. These action steps must be implemented flexibly to support and strengthen market opportunities and achieve the desired outcomes within this evolving area.

The next chapter, titled **Guide**, restates the most general TOD strategies. These general strategies can serve as guideposts to help the implementation partnerships and stakeholders respond flexibly to the opportunities and constraints that will inevitably arise during the station area land-use changes while preserving the core of the community vision.

Hiawatha Flats Apartments: Before and After Redevelopment



Before: Former vacant TIRO Industrial Site from the corner of Dight Avenue and 43rd Street



After: New Hiawatha Flats Apartments from the corner of Dight Avenue and 43rd Street

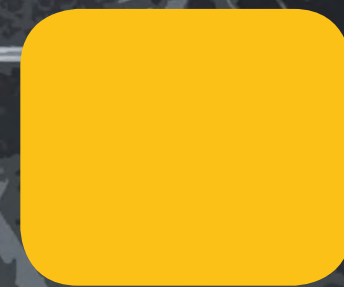
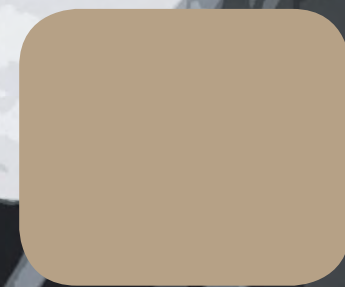
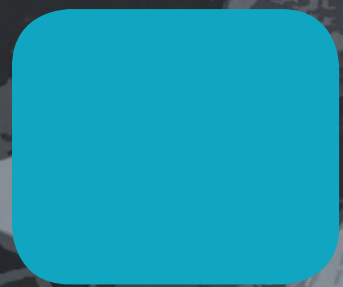


Before: Former vacant TIRO Industrial Site from the corner of Snelling Avenue and 43rd Street



After: New Hiawatha Flats Apartments from the corner of Snelling Avenue and 43rd Street

INVEST



Guide — [gahyd]

–verb (guide)

Definition:

1. To accompany visitors to show points of interest and to explain their meaning or significance.
2. To assist a person seeking to reach a new destination by accompanying or giving directions to the person.

–noun (guide)

Definition:

1. A person, device or manual that regulates or directs purposeful action or progressive motion.
2. A handbook, guidepost, or guidebook that gives information, instructions or advice.

The 46th and Hiawatha Transit Oriented Development Strategies provide the compass which will guide development in the station area now and in the years to come. These strategies identify significant local issues and define a broad approach to shaping the projects that should be implemented as the station area develops the characteristic features of a transit-oriented neighborhood. Like a compass the Strategies merely point the way; with specific paths and solutions yet to be defined.

- **Transit-Oriented Development Strategies**
- **Build Infrastructure for the Future**
- **Implement Sustainable Urbanism**
- **Center on the Transit Station**
- **Remove Barriers**
- **Enhance Multimodal Transportation**
- **Build Partnerships**
- **Require High-Quality Design**
- **Expand Housing Choices**
- **Manage Traffic Wisely**
- **Create Parcels for Neighborhood Center Development**
- **Support and Expand Local Retail**

SURVEY

PLACE

SUPPORT

IMAGINE

INVEST

GUIDE

BUILD



Transit-Oriented Development Strategies

Eleven (11) Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Strategies were developed based on the guiding principles, citizen input, community land use vision, and proposed plans. These strategies represent the goals and objectives of the community and are meant to inform actions by policy makers, private and public investors, engineers, architects, and development teams. These strategies are intended to guide the implementation of infrastructure and development projects within the study area.

The TOD strategies address the major components of the overall plan's physical vision and implementation. These strategies are proposed to be used as touchstones as the station area evolves and as guides for future redevelopment. All projects listed in this plan and others that arise in the 46th and Hiawatha station area can be evaluated against these strategies. These TOD strategies are meant to facilitate coordinating public and private investments, support creating project specific partnerships, and facilitate priority setting for future projects by adding enduring economic value, community support, and environmental enhancement.



Hiawatha LRT crossing 46th Street

These strategies should be applied consistently, patiently, flexibly, and creatively to attract and align both private and public investment. Flexibility is necessary to fully benefit from the current progress in green design and building technologies, as well as evolving governmental policies, programs, and regulations in this rapidly changing field of sustainable urban development. This creativity and flexibility is also essential to successfully attract resources in a constantly changing (and challenging) private development market and public sector fiscal environment.

Implementing projects associated with each individual strategy represents a step toward the type of environment envisioned in this document. However, simultaneously implementing several strategies within each project is the key to achieving the multimodal, complete, and sustainable neighborhood envisioned by the project stakeholders. Although not every project will exemplify every strategy, successful implementation occurs when opportunities for synergy are recognized early, such as when a street project is designed as a complete green street that contributes to multimodal transportation choices and supports emerging pedestrian-oriented land uses. Another positive example is when the design features of a new private development simultaneously build upon the quality of the surrounding neighborhood and other recent transit-oriented developments, implement green building technology and low impact site design, and contribute to the land use mix of a walkable urban center that is connected with transit.



Build Infrastructure for the Future

Phase and implement public infrastructure improvements and policies for needed improvements that are strategically timed to influence and support high-quality sustainable and pedestrian friendly transit-oriented development.

The infrastructure strategy plays a significant role in the progression and implementation of area projects and directly relates to quality-of-life improvements.

The City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County have identified several street and infrastructure projects that will occur over the next ten to fifteen years, some of which are already partially funded and prioritized within capital improvement plans, while others will require considerable resource allocations from future funding cycles. The Minneapolis Park Board, Watershed Management Districts, Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), and Metropolitan Council also provide essential leadership and support. Because most prime land for transit-oriented redevelopment is currently, or was previously, used for highway- and railroad-oriented industrial and commercial purposes, it often lacks sufficient high-quality infrastructure needed for developing pedestrian-oriented multifamily housing or mixed-use commercial space.

The timing, sequencing, and reliability of infrastructure initiatives are crucial to set the stage and coordinate with additional improvements and new development. A significant amount of the change that will occur in the station area will be driven by policy decisions pertaining to large- and small-scale infrastructure projects. These projects will contribute to and support both area infrastructure needs and redevelopment feasibility. Policy decisions will lay the groundwork for, and open the market up to, future development opportunities, which will in turn spur additional development within the station area.

Leadership by local businesses, developers, and property owners that create partnerships, establish assessment districts, secure grant funding, coordinate with public capital projects and economic development programs, and leverage private financial contributions from benefitting properties will play a critical role in financing enhancements to public infrastructure. Private commitments will be essential for generating revenues to maintain high-quality retail center streetscapes and property services, as well as innovative district stormwater management facilities and amenities.

Public leadership and innovation in developing stormwater management infrastructure in the railroad and future greenway corridor can produce a two-fold benefit by providing a baseline system as well as a site amenity. This baseline infrastructure has the potential to attract high-quality private development projects and to encourage private developers to exceed current site plan and building efficiency standards.

“Complete Green Streets” support the multimodal transportation needs of a transit- and pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center environment and integrate multi-functional sustainability into their overall design. This is another innovative approach for achieving the goals of this strategy.

Strategic design and phasing of public infrastructure investments demonstrates a public commitment to transit-oriented development in this station area and increases the feasibility and quality of private investment. Infrastructure investments will need to be phased with the emerging development market to leverage the significant public and private resource commitments necessary to remove barriers and establish the infrastructure framework necessary to support the land use vision identified in this plan. This strategy can also help ensure that the guiding principle of constructing sustainable infrastructure and green development occurs within the station area.

The following projects are associated with this strategy:

- Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership
- Additional TOD funding tools and programs
- 46th Street Green Median Retrofit
- Minnehaha Park Connections and Gateways
- Improved pedestrian sidewalks, railroad, and highway crossings
- Pedestrian level lighting
- 45th and Hiawatha bike and pedestrian crossing
- Signal system improvements for major Hiawatha Avenue intersections
- Minnehaha Avenue Reconstruction
- Snelling Avenue Extension
- 46th Street “destination” green, complete street, and median
- Modernize high-voltage powerline
- Phase railroad corridor abandonment and trail improvements south of 42nd Street
- Phase linear stormwater infiltration features in greenway corridor
- Complete Town Square local street grid
- Evaluate options for pedestrian bridge
- Secure signature mixed-use development project on the LRT station site
- Identify approach for Snelling Yards public space or park
- Acquire property for Snelling Avenue Extension and Town Square redevelopment
- Town Square business association and special service district
- Relocate stormwater retention pond, and develop pond site near LRT Station



Sustainability

Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

-World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987

Implement Sustainable Urbanism

Adopt regulations, implement demonstration projects, and support incentives that mandate and encourage sustainable development practices.

At the final Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting, CAC members recommended that the City of Minneapolis and other governmental partners identify the 46th Street LRT station area as a demonstration area for innovation and leadership in developing and implementing sustainable development policies, programs, and high performance infrastructure and green development. The sustainability strategy as applied to the 46th Street station supports several proposed projects that consolidate resources, conserve energy, and efficiently manage stormwater.

One key premise of transit-oriented development is efficiency. Successful TOD involves consolidating goods, services, and residents to result in cost and time savings. It also provides improved access to regional destinations for employment and services. By reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT), the carbon footprint of the community can be reduced. In addition to promoting more efficient land use patterns, sustainable building and infrastructure design can reduce emissions and material waste and also serve as an amenity to area residents.

Because of the high existing levels of impervious surfaces within the railroad and highway corridor change area, redevelopment that complies with the current environmental standards for new development will reduce blight and significantly improve the environmental quality of the LRT station area. However, higher standards should be encouraged whenever possible.

Street and sidewalk reconstruction projects, infrastructure retro-fit projects, and new development all create the opportunity to “green the street” and to incorporate sustainable principles into existing infrastructure, which can then be carried over into adjacent development projects. Examples of green and sustainable elements include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Create safe and defined pedestrian and bike zones to promote the use of non-motorized transportation.
- Develop stormwater infiltration systems as an aesthetically pleasing site amenity.
- Encourage using recycled and renewable resources in new buildings, as well as energy efficient building systems and appliances.



Rain garden demonstration project along the Midtown Greenway

- Orient buildings to maximize passive solar use.
- Plant additional street trees along roadways.
- Incorporate permeable surfaces when possible.
- Preserve and add landscaping and tree cover to existing and proposed building sites and to the margins and medians of transportation corridors whenever possible.

Protecting large urban parks like Minnehaha Park while increasing vegetation and tree cover along city streets and adding smaller urban public and private green spaces strengthens the historic “lungs” of the city. In particular, increasing green streetscapes reduces airborne particulate matter, summertime urban temperatures, and ground level ozone while also increasing absorption of carbon dioxide.

Smaller “springboard” projects on private or public land that serve to improve derelict land, reduce impervious surfaces, and plant additional landscaping and tree cover will play a role, along with larger projects, in visibly improving the community and branding the neighborhood as a green community. Every household and property owner can participate in this goal. Neighborhoods with significant landscaping, boulevards, and tree cover are known to have stronger property values and significantly higher levels of outdoor activity and walking than neighborhoods with less natural amenities.

The following projects are associated with this strategy:

- Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership
- Additional TOD funding tools and programs
- Expand LRT Stations and Transit Service
- 46th Street Green Median Retrofit
- Minnehaha Park Connections and Gateways
- Minnehaha Avenue Reconstruction
- Snelling Avenue Extension
- 46th Street “destination” green, complete street, and median
- Phase railroad corridor abandonment and trail improvements south of 42nd Street
- Phase linear stormwater infiltration features in greenway corridor
- Complete Town Square local street grid
- Support “Great Streets” program for neighborhood storefront revitalization
- Secure signature mixed-use development project on the LRT station site
- Prepare RFP and sell Snelling Yards property for high quality multifamily development
- Identify approach for Snelling Yards public space or park
- Acquire property for Snelling Avenue Extension and Town Square redevelopment
- Town Square business association and special service district
- Relocate stormwater retention pond and develop pond site near LRT Station



Permeable pavers that provide growing space for grass improve stormwater infiltration at Hiawatha Flats



Green Building Materials



Energy Efficient Test Lighting at 46th Street LRT Station



Bicycle Storage at 46th Street LRT Station



Center on the Transit Station

Reinforce the identity and function of the light rail station as a central connected component of the transit-oriented neighborhood and secure a signature transit-supportive development at the LRT station.

The location of the transit station itself is the central principle from which all other transit-oriented development principles stem. The 46th Street station is poised to become one of the most successful transit nodes along the Hiawatha line with its high ridership and efficient transfer facilities, existing residential community, recent pioneering TOD projects, and strong market for diverse housing and retail opportunities. The key will be to incorporate the station area into the surrounding neighborhoods by improving transit, pedestrian, and bicycle connections throughout the quarter- and half-mile station area. The concentration of resources and improvements in this area represents a significant investment in the future development potential of the station area and also improves access to the station from the established surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Establishing better connections between the station and the surrounding area will help make the area more transit user-friendly and will strengthen the station area as an emerging regional destination for transit patrons as the neighborhood center develops. Improving amenities near the station and incorporating higher density housing nearby can increase ridership by making riding LRT accessible to a wider range of users.

One important goal for the station site itself has been to secure a signature development project that integrates effectively with the transit station and surrounding neighborhood. Anchoring the station site with a new mixed-use project plays an important role in establishing the character and visibility of the station area as a vital and active neighborhood center that provides high-quality housing and convenient retail choices for neighborhood residents and transit patrons. The Oaks Station Place project is under construction in 2012. This development on the station site will promote additional nearby transit-supportive development that can visibly connect the east and west sides of Hiawatha Avenue into a single neighborhood center.



The Oaks Station Place development provides a distinctive new entrance to the transit station



Multimodal transportation choices at the 46th Street LRT Station connect the station to the surrounding community

The following projects are associated with this strategy:

- Secure signature mixed-use development project on the LRT station site
- Gateway projects at entry points to TOD district
- Hiawatha Avenue Functional Classification and Role
- Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership
- Additional TOD funding tools and programs
- Expand LRT Stations and Transit Service
- Minnehaha Park Connections and Gateways
- Improve pedestrian sidewalks, railroads, and highway crossings
- Pedestrian level lighting
- 45th and Hiawatha bike and pedestrian crossing
- Improve signal systems for major Hiawatha Avenue intersections
- 46th Street “destination” green, complete street, and median
- Evaluate options for pedestrian bridge
- Relocate stormwater retention pond, and develop pond site near LRT Station



Remove Barriers

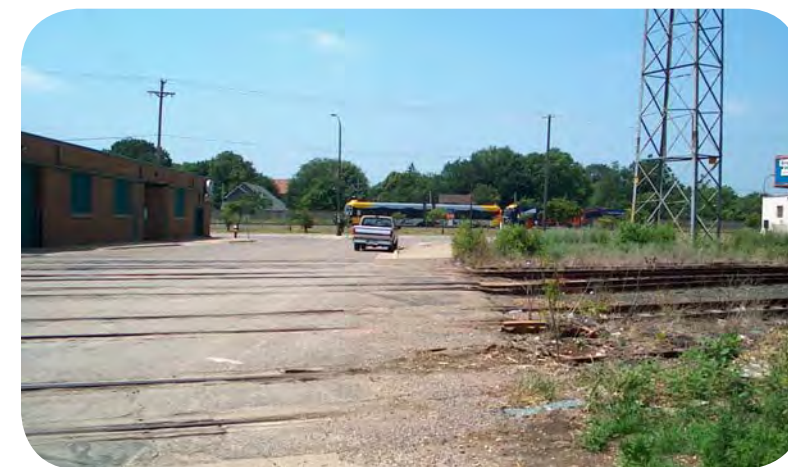
Mitigate, reduce, or remove physical and policy barriers that may inhibit, complicate, or delay developing a sustainable and pedestrian friendly TOD environment.

The “remove barriers” strategy was developed out of a desire to make the transit station area more accessible to pedestrians; a better neighbor and resource for the surrounding community; less damaging to environmental quality; and more welcoming for additional development. Barriers that currently exist include excessive curb cuts, inadequate and unfriendly pedestrian walkways, derelict land, limited street and pedestrian connections, unconsolidated and underutilized utility corridors, incompatible land uses, and blighted or polluted brownfield properties. A more complete street grid system that improves local traffic circulation and access, stronger and complementary multi-modal transportation facilities, and clear identification of the pedestrian realm will encourage residents and visitors to walk more to their destinations and drive less.

The goals of mitigating, reducing, and removing the most significant barriers identified in the station area are reflected primarily in the projects listed below.

The following projects are associated with this strategy:

- Hiawatha Avenue Functional Classification and Role
- Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership
- Additional TOD funding tools and programs
- Minnehaha Park Connections and Gateways
- Improved pedestrian sidewalks, railroad, and highway crossings
- Pedestrian level lighting
- 45th and Hiawatha bike and pedestrian crossing
- Signal system improvements for major Hiawatha Avenue intersections
- Snelling Avenue Extension
- 46th Street “destination” green, complete street, and median
- Modernize high-voltage powerline
- Phase railroad corridor abandonment and trail improvements south of 42nd Street
- Phase linear stormwater infiltration features in greenway corridor
- Complete Town Square local street grid
- Evaluate options for pedestrian bridge
- RFP and sell Snelling Yards property for high quality multifamily development
- Acquire property for Snelling Avenue Extension and Town Square redevelopment
- Relocate stormwater retention pond and develop pond site near LRT Station



Inadequate sidewalks, railroad crossings, and lighting near the 46th Street LRT station



Underutilized railroad and powerline corridor near the 46th Street LRT station



Enhance Multimodal Transportation

Plan and implement a full range of policies and improvements that promote or mandate improving non-motorized transportation options within the transit-oriented neighborhood.

The multimodal strategy supports building new transit-oriented development and creating livable and sustainable neighborhoods. Providing transportation options is one fundamental transit-oriented development principle and can lead to cost savings, health benefits from active living, and increased mobility. This strategy attempts to shift the balance of transportation choices in the station area away from the private automobile (especially for short, single-purpose trips and commuting trips by single occupant vehicles) and toward safe, efficient, and high-quality non-motorized and transit-related transportation options. This goal is best stated in the definition of TOD from the Transportation Cooperative Research Program of the U.S. Government that identifies transit-oriented development as a pattern of development that “is oriented principally to transit, pedestrian, and bicycle travel from the surrounding areas, without excluding automobiles.” The balanced movement of various modes of transportation is an integral component of a successful transit-oriented development node and creates a safer environment for pedestrian, cyclists, motorists, and transit users alike.

Achieving and supporting a multimodal environment requires providing basic maintenance and operating support for pedestrian and bicycle facilities. These facilities should provide safe access to transit and neighborhood destinations during all seasons and for populations of varying age and abilities. This is a shared private and public responsibility. Creating a multimodal environment includes enhancing pedestrian-oriented streetscapes, promoting wayfinding techniques and place-making, and developing higher density housing and retail uses near the station.



Bicycles next to the 46th Street LRT Station

The following projects are associated with this strategy:

- Hiawatha Avenue Functional Classification and Role
- Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership
- Additional TOD funding tools and programs
- Expand LRT Stations and Transit Service
- Minnehaha Park Connections and Gateways
- Improve pedestrian sidewalks, railroad, and highway crossings
- Pedestrian level lighting
- 45th and Hiawatha bike and pedestrian crossing
- Make signal system improvements for major Hiawatha Avenue intersections
- Reconstruct Minnehaha Avenue
- Snelling Avenue Extension
- 46th Street “destination” green, complete street, and median
- Modernize high-voltage powerline
- Phase railroad corridor abandonment and trail improvements south of 42nd Street
- Complete Town Square local street grid
- Evaluate options for pedestrian bridge
- Support “Great Streets” program for neighborhood storefront revitalization
- Secure signature mixed-use development project on the LRT station site
- Promote gateway projects at entry points to TOD district
- Acquire property for Snelling Avenue Extension and Town Square redevelopment
- Town Square business association and special service district



Build Partnerships

Institutionalize and support public, private, and community partnerships to initiate and champion implementing the TOD strategies and projects over time.

Developing and maintaining partnerships in the planning process is an important step for identifying and implementing a cohesive vision. Early cultivation of these relationships leads to continued cooperation throughout and produces successful, widely-supported results.

The station area is home to two very strong neighborhood groups, the Standish-Ericsson Neighborhood Association (SENA) and the Longfellow Community Council (LCC), whose continued involvement in area projects has ensured an outstanding level of citizen participation. The Hennepin County Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership has been established as the primary ongoing public, community, and private partnership organization for implementing station area plans in this segment of the Hiawatha LRT transit corridor. Continued coordination with city, county, and state entities ensures open lines of communication for planning and implementing area projects and is increasingly essential for funding and implementing larger scale public projects.

Another important role of partnerships is to develop reliable methods of communication and information reporting that provides updates for community stakeholders, facilitates the recruitment of new private and public implementation partners, and creates momentum for ongoing implementation of the long-term station plan and vision. Greater transparency and certainty regarding public decision making processes, procedures, investment plans, and infrastructure and community development programs will also promote greater community support and opportunities for additional private investment.

The following projects are associated with this strategy:

- Hiawatha Avenue Functional Classification and Role
- Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership
- Additional TOD funding tools and programs
- 46th Street Green Median Retrofit
- Minnehaha Park Connections and Gateways
- Improved pedestrian sidewalks, railroad, and highway crossings
- Pedestrian level lighting
- 45th and Hiawatha bike and pedestrian crossing
- Signal system improvements for major Hiawatha Avenue intersections
- Minnehaha Avenue Reconstruction
- Snelling Avenue Extension
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- Modernize high-voltage powerline
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- RFP and sell Snelling Yards property for high-quality multifamily development
- Identify approach for Snelling Yards public space or park
- Acquire property for Snelling Avenue Extension and Town Square redevelopment
- Town Square business association and special service district
- Relocate stormwater retention pond, and develop pond site near LRT Station



Public meeting and planning workshop at the Hiawatha Community School



Maintaining a dialog with community members helps to foster stewardship of the vision



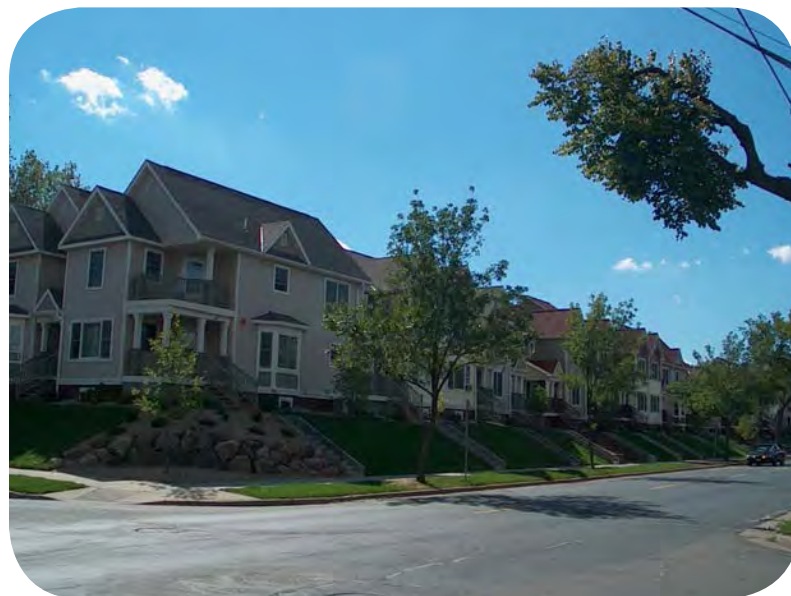
Require High-Quality Design

Promote and celebrate high-quality design of both public infrastructure and private revitalization and development projects.

The High-Quality Design strategy focuses on designing public spaces (the “public realm”), private development (buildings), and infrastructure (streetscapes, stormwater management facilities, and utility corridors). A primary goal is to create a high-quality urban place; a physical environment that supports and increases the mix and distribution of activities and spaces that create a significant and memorable association with the 46th and Hiawatha LRT station area. While high-quality design can improve the function and efficiency of the urban environment (as well as its economic performance), the focus here is also on the arrangement and appearance of the designed environment in a manner that results in a place that is both functional and desirable to residents, employees, and visitors alike.

High-quality “pedestrian-oriented” design is essential for a successful neighborhood center and transit station area. Following are some primary public tools for shaping high-quality design:

- A public process in which private development teams and public project management teams make preliminary presentations and receive early input from stakeholders such as elected officials, neighborhood organizations, the Planning Commission, and city planners and other design professionals to shape and improve their proposals early in the design development process
- Strong development standards and design guidelines for private development and public infrastructure projects such as those provided by the Zoning Code, the Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth, the Access Minneapolis Plan, and other adopted policies
- Station Area Master plans and specific site development scenarios that express general community preferences and design guidelines, provide technical information on project impacts and feasibility, establish community consensus that can reduce entitlement risk, facilitate productive community engagement, and inform project design development
- Encourage integrated multidisciplinary project design teams in which project design criteria are multi-functional and incorporate diverse and complementary design objectives whenever possible
- Promote public recognition and awards for high quality urban design projects



Franklin Station Townhomes near the Franklin Avenue LRT station



Many Rivers East and West near the Franklin Avenue LRT station

The following projects are associated with this strategy:

- Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership
- Additional TOD funding tools and programs
- 46th Street Green Median Retrofit
- Minnehaha Park Connections and Gateways
- Minnehaha Avenue Reconstruction
- Snelling Avenue Extension
- 46th Street “destination” green, complete street, and median
- Phase railroad corridor abandonment and trail improvements south of 42nd Street
- Phase linear stormwater infiltration features in greenway corridor
- Evaluate options for pedestrian bridge
- Support “Great Streets” program for neighborhood storefront revitalization
- Secure signature mixed-use development project on the LRT station site
- Gateway projects at entry points to TOD district
- RFP and sell Snelling Yards property for high-quality multifamily development
- Identify approach for Snelling Yards public space or park
- Town Square business association and special service district
- Relocate stormwater retention pond, and develop pond site near LRT Station



Expand Housing Choices

Provide a diverse mix of housing choices by using the opportunities provided by demand for transit-oriented development to influence type, density, and quality of residential development.

A variety of housing types and sizes can be incorporated into this neighborhood to fulfill the evolving demand for housing that is available and affordable for all ages and household types within the neighborhood. Multifamily housing choices can provide opportunities for residents to remain within their neighborhood as they age and attract additional long-term residents. Increasing the supply of high-quality multifamily housing choices will serve the changing demographics, household structure, and needs of the Twin Cities population as it is today, rather than as it once was in the past, while preserving strong demand for a diverse mix of new and existing housing choices.

Transit stations need a critical mass of nearby residents to sustain ridership, attract retail services, and achieve the mix of land uses desirable in a transit-oriented community. Housing in the station area is ideal for those who choose not to own a vehicle and can take advantage of the growing regional transit connections. A significant concentration of housing near the station results in household transportation savings and higher standards of living. Housing development near the transit station can create a safer and more active urban environment. Nearby multifamily housing is an efficient use of the regional transit investment.

The following projects are associated with this strategy:

- Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership
- Additional TOD funding tools and programs
- Expand LRT Stations and Transit Service
- Improved pedestrian sidewalks, railroad, and highway crossings
- Pedestrian level lighting
- 45th and Hiawatha bike and pedestrian crossing
- Signal system improvements for major Hiawatha Avenue intersections
- Snelling Avenue Extension
- Modernize high-voltage powerline
- Phase railroad corridor abandonment and trail improvements south of 42nd Street
- Complete Town Square local street grid
- Secure signature mixed-use development project on the LRT station site
- RFP and sell Snelling Yards property for high-quality multifamily development
- Identify approach for Snelling Yards public space or park
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- Relocate stormwater retention pond, and develop pond site near LRT Station



Hiawatha Court near the 38th Street LRT station



Waters at Minnehaha provides senior housing near the 38th Street LRT Station

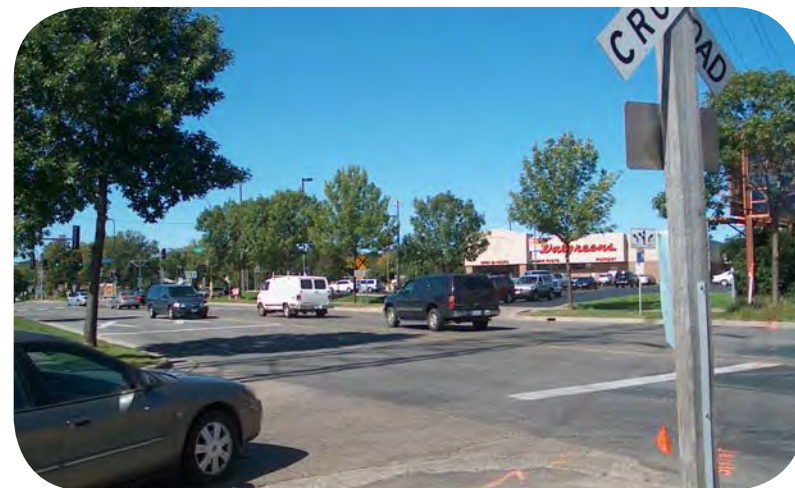


Manage Traffic Wisely

Support strategic traffic policies and investments that mitigate existing and perceived traffic congestion issues and manage automobile traffic in the 46th Street Station Area while providing strong transit, pedestrian, bicycling, and park-once alternatives that reduce local traffic growth.

Traffic solutions are important to increase the efficiency and safety of intersection movements for all users, to improve the level of service, and to successfully integrate all modes of transportation within a growing neighborhood. Since light rail transit commenced service along Hiawatha Avenue, all modes of transportation have required significant adjustments. Traffic conditions along 46th Street can be managed safely and effectively for all transportation users by implementing balanced mitigation techniques such as traffic signal system improvements, managing property access and allowed turning movements, installing or retrofitting medians, reconstructing sidewalks, and making signage and crosswalk improvements. Improving traffic conditions at 46th and Hiawatha requires solutions that can be implemented on the corridor level since signal timing and design at one intersection affects driver expectations and signal issues at other intersections along the LRT line.

Improvements in the station's overall transit service can alleviate automobile congestion along Hiawatha as well as provide a more environmentally friendly alternative to the private automobile. Growth of the metropolitan region's overall transit system increases access to jobs and services which increases the incentive to use transit since it provides a more complete and flexible range of destinations. Individual perceptions of speed, delay, and convenience are not always an accurate measure of overall transportation system efficiency, but improvements can be made to balance and support all modes of travel.



Traffic on 46th Street near the LRT station



Hiawatha Avenue looking north towards the LRT station

The following projects are associated with this strategy:

- Hiawatha Avenue Functional Classification and Role
- Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership
- Additional TOD funding tools and programs
- Expand LRT Stations and Transit Service
- 46th Street Green Median Retrofit
- Improved pedestrian sidewalks, railroad, and highway crossings
- 45th and Hiawatha bike and pedestrian crossing
- Signal system improvements for major Hiawatha Avenue intersections
- Minnehaha Avenue Reconstruction
- Snelling Avenue Extension
- 46th Street "destination" green, complete street, and median
- Complete Town Square local street grid
- Evaluate options for pedestrian bridge
- Acquire property for Snelling Avenue Extension and Town Square redevelopment
- Town Square business association and special service district



Create Parcels for Neighborhood Center Development

Collaborate with property owners and developers whenever possible to configure or assemble parcels that create feasible development sites and the interconnected transportation network necessary to sustain a transit-oriented environment through private and public efforts to assemble land.

Successful development relies on easily accessible, appropriately sized and configured parcels. A number of potentially re-developable parcels are located within the 46th Street Station area, including property owned by public and private parties. It is reasonable to assume that, as transit-supportive land use changes occur and development interest increases, private property owners will be approached by developers looking to consolidate parcels for larger development projects. By assembling several smaller parcels, or acquiring a larger parcel, prospective developers are able to increase the financial feasibility of projects, typically resulting in a higher quality product and a higher level of amenity. Property owners that are considering selling their properties may want to coordinate with adjacent property owners to add value to their properties by selling adjoining sites at the same time or may wish to participate as investors in redeveloping their properties.

By properly configuring land, it is possible to provide a well designed and neighborhood-scaled urban concentration of residential units and retail spaces while contributing to the area's accessibility by all modes

of transportation. The concentration of development parcels allows for master planning, rather than piecemeal or uncoordinated development that often results in a higher frequency of individual automobile trips.

Except in situations where private property must be acquired for public infrastructure improvements, property transactions will occur at the will of property owners through the voluntary sale of property. High-quality development can provide economic opportunities and financial incentives through the marketplace for property owners to consider participating in this transition. In limited circumstances, public entities may also acquire property from willing sellers to assemble property and improve the feasibility and quality of plan implementation.

The following projects are associated with this strategy:

- Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership
- Additional TOD funding tools and programs
- Expand LRT Stations and Transit Service
- Minnehaha Avenue Reconstruction
- Snelling Avenue Extension
- 46th Street "destination" green, complete street, and median
- Modernize high-voltage powerline
- Phase railroad corridor abandonment and trail improvements south of 42nd Street
- Phase linear stormwater infiltration features in greenway corridor
- Complete Town Square local street grid
- Secure signature mixed-use development project on the LRT station site
- RFP and sell Snelling Yards property for high-quality multifamily development
- Identify approach for Snelling Yards public space or park
- Acquire property for Snelling Avenue Extension and Town Square redevelopment
- Relocate stormwater retention pond, and develop pond site near LRT Station



The City of Minneapolis will sell its vacant Snelling Yards site for transit-oriented redevelopment



The vacant Snelling Yards property is large enough to provide several new multifamily housing sites



Support and Expand Local Retail

Encourage a mixture of pedestrian-friendly neighborhood-serving retail opportunities that support market rate housing options, fulfill neighborhood and trade area needs, and establish a complete transit-oriented neighborhood center.



Traditional neighborhood retail storefronts are located along several walking routes to the LRT station



Oaks Hiawatha Station is a mixed-use development that includes ground floor stores

Incorporating retail or commercial space is one fundamental element of a transit-and pedestrian-oriented environment because it allows residents and visitors to purchase goods and services within walking distance, reduces the need to drive, and allows shoppers that arrive by automobile to park once while fulfilling several shopping needs. A strong retail presence near the transit station can become a destination that serves area visitors and helps establish a sense of neighborhood identity. Active ground-floor retail spaces create visual interest and contribute to a more pedestrian-friendly environment in addition to providing the “eyes on the street,” which add to the feeling of safety. Blank walls at street level create an inhospitable environment for pedestrians and give the perception that the building and the community is inaccessible or unwelcoming.

According to market projections, the proposed Town Square district along 46th Street can support a neighborhood center scale of retail development over the next ten to fifteen year period. This retail market potential includes both redeveloping and replacing some of the existing automobile-oriented retail buildings and adding additional commercial space. These market projections assume concurrent residential development within mixed-use buildings that include ground-floor retail uses as well as multifamily development on other nearby sites. The residential component is crucial to provide market incentives for redeveloping existing properties and incorporating structured and shared use retail parking. Additional housing also adds local retail demand that supports neighborhood retail services within a Main Street pedestrian-oriented configuration. This neighborhood center scenario assumes that some local retailers will become tenants in the new neighborhood center.

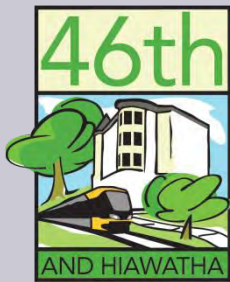
In addition to establishing a new mixed-use neighborhood center, this plan promotes revitalizing existing retail storefronts and shops located along the primary walking paths to the station, which can also capture additional local sales potential from the new nearby residential development.

Retail development can promote the transit-oriented principle of efficiency by providing quality, neighborhood-serving retail and commercial options for residents, shoppers that drive from within the larger trade area, and transit commuters alike. Local retail opportunities can effectively reduce the need for automobiles as well as allow travelers to combine trips, further reducing the number of vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Reducing VMT in turn reduces vehicle emissions and promotes the use of alternative modes of transit, which leads to a more sustainable environment and a healthier lifestyle. Households that can access jobs and retail services without using their cars will also have more income available for retail and housing needs.

The following projects are associated with this strategy:

- Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership
- Additional TOD funding tools and programs
- Improved pedestrian sidewalks, railroad, and highway crossings
- Pedestrian level lighting
- 45th and Hiawatha bike and pedestrian crossing
- Signal system improvements for major Hiawatha Avenue intersections
- Minnehaha Avenue Reconstruction
- Snelling Avenue Extension
- 46th Street “destination” green, complete street, and median
- Complete Town Square local street grid
- Support “Great Streets” program for neighborhood storefront revitalization
- Secure signature mixed-use development project on the LRT station site
- Promote gateway projects at entry points to TOD district
- Acquire property for Snelling Avenue Extension and Town Square redevelopment
- Town Square business association and special service district

Moving from Guide to Build



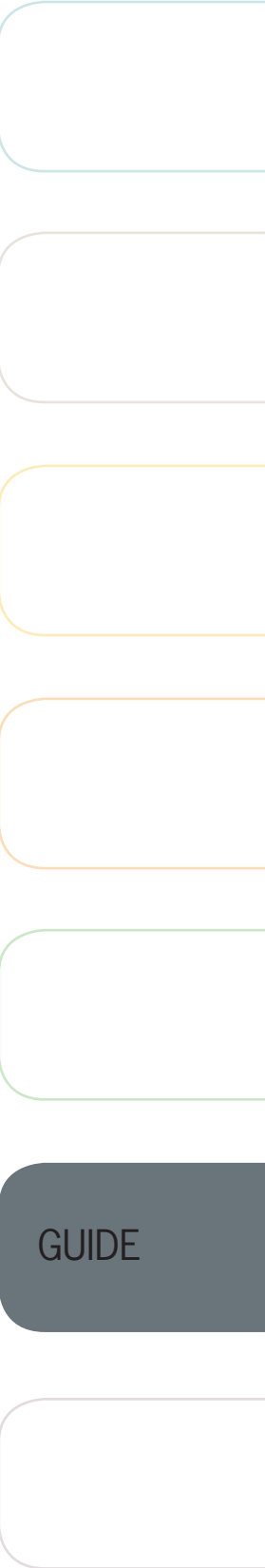
I M A G I N E



Key District Projects



- LRT station site development
- Snelling Avenue Yards redevelopment
- 46th/Destination Street & Snelling Avenue extension
- Town Square retail anchor
- Local street and corridor improvements



GUIDE



Build — [bild]

–verb (*build*)

Definition:

1. To construct according to a systematic design and plan by assembling and joining parts or materials.
2. To establish, strengthen or construct something of enduring value; like a neighborhood, a house, or a business.
3. To commission, finance and oversee a construction project.

–noun (*build*)

Definition:

1. Referring to the manner, date, style or form of construction; such as “the house is a modern build.”
2. The physical makeup or physique of a person or thing.

A transit-oriented neighborhood center around the 46th Street LRT station area will emerge as the result of many different projects, undertaken by numerous public and private stakeholders, over the next twenty-years. This chapter proposes a consensus 15-year action plan that identifies the most important strategic opportunities and projects to implement this plan.

- **Putting It All Together: The 46th and Hiawatha Project Toolbox**
- **Proposed Project Timelines and Phasing Scenario**
- **Strategy for Physical Improvements and TOD Market Building**
- **Points of Agreement: The Strategic Investment Framework of the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership**
- **Citizen Advisory Committee Recommendations**

SURVEY

PLACE

SUPPORT

IMAGINE

INVEST

GUIDE

BUILD

Section 7: BUILD



It is not primarily what we analyze and imagine, but what we invest in and build, that will determine the success of city land-use plans and the enduring quality of our neighborhoods.

The neighborhoods around the 46th Street LRT Station area are already wonderful places to own or rent a home, raise a family, manage a business, travel to work, see a movie, and visit parks and natural areas. Yet, the change area near the LRT station can be significantly improved. New economic markets, infrastructure needs, and opportunities have been created by the construction of Hiawatha LRT. This is a location where demographic change and market forces, public policies and investments, will combine with private investment decisions and public leadership to build an even better and more sustainable place that preserves and builds upon the existing strengths of the community.

Dates and schedules included for future projects in the text, maps and charts in this study are planning and market projections that illustrate the potential phasing and timing of future infrastructure and development activities. They are included for planning and market advocacy purposes and do not represent programmed infrastructure investments or committed private development.

This chapter provides a flexible and strategic 15-year action plan that can be coordinated with local stakeholders and implemented as opportunities arise to support and realize the vision adopted in the 46th and Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan.

This chapter presents the 46th Street LRT Station area action plan in three ways.

1. First, the action plan is presented as a specific list of recommended projects, referred to as the 46th and Hiawatha Project Toolbox, that were developed in consultation with community stakeholders and the planning consultant team to implement the TOD strategies and physical priorities of the 46th Street LRT Station area plan.
2. Next, the action plan is presented as a recommended, but flexible, timeline and phasing framework for implementing the projects listed in the 46th and Hiawatha Toolbox.
3. Finally, the action plan is presented as a map of the Strategic Infrastructure and Development Projects that are identified in this plan.

This chapter also identifies the major station area and corridor projects that are supported by both the 46th and Hiawatha TOD Strategy and the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Strategic Investment Framework. The Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership is the primary collaborative partnership through which many of the identified strategies and projects will be implemented over time within this station area.

The report concludes with the list of the recommendations of the Citizen Advisory Committee for this study.

There are two preconditions necessary to move forward with this implementation strategy successfully:

1. A strengthening economy that invests in a sustainable and livable urban future, and
2. Strong public, private, and community partnerships that cooperate and balance short-term and long-term priorities. These partnerships can provide informed advocacy on behalf of the policies, programs, and projects that will implement this plan

Fortunately, these efforts and projects are already under way.

Putting It All Together: The 46th and Hiawatha Project Toolbox

The 46th and Hiawatha Project Toolbox lists the major policies, infrastructure projects, and development priorities that can anchor, support, and attract walkable and sustainable neighborhood center development around the 46th Street LRT Station. These projects contribute to neighborhood livability and revitalization of the community, as well as neighborhood center redevelopment within the designated change area.

Each of the proposed projects is identified by its location and impacts upon one or more of the station area districts identified in the Imagine chapter. Each project also incorporates and supports one or more of the TOD strategies, which are identified by symbols in the Toolbox matrix.

A status update has been provided for projects that are under way or have been completed since the project list was initially developed by the Citizen Advisory Committee and project team several years ago. Preliminary phasing recommendations are also provided for each project, indicating whether the project timing is expected to be Near-Term (2012-2013), Medium-Term (2014-2018), or Long-Term (2019-2026). One of the key challenges for the implementation partnership is to evaluate and update the appropriate timing and phasing of station area projects, based on emerging market opportunities, stakeholder preferences, available resources, and competing strategic needs. A few of the identified projects are intended to be implemented concurrently with other projects. Projects that are listed in the Project Toolbox are identified as policy, development, or infrastructure projects.

Policy Initiatives

Policy initiatives listed in the toolbox promote significant changes to public design guidelines or design standards, ordinances, and funding programs. These policy proposals promote inter-agency coordination, which is a critical first-step for supporting transit-oriented development within the station area. Community support and participation in the Minnehaha Hiawatha Community Works Partnership, as well as ongoing market advocacy and community engagement, will be essential for coordinating elected officials, governmental agencies, neighborhood public opinion, community stakeholders, and developers to implement this plan.

		DISTRICT		STATUS	PHASING			SUPPORTS		STRATEGIES											
PROJECTS		Town Square/ Park View	Station View	Station Place	February, 2012	Near Term (2012-2013)	Medium-Term (2014-2018)	Long-Term (2019-2026)	Neighborhood Revitalization & Livability	Neighborhood Center Redevelopment	Infrastructure	Sustainability	Transit Station	Barriers	Multimodal	Partnerships	High-Quality Design	Housing	Traffic	Parcels	Retail
POLICY	46th & Hiawatha Rezoning Study	X	X	X	Completed	X				X											
	Identify Hiawatha LRT corridor segment as a unique multi-modal transportation facility within the State and regional transportation plans and highway policies	X	X	X			X		X	X											
	Coordinate with Hennepin County's Minnehaha Hiawatha Community Works project, and support community and multi-jurisdictional public implementation partnership	X	X	X	Underway	X	X	X	X	X											
	Support additional Federal, State, regional and local funding tools for infrastructure and economic development in Transit Investment Areas (4)	X	X	X	Underway	X	X	X		X											

1, 2 & 3 Projects identified with the same number are thought to coincide with one another either for design interfaces, r-o-w or easement acquisition, construction or project phasing

4 Projects not included in original Citizen Advisory Committee review process

Development Activities

Development activities, sites, and projects listed in the toolbox refer primarily to strategic opportunities for physical improvements to land and buildings. These activities may be undertaken by either public or private entities to strengthen the market for successful

transit-oriented development within the station area. The intent of some initiatives is to prepare land for future development. These initiatives include selling excess public property for transit-oriented development, maintaining cooperation among property owners to create high value development sites,

and relocating or mitigating existing infrastructure and utility barriers that impede transit and pedestrian friendly neighborhood center development. Other projects are geared toward strengthening concentrations of neighborhood retail activity and improving property access or wayfinding for area visitors.

PROJECTS		DISTRICT			STATUS	PHASING			SUPPORTS		STRATEGIES										
		Town Square/ Park View	Station View	Station Place		February, 2012	Near Term (2012-2013)	Medium-Term (2014-2018)	Long-Term (2019-2026)	Neighborhood Revitalization & Livability	Neighborhood Center Redevelopment	Infrastructure	Sustainability	Transit Station	Barriers	Multimodal	Partnerships	High-Quality Design	Housing	Traffic	Parcels
DEVELOPMENT	Support Great Streets partnerships for neighborhood retail storefront revitalization on Minnehaha and 34th Aves	X	X	X	Underway	X	X	X	X												
	Secure mixed-use development on LRT station site that is integrated with the station, creates high-quality public spaces and exemplifies green development			X	Oaks Station Place is Underway	X			X	X											
	Promote gateway projects at key entry points to transit- and pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center	X	X	X	First project Underway at Station Site	X	X			X											
	Prepare for sale and development of city-owned Snelling Yards site consistent with Plan vision (2)		X		Preparation of RFP is Underway	X				X											
	Identify partnership approach for development of Snelling Yards site public space or park amenity (2)		X		To be evaluated in RFP Process	X			X	X											
	Coordinate with owner of Capp Industries property on future timing of Town Square redevelopment & Snelling Avenue Extension (1)	X					X	X	X	X											
	Support formation of Town Square business association and assessment district for public realm, parking and environmental facilities management (4)	X		X				X	X	X											
	Relocate retention pond and develop 46th Street frontage across from LRT station			X				X		X											

1, 2 & 3 Projects identified with the same number are thought to coincide with one another either for design interfaces, r-o-w or easement acquisition, construction or project phasing

4 Projects not included in original Citizen Advisory Committee review process

Infrastructure Projects

Public infrastructure projects listed in the toolbox refer to infrastructure design and technical studies, policy initiatives, or capital projects. Capital improvement projects are costly long-term investments that are intended to repair, replace, or modify the condition, capacity, environmental impacts, functionality, design, safety, and aesthetics of public infrastructure. Capital projects often replace segments of larger city, county, regional or state public infrastructure systems like streets and utilities. They are durable physical investments that are difficult to

modify after they are constructed. The timing of capital projects that modify or replace existing facilities and services must be carefully programmed to preserve the value of existing investments as well as address new and evolving service needs, including redevelopment.

Most infrastructure projects involve changes within public right-of-ways like streets and utility corridors. As stated in **High Performance Infrastructure Guidelines**, a publication of the Design Trust for Public Space, “The public right-of-way organizes the

massive flow of energy and matter that courses through the city on a daily basis. Right-of-way components include roadway, sidewalks, sub-grade systems, and landscaped areas, and the design of each of these components profoundly affects our experience of the city. By undertaking coordinated, sustainable approaches to streetscape design, construction, operations, and maintenance – and by joining considerations of function and performance with concern for the human experience of the urban environment – cities can promote safety, reliability, cost-effectiveness, public health, and quality of life.”

		DISTRICT			STATUS	PHASING				SUPPORTS	STRATEGIES										
PROJECTS		Town Square/ Park View	Station View	Station Place	February, 2012	Near Term (2012-2013)	Medium-Term (2014-2018)	Long-Term (2019-2026)	Neighborhood Revitalization & Livability	Neighborhood Center Redevelopment	Infrastructure	Sustainability	Transit Station	Barriers	Multimodal	Partnerships	High-Quality Design	Housing	Traffic	Parcels	Retail
INFRASTRUCTURE	Expand LRT station platforms and trains to improve transit service			X	Completed	X			X	X											
	Implement 46th Street “green” median retrofit (Minnehaha Ave to 46th Ave)	X					X		X												
	Link Minnehaha Park to 46th Street, Town Center and LRT Station with gateway markers, wayfinding signs or kiosks and green connections	X		X			X	X	X	X											
	Repair and enhance major pedestrian connections with sidewalk repairs and improved at-grade street and railroad crossings	X	X	X		X	X		X	X											
	Include pedestrian level lighting on main pedestrian streets and in subdistricts that undergo redevelopment	X	X	X	First Project Completed on 46th St.	X	X		X	X											
	Establish a safe pedestrian and bicycle crossing of Hiawatha Avenue at 45th Street near the north end of LRT platform		X	X	Additional Study Required		X		X	X											
	Improve Signal Systems and Pedestrian Crossings at Hiawatha Intersections for safer and more efficient vehicular, bike and pedestrian movements		X	X	Underway	X			X	X											
	Coordinate construction of Snelling Avenue extension and right-of-way acquisition with market advocacy for Town Square mixed-use catalyst development (1)	X					X	X		X											

1, 2 & 3 Projects identified with the same number are thought to coincide with one another either for design interfaces, r-o-w or easement acquisition, construction or project phasing

The projects listed in this section are intended to provide community and property services for existing land-uses, support new developments, and serve as catalysts that promote additional high-quality neighborhood center redevelopment within the LRT station. This can be accomplished by doing the following:

- Providing improved multimodal access to the LRT station and other local destinations like Minnehaha Park;

- Constructing community livability and market building amenities like improved sidewalks and streetscapes, trails, and green spaces;
- Removing, modifying or mitigating physical barriers like utility corridors or difficult pedestrian crossings that limit opportunities for higher LRT transit services usage or town square redevelopment;
- Providing new transportation and utility capacity, including a complete street grid, with design and performance characteristics that can

- better serve the compact and pedestrian oriented land-uses emerging at the 46th Street LRT station activity center; and
- Emphasizing the importance of sustainability by implementing benchmark demonstration projects, establishing high environmental standards for private development, and implementing high performance green infrastructure

PROJECTS		DISTRICT			STATUS	PHASING			SUPPORTS		STRATEGIES										
		Town Square/ Park View	Station View	Station Place		February, 2012	Near Term (2012-2013)	Medium-Term (2014- 2018)	Long-Term (2019-2026)	Neighborhood Revitalization & Livability	Neighborhood Center Redevelopment	Infrastructure	Sustainability	Transit Station	Barriers	Multimodal	Partnerships	High-Quality Design	Housing	Traffic	Parcels
INFRASTRUCTURE	Construct 46th Street medians between Minnehaha and Hiawatha Avenues after Snelling Avenue extension is constructed (1)	X					X	X	X	X											
	Complete high-performance 46th St. "destination/green street" retrofit or reconstruction (Hiawatha Avenue to Minnehaha Ave) (1)	X					X	X		X											
	Modernize and relocate high-voltage transmission lines onto monopole system (3)	X	X	X			X	X		X											
	Phase unused railroad right-of-way acquisition and construction of mid-block pedestrian and bike path in rail corridor south of 42nd Street (3)	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X											
	Phase linear district stormwater infiltration basins along with development through the rail and powerline corridor (3)	X	X	X			X	X	X	X											
	Reconstruct Minnehaha Avenue as a "green" and complete community connector street for all modes of travel	X	X		Preliminary Design is Underway		X			X											
	Complete Town Square local street grid to coincide with development phasing (3)	X						X		X											
	Evaluate options (If, when and where) to construct pedestrian bridge connecting LRT station to new redevelopment or shared use parking facilities across Hiawatha Avenue		X	X				X	X	X											

1, 2 & 3 Projects identified with the same number are thought to coincide with one another either for design interfaces, r-o-w or easement acquisition, construction or project phasing

Some infrastructure projects are smaller-scale springboard projects that can be implemented relatively quickly to affirm support for the plan vision and partnership approach. One example of a springboard project is the Alternative Street Lighting project on 46th Street, which was jointly implemented by Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis through the Minnehaha Hiawatha Community Works Partnership.

Some of these infrastructure improvements will be provided by new private development in order to strengthen the market for retail services and to attain higher pricing for housing units. Other larger-scale projects will be public projects that require more extensive coordination between jurisdictions, resolution of complex design issues, significant funding commitments, and several years to complete.

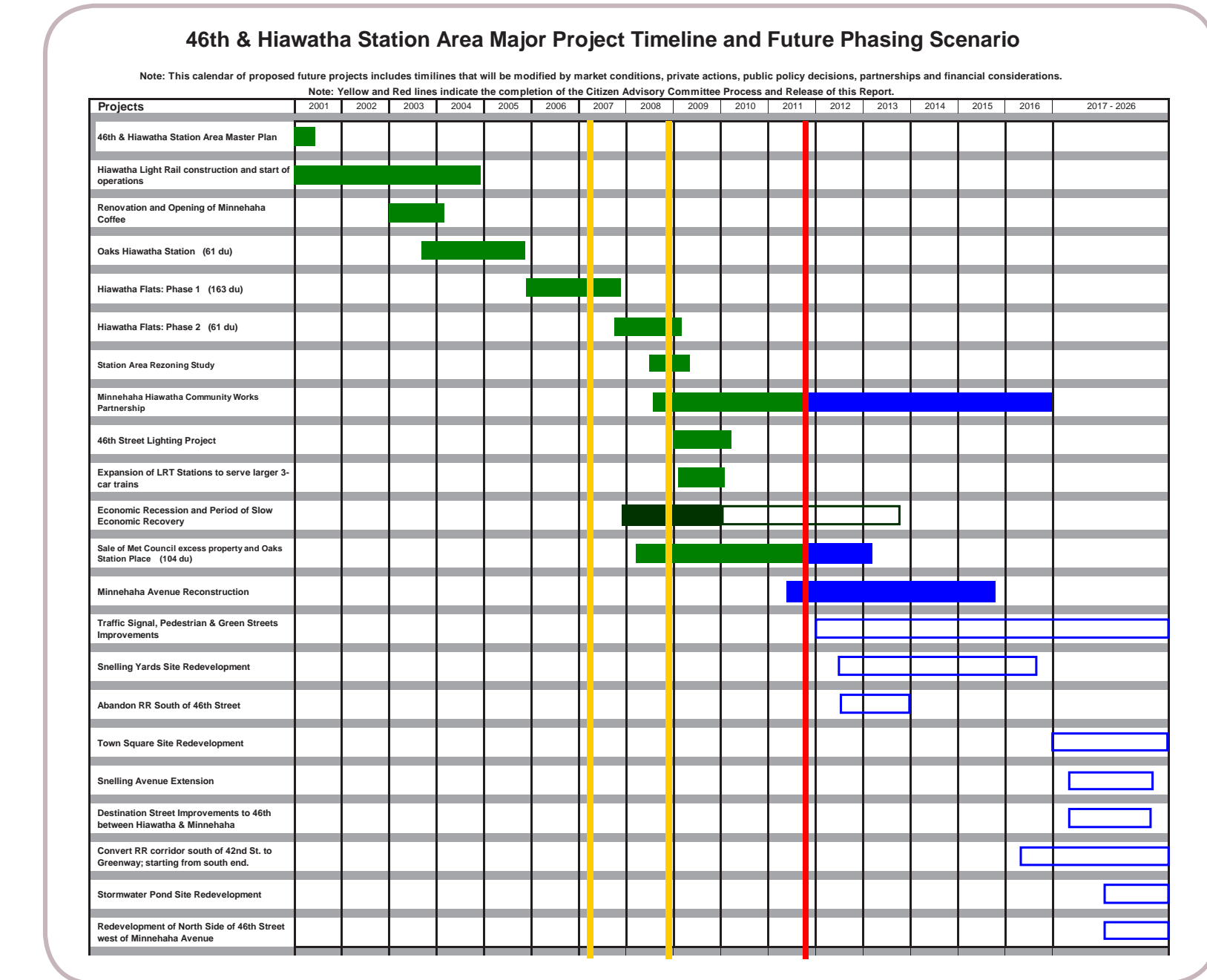
Proposed Project Timelines and Phasing Scenario

This Transit-Oriented Development Strategy has identified key activities that can be undertaken by the City of Minneapolis and other government jurisdictions in partnerships with property owners, developers, and the community to implement the Station Area Master Plan. These projects can increase the pace, quality, and community benefits from new development. These policy, infrastructure, and economic development activities can strengthen the economic feasibility of new transit-oriented development and attract targeted private and public investment that supports the vision of a sustainable and pedestrian-oriented urban neighborhood center that is connected with the 46th Street LRT Station.

Most of the land-use transition identified in this plan will result from private investment decisions made by property owners, developers, and lenders that are consistent with adopted plans and land-use regulations. Therefore, it is especially important to coordinate the timing of public investments with this market as it develops.

During this land-use transition, renovating existing properties will in most cases strengthen the emerging market for neighborhood center redevelopment as well as enhance current neighborhood livability. Opportunities for property owners to contribute to and benefit from this plan through the profitable sale or redevelopment of their properties will emerge gradually over the next ten to fifteen years. Therefore, market advocacy on behalf of plan implementation must be balanced with accurate information about market opportunities and the business needs of developers, local businesses, lenders, investors, and property owners. A strong partnership can facilitate information exchange and consensus building among stakeholders as the marketplace evolves.

Public resources are limited, and new public investments must be timed carefully to replace obsolete infrastructure and support both established needs and new

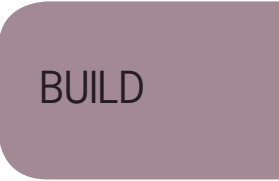
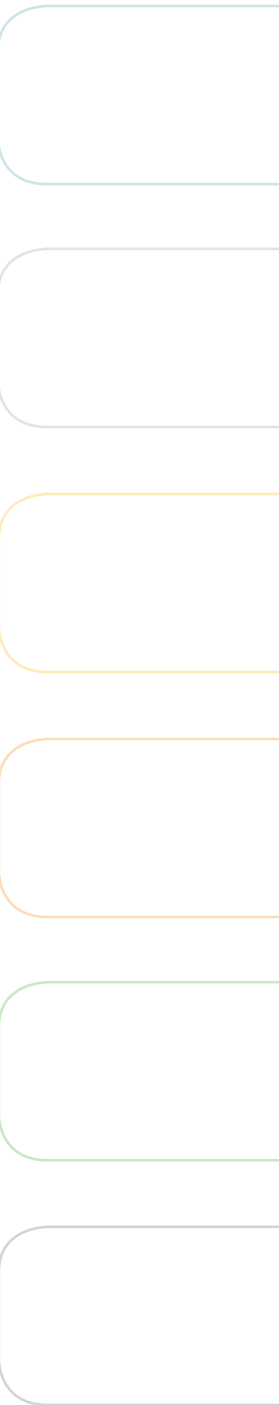


development as it actually occurs, preserving flexibility to revise the plan if necessary. Identifying the appropriate timing, funding sources, and investment approaches for key infrastructure and economic development projects that will modify or replace existing infrastructure systems as well as support and enhance the growing market for transit-oriented development within the neighborhood center will be one of the most significant challenges for the implementation partnership.

The “Major Project Timeline and Future Phasing Scenario” is a planning tool intended to provide information about

timing and phasing assumptions for projects completed or proposed in planning studies around the 46th Street LRT Station area:

1. The timeline includes significant milestone projects completed in the LRT station area, which are indicated by green lines.
2. Projects that are under way in late 2011 are indicated in blue. This color applies to projects such as the Oaks Station Place project on the LRT station block, which is now construction. Previous phases of that project associated with the property acquisition, predevelopment planning, and land use approvals have been represented by a green line.



- The schedule for proposed future projects is identified by the rectangular bars that are outlined in blue. This is a planning assessment of the projected timing and phasing of future projects based on priorities established in the planning process, current planning initiatives around the station, information from property owners, and recent market trends. Projects are also inserted onto the timeline based on the relationship between specific development sites and infrastructure projects that are expected to be implemented together.
- The chart highlights the impact of market conditions by including a bar depicting the major economic recession and financial crisis in 2007 and 2008 and the period of slow recovery from the recession.
- The yellow lines on the chart document the period during which the Citizen Advisory Committee meetings, community meetings, and most of the project team research was completed for the 46th Street Transit Oriented Development Strategy. The red line indicates the date that the final text and exhibits for the report were completed. The final report incorporates additional market information and revised timelines developed in response to the economic recession, as well as input from the planning process for the Minnehaha Hiawatha Community Works project.

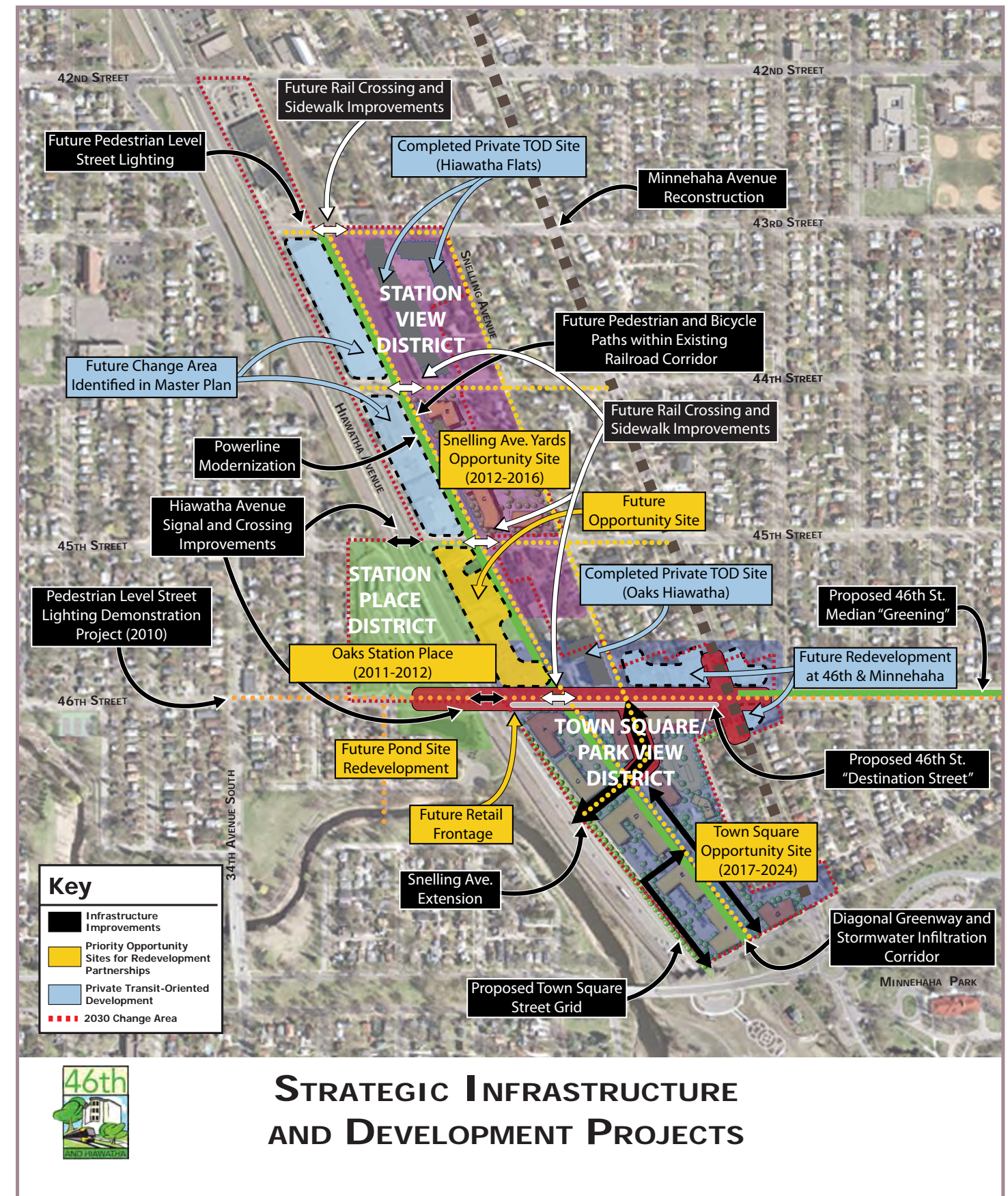
The schedules included in the major project timeline and future phasing scenario reflect planning goals and preferred development scenarios. They do not represent a schedule of committed projects or resources. Nor should this exhibit be regarded as a firm schedule. Actual project timelines and priorities will continue to be negotiated at the interface between private market timing and public investment programs, as opportunities and conditions in the station area evolve over time. Project schedules at the 46th Street LRT Station are expected to be revised as needed through the ongoing Community Works Partnership and implementation process.

Making it Real: Toward an Integrated Strategy for Physical Improvements and TOD Market Building

This implementation plan has identified policies, infrastructure projects, and development activities that will support high-quality transit-oriented redevelopment within the designated land-use change area around the 46th Street LRT station. This plan integrates principles of urban land-use and development planning with ecology, infrastructure planning, and urban design. The emerging transit- and pedestrian-oriented neighborhood center will capitalize upon the local transportation opportunities and evolving real estate market conditions that have been created by proximity to the LRT station and that are already visibly driving significant neighborhood growth and revitalization.

The map of “Strategic Infrastructure and Development Projects” illustrates how the proposed infrastructure investments and catalytic development sites can work together over time to create a walkable and sustainable neighborhood center that is connected to the LRT Station and serves as an asset for the surrounding community. Dates included on this map are simply refined planning estimates that are intended to illustrate a feasible phasing scenario of market development and infrastructure investments in this area.

Ultimately, the goal of this plan is to strengthen an already healthy and vibrant neighborhood as it evolves. By better accommodating local demographic changes and population growth; increasing life cycle housing choices; supporting local retail vitality; and promoting sustainable transportation options like walking, biking, and transit, a great location can become an even greater place.



Points of Agreement: The Strategic Development Framework of the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Project

These projects are proposed for implementation in the TOD strategy and the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Project's "Strategic Investment Framework" (2011). The Minnehaha-Hiawatha document provides additional details about many of these projects.

46th Street:

- Develop the 46th Street LRT station site.
- Reconstruct Minnehaha Avenue as a complete street, green street, and Active Living Project.
- Redevelop the city-owned Snelling Yards site.
- Plan and build a diagonal greenway corridor in the railroad and utility corridor.
- Reconstruct 46th Street (CSAH 46) as a complete, green street and neighborhood gateway.
- Design and build the Snelling Avenue extension south from 46th Street connecting to Hiawatha Avenue.
- Add a pedestrian and bike crossing at Hiawatha Avenue and 45th Street.
- Pursue infill development of the pond site southwest of the Hiawatha and 46th Street intersection.

Corridor-wide (including 46th Street) and general:

- Complete studies, and implement traffic signal improvements on Hiawatha Avenue.
- Improve pedestrian crossing safety and experience at Hiawatha Avenue signalized intersections.
- Establish a new roadway functional classification for the Hiawatha Avenue corridor (Mn 55) within the state and regional roadway system.
- Create an urban design vision for development along the east frontage of Hiawatha Avenue.
- Promote business improvement financing tools and neighborhood business associations for activity centers and commercial nodes.
- Provide design and technical assistance for improving the character of activity centers and commercial nodes, as well as parking improvement strategies.

- Partner with railroad ROW owners to improve pedestrian crossings of freight railroad tracks.
- Identify and implement stormwater management improvements with street reconstruction projects.
- Expand and enhance open spaces for ecological stormwater management.
- Develop "sustainable" corridor identity and strategies, including green businesses and jobs.
- Provide technical assistance/resources for redevelopment projects to achieve LEED certification.
- Strengthen maintenance programs for public green spaces – trees and landscaping.

- Inventory the pedestrian environment, and implement the Minneapolis Pedestrian Master Plan objectives and strategies.
- Add bike facilities and amenities in key activity areas.
- Develop park and open space opportunities.
- Develop financial tools and capacity to make strategic property acquisitions.

The Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership will be the principal public and community partnership that will implement the recommendations of this study.

Citizen Advisory Committee Recommendations

Following are the CAC Recommendations, reviewed and adopted on December 9, 2008:

1. The 46th and Hiawatha TOD Strategy Citizen Advisory Committee supports an approach to achieving the goals of the LRT Station Area that combines the following:
 - a. Promoting neighborhood revitalization that preserves and enhances existing community assets, opportunities, and wealth and promotes neighborhood livability
 - b. Developing a new neighborhood center within the identified station area change area that builds upon and supports the surrounding neighborhood
2. The 46th and Hiawatha TOD Strategy Citizen Advisory Committee endorses public actions to promote the community vision of the 46th Street LRT Station area as a walkable and sustainable urban neighborhood center connected with transit.
3. The Citizen Advisory Committee encourages units of government with jurisdiction over land-use policies and regulations, transportation facilities and other infrastructure systems, parks and other public facilities, and economic development programs and resources to collaborate and support project and priorities identified in this study that can flexibly support private investments and community enhancement consistent with this plan vision.
4. The 46th and Hiawatha TOD Strategy Citizens Advisory Committee approves the action items identified in this plan as an important list of small and large projects that can contribute to achieving the potential of this station area as a walkable and sustainable urban neighborhood connected with transit and promote additional private actions and investments consistent with this plan. The Citizens Advisory Committee encourages ongoing private, public sector, and community participation in implementing this plan.
5. The 46th and Hiawatha TOD Strategy Citizens Advisory Committee encourages private property owners to consider opportunities to improve their property and/or participate in the economic benefits and opportunities to implement this plan. The CAC supports a market-based approach to land-use change and development in which property owners, business owners, residents, and developers make their own decisions about when and whether to sell or develop their private property, unless their property is required for essential public infrastructure improvements. The only currently-known exception is the light industrial property required for the right-of-way for the Snelling Avenue extension.
6. The 46th and Hiawatha TOD Strategy Citizens Advisory Committee encourages continuing community participation in this initiative as well as in the neighborhood and citizen engagement processes included as part of all development and infrastructure projects. The CAC supports Hennepin County's Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works project with continuing City of Minneapolis and neighborhood involvement and acknowledges that this is an important community, public, and private implementation partnership for this corridor and station area.
7. This committee recognizes that the Canadian Pacific Railroad serves several important businesses around 38th Street and further north in the Hiawatha Corridor. The committee encourages exploration by appropriate units of government of options for acquiring the unused and underused portions of the Canadian Pacific Railroad corridor south of 42nd Street.
8. The 46th and Hiawatha TOD Strategy Citizens Advisory Committee encourages continued coordination and communication with other projects of regional significance located near the 46th Street LRT station area such as the proposed redevelopment of the Highland Park Ford Plant in St. Paul.
9. The 46th and Hiawatha TOD Strategy Citizens Advisory Committee acknowledges the personal and professional contributions of Minneapolis project manager Mark Garner and consultants Mark Nolan, Tim Gross, and Sarah Zorn in contributing to this project and extends its formal recognition and appreciation.

BUILD

An architectural sketch of a city block, viewed from an elevated perspective. The sketch is rendered in a light, muted color palette, primarily using shades of green, brown, and blue. On the left side, a river or canal flows, bordered by a row of trees. The central and right portions of the image show a dense arrangement of buildings of varying heights and styles, interspersed with numerous trees. The drawing style is loose and illustrative, typical of a conceptual architectural plan. The word "APPENDIX" is centered over the middle of the sketch in a bold, teal-colored font.

APPENDIX

APPENDIX: 1

What has Happened Since Planning to Construct Hiawatha LRT Began in 1998?

The following list describes projects that have shaped or exemplified the emerging market for transit-oriented development at the 46th Street LRT Station. Photographs are provided for some completed projects. Several of the projects were supported in the TOD strategy recommendations adopted by the Citizen Advisory Committee in December of 2008 or were shaped by the study and ongoing consultation with project partners. The projects that have been either supported or influenced by the 46th Street TOD Strategy are identified with an (X) symbol.

Opening of Hiawatha Light Rail Transit

Construction began on the Twin Cities' first light rail transit line in 2001, with service beginning in June of 2004. The Hiawatha Line is a 12.3-mile route with 19 stations that connects downtown Minneapolis with the Minneapolis - St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America in Bloomington. In its first full year of operation in 2005, Hiawatha LRT carried 7.9 million riders. From its opening, ridership has exceeded all estimates and topped 10.5 million rides in 2010, a six percent increase over 2009 and the highest annual ridership in the line's six-year history. Over 32,000 trips are taken on Hiawatha LRT on a typical weekday. In 2010, more than 586,000 passengers boarded Hiawatha trains at the 46th Street LRT station, which was 5.6 percent of all riders.



46th Street LRT Station

46th & Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan

In 2001, the 46th & Hiawatha LRT Station Area Master Plan was adopted by the City of Minneapolis after extensive community involvement and technical analysis of land-use and infrastructure conditions around the station. This plan established the "Town Square" vision for the station area as a future transit-oriented neighborhood center with a mix of multifamily housing and mixed-use retail services constructed over a twenty-year period on redeveloped commercial property located near the station. The Master Plan has provided the principle guidance for subsequent planning and regulatory actions, including this study.

Longfellow Community Rejects Auto-Oriented Shopping Center Development

In 2002, less than one year after the station area plan was completed, a development proposal was brought to the city for a large portion of the Town Square site. The developer proposed constructing a 90,000-square foot retail center that would have included a big box grocer, about 25,000 square feet of retail in three single-story stand-alone buildings, and 21 townhouse units at the southern end of the site near Minnehaha Park. The proposed development required support from the Minneapolis Planning Commission to approve new zoning for the project. At several community meetings the developer presented the proposal to neighborhood residents and policy makers, where they discovered strong opposition to an auto-oriented retail shopping center. Supporters of the 46th & Hiawatha Station Area Master Plan called for a neighborhood center retail environment with mixed-use development; a smaller neighborhood-oriented grocery store; less surface parking; more intensive housing development; and a street grid and pedestrian environment that supported walking, transit ridership, and neighborhood shopping.

Critical Parking Area

At the request of the residents on several blocks located just west of the LRT station the Minneapolis City Council approved a Critical Parking Area (CPA #27) to provide relief to those residents from parking by “hide and ride” LRT commuters that have no association with residents or businesses in the neighborhood. Only houses and businesses located at qualified addresses may receive parking permits within the critical parking area.

Strong Housing Demand to Live Near Hiawatha LRT Neighborhood Stations

The ability of Hiawatha LRT to attract demand for new transit-oriented housing development has been impressive. During the period from 2003 to 2009, more than 900 housing units have been constructed near the neighborhood LRT Stations in South Minneapolis that are located between the Franklin Avenue and the VA station. An additional 210 units are currently under construction. These units include a mix of market-rate rental apartments, condominiums, mixed-use buildings with retail on the first floor, senior citizen apartments, and mixed-income and affordable housing developments. In late 2011, nine more housing developments are in pre-development planning and financing stages, at least four of which are slated to begin construction in 2012. Strong demand from individuals and households who prefer to live near LRT is now a demonstrated market within the region.

Retail Property Renovations

Minnehaha Coffee opened in 2003 after renovating a former gas station that had fallen into disrepair. Minnehaha Coffee illustrates both the opportunities and the economic challenges for locating convenience retail and food service businesses near the LRT stations while also attracting business from high traffic counts, convenient property access and retail visibility. Both increases in nearby multifamily housing development and growing trends to walk and shop locally are needed to support neighborhood retail near the LRT station. Several other existing retail businesses and properties have been renovated since the LRT opened, including more automobile-oriented businesses such as the Holiday Station, Burger King, and Dairy Queen.

Car Sharing Established in LRT Station Area

Share cars provide access to automobiles for members who rent them for a specific period of time and otherwise can rely on transit, walking, and biking for their daily travel needs. Hour Car, a program of the non-profit Neighborhood Energy Connection, introduced a share car at the 46th Street LRT Station in 2005. Private developers have also provided share cars in Oaks Hiawatha Station and Hiawatha Flats developments, enabling some tenants to get by without the cost of owning a private automobile.

Traffic Signal System and Intersection Improvements (X)

In February of 2005, signal systems in the Hiawatha LRT corridor were upgraded to improve traffic flow and reduce traffic delays caused by the trains preempting traffic signals at cross streets along the LRT alignment. More extensive engineering studies were completed in 2011, identifying additional signal system and intersection improvements to support overall multimodal transportation system safety and efficiency. These improvements will be implemented beginning in 2012.

Oaks Hiawatha Station

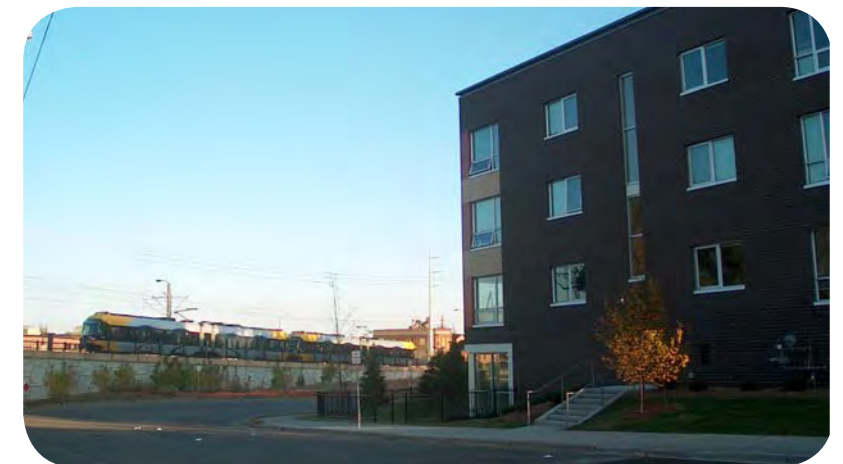
Located at the northwest corner of 46th Street and Snelling Avenue, Oaks Hiawatha Station is a mixed-use, market-rate apartment building with 61 housing units that was completed in 2005. It was the first pioneering Transit-Oriented Development project located in the station area to serve the emerging housing demand to live near LRT. The project includes about 3,500 square feet of ground floor space fronting on 46th Street, illustrating how new mixed-use development can begin to create the pedestrian-oriented retail “main street” on 46th Street that is envisioned in the Master Plan. The building also established high quality design and materials standards for new development, replacing a vacant former taxicab maintenance building and storage lot, a vacant residential lot, and a vacant single family home. Oaks Hiawatha Station was co-developed by Klodt Development and Oaks Properties, and both developers have subsequently acquired other development sites in the station area, making a long-term commitment to invest in new development at this station.

Minnehaha Park Master Plan Implementation

Minnehaha Park is one of the jewels of the Minneapolis and Twin Cities Regional Park system, with more than 850,000 visitors each year. Over the past decade, the Minneapolis Park Board has completed numerous major projects, nearly completing the implementation of the Minnehaha Park Renovation Plan that was adopted in 1992. Improvements have included a land bridge carrying Minnehaha Parkway over the tunnels for Hiawatha Avenue and the LRT tracks, connecting sections of the park that were formerly separated by the state highway. The Longfellow Gardens were constructed on the land bridge and are within easy walking distance of the 46th Street LRT station. More recently, improvements were completed to the Wabun Picnic Area and the Lower Glen near Minnehaha Falls, including constructing new picnic area shelters, a wading pool, and other recreational and bike facilities. Parking lots constructed in the Wabun area were the first in the Minneapolis Park system to use porous pavement to manage stormwater infiltration and runoff, which will reduce erosion and environmental degradation of Minnehaha Creek and the Mississippi River Gorge.



Minnehaha Place Condominiums near the VA LRT Station



Midtown Clare Apartments near the Lake Street LRT Station



Minnehaha Coffee



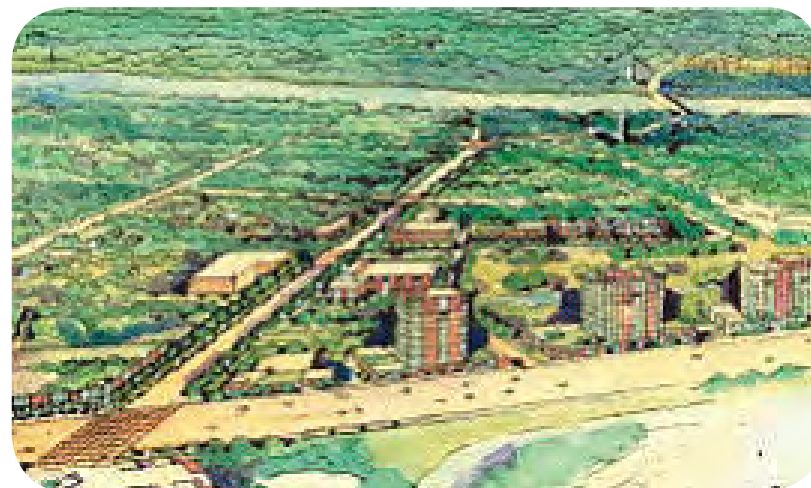
Oaks Hiawatha Station Apartments



Hiawatha Flats Phase 1



Longfellow Gardens at Minnehaha Park



AIA Design Workshop Rendering at 46th Street LRT Station Area



Canadian Pacific Railroad Easement south of 46th Street



Great Streets logo

Hiawatha Flats Phase 1

The first phase of the Hiawatha Flats development, located between 43rd and 44th streets adjacent to the Canadian Pacific Rail Corridor, was completed in 2007 by Klodt Development. The 163-unit market rate apartment building includes larger units and extensive building amenities to serve employees working in the downtown office market. The building was designed with several features that could enable the units to be converted to condominiums at some time in the future. The building also introduced low impact design techniques to manage stormwater on-site.

AIA Great City Design Team Workshop

In May of 2007, the Minneapolis Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) hosted a community design workshop with the goal of improving the environment of 46th Street from Hiawatha Avenue to the Mississippi. Neighborhood residents and key agency stakeholders were invited to participate in this workshop where several concepts and ideas were expressed through drawings.

Acquisition of a Rail Corridor Property by the City of Minneapolis (X)

In 2007, the City of Minneapolis acquired the narrow property with the railroad track running between Nawadaha Avenue and 46th Street. The property had been owned by MnDOT before being conveyed to the city through a land swap that included Minneapolis Parks. In the future, after the abandoned railroad easement is vacated, the property is proposed to be part of a green connection from 46th Street to Minnehaha Park that can provide a neighborhood amenity for new residential and commercial development and the surrounding community. The derelict property was cleaned up by the city, with litter and scrub vegetation removed.

Additional Station Area Policy Implementation

Incorporating the 46th & Hiawatha Master Plan into the city's Comprehensive Plan has provided the policy basis for additional policy implementation and changes in land-use regulations to support the adopted land-use vision. Since 2001, these new policies and regulations have included the following:

- Designating 46th Street Station Area as a Transit Station Area (TSA) in the Comprehensive Plan
- Adopting a Redevelopment Plan for the designated station change area
- Approving a Pedestrian Oriented Zoning Overlay District (2005)
- Including the extension of Snelling Avenue as a future project in the city's Capital Program and Access Minneapolis Citywide Transportation Plan
- More recent policy actions have also reflected or complemented implementation recommendations from the 46th Street TOD Strategy, including the following:

- Hennepin County established the Minnehaha- Hiawatha Community Works Partnership (2008). (X)
- A 46th Street LRT Station Area Rezoning study was conducted, and the Primary and Overlay Zoning Districts were modified (2009). (X)
- The proposed station area neighborhood center was designated as an Activity Center in the Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth (2009). (X)
- The state designated the 46th Street LRT Station Area as a Transit Improvement Area (TIA) (2010).

Minneapolis Great Streets Business District Programs (X)

In 2007, the City of Minneapolis established the Great Streets Program to support small businesses and property improvements that provide neighborhood retail services along commercial corridors, at small neighborhood commercial nodes, and in LRT station areas. The program works through community-based partnerships to deliver financing and technical assistance for businesses and commercial property owners. Over the past three years, this ongoing program has provided business district support grants, technical assistance, façade improvement grants, and business financing on Minnehaha Avenue and within the 46th Street Station Area.

Strategic Investment Framework of Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Partnership (X)

In 2008, the Hennepin County Community Works Division launched a three-year process to develop a Strategic Investment Framework for the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor as a public and community partnership to guide and coordinate the county, city, and other revitalization investments. These capital investment decisions will be community driven and based on close collaboration among all stakeholders. The Minnehaha-Hiawatha corridor includes three station areas: Lake Street, 38th Street, and 46th Street. The Community Works Partnership completed the Strategic Investment Framework document in late 2011.

Hiawatha Flats Phase 2

Hiawatha Flats, Phase 2, is a 61-unit apartment building completed by Klodt Development in 2008. The three-story building, which fronts Snelling Avenue, transitions in scale between the phase-1 building and the single family houses across the street. The building also preserves existing canopy trees and provides separate front-door entries for the lower floor units. Despite the slowdown of the economy during the recession, which resulted in slower rentals, Hiawatha Flats achieved stabilized occupancy levels in late 2010, demonstrating the strong demand for housing options near the LRT station.

Minnehaha Restoration Project

Over the past three years, an ecological stabilization and renovation project has been completed along Minnehaha Creek through Minnehaha Park to repair

major erosion damage to the creek bed, stream bank, bluffs, and vegetation along the creek; to restore historic walls and stairs erected by the WPA during the 1930s; and to construct boardwalks and trail improvements along the creek.

Hiawatha LRT Expansion of Station Platforms and Transit System (X)

In 2009, the 46th Street LRT Station platform and shelters, along with other stations along the Hiawatha alignment, were expanded to allow transit service to operate in the future with longer three-car trains that can carry 50 percent more riders. Service expansion can occur as LRT ridership increases and more LRT vehicles are acquired. This can significantly improve the quality of transit services available at the 46th Street LRT station. An additional station was also constructed in Bloomington at American Boulevard. Finally, in late 2009, the new Target Field LRT Station opened in Downtown Minneapolis to coincide with the start of Northstar Commuter Rail service connecting to that station. Additional transit system expansion that is under way – such as the current construction of the Central Corridor LRT project – will further increase transit ridership and will increase the demand to live, work, or shop near transit.

46th Street Lighting Project (X)

The first infrastructure project initiated through the Minnehaha Hiawatha Community Works Project is a pilot high performance sustainable street lighting project along 46th Street. Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis collaborated to approve funding and to install new street lighting on 46th Street between 34th and 46th avenues, which was completed in the spring of 2010. The project improves safety and enhances the pedestrian environment within the neighborhood and along this major pedestrian connection to the 46th Street LRT Station. The improved lighting is part of a multi-year pilot program that will compare several types of lighting technologies (LED and Induction) for energy efficiency, cost-effectiveness, and light quality.

RiverLake Greenway

The RiverLake Greenway was completed in late 2010, providing an east-west bicycle connection across south Minneapolis extending from the Mississippi River to the Chain-of-Lakes. The Greenway is part of the growing network of bike and pedestrian facilities that promote active living and alternative transportation within the city. The Greenway crosses Hiawatha Avenue at 42nd Street at the northern edge of the study area, connects with the Hiawatha LRT Bike Trail and other north-south facilities, and provides good connections to both the 46th Street and the 38th Street LRT Stations.



Minnehaha Creek Restoration



Hiawatha Flats Phase 2



46th Street LRT Platform Expansion in 2009

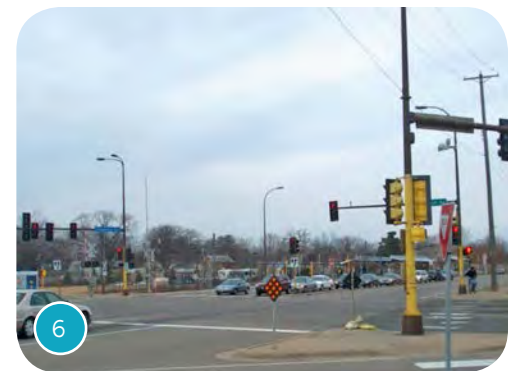
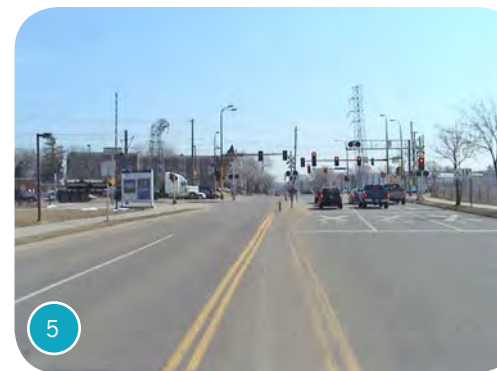
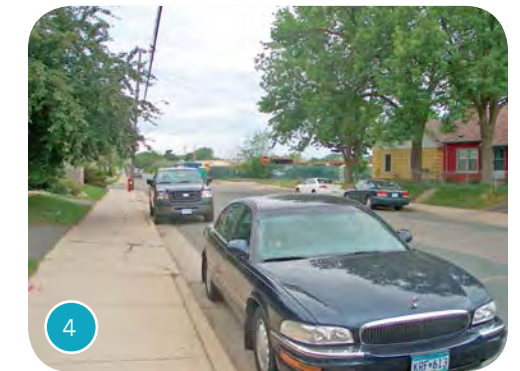
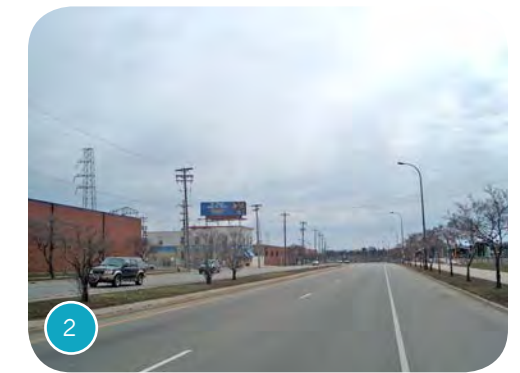
APPENDIX: 2

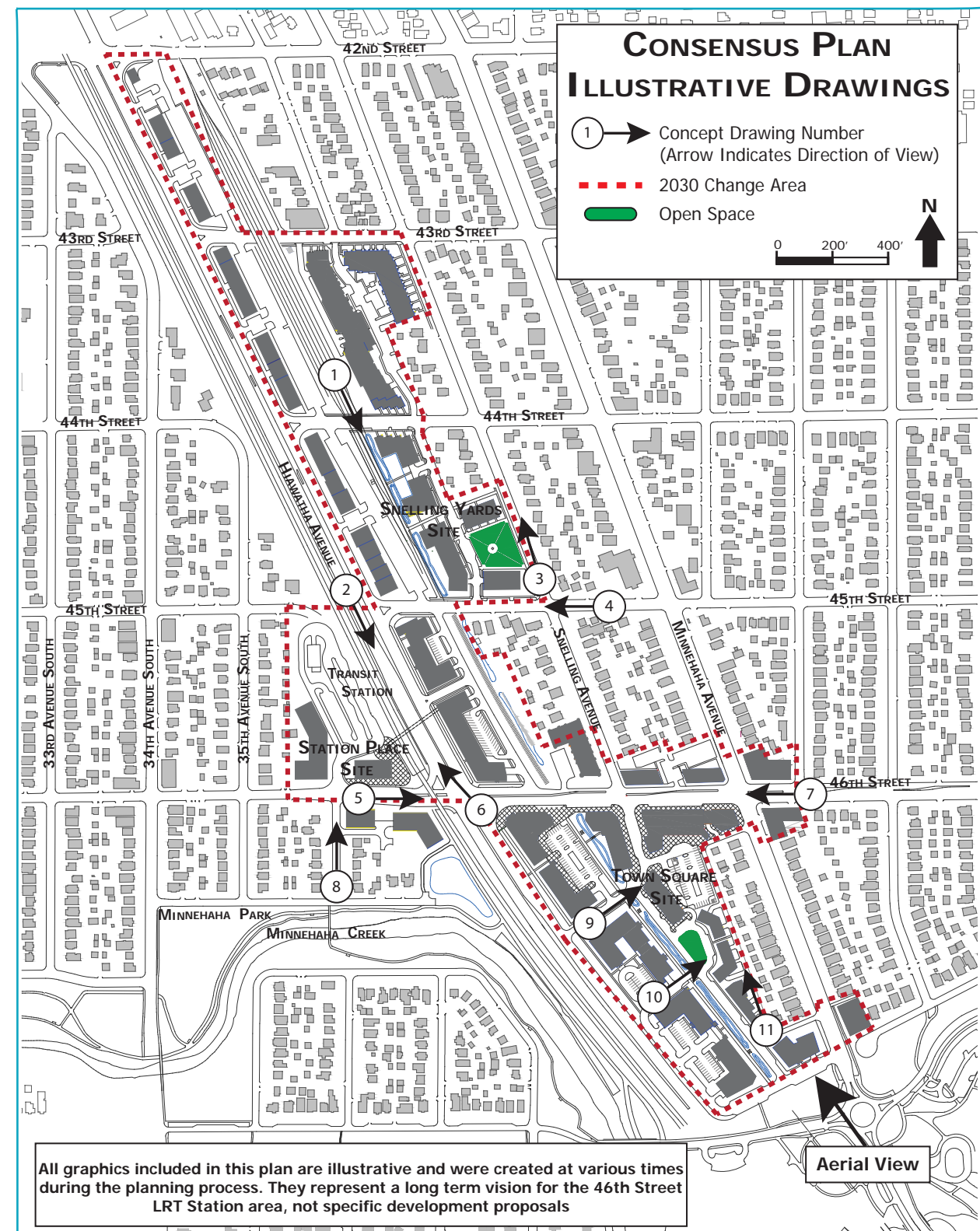
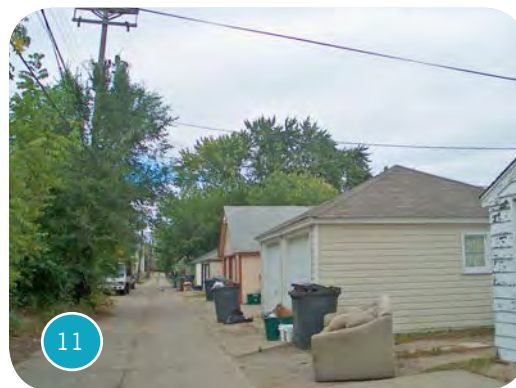
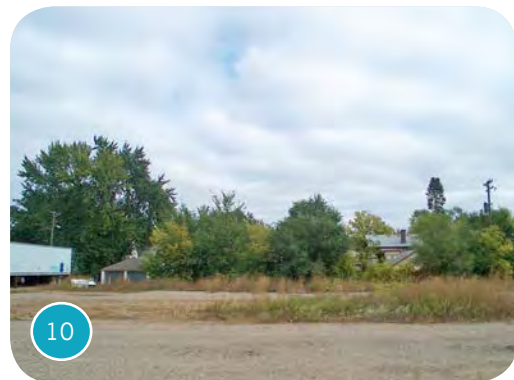
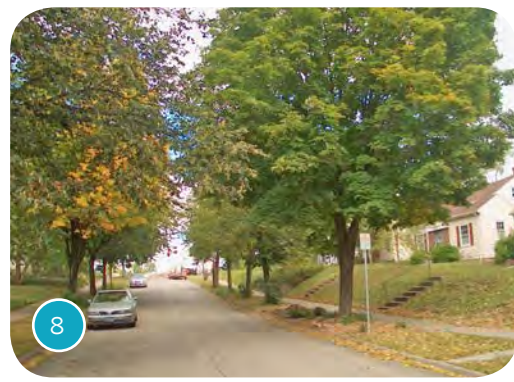
Picture This: A Multimodal Environment, Complete Neighborhood Center and Sustainable Place

Drawings and renderings were prepared for this study to help the community and future developers visualize the urban form and scale of the walkable and sustainable urbanism connected to transit that is supported by this planning process. The drawings are intended to place this plan vision within the physical context of the 46th and Hiawatha station area.

These pictures are purely illustrative and are not intended to represent real or proposed future development. Private developers and property owners will propose their own development plans and scenarios that will differ in details from these preliminary scenarios and architectural sketches. Nor are these illustrations intended to limit the creativity of future development teams in selecting materials, preparing site plans, or developing the architectural design. However, these drawings can assist development teams and property owners to better understand the general goals and aspirations of the community when they begin their own design initiatives, market analysis, and pre-development planning.

The picture captions provide more detailed descriptions of each drawing. The renderings are included along with photographs and a map that clarifies the respective vantage point of each drawing and its location within the study area.







44th Street looking south down the future Greenway Corridor

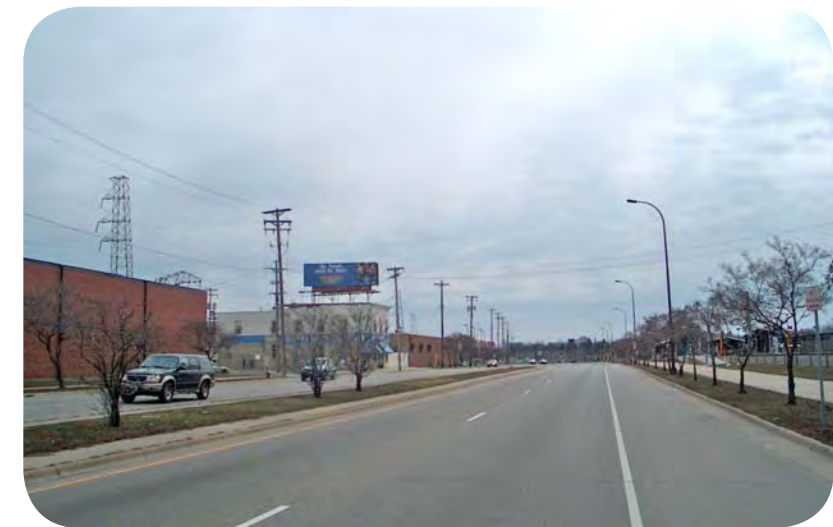
New development on the Snelling Yards opportunity site (center) is similar in scale and character to the existing Hiawatha Flats development (left foreground). The future mid-block “Greenway” corridor integrates the utility corridor with new pedestrian and bicycle facilities and a linear stormwater infiltration basin that creates a functional amenity for adjacent residential development.





Hiawatha Avenue approaching 45th Street, looking south toward the LRT Station

New urban scale development on both sides of Hiawatha Avenue along 46th Street will visually bring together areas to the east and west of the highway, creating a sense of arrival and activity around the LRT station and neighborhood center.



Snelling Avenue at 45th Street looking northwest into new development on the Snelling Yards site



New multistory residential development on the Snelling Yards opportunity site may incorporate a new green space or neighborhood park amenity to attract new residents. Redeveloping the aging public works maintenance facility enhances the neighborhood with new multifamily housing that transitions in scale and incorporates ground-oriented entries into lower level housing units located across the street from the single family dwellings.

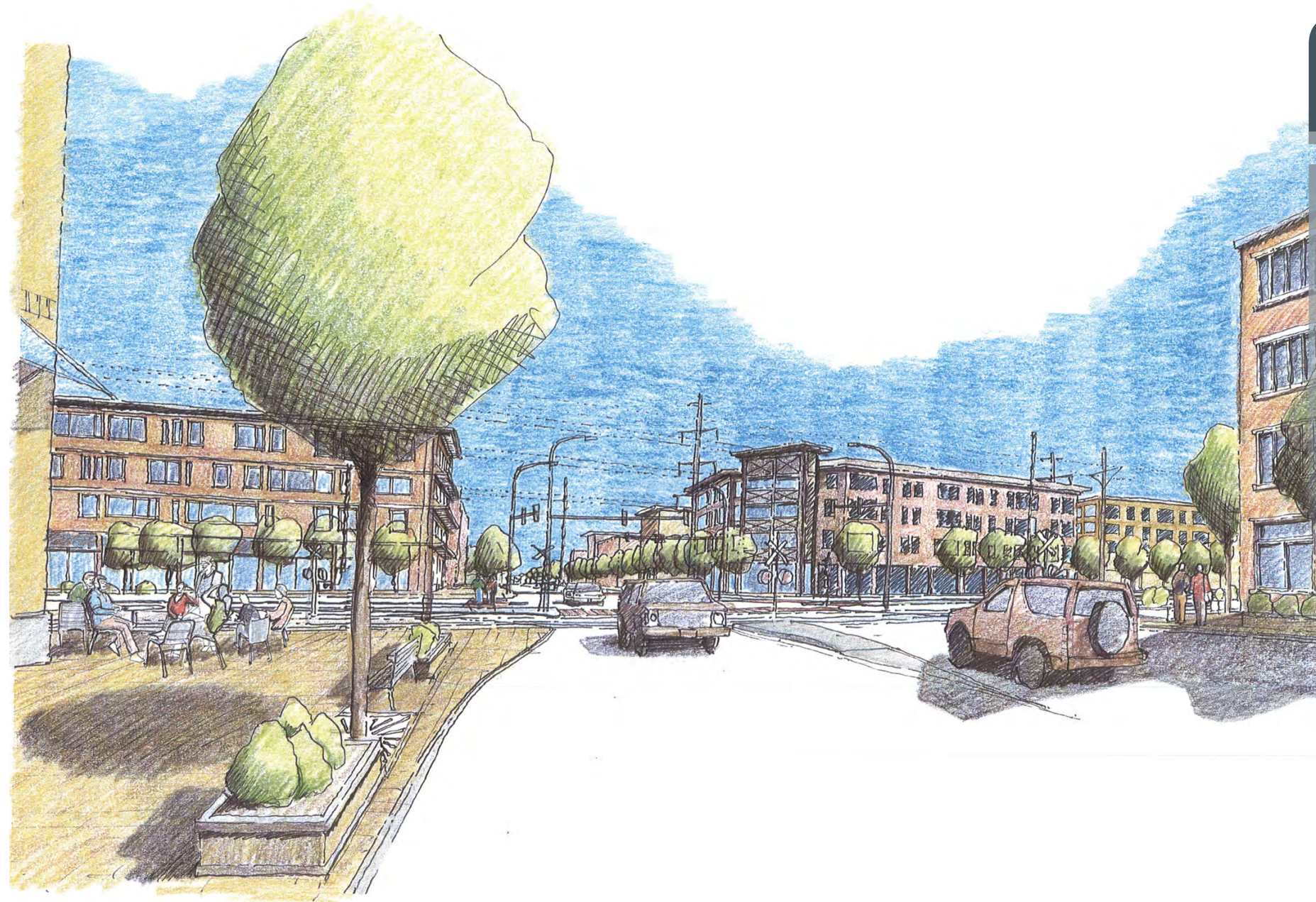




45th Street looking west toward the Snelling Yards site

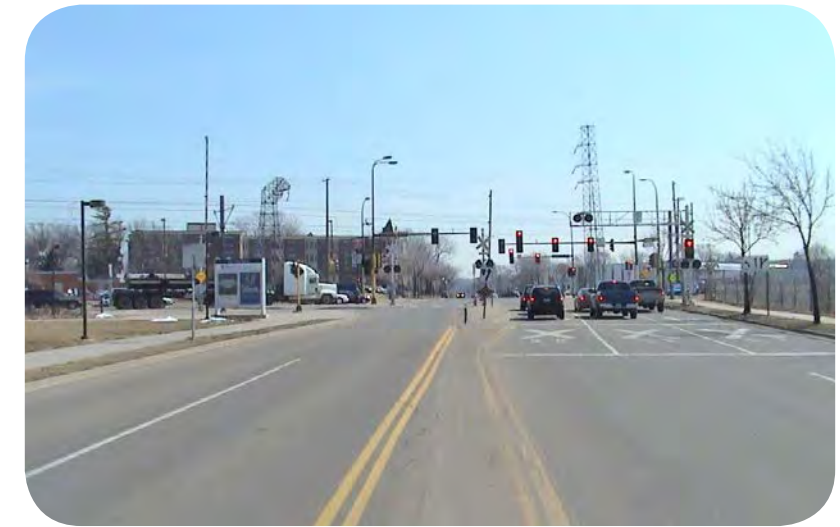
Redeveloping the former Public Works site at 45th Street and Snelling Avenue (seen here at center-right) begins the transition to more urban scaled multifamily housing approaching the LRT station from the east. New residential buildings will range from three to five stories and will provide underground parking for residents.





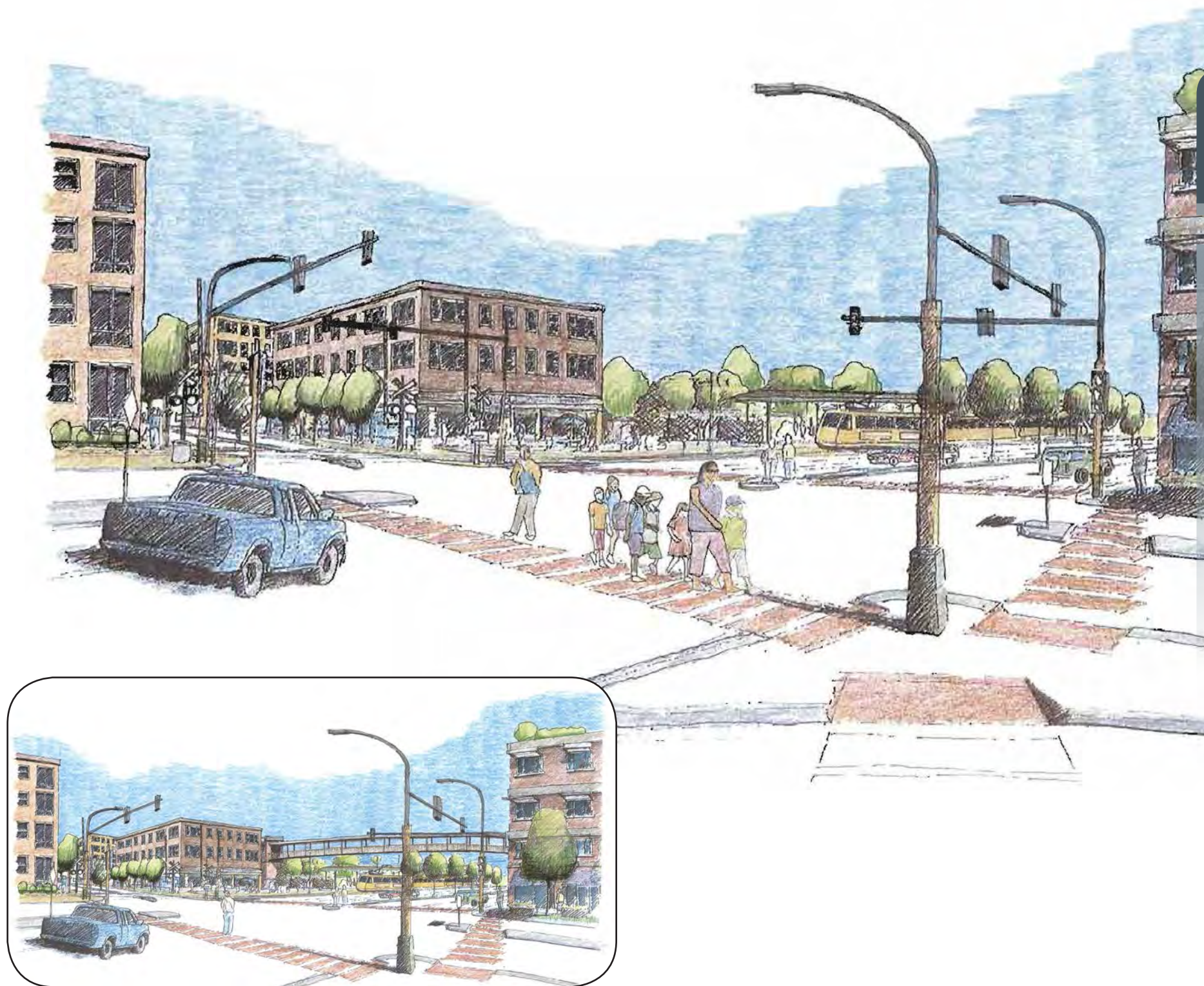
46th Street looking east toward Hiawatha Avenue

A pedestrian plaza, new ground floor retail, and multifamily housing units enliven the Station Place development adjacent to the LRT station (left foreground). Land next to the transit station that is currently devoid of buildings and activity will host a bustling multimodal public realm. Further to the east, the new neighborhood center frames both sides of 46th Street between the LRT station and Minnehaha Avenue.



Intersection of 46th Street and Hiawatha Avenue looking northwest toward the LRT Station

This view highlights the multimodal hub of the station area, where the light rail station and new transit plaza (center) serves as a focal point for the neighborhood center. Future mixed-use development occurs in all four quadrants of the intersection, taking advantage of the proximity to the station. Improved pedestrian crossings facilitate safe and amenable access to the station. One rendering illustrates the possibility of creating a skyway connecting new mixed-use development on the east side of Hiawatha Avenue to the LRT station site.





Intersection of 46th Street and 41st Avenue South looking east toward the neighborhood center

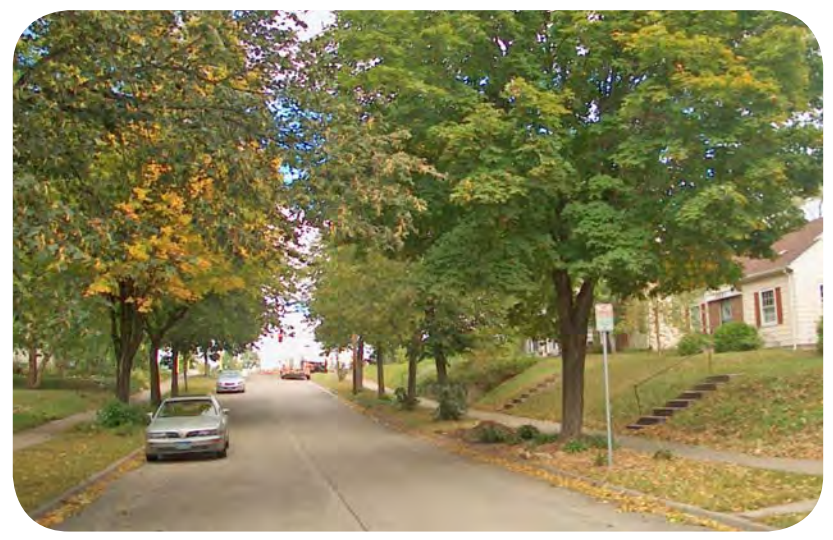
This view depicts an improved pedestrian and retail environment along 46th Street, where street trees, new sidewalks, and clearly-marked crosswalks promote nonmotorized transportation options within the neighborhood center. New mixed-use buildings, with retail on the ground floor and residential units above, frame 46th Street and create a “destination” Main Street for the shopping district.





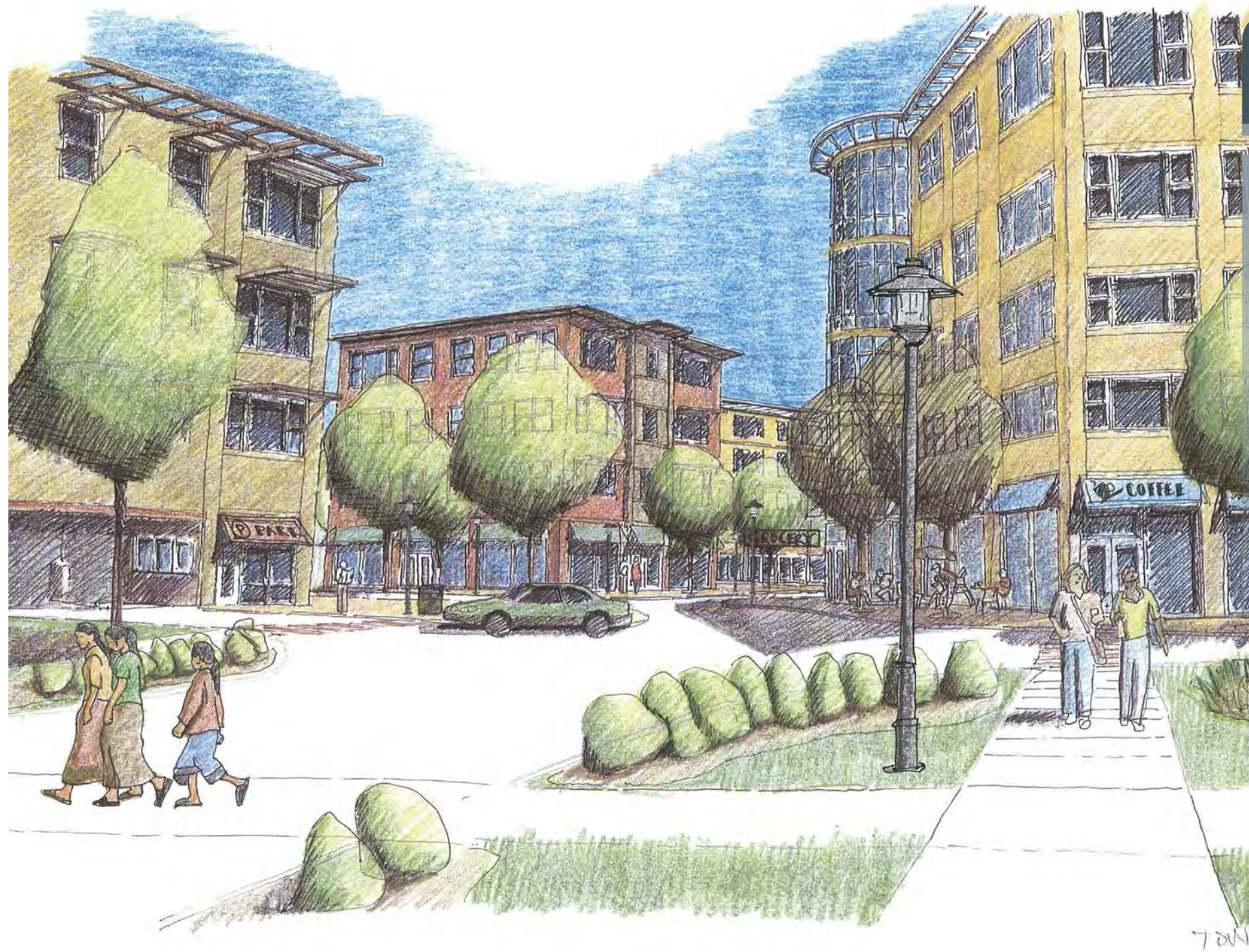
36th Avenue South looking north toward the Light Rail Station

New three-story and four-story residential development is proposed for the “Station Place” sites west of Hiawatha Avenue on both sides of 46th Street (background). While adding density, retail services, and transit patronage on and near the LRT station, new development can step down in scale to address the established single-family neighborhood directly to the south near Minnehaha Creek.



Looking eastward along the Snelling Avenue extension from Hiawatha Avenue

A new neighborhood grocery store and other destination retail shops are located on the ground floor of mixed-use buildings that serve as the focal point of a new pedestrian-friendly retail neighborhood center. Residential units overlook vibrant streets and the nearby Greenway, which incorporated a future pedestrian trail with native plantings surrounding naturalized stormwater infiltration basins.



Town Square looking east toward Townhouse Development

Two-and-one-half-story townhomes front a triangular green space near the center of the Town Square site. These residential buildings feature front porches and provide a unit type that differs from the higher density, multi-story buildings to the north and west.

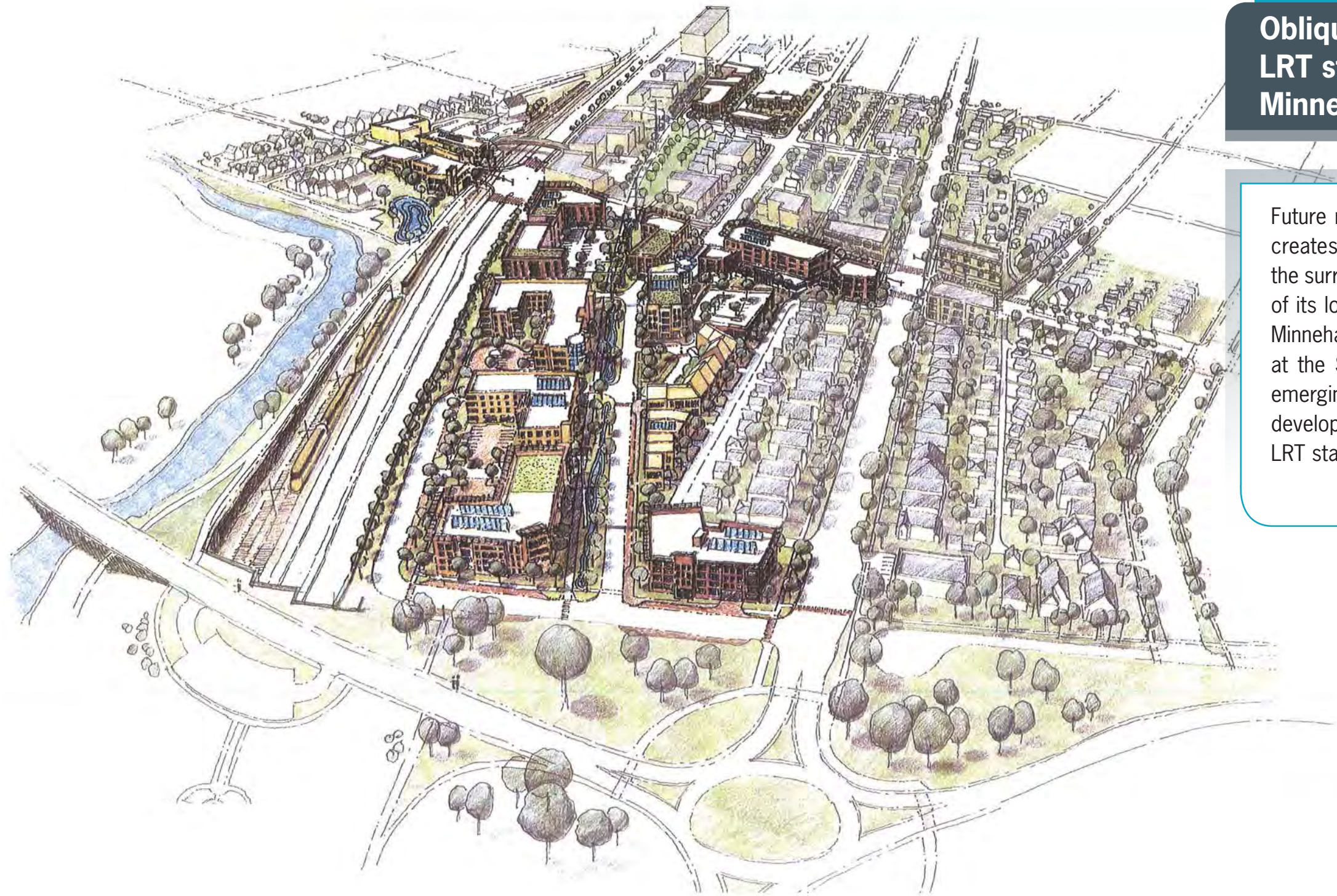




Alley located between the Town Square site and Minnehaha Avenue looking north

This viewpoint depicts the gentle transition in building scale between new Town Square townhomes with tuck-under garages (left) and the garages of the existing single family houses that front Minnehaha Avenue (right). An improved alleyway with additional landscaping could enhance both new and existing houses.





Oblique aerial view of the 46th Street LRT station area looking north from Minnehaha Park

Future redevelopment of the Town Square site (center) creates a mixed-use neighborhood center that enhances the surrounding neighborhood and also takes advantage of its location near the light rail station (upper left) and Minnehaha Park (bottom). Residential development at the Snelling Yards site (center top) blends into the emerging concentration of transit-oriented residential development located west of Snelling Avenue, near the LRT station.