

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division
Small Area Plan/Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Date: December 17, 2007

Project Name: Uptown Small Area Plan

Submitted By: CPED Community Planning Division

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Wards: 10 and 7 (one block front in Ward 7)

Neighborhood Organizations:

- East Isles Residents Association
- Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association
- East Calhoun Community Organization
- Calhoun Area Residents Action Group

Current Minneapolis Plan Designations:

- Activity Center – Uptown
- Commercial Corridors – Lake, Lagoon, Hennepin (from Lake to Franklin)
- Community Corridors – Hennepin (from Lake to 36th Street)
- Major Housing Site – The Midtown Greenway

Background

In early 2006, the Planning Division began work on the Uptown Small Area Plan. The Minneapolis Plan calls for more detailed planning to be done around each of the designated Activity Centers. In 2005 several major developments were proposed, enhancing the need for a more detailed land use vision for the area.

From Spring 2006 to Fall 2007, City staff and the project consultants worked with a Steering Committee made up of representatives from the four Uptown neighborhoods, the South Hennepin Business Association, the Uptown Association, and the Midtown Greenway Coalition. Council Member Ralph Remington chaired the committee and appointed six additional individuals who did not represent specific groups. The committee will have met twelve times before the planning process is completed. In addition, nine community meetings were held to provide information and receive input from the broader community. Other outreach included direct mail, an online survey, focus group meetings, regular e-mail updates, and a project website.

The 45-day public review period began on October 5, 2007 and ended on November 21, 2007.

Plan Summary

The primary purpose of the plan is to provide more detailed policy direction for land use and development in the Uptown area. The plan strives to recognize, protect, and enhance established neighborhoods; recognize the value and benefits of high-quality, well-located, and well-designed urban density; celebrate Uptown's adjacency to the Lakes and the Midtown Greenway, prioritize streets as places for social interaction and urban activity; and accept the dual role of Uptown as a regional attraction and local community.

The plan breaks Uptown into six different character areas, recognizing that different parts of the study area have different characteristics and should evolve differently over time. These sub areas are: the Hennepin Avenue Commercial Corridor, the Urban Village, the Activity Center, the West Lake Street Live/Work area, the South Hennepin Community Corridor, and Neighborhoods. To guide land use throughout the study area, the Plan contains a land use plan and a development intensity map. The plan also contains a series of recommendations related to open space and access (i.e. pedestrian and bicycle, transit, parking, and traffic).

The draft distributed for the 45-day public comment period is available on the project website at: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/planning/uptown-plan.asp> and was previously distributed to the Commission members.

Public Comments

During the 45-day public comment period forty letters were received. While most are generally supportive of the concepts in the plan, many detailed suggestions were made. Staff is currently reviewing these comments and working with the project consultants to determine how the comments might best be addressed. Staff and the consultants plan to make minor edits and clarifications and present the Commission with a revised draft for consideration.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT – PLANNING DIVISION:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission **continue** this item to the January 14th City Planning Commission meeting in order to allow more time for staff and the project consultants to address the comments received during the 45-day public comment period.