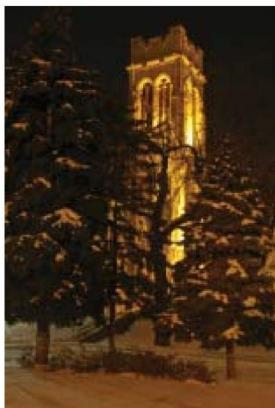


## Recommendation 4.21 (a-f)

### Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor

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

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



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



November 6, 2010

#### **Community Workshop II Visioning Loring 2030**

##### **Community Visioning & Design Workshops**

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

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

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



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

### Long Range Transformational Opportunities

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



investment, the following significant improvements may be possible:

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



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

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



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

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

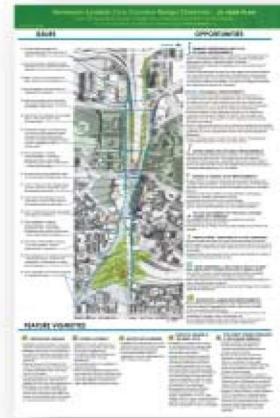
pedestrians who use this location to walk between Loring Park and the Walker Art Center (See Chapter 1 *Cultural Assets & Economic Vitality*)

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

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

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

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



#### **2008: Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor Design Charrette**

The poster shown on the last page of this section, which can be found at

[www.loringpark.org](http://www.loringpark.org), summarizes a range of short term 'functional improvements' that would improve non-vehicular experiences in the corridor. Along with the public realm design guidelines for Loring Park Edge found in this chapter, this document should be used as a starting point for implementation of improvements within the corridor.

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

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

APRIL 26, 2008

[HTTP://DOWNTOWN2015.COM/HOME PAGE/HENNIPINLYNDALE/HENNIPLYNPAGE.HTM](http://DOWNTOWN2015.COM/HOME PAGE/HENNIPINLYNDALE/HENNIPLYNPAGE.HTM)

## 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, automobile-dominated environment.
- Over-head road signage is out of character and out of scale with the surrounding urban environment.
- Lack of street-front activity associated with adjacent institutions
- Poor pedestrian crossing accommodations - confusing pedestrian path - wind-swept - threatening automobile environment - poor transit accommodations
- Excessive impermeable surfaces - too much asphalt - missed opportunities for greening
- Poor pedestrian (& cyclist) environment - freeway fencing is rundown and unattractive - landscaping is unkempt and uninspiring
- Poor pedestrian environment adjacent to commercial uses.



## 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 Hennepin/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 Hennepin/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 triangular 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 LOWRY TUNNEL ENTRANCE & THE GRAND TERRACE

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