

2. Public Participation

Public Participation

The Small Area Plan process was conducted in three phases over approximately 18 months. The depth of public outreach was a foundation for the Plan, and the process was open, transparent, and inclusive; all focus group meetings, Steering Committee and public meetings were open and accessible. The Steering Committee met twelve times throughout the process and helped to guide the project. The design team hosted nine community meetings at Calhoun Square and facilitated fourteen focus group discussions. Total meeting attendance exceeded 500 people. In addition, the team gave periodic updates to the Planning Commission and interested groups such as the Midtown Greenway Coalition and the Uptown area business associations. Below are highlights from and outcomes of the public input sessions. In addition, a robust project website was updated with regular information about the process. Over 20 e-mail updates were sent out to meeting participants over the 18 month process. Additional notes and details are located in the Appendices.

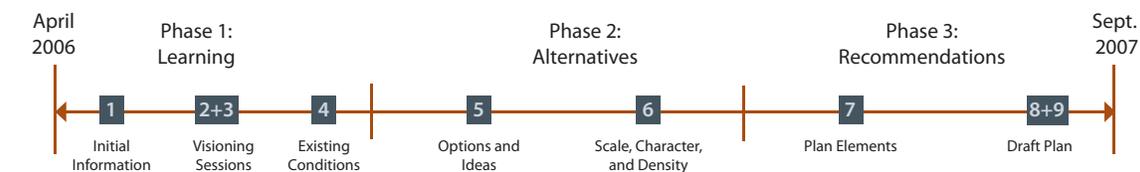
Steering Committee

The Uptown Small Area Plan Steering Committee was selected in June 2006. The Steering Committee was comprised of:

- One (1) Council Member
- Two (2) representatives from each of the surrounding four neighborhoods
- Six (6) City Council Member appointees
- One (1) representative from each of the two business associations
- One (1) representative from the Midtown Greenway Coalition

Responsibilities of committee members included:

- Communicating with appointing organizations.
- Helping to engage the public.
- Advising on the planning process.
- Advising on Plan content.
- Balancing various values.



Public Process: The Small Area Plan included nine Community Meetings over 18- months. Presentations and public feedback sessions were part of each meeting.

Visioning Sessions

In November 2006, the City hosted two Community Visioning Sessions in Uptown. Participants shared their concerns and discussed what they value about Uptown. Input from these meetings helped draft the vision statement that guides the Plan. Listed below are the most frequent responses from the visioning session discussions.

What you value about Uptown:

- Livability issues such as “balance of destination to residential,” “small town feel with urban amenities,” human scale, sense of community, “walkability.”
- Lakes, Greenway, parks, and green spaces.
- Transportation options, walking, biking, transit, auto.
- Fun, quirky, unique character, “energy.”
- Diversity—small business, population and cultures, aesthetics and activities.
- Historic nature of residential houses.

What your concerns are about Uptown:

- Transportation & traffic.
- Incompatible development (height & density in inappropriate locations).
- Safety and crime.
- Affordability (both housing & commercial spaces).
- Loss of identity and diversity.
- Loss of residential services.
- Air, noise, and water pollution.

Focus Groups

In February 2007, the consultant team hosted focus group meetings to identify specific issues within each group as well as general issues across groups. The following stakeholders participated in the focus group meetings:

- Retail operators
- YWCA representative
- Developers
- Restaurant and bar operators/owners
- Office employees
- Residents (variety of ages)
- Multi-family property owners/managers
- Public safety officers and personnel
- Public realm representatives (parks, art)
- Business associations
- Transportation planners
- Faith-based community members and leaders
- Arts and culture representatives
- Families

Results from the focus group meetings included these common themes and conclusions:

Business mix is out of balance

As daily uses and activities have decreased, so has the daytime population. In the past ten years, the



Public Process: The Small Area Plan process included nine community meetings. Presentations and feedback sessions were part of each meeting.

business mix has shifted towards evening uses such as restaurants, bars, and theaters. The lack of daytime uses creates an unhealthy imbalance that is inconsistent with the desired future of the area. A strong daytime population will help stabilize and attract community-oriented businesses.

Parking is a problem

There is a need to better use existing parking supply and create a long term parking strategy. There is enough parking; however, access and quality are poor.

Calhoun Square is critical

As the largest property in Uptown, Calhoun Square has a huge impact on the overall health and vitality of the region. The uncertainty about Calhoun Square's future has hurt not only the building tenants, but also the entire area. It is time to rethink the building format and consider a major overhaul that improves the building's relationship to the street and to the neighborhood.

People love Uptown

There is a passion and desire for Uptown to remain an "enclave of the weird." People are drawn to Uptown because it offers amenities within walking distance unlike any other place in the region.

Public infrastructure is poor

With the exception of recent investments on Hennepin Avenue north of 28th Street (street lamps, small parks), the study area has seen few improvements to public infrastructure.

Public Input Meetings

The team hosted nine public meetings at which ideas and recommendations were presented and feedback was sought. Typically, public meetings contained a presentation and either small groups or an open house format in which stakeholders and residents could offer opinions and feedback. The public meeting schedule and outline was as follows:

2006

November: Visioning Sessions (2 meetings)

2007

February: Existing Conditions

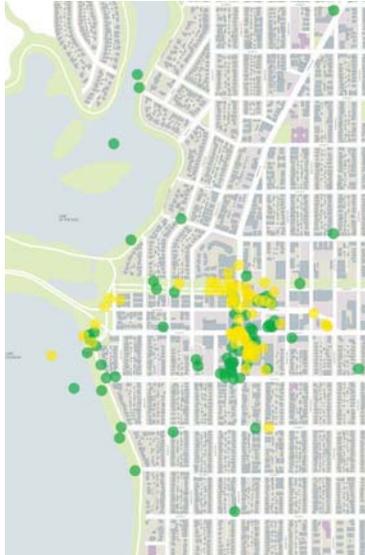
March: Goals and Initial Ideas

May: Character Scale and Design

June: Land Use, Built Form, Transportation and Public Realm Improvements

September: Final Recommendations and the Adoption Process (2 meetings)

On February 8, the design team hosted a public meeting in Calhoun Square. The team reported on the focus groups and solicited input from attendees on the topics of streets, gathering spaces, and new development. The purpose of this meeting was to begin transitioning from visioning to place-based design, as well as to identify common themes or patterns. Participants were asked to answer specific questions by locating places on the map with colored dots and writing responses on index cards. The responses are below.



Favorite (green) and New (yellow) Gathering Places: Stakeholders desire new gathering places to be located close to the core, at Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street and at Hennepin Avenue and the Greenway.



Opportunities for New Development: Stakeholders identified the Arby's site and Calhoun Square as the priority locations for redevelopment.



Traffic and Street Problem Areas: The Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street intersection, the one-way split, and portions of Hennepin Avenue between 26th Street and Franklin Avenue emerged as the most significant problem areas.

What are the qualities of ideal gathering places in Uptown?

- Open space / green / landscaped
- Accessible / open / comfortable
- Seating / benches
- Public art
- Public access
- Variety of commercial / community uses
- Usable in all seasons

What are the qualities of ideal new development in Uptown?

- Mixed-use and dense but appropriately scaled
- Modern
- Traditional
- Incorporates green space
- Serves the needs of Uptown: useful stores and daily activities of life
- Diverse, unique, weird, affordable
- Good frontage
- Hidden parking

What are the qualities of ideal new streets in Uptown?

- Pedestrian friendly / sidewalk / lighting
- Trees / landscape / green
- Buildings relate to street
- On-street parking
- Good traffic conditions



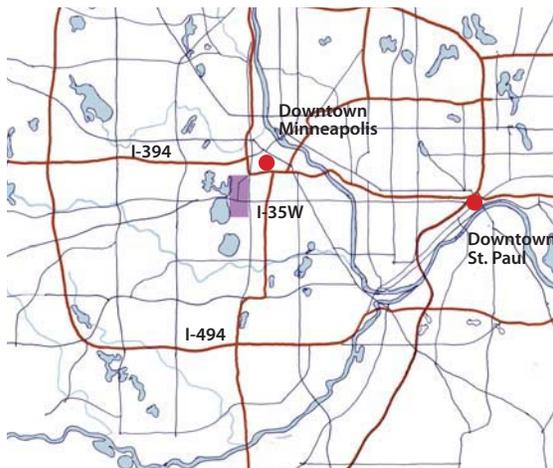
3. Physical Analysis

Urban Design Analysis

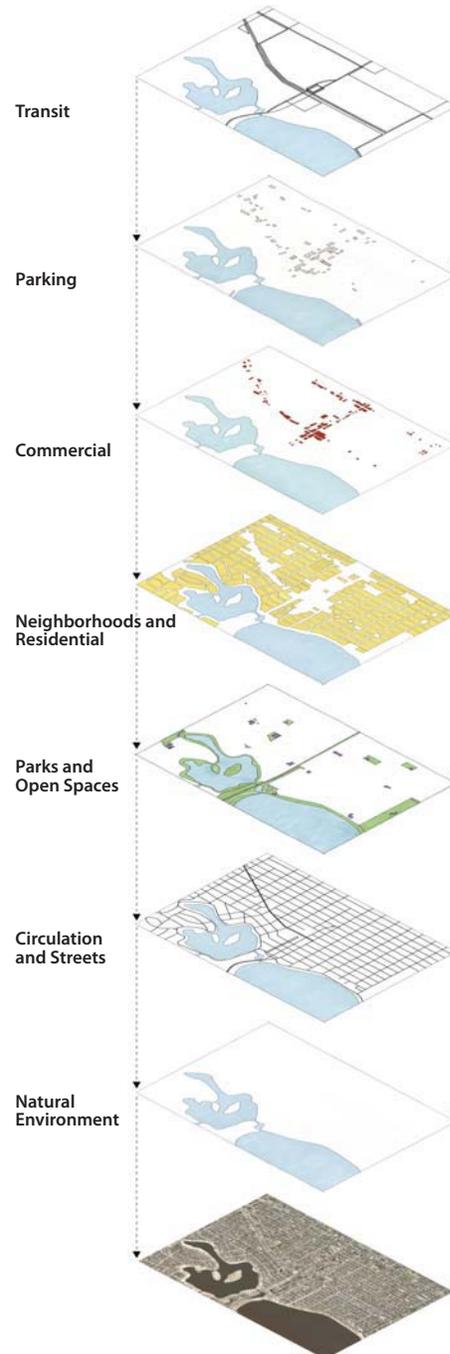
Uptown's history and community character are products of regional growth patterns, natural features, and built systems. Each of these components connects the area to its immediate community and to the greater region.

Urban areas like Uptown are composed of overlapping and related systems. Each individual system's health and ability to interact and support other systems impacts the overall area's health. On the following pages, selected systems of the City are extracted as layers and are analyzed for their health and viability.

Over time, some of the urban systems that have made Uptown a desirable place to live, do business, visit, and invest have eroded. Although neighborhoods surrounding Uptown remain desirable because of their proximity to the Lakes and downtown; and residential properties continue to increase in value, underlying structural flaws inhibit the area from developing to its full potential.



Regional Locator: Uptown is located near the western edge of Minneapolis, but it is located in the center of the region.



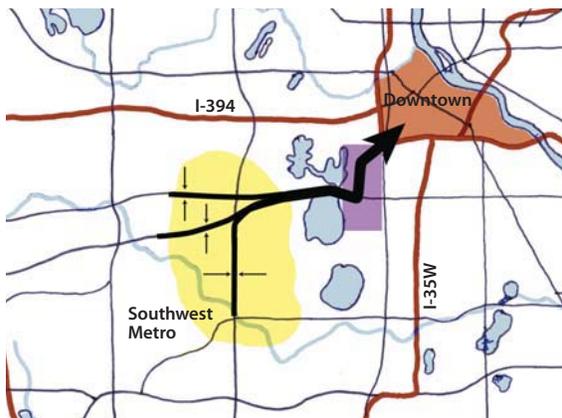
Urban Systems: Uptown is a series of functional layers that, when healthy, reinforce and strengthen each other.

Circulation and the Street Grid

The street grid in Uptown is incomplete. Incremental changes over the past twenty years have disconnected once-connected streets, thereby limiting options and forcing traffic onto a limited number of routes. These changes forced the urban grid system to operate like a suburban traffic system.

- Links in the street system have been vacated: 29th Street, Girard Avenue, and Holmes Avenue.
- Neighborhood streets have been converted to one-way to prevent “cut through” traffic.
- Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue were converted to one-way streets to reduce intersection delay and maximize “through-put” in an effort to reduce air pollution.

The Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue intersection consists of super-blocks (blocks that have been combined through street vacations) on two of



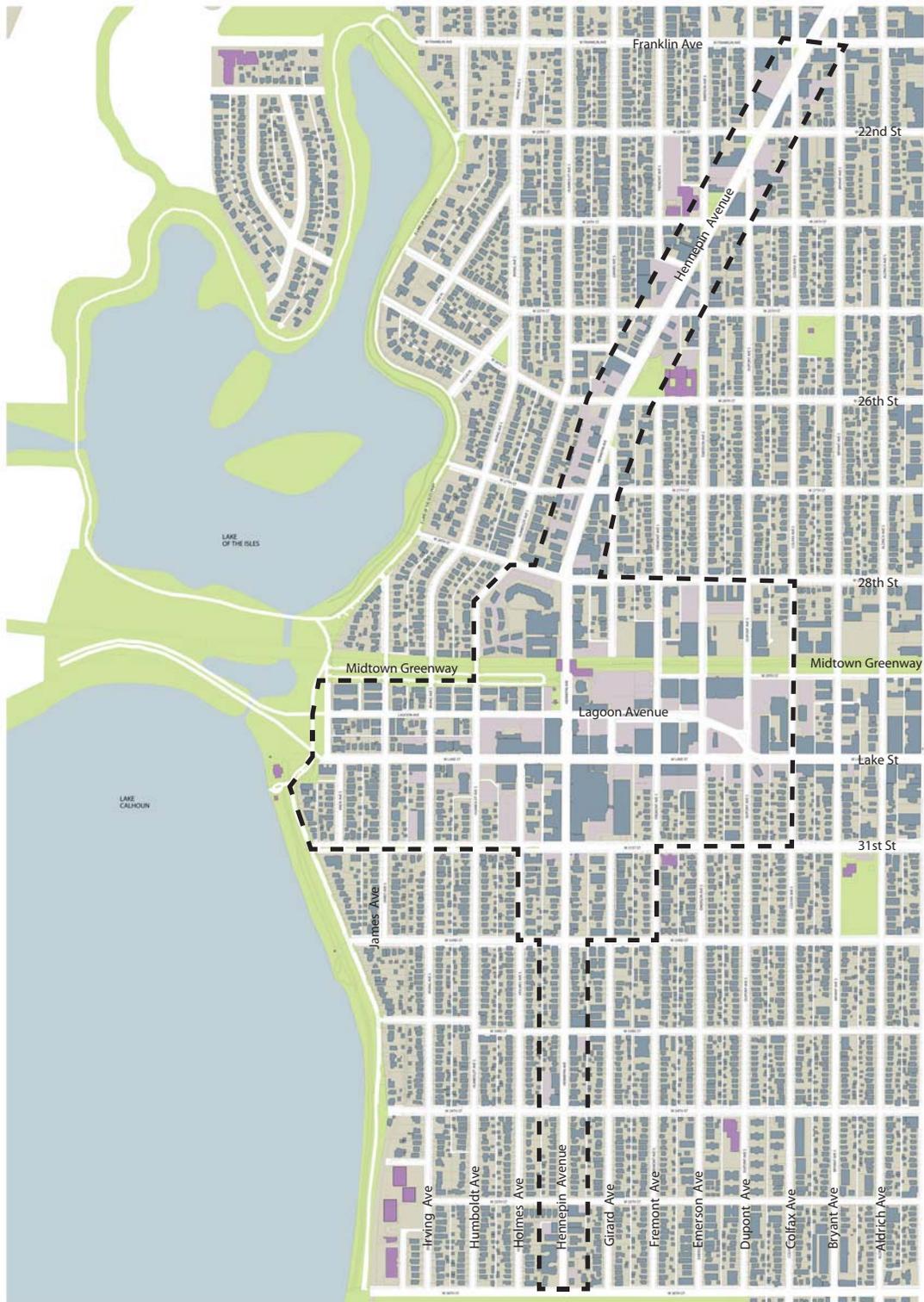
Regional Traffic Pattern: The Chain of Lakes acts as a barrier to east/west traffic. Three of the region's main east-west arterials merge to become Lake Street in Uptown. Since Uptown is located adjacent to downtown, Hennepin Avenue is a primary commuter route for residents in the southwest suburbs. Nearly one-third of all vehicles heading east on Lake Street turn north or south at Hennepin Avenue.

four corners. The large blocks and one-way streets disrupt natural circulation patterns and put undue pressure on the Hennepin/Lake intersection.

This Plan will investigate ways Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue can be improved as settings for new investment and pedestrian activity, as well as ways overall area circulation can be improved to lessen the burden on the Hennepin Avenue/Lake Street intersection.



Street Grid and One Way Streets (in red): One-way streets in Uptown facilitate through-traffic, reduce intersection delay, and prevent “cut-through traffic,” but they also add turning movements, misdirect drivers, and reduce storefront visibility.



Existing Conditions: Uptown consists of a mix of uses, including residential neighborhoods, commercial corridors, and aging industrial uses. North of 28th Street and south of 31st Street, Uptown has a positive relationship to the surrounding neighborhoods. However, in the core, the neighborhoods are separated.

Parks and Open Spaces

Uptown is located in one of the region's most amenity-rich areas. It is adjacent to the Chain of Lakes and the Midtown Greenway, which connects the Lakes and the Mississippi River via south Minneapolis neighborhoods. Although the Greenway is a valuable public amenity, it is difficult to see and to access from Uptown because of its location in a former railroad trench.

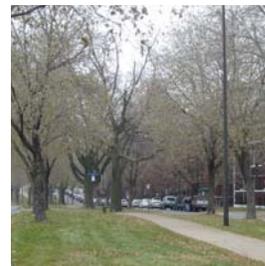
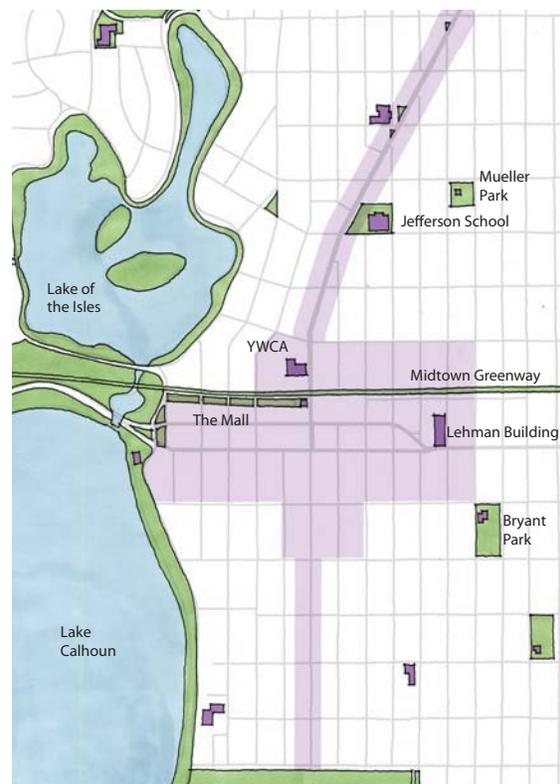
Environment and Air Quality

An urban environment needs to respect the natural systems that support it. Maintaining water quality and air quality are important considerations. Uptown is adjacent to the Chain of Lakes, which provide infinite value in the form of recreation,

beauty, and natural processes. If the quality of the Lakes is not preserved, Uptown will suffer. Likewise, air quality is a key issue in an urban environment. While air quality in Minneapolis is among the best in the country when compared to that of other major cities, the impacts of traffic congestion and the location of polluting businesses needs be carefully considered. A 2007 air quality study conducted by the City of Minneapolis included six monitoring stations in Uptown. Details of this study can be found in the Appendix.



Regional Open Space System: The Chain of Lakes

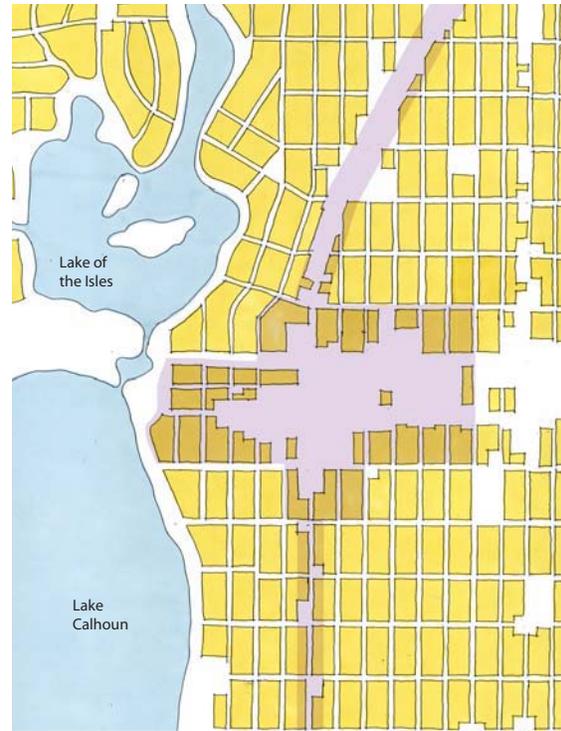
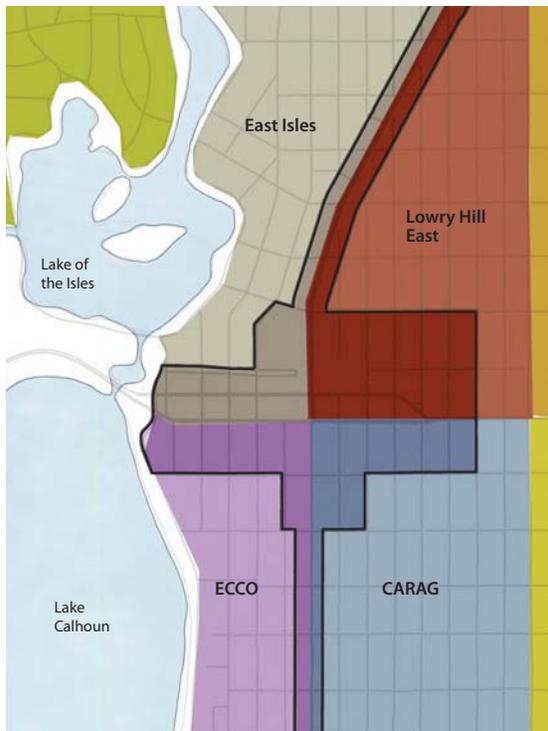


Local Open Space System: The Mall and Midtown Greenway

Neighborhoods & Residential

Uptown extends into four well-defined neighborhoods comprised of different household and building types. These neighborhoods rely on Uptown for a range of daily goods and services. Two business associations, the South Hennepin Business Association and the Uptown Association, represent the Uptown area.

The physical orientation of Uptown neighborhoods primarily follows the north-south Minneapolis street grid system, and the majority of housing structures face east and west. The residential pattern is established and solid, but it erodes as it blends with commercial areas along Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street. Former industrial land along the Midtown Greenway forms a hole in the residential fabric, thereby further eroding the residential pattern at its edges.



Neighborhood Building Types: A variety of housing types, including single family and multi-family buildings, exists in Uptown neighborhoods.



Residential Area Characteristics: New housing in the core along the Greenway and a typical north-south neighborhood street are typical conditions in Uptown residential areas.

Land Use / Built Form

A range of building sizes in Uptown reflects the range of needs and uses in the study area. Because of their regular spacing and consistent positions, smaller scale residential buildings form and define blocks in surrounding neighborhoods. Contrarily, irregularly shaped larger scale commercial buildings in the study area core do not define spaces or street edges.



Calhoun Square

Transit

Local and regional transit routes pass through Uptown to and from all major directions. A transit center located in the center of the study area is the hub for buses serving these routes, and Uptown could be a stop along the future Southwest Transit LRT corridor.



Southwest Corridor Transit Options: Kenilworth alignment (red); Greenway alignment (black).

Commercial

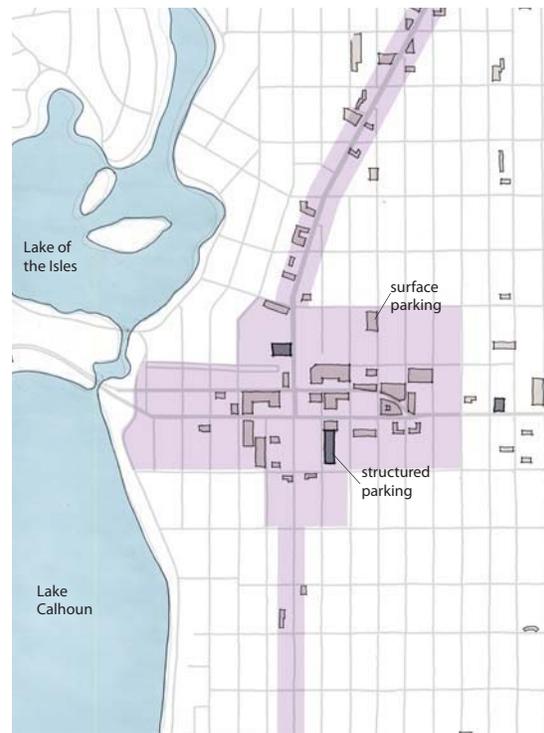
Several distinct commercial patterns occur in Uptown. North of 28th Street on Hennepin Avenue, commercial uses occupy mixed-use buildings at corners and single-use retail buildings mid-block. The largest concentration of commercial buildings is at Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street. Several houses have been converted to service retail between 31st and 32nd Streets, and south of 32nd Street, commercial uses follow a traditional streetcar pattern where some corners contain small storefronts.



Commercial Building Types: A converted house and storefront on Hennepin Avenue are typical commercial building types.

Parking

The existing Uptown parking supply is not well coordinated, balanced, or utilized. With the exception of weekend evenings, a parking surplus exists; however, it is not well-managed and therefore is not well used. The lack of a coordinated parking system discourages walking between destinations, and instead encourages short car trips between parking lots.



Parking Conditions: Surface parking for individual businesses discourages a “park once and walk” approach; underground parking for residences is accessible but hidden and unobtrusive.

Historical Resources

Uptown's changing history and eclectic collection of architectural styles is reflected in many remaining structures. Several older, revered public buildings lack a dominant architectural style but contribute to the variety that characterizes Uptown. The residential neighborhood architectural style is more stable and consistent than that of the commercial corridors. This is because most neighborhood construction occurred between 1900 and 1930, at a time when building styles in the region were primarily Midwestern Colonial, Classical, Craftsman, and

Victorian.

There are no historic districts in the Study Area however, the following five buildings are designated historic landmarks:

- Walker Library
- Uptown Theater
- Suburban World Theater
- Moorish Mansion Apartments
- Scottish Rite Temple



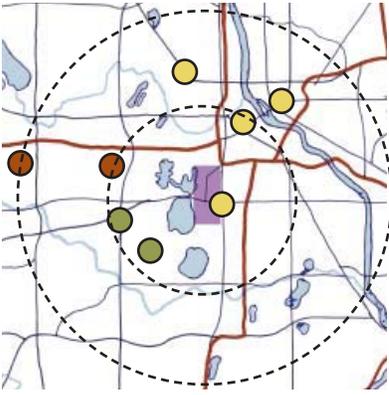
Residential Buildings



Mixed-use Buildings



Other Buildings



4. Policy

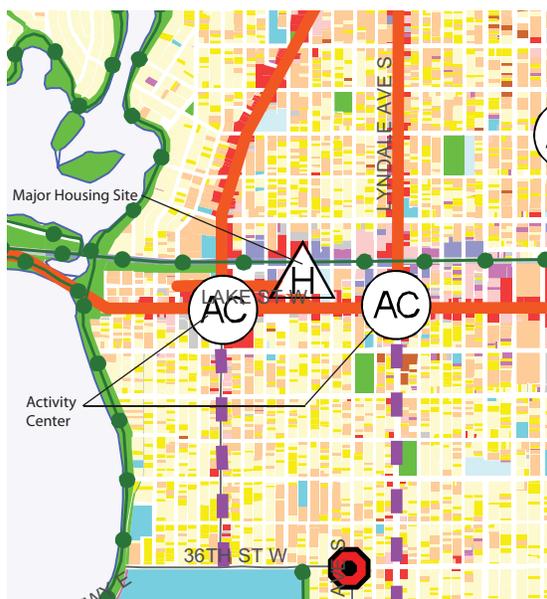
Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan

In 2000, the City of Minneapolis adopted the current comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan, known as The Minneapolis Plan, is a city-wide policy document that directs growth and community character. The Minneapolis Plan:

- Analyzes trends in the City's population, economic growth, and neighborhood livability.
- Proposes a vision for the physical development of the City.
- Identifies steps the city must take in order to achieve that vision.

The Plan recommends creating Small Area Plans for areas of the City where growth and change are encouraged. The Plan designates these areas as Activity Centers, Major Housing Sites, and Commercial Corridors. Each of these designations occurs in the Calhoun Isles Community generally, and in Uptown specifically.

The Minneapolis Plan designates the area around Lake and Hennepin Avenue as an **Activity Center**.



Minneapolis Comprehensive Plan: The Comprehensive Plan designates Uptown as an Activity Center. Activity Centers are the places in the City where a range of uses are encouraged, including evening activities and regional destinations.

According to The Minneapolis Plan, “Partially as the result of the city’s historical development, certain districts have functioned as hubs of activity and movement for decades. Other areas are just recently experiencing a renaissance of business and development interest as unique destinations. Activity Centers are the places that shape Minneapolis’ urban identity. By encouraging a mix of uses that hold appeal for many residents and visitors, a long day of activity that stretches into the evening, traditional urban form in buildings that enhance the pedestrian environment and a sense of safety through street level activity, Activity Centers attract interest and patrons throughout the city.”

For Activity Centers, The Minneapolis Plan directs the City to:

- Undergo a small area plan that establishes boundaries, addresses the identity role and features of the Center, gives guidance to the mix of land uses, scale and size of development in these areas and identifies transportation and circulation needs.
- Support diverse commercial and residential development types which generate activity all day and into the evening.
- Promote mixed-use buildings.
- Preserve traditional urban form.
- Discourage automobile services and drive through facilities.
- Establish parking facilities and management strategies that promote shared facilities, while minimizing visual impacts, and adverse effects on sidewalks and pedestrians.
- Manage transitions between high traffic land uses and adjoining residential areas.
- Apply street design criteria that incorporate pedestrian orientation.

As the region grows and demographics change, Minneapolis will want and need to absorb new households. These new households will search for housing types more varied than what currently exists in Minneapolis. In order to meet this demand the Minneapolis Plan designates **Major Housing Sites**. The Urban Village site, located between the Midtown Greenway, 28th

Street, Hennepin Avenue, and Lyndale Avenue is designated in the Minneapolis Plan as a Major Housing Site because of its adjacency to the Activity Center and natural features such as the Lakes and public facilities such as the Midtown Greenway. The Minneapolis Plan encourages such sites to contain medium to high-density housing in a variety of types and income levels.

The Plan identifies Hennepin Avenue, between Franklin Avenue and Lake; Lagoon Avenue; and Lake Street as **Commercial Corridors**. Commercial Corridors are streets in Minneapolis that are primarily commercial in nature, carry high volumes of traffic, and retain a traditional urban building form and street orientation of businesses. The Minneapolis Plan encourages strengthening these corridors by:

- Encouraging new compatible development along them.
- Promoting alternative uses such as mixed-residential, office, institutional and low impact clean and light industrial uses, and addressing issues of parking, traffic and transit.
- Assisting with the reuse and rehabilitation of older commercial buildings.

Hennepin Avenue from Lake Street to 36th Street is designated a **Community Corridor**. Community Corridors connect neighborhoods and are predominately residential in character. Commercial uses on Community corridors are located at specific intersections and they are small scale, neighborhood oriented.

This document, when adopted, will be a part of the Comprehensive Plan and will be the official guiding policy for the area. The Plan recommends changes to some of the above detailed designations. Recommendations for such changes are described in the Land Use Section.

Current Zoning

The study area contains a variety of zoning classifications and two overlay districts. Most properties lining Hennepin Avenue (north of 31st Street), Lagoon Avenue (east of Hennepin) and Lake Street are zoned for commercial uses. Some industrial zoning is present just north of the Greenway, west of Hennepin. Hennepin Avenue south of 31st Street is lined with a mix of commercial and residential zoning.

The area is influenced by two overlay districts: the Shoreland Overlay District that extends 1000 feet from the Lakes and a Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District in the Core of Uptown. The Shoreland Overlay District is a state-wide ordinance designed to protect waters. It seeks to accomplish this goal by managing development within 1000 feet of all water bodies - rural and urban. The ordinance contains provisions for locations of buildings, height of structures, development on slopes, grading and filling, removal of vegetation, and stormwater management.

The Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District was established to preserve and encourage the pedestrian character of commercial areas and to promote street life and activity by regulating building orientation and design. The Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District prohibits auto-oriented uses such as drive through restaurants, banks, and auto service uses. In addition, it contains provisions for locating buildings close to the sidewalk and parking to the side or rear of buildings. The Uptown Pedestrian Overlay District also requires a Travel Development Management Plan for any development over 4000 square feet.

This Plan does not recommend zoning changes directly. However, this Plan recommends the City undergo a zoning study for the area in which existing zoning will be examined and potentially changed. As this Plan gives direction for future growth in the area, it will be used to direct the zoning study.

Additional Land Use Policy

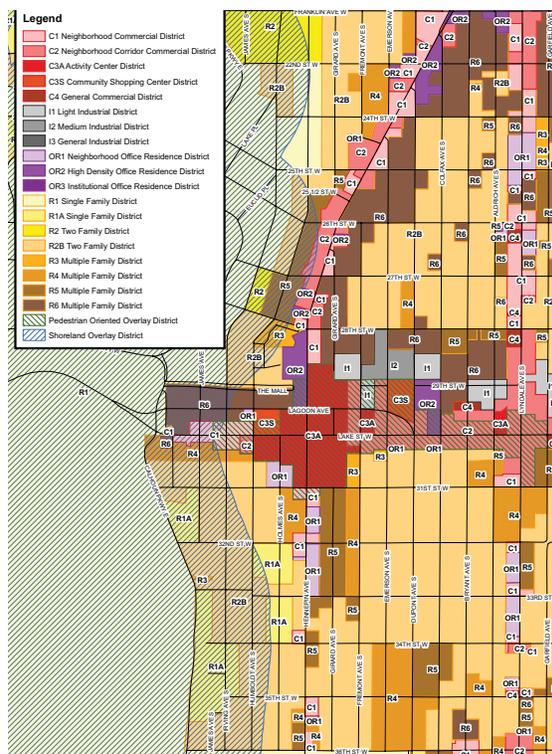
There is no existing adopted plan for the extent of this study area. The area has been formally governed by the comprehensive plan and the zoning code and the Midtown Greenway Land Use and Development Plan, and informally directed by the following Plans:

- Uptown Parking and Transportation Study (2005)
- Hennepin Avenue Strategic Plan (1995)
- CARAG Neighborhood Master Plan (2000)
- West Lake Street Urban Village Charrette (1998)

In addition, this Plan has taken into consideration the following studies that have been concurrent with this project:

- Access Minneapolis Citywide Transportation Action Plan
- Southwest Transit Alternatives Analysis Study
- City of Minneapolis Citywide Comprehensive Plan Update

The Midtown Greenway Land Use and Development Plan overlaps with this plan in the area bounded by Humboldt Avenue, 28th Street, Bryant Avenue, Lagoon Avenue, and a line approximately mid block between Lake Street and the Greenway. This plan has suggested new land use designations for a few parcels in this area, but retains most of the previously adopted uses. Additional policy direction related to height, massing, and design is contained in this document in an attempt to provide refinement of previous policy for this area.



Past and Related Planning Efforts

This small area plan builds on previous plans. In 1995, the Hennepin Avenue Strategic Plan was completed. Many of that plan's recommendations have been implemented:

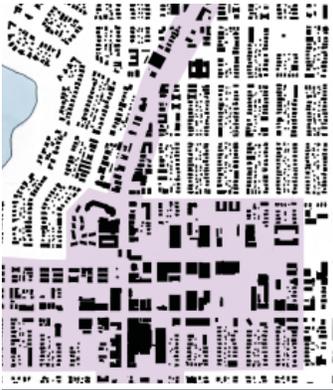
- A Pedestrian Oriented Overlay District was enacted.
- Small parks were constructed at the ends of triangular blocks.
- Selected parking lots were consolidated.
- Streetscaping was implemented between Franklin Avenue and 28th Street.
- Bicycle connections to Lyndale Avenue were established.

In 1998, Town Planning Collaborative conducted the Uptown Lake Street Charrette. The Plan was not adopted by the City, but several investments resulted:

- The Metro Transit Hub.
- The Urban Village with an upper promenade on the Greenway.
- Development on the Police Garage Site (Lake Street between Emerson Avenue and Fremont Avenue).
- District parking at Lyndale/Lake.

In addition to the Minneapolis Plan, several adopted City plans influenced the making of this Plan. They include:

- Each surrounding neighborhood's NRP plans.
- Midtown Greenway Development Objectives.



5. History, Demographics and Market Summary

The History of Uptown's Urban Form

The Chain of Lakes has been a destination since the 1870s. It was then a popular fishing spot and a setting for resort hotels. Streetcars connected the area to the larger region in the late 1800s, when the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board began purchasing property adjacent to the Lakes for a city-wide park system. Residential development followed, and flourished during the first two decades of the 20th Century. By 1930, the area was completely subdivided and built out with homes and businesses.

Uptown was the premier retail district outside downtown, and had emerged as a regional entertainment destination by the time the Lagoon Theatre (later named the Uptown Theatre) opened in 1913. The Minneapolis Arena drew nearly 100,000 people a year to the area. Ample employment opportunities in lumber yards, stoneyards, and factories located along the 29th Street rail line supported the sale of commercial goods and services.

Following World War II, Uptown responded to increased competition from the suburbs as returning soldiers, the baby boom, the GI bill, and highway construction fueled a suburban development boom.

Uptown's tradition as a hub of commercial, recreational, and residential activity continued, though it experienced a relative erosion in commanding those markets as other markets increased the competition. In the late 1950s and into the early 1970s, a period of redevelopment activity and the expansion of

Lagoon Avenue east of Hennepin Avenue created an Uptown that had more single-use buildings with larger parking lots. Along Hennepin Avenue north of 28th Street, auto-oriented buildings replaced small, multi-tenant commercial buildings. In the Uptown neighborhoods, larger apartment developments replaced pockets of single family houses

Throughout the economic and demographic cycles, the Chain of Lakes remained popular to residents and visitors alike. Their popularity grew steadily and has contributed to Uptown's identity.

During the 1970s and 80s, Uptown experienced another transformation. During the late 1970s through the 1980s, Uptown experienced investment aimed at rebranding Uptown as a premier urban, retail district. Calhoun Square, an urban mall, acted as a catalyst for the change when it opened in 1983. A group of business and property owners created the first Special Service District in Minnesota. The district allowed Uptown to improve its image through the imposition of a local tax assessment to provide services such as snow plowing, additional trash removal, tree lights, etc. These efforts renewed interest in Uptown as a regional destination and set the stage for the late 1990s when interest in the "urban experience" for living and entertainment grew significantly.

In the 1990s, Uptown's image changed again when national retailers opened local stores. During this time, Uptown also thrived as a place for entrepreneurs offering rare and unique goods and services.



The Uptown business community flourished throughout most of the 1990s. However, significant transition has occurred since 1995. Several national retailers and popular local stores have closed. Entertainment and restaurant offerings have flourished, but the daytime population (generated by basic daily goods, services and employment) has declined significantly. Several residential projects have been approved (+500 units) in the past 5 years, but only 125 new units have been built.

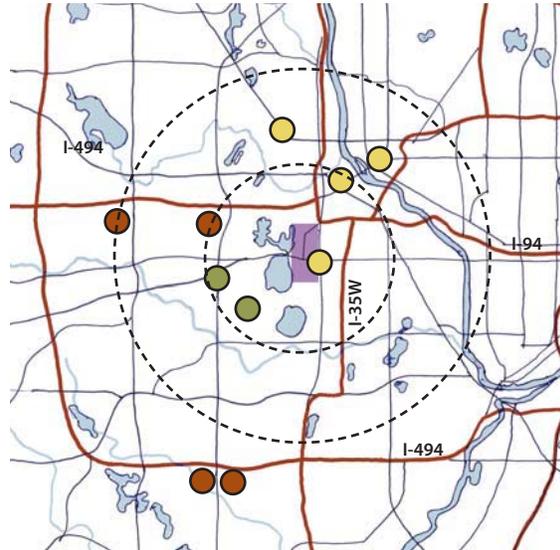
The current transition in Uptown is of concern, as the community has voiced concerns regarding the health and growth of Uptown. There are structural and market issues at work and the need for a Small Area Plan is not only about controlling and guiding growth, but also about fixing structural flaws.

The region has grown

Uptown is a regional destination. As the region grew westward, Uptown went from the edge (and accessible) to the middle (and less accessible) of the regional retail area. It is not uncommon for retail uses to thrive on the edges of regions, and struggle in the middle. Often, the most central locations are the least accessible and most confusing to infrequent users. In addition, as the region has grown, competing community centers have emerged throughout the City and suburbs. Whereas Uptown once was one of a few options, now it competes against many.

The EPA and the One-Way Pairs

In the late 1980s, EPA air quality measures of the Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue intersection exceeded acceptable limits. To maintain federal funding, the City and County switched Lake Street and Lagoon Avenue to a one-way pair street system. This conversion had a long-term effect on retail in the area, specifically on Lagoon Avenue, which has become the location of more auto-oriented uses and is much less pedestrian friendly.



Increased Competition: During the past 15 years, other regional commercial (red), neighborhood commercial (green), and art districts (yellow) have emerged and solidified their identity.



Increased Competition: Area destinations that draw from a regional base include (clockwise from top left) Excelsior and Grand in St. Louis Park, 50th and France in Edina and Minneapolis, East Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis, and Grand Avenue in St. Paul.

Calhoun Square

Calhoun Square was built in 1983. Depending on one's perspective, Calhoun Square either saved Uptown or, as stated by one resident, "killed the soul of Uptown." Calhoun Square is the largest building and development in Uptown and it is centrally located, so the health of the area is linked to its successes and failures. Calhoun Square is an interior mall – a successful model for retail development in the early 1980s, but a less successful model now. The lack of street interaction, the absence of a coherent business plan, and the transition in ownership suggest it is time for a significant overhaul of the Calhoun Square property.

Decisions to vacate streets and disrupt the grid

Over the years, several local links in the street network were vacated or switched to one-way. Each street connection contributes to the overall network. Thus, when one is altered, cut off, or switched to one-way, it adds load to the remaining network and intersections – in particular to Hennepin Avenue and Lake Street.

National Retailing Trends

Throughout the 1990s, retail across the country underwent a major shift. Goods and services typically purchased in neighborhoods at small and medium sized stores shifted to suburban areas where large box retailers with sophisticated inventory and distributing systems, larger customer bases, and bulk purchasing offered the same products at lower prices.

Recent Development Proposals

Several recent projects were proposed and approved in 2005, 2006 and 2007, but not yet constructed at the time of this Plan. These include:

- Hornig Development received approval in January 2006 for the development of The Portico. Approved Plans called for 34 for-sale condominium units to be located at the intersection of Lagoon Avenue and Irving

Avenue.

- Ackerberg Group received approval to construct Mozaic, which was approved to include 135 condominium units, 1550 seat theater, approximately 40,000 s.f of office, and 13,500 s.f. retail restaurant space, at the intersection of Girard Avenue and Lagoon Avenue (currently being occupied by the Uptown Theatre and a surface parking lot).
- Solomon Group received approval for the redevelopment of Calhoun Square at the intersection of Lake Street and Hennepin Avenue. Approved Plans include 108 for-sale condominium units above 190,000 square feet of retail space, 95,000 square feet of office space, and 35,000 square feet of restaurant space. During the study, the property changed hands and is currently owned by Blackrock.
- Nob Hill Investments LLC received approval for a 114 unit hotel on Holmes Avenue between Lake Street and 31st Street.

This plan treated these approved projects as soon to be existing conditions. This plan uses these approved plans as context and does not suggest that the approved plans should be revisited. If plans for these project change, the new proposals should be evaluated based on the analysis that went into the initial approval, the merits of a new design, and the recommendations in this Plan.

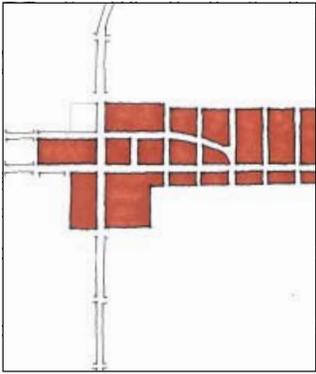
Demographic Snapshot

- Uptown's population has grown minimally over the past 15 years (.2%). Both the City (.7%) and the metro area (1.3%) have grown considerably.
- While population is relatively steady, Uptown has been and will continue to age in the coming years. There are 30 percent fewer 20- to 24-year-olds in Uptown than there were in 2000. There are nearly 40 percent more 55- to 65-year-olds in Uptown than there were in 2000. The loss of 20- to 24-year-olds since 2000 will likely translate into a decline in families with children in the coming decade.
- Uptown's median income (\$40,000) is considerably lower than that of the rest of the City (\$48,000) and the metro area (\$68,000). It is, however, expected to increase faster (26%) than the City (22%) or the metro area (22%) in the coming decade.
- Uptown has considerably higher percentage of households renting (79%) than the City (48%) and the metro area (27%).
- In the 55408 ZIP code, approximately 800 rental units (10% of the total) have been converted to condominiums in the past six years. These 800 new condominiums represent nearly half of all owner occupied units in the 55408 ZIP code.

Market Snapshot

- Approximately 500 units of new housing in Uptown have been approved in the past five years; however, only approximately 125 have been built.
- With the exception of Calhoun Square, retail vacancy in Uptown is very low (2.5%). Despite this low vacancy rate, turnover is very high. Space does not stay empty for long. Typically, there is another business waiting in line to test the market.
- There is very little office space in Uptown. It is in high demand. Only 4.6 percent of the office space is vacant, compared to approximately 15 to 20 percent in downtown Minneapolis.
- Uptown businesses capture considerable spending dollars from residents outside Uptown in restaurants, used merchandise, groceries, health and personal care, and alcoholic beverages.
- Uptown residents spend considerable dollars outside Uptown in the following categories: electronics, appliances, furniture, building materials, clothing, lawn and garden, and home furnishings.

For additional detail on demographics and the Market Study, please refer to the appendices.



6. Vision and Goals

Uptown Vision

In November 2006, over 100 people attended visioning sessions to discuss their hopes and concerns for Uptown. Participants described the Uptown they want to see in the future. The Vision Statement below is a synthesis of the individual visions.

Uptown is a **welcoming** neighborhood, with a **diversity** of people, places, and architecture.

Uptown is a **green** community. Its buildings, streets, lakes, and parks form a green cityscape that contributes to a sustainable region.

Uptown looks and feels like no other place. It offers its own **urban character** with a dense, mixed-use core of new and old buildings surrounded by quiet, tree-lined neighborhoods.

Uptown is a **vibrant** center of activity where people gather throughout the day and into the evening.

Uptown is a car optional environment. Walking, cycling, and transit use are the preferred **transportation choices** of many residents and visitors.

Uptown has a rich social and architectural **history** that contributes to and sustains its unique character.

Design Goal #1

Reinforce surrounding neighborhoods.

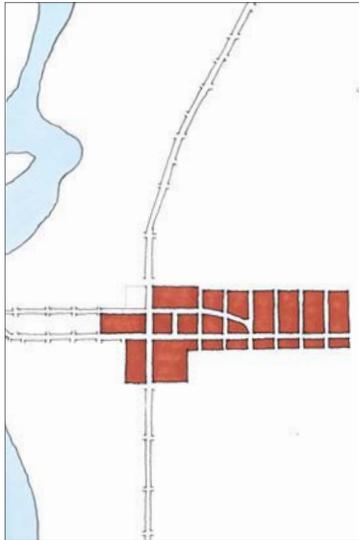


The neighborhoods surrounding Uptown are vital to its success. They contain a local customer base with significant buying power. Neighborhood stability requires support for neighborhood initiatives such as maintaining housing stock and improving local parks. Properties on the corridors must be designed to reinforce neighborhood edges. The goals are to:

- Strengthen neighborhood edges.
- Reinforce neighborhood uses by limiting commercial encroachment.
- Establish a high quality transition area, including green buffers between neighborhoods and surrounding uses.
- Improve streets for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit.
- Improve parking options.

Design Goal #2

Create a dense mixed-use core.



The center of Uptown is strongly defined at the edges by an established residential pattern. Mixed-use development in this well-defined area will concentrate commercial, office, and entertainment activity at the core, and a healthy mix of business and commercial activity will bring complementary daytime population to the area. In addition, a residential component will connect existing neighborhoods and provide a smooth transition between them.

- Support high quality mixed-use commercial and residential development.
- Support a healthy mix of businesses.
- Increase the daytime population.

Design Goal #3

Establish public open spaces that connect to the Greenway and the Lakes and encourage interaction and gathering.

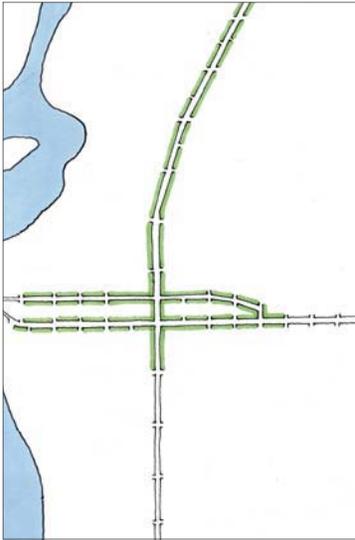


The Midtown Greenway and the Lakes are adjacent to Uptown. However, these significant public spaces are not well-connected or easily accessible, physically or visually, from the Uptown core. Better connections and accessibility will increase movement between and within these public spaces and the Uptown core. This, in turn, will improve the relationship between Uptown and its surroundings, and will allow Uptown to capitalize on the prominent public assets the larger area offers.

- Improve connections between the Midtown Greenway, the Lakes, and Uptown.
- Establish a central public gathering place.
- Establish a variety of smaller public urban spaces.
- Use green space to improve connectivity between amenities such as the Lakes and the Greenway and to preserve and improve air and water quality.

Design Goal #4

Improve Hennepin, Lagoon, and Lake for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit.

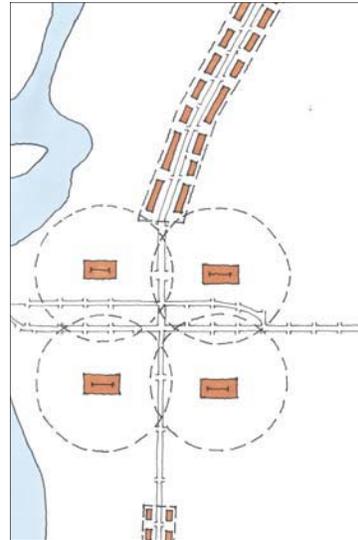


Uptown thrives because it supports alternative transportation options and because it is well-connected to regional routes and trail systems. However, sidewalk and street conditions in the Uptown core are inhospitable for walkers, cyclists, and transit riders. Investment that improves the public right-of-way by widening, greening, and otherwise activating sidewalks, adding bicycle lanes, and prioritizing transit, will contribute to a friendlier experience along these major Uptown routes. Furthermore, investment in human-scaled building frontage, or the interface between the public and private realm, will also improve the public experience.

- Reconnect the street and sidewalk network where feasible.
- Widen, green, or otherwise activate sidewalks.
- Prioritize transit.

Design Goal #5

Improve and coordinate parking options.



Ample parking options exist in Uptown, but access, cost, and wayfinding challenges prevent visitors from using these parking options. A coordinated Uptown parking strategy that includes appropriately located structures and lots that are affordable, easy to find, and shared among all Uptown visitors regardless of their specific destinations, will alleviate parking pressures experienced by area residents, visitors, and workers. This strategy will address short (shoppers), medium (visitors), and long (employees) term needs.

- Establish a coordinated parking strategy.
- Improve access to parking areas.
- Address short-term, medium-term, and long-term users.