



WestBroadway

ALIVE

City of Minneapolis
Community Planning and Economic Development
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1. Introduction

Project Goal

West Broadway has historically been the most significant commercial and cultural destination in north Minneapolis. Although much reduced from its boom years, it remains the main street of north Minneapolis. The purpose of the West Broadway Alive! (WBA) plan and planning process is to lay the groundwork for the revitalization of West Broadway as a recognized and cherished place and the center of commercial and community activity in north Minneapolis.

The West Broadway Alive plan seeks to provide a roadmap for improving the corridor as well as better understanding the strengths and opportunities within this unique section of Minneapolis. This plan has been developed to ensure that West Broadway truly does come alive with long-term economic stability and continues to be a place of community pride rooted in the many cultures and ethnicities that represent the Avenue and surrounding neighborhoods.

The plan outlines a vision for West Broadway, provides site specific guidance for future development, and proposes an action agenda comprised of recommended implementation steps.

It was understood from early on that West Broadway has historically never been just one thing. It has always operated on several levels, acting as:

- **Main Street**
- **Destination/Activity Center**
- **Community space**

This rich set of complementary roles has been diminished over time to the point where West Broadway today only fully accomplishes the first role—that of a place where local residents can pick up a range of convenience goods and services. In fact, many local residents go elsewhere even for daily needs such as groceries and household goods.

This plan is a roadmap for restoring West Broadway’s place in providing these three functions. We have learned that there is a potential market to be captured in all three areas. And in fact it has become apparent that, in order to make existing businesses successful and to invite new development to the many underutilized properties on West Broadway, it will be necessary to reestablish the place of West Broadway in each of these three roles.

Three Frames of Reference

Because West Broadway is such a complex environment, the question of what would be required to achieve a transformed environment was approached through three lenses.

West Broadway Should Be

- **A Main street**
Meeting the local shopping needs of North Minneapolis residents
- **A Destination**
Offering sub-regional goods and services as well as destination “jewels.”
- **A Community space**
Supporting markets and festivals that activate the street and provide a community gathering point



Redevelopment. What kind of new development is desired, and how can it be fostered?

Business improvements. What would it take to improve the attractiveness of the commercial districts, and what types of support are needed for existing businesses?

Design. How do we turn West Broadway into an attractive, welcoming and comfortable environment to spend time in?

An attempt was made throughout the planning process to not neglect any of these three perspectives. The action agenda was enriched as a result because consideration of the issues through each frame of reference yielded a different (but complementary) menu of recommended

improvement strategies.



The infographic titled "West Broadway Needs" is presented on a white background with a vertical green bar on the left. It lists three main categories, each with a sub-header, a brief description, and a representative image. The categories are: 1. "New Development" with the sub-header "Redevelopment of private property, street reconstruction" and an image of a modern building under construction. 2. "Business District Activation" with the sub-header "Business mix, pedestrian amenities, business support, marketing and branding, community events" and an image of a busy street scene with people and shops. 3. "Design Improvements" with the sub-header "Façade improvements, streetscape improvements, development guidelines, public art" and an image of a street with colorful buildings and a car.

Project Background

The impetus for doing a comprehensive and long range plan for West Broadway originated with the West Broadway Area Coalition, which recognized the importance of focusing the collective attention of the City and community stakeholders on West Broadway. The project was taken up by the City and funded predominantly through City planning funds with some financial support from Near North/Willard Hay Neighborhood Revitalization Program funds.

This plan document builds on past planning work over the past several years, most notably a series of planning exercises focused on the Penn/Broadway node and the largely residential part of West Broadway that has become known as “The Curve.” It also benefits from a recent market analysis as well as an ongoing process concerned with marketing North Minneapolis—both of which were sponsored by the Northway Community Trust.

The West Broadway Alive study area includes property within a block of West Broadway from the Mississippi River to the western City limits. It extends further as appropriate to include property within a quarter-mile radius from the major transit nodes at Penn Avenue, Emerson/Fremont Avenues, and Lyndale Avenue. The study also includes an expanded area at the Mississippi River.

Planning Process

The planning process was organized around community work sessions, but also utilized smaller group settings to extend the outreach and explore more focused topics. The design and execution of the planning process relied heavily on a community-based project Steering

Committee. Input from these processes was used to generate and refine ideas and plan recommendations.

Community Engagement

The West Broadway Alive planning process went to great lengths to reach out and engage the community. A wide variety of methods were used to attract people to the five public meetings, resulting in an average attendance of 130 people. This was accomplished through the use of traditional methods such as e-mails, flyers, and newspaper advertisements. Nontraditional methods of getting the word out included stationing posterboards in heavily utilized neighborhood businesses, and talking about upcoming events on community radio programs.



A significant media outreach strategy was used to inform as many stakeholders as possible both about meetings and events and the process itself. Terry Collins at the Star Tribune published an article. Community newspapers covered events and provided other publicity including: North News, Asian-American Press, Minnesota Spokesman-Recorder, Hmong Times, One Nation News and The Sentinel. Broadcast media such as WCCO-AM, MPR, Cities 97, KBEM-FM presented public service announcements. Other organizations published information about the planning process in their newsletters.

The community meetings were themselves designed to be engaging. Every event included abundant visual material, and offered multiple methods of engaging with the ideas and providing input. Examples included drawing West Broadway logo ideas, placing dots on a poster to indicate preferences, building development scenarios with blocks, and walking along a life sized sidewalk in front of a life-sized storefront mockup.

Special efforts were made to connect with various minority communities. Local churches helped get the word out in this regard. A Hmong community organization assisted with outreach to Hmong residents and business owners. Interpreters were available at community meetings.

Beyond the efforts to attract people to community events, additional outreach was designed to connect with community members and other stakeholders where they lived and worked. Information about peoples' shopping choices was solicited via a survey that was placed in local businesses, as well as distributed to residential households by students in a North High School geography class. The geography class also mapped the West Broadway corridor with an eye toward physical conditions that made locations vulnerable to criminal activity.

Neighborhood outreach included discussion of the goals and recommendations of the plan in neighborhood meetings in nearly every north Minneapolis neighborhood, and several smaller sub-neighborhood

groups. West Broadway property owners, business owners, and developers were also convened for their insights and to cultivate their participation. Representatives from the Steering Committee attended community-wide events such as the North Housing and Home Improvement Fair and National Night Out with information about the planning effort.

A group of community members and other stakeholders played a role in guiding the planning process through participating in a project steering committee. The committee included representatives from neighborhood groups, the West Broadway Business Association and West Broadway Area Coalition, other neighborhood and community institutions and elected officials. The Steering Committee advised and assisted city staff and the project team on communication and outreach, and vetted public meeting agendas and materials.

The outreach and communications employed in the planning process helped to shape the plan through the inclusion of as many stakeholders as possible. It bore fruit in that there is a high degree of community consensus around the objectives and action strategies in the plan.

Summary of Community Meetings

ASSETS: EAST



In order to ensure that these issues are properly vetted by stakeholders over twenty steering committee, task force, and open house meetings were conducted throughout this process. Below is a review of the various community meetings that occurred throughout the planning process.

Community Kick-Off Meeting, August 24, 2006

A community-wide project kick-off meeting was facilitated on Thursday, August 24, 2006, at Shiloh Temple, to introduce participants to the West Broadway Alive planning process. The event was attended by approximately 150 people. The focus was on obtaining baseline information about people's attitudes and perceptions of West Broadway. Stations were set up to allow participants to view the results of previous studies of West Broadway, as well as to offer input on key questions about West Broadway, including:

- What are its assets?
- What do you like?
- What types of new housing are needed?
- Indicate opportunities for change.
- What is your vision?
- Where do you live, work, shop and stop?
- What do you want to see?

Open House Meeting Number 2, November 14, 2006

A second community-wide public meeting was facilitated on Tuesday, November 14, 2006 at the Capri Theater. The event was attended by approximately 125 people. The meeting focused on four major issues pertaining to the planning process: vision statement/guiding principles, land and design concepts, options for enhancing Emerson and Fremont

Avenues as a gateway to West Broadway, and artistic motifs. Meeting participants listened to presentations about each of these four plan elements, discussed the topics with presenters, and were given comment cards to provide input to the City of Minneapolis and the SEH Team.



Open House Number 3, February 10, 2007

The third open house took place at the Plymouth Christian Youth Center. The purpose of the meeting was to allow participants an opportunity to experiment with what kind of development they would like to see on case study sites at Broadway and Washington, and at Broadway and Knox. exercise required placing and

stacking blocks on a large aerial view of each site. The feasibility of the development concepts was analyzed during the exercise. An exhibit area solicited feedback on streetscape and public art concepts, as well as transportation elements. Roughly 70 community members attended this Saturday morning open house.

Open House Number 4, May 8, 2007.

A community-wide public meeting was facilitated on Tuesday May 8, 2007 at 800 West Broadway Avenue. The focus of the meeting was on West Broadway's commercial core.

Exhibits included materials related to business strategies, land use and development intensity, redevelopment scenarios, transportation, streetscape and public art ideas. The event was attended by approximately 160 people. The public were given comment sheets to provide general input to the City of Minneapolis and the SEH Team.



Open House Meeting Number 5, July 17, 2007

The final community-wide public meeting was held to discuss implementation strategies as well as celebrate the project. The event was attended by over 140 people. Meeting participants enjoyed a cook-out with local businesses contributing food and beverages for the event. A formal presentation was held to discuss implementation and revitalization strategies. Participants were also asked to provide

comments on streetscape elements, final design guidelines and implementation priorities.

Summary of Business Kick-off Meeting

A project kick-off meeting was facilitated with the business community on Thursday, October 12, 2006. The event was attended by approximately 65 people who focused on developing a list of potential “brand” or “marketing” identities and strategies that could be employed during the planning process.

Summary of Developer Focus Meeting

A developer focus group meeting was held on Wednesday, November 15, 2006 at the offices of Master at Broadway and 2nd Street. The purpose of the meeting was to provide information and solicit feedback regarding development issues along the West Broadway corridor. The meeting focused on passive elements within the corridor and explored what types of development are working or not working along the Avenue.

The consultant team and city staff provided an overview of the project and future plans for the Avenue as well as talked in general terms about land use and case study sites. Much of the meeting was spent learning from developers about the challenges of developing on West Broadway, and what could be done to help developers surmount those challenges. The event was attended by 23 people.