

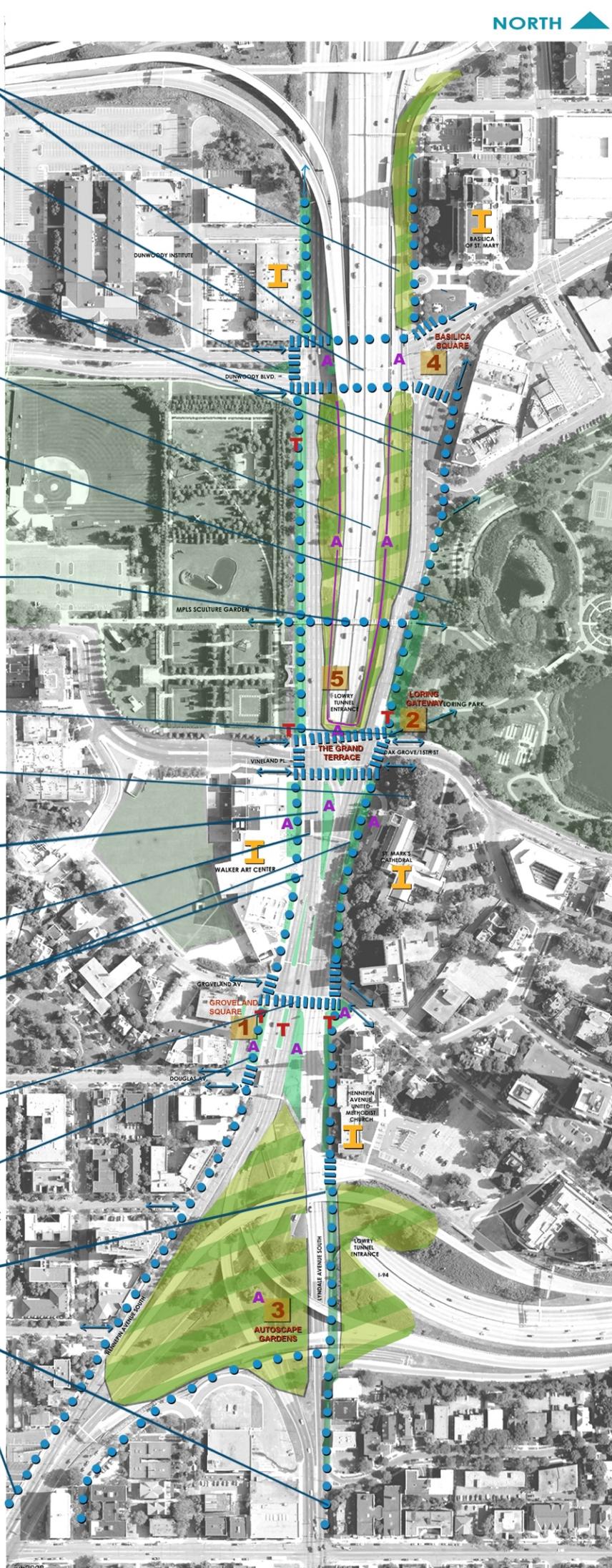
# Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor Design Charrette : 15 YEAR PLAN

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

APRIL 26, 2008

## ISSUES

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



## OPPORTUNITIES

- **PRIMARY PEDESTRIAN & BICYCLE PATHWAY IMPROVEMENTS**
  - Review elements of pedestrian infrastructure, including pavements, layout, landscape/streetscaping, lighting, signage, security. See Minneapolis Street & Sidewalk Design Guidelines.
  - Establish which segments of pathway are in most critical need of improvement.
  - Pursue improvements through city long-range improvement funding, non-auto transit grants, incorporation of pedestrian improvements into adjacent public and private construction projects, investments on the part of adjacent properties, civic gifts from people, businesses and organizations across the Twin Cities.
- **CROSSWALK IMPROVEMENTS**
  - Crosswalks and associated walkways at two intersections: at Groveland Avenue and at Vineland Ave./15th St. were identified as having the most critical problems and the most urgent need for improvements. Look for opportunities to improve all crosswalks along corridor, but focus efforts on these two intersections.
  - Document effects of poor pedestrian conditions on neighboring institutions including the Walker, St. Mark's, and Hennepin Ave. Methodist Church. Incorporate into both neighborhood's planning and advocacy efforts.
  - Identify improvement options such as striping, signage and landscape
  - Organize efforts to make improvements around city policy and planning guidelines such the Transportation Action Plan and the Pedestrian Masterplan.
  - Pursue funding support through methods noted in the pedestrian/bicycle pathways section at the top of this column.
- **INTERCONNECTING PATHWAY IMPROVEMENTS**
  - Identify important pathways that connect to, or intersect with the Hennepin/Lyndale Corridor. Encourage and support efforts to strengthen these pathways, especially those that connect together the Loring Park and the Lowry Hill neighborhoods, and that connect to Downtown Minneapolis and to The Lakes.
- **TRANSIT & TRANSIT STOP IMPROVEMENTS**
  - Support efforts to improve transit service along the Hennepin and Lyndale Transit Corridors - including the expansion of the downtown bus fare zone and the introduction of streetcar service on Hennepin Avenue.
  - Improve transit stop facilities, including shelters, landscaping, scheduling, signage, cleanliness, security.
  - Incorporate art and artistry into transit facilities
  - Seek funding through a variety of governmental jurisdictions, grants, and private investment (e.g. bus shelter providers)
- **ART AS AN ELEMENT OF THE CIVIC LIFE AND FABRIC OF CORRIDOR**
  - Find opportunities to incorporate new public art works at fitting locations along the corridor.
  - Incorporate art and artistry into new public infrastructure where ever possible.
- **INSTITUTIONS - ANCHORS OF A CIVIC CORRIDOR**
  - Support health and vitality of major institutions along the corridor.
  - Encourage civic/cultural activity within the public realm of the corridor.
  - Encourage investments by area institutions to enrich the character of the corridor.
  - Support public improvements to the corridor that benefit the vitality of institutions located along the corridor.
- **NEW GREENING ALONG PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY**
  - Seek opportunities to increase the amount of vegetation along the corridor. Focus on areas that are currently either unplanted or where additional trees or other plants could be added.
  - Work with experts to find low maintenance plants that are tolerant of harsh road and winter conditions.
  - Develop strategies for greening using new technology such as green walls and artificial trees.
- **INTERSTATE LANDSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS**
  - Build political support for funding to help mitigate the damage that the building of Interstate 94 and the Lowry Tunnel caused to the Hennepin/Lyndale Corridor.
  - Develop a partnership with MNDOT in addressing problems such landscaping, signage, noise, salt damage, etc.
  - Encourage partnerships that would allow for the incorporation of art and artistry into the construction of new infrastructure.

## FEATURE VIGNETTES

### 1 GROVELAND SQUARE

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

### 2 LORING GATEWAY

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

### 3 AUTOSCAPE GARDENS

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

### 4 BASILICA SQUARE & THE WEST GATE

- Establish a complete urban space by strengthening the freeway edge to form the third wall of a triangularly shaped city square.
- Construct new freeway screening that fits the character of adjacent architectural elements and which is an inspiring artistic work in itself.
- Use the medieval city wall and gate as a typology to address the design of the freeway edge and the Hennepin Avenue underpass - mark the underpass as a gate in the wall - an entry to downtown - the west gate.
- Recognize the freeway. Options: celebrate American Interstate system (I-94 Boston 1133 mi. east Seattle 1382 mi. west) - expand Basilica gardens as the Garden of St. Anthony and St. Christopher in honor of travelers.

### 5 & THE GRAND TERRACE

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