

APPENDIX C:

RECENT STUDIES IN THE CEDAR RIVERSIDE AREA

Here is a very brief summary of some recent plans in the Cedar Riverside area and some of the main issues and concepts covered in each one, along with recommendations.

Expanding Horizons in Cedar-Riverside: Opportunities for Walking, Biking, Open Space, and Community and Economic Development

Metropolitan Design Workshop, 2004

- Contains a detailed description of history of neighborhood and summary of previous studies done for this area
- Includes recommendations related to:
 - Community and economic development – reinvestment in Cedar Ave, marketing to potential customers, promoting infill
 - Bicycle and pedestrian movement – improve safety, emphasize gateways and entrances, improve pedestrian/bicycle environment, facilities, and access
 - Green and open spaces – encourage environmentally friendly design, develop pedestrian corridors, create public art and play areas

Franklin-Cedar/Riverside Transit Oriented Development Master Plan

City of Minneapolis, 2002

- Contains detailed description of the area, including recent planning efforts, characteristics of LRT corridor and surroundings, and results from an associated market study (with land use recommendations)
- Summarized community input, including:
 - Safe, direct pedestrian connections
 - Improved street character for safety, economic viability
 - Clear, attractive signage and other way finding features
 - Concerns about parking
- Includes recommendations related to:
 - Reinvestment and redevelopment of targeted areas, including commercial infill and residential rehabilitation
 - Improved pedestrian corridors and streetscaping, including lighting and signage
 - Better connections between bus routes and LRT station
 - Improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities and crossings
 - Better use of parking facilities, including adjustments for schedules, development of residential parking zones or permits

Cedar Riverside Business Association Recruitment Study
University of Minnesota, 2005

- Contains information on a survey done of 27 Cedar Riverside area businesses to assess reasons for low CRBA member turnout and participation
- Reasons for lack of participation included limited time (particularly among the area's many small businesses) and limited information about CRBA; provided recommendations for how CRBA can make changes to increase participation
- Survey participants also identified key issues that need to be addressed in the neighborhood:
 - Safety – particularly along Cedar and Riverside, crime and drug activity along streets; need police presence, other crime reduction strategies
 - Parking – particularly around Cedar/Riverside, not so much Seven Corners; need more free/low cost parking, current options too expensive for customers or not convenient
 - Appearance – run down buildings, trash/litter, etc.; concern throughout neighborhood; need to clean up area
 - Housing – poorly maintained rental properties; hard to find homeownership opportunities mean high turnover; not in enterprise zone
 - Other – connecting/communicating with immigrants; geographical divide along Cedar; “culture of blame”; bar scene issues

Cedar-Riverside Neighborhood Parking Study
City of Minneapolis, 2006

- Contains information from a survey done of 72 Cedar Riverside area businesses and intercept survey of 103 individuals on the topic of parking
- Includes inventory of parking spaces, costs, and usage rates in the neighborhood; concludes that there are a large number of spaces; also included information about bus service to the neighborhood and ridership
- Survey participants' comments fell into several main categories:
 - Not enough parking – limited free and low cost parking, people tend to park in the wrong place, difficult to monitor, creates a problem attracting customers
 - Parking too expensive – and people are frequently ticketed
 - Crime – loitering, break-ins within parking lot, not maintained well
 - Other – concern about selling city lots, validation system is confusing, management of lots and upkeep of machines/meters
- Plan recommendations included:
 - Adding critical parking areas
 - Encouraging more shared parking
 - Improving pedestrian amenities
 - Encourage employees to carpool/use transit to get to work
 - Encourage transit oriented development on 6th St, including development of Lot A
 - Create parking validation map or other system to make more understandable

Cedar Riverside NRP First Step Plan
West Bank Community Coalition, 2006

- Comments received through outreach process summarized into four main areas:
 - Building community and partnerships across cultures, among residents, educational institutions, and business community – supporting and promoting community organizations and events, improved community space and image
 - Improve physical environment of neighborhood – LRT access, bike/ped paths, lighting, increased parking, cleaning up area, safety enhancements, traffic calming, park and recreational improvements
 - Diversifying housing options, improving living conditions in the area – housing availability and improvement, homeownership opportunities, student housing options, maintenance of housing
 - Upgrade provision of human services for improved mental, physical, educational health for all ages

- NRP implementation steps organized into four categories:
 - Economic development, housing, and infrastructure – lighting/safety improvements around LRT, homeownership program, home improvement loan program, support Dania Hall redevelopment
 - Physical environment and safety – East African officer, improve police substation, improve resident/police contact, safety committee, block clubs, hiring safety coordinator, safety cameras, cleanup days, improve sidewalks, add trash cans, etc. through special service district, community gardens
 - Human opportunities – human resource coordinator, community space survey, quarterly service directory and website, youth sports teams, youth and senior councils, pilot shuttle system
 - Community building and neighborhood relations – neighborhood relations committee, organize community gatherings and events, events coordinator, welcome packets, signs and banners,

Report to the West Bank CDC: Community Organizing in Cedar-Riverside, Present and Future

Randy Stoecker, 2002

- Evaluation of need for community organizing in the neighborhood, and discussion of capacity of CDC to initiate this organizing effort
- Unclear conclusions, but does outline some issues raised in the neighborhood:
 - Culture-specific and sensitive human services are needed, particularly related to health care and other important needs of immigrant community
 - Economic development, particularly along Cedar Avenue – need for funds to rehab storefronts and adequately market goods and services to new customers, as well as streetscaping and signage
 - Parking and traffic issues, deemed as important but difficult to resolve
 - Need for a new Dania Hall, particularly issue with identifying the large amount of funding to do it right
 - Need for community internet, noting that some parts of immigrant community in particular are web-active, and there is much demand for web services
 - Housing issues, including addressing disorganized co-op structure
 - Other issues, including green space and safety concerns

Hiawatha LRT Corridor Transit-Oriented Development Market Study

Minneapolis Community Development Agency, 1999

- Addresses potential for new transit-oriented development in the areas along proposed Hiawatha LRT corridor, identifies public efforts which could be used to facilitate such development, and provides market analysis of each station area
- Four catalyst stations identified, at which investments should be focused – Downtown East, Lake Street, 46th Street, and Bloomington
- For Cedar Riverside station:
 - Provides overview of existing conditions, including land use, anchor destinations, access, internal circulation and linkages, and likely development
 - In target development area, identifies potential for new rental residential units (150) and retail square feet (30,000)
 - Gives recommendations for enhancing station area, including:
 - Adding amenities around station to strengthen community, including an active recreation space for sports leagues, community gardens, etc.
 - Improve pedestrian connections from station area to Cedar
 - Development probably will be tied to local institutions, or additional entertainment-related uses – not much potential for office development

Walking and Bicycling to Hiawatha Light Rail Transit in Minneapolis
Metropolitan Council, 2002

- Evaluates the conditions and completeness of walkways and bikeways at Minneapolis LRT stations on the Hiawatha line; includes evaluations and prioritized recommended improvements and detailed maps of inventories and recommendations
- Goal is to help provide quick, safe, and comfortable station access within a 10 minute walk (1/2 mile) and bike (up to 2 miles) of stations
- Developed in conjunction with update of city's bikeway plan; Cedar-Riverside bikeway recommendations include:
 - 19th Ave – 10th St bridge to Riverside Ave
 - 4th St S – 19th Ave S to 21st Ave S
 - 21st Ave S & 6th St S – 4th St S to 6th St S to 20th Ave S
 - 5th St S – 20th Ave S to Cedar Ave to 6th St S
 - 16th Ave S – 6th St S to LRT Trail
- Includes walkway inventory and recommendations, with 23 specific areas that need upgrading in Cedar Riverside (repaving, curb ramps, widening sidewalk, etc.); highest priority was repair to walkway on 15th Ave S on east side, north of 6th Street

Light Rail Transit Ridership Survey: Cedar Riverside Station
West Bank CDC, 2006

- Survey of 101 users of light rail station in Cedar Riverside in 2005; includes information about demographics, trip purpose, frequency of use, and demand for shopping in the neighborhood
- Many riders used LRT frequently, and were generally “very satisfied” with it; many residents said it had increased their employment options
- On average, riders were “satisfied” with neighborhood in terms of the businesses available; positives included quality, convenience, and diversity
- On average, riders were “somewhat satisfied” with the area; positives are that it is diverse and unique; negatives are that it is dirty, poorly maintained, and dangerous; residents tended to rate it more attractive than others did; many said area was safe during the day but not at night (lighting was mentioned)
- Many provided ideas for additional stores that should be located in the area; top choices included book/music store, ethnic restaurants, American restaurants, and a laundromat

The Arts Quarter: University of Minnesota West Bank (South) District Plan
University of Minnesota, 2000

Process begun in response to need for new art building, new student housing, and replacement of lost surface parking.

Key features of plan for Arts Quarter:

- Neutrally designed building to house the Art Department, in two buildings fronting on 21st Ave, connected across street by skyway
- New student housing on Riverside Ave, between 21st & 22nd Avenues, 450 total beds, possibly with space available to the public; until built, screen temporary surface lots on Riverside with landscaped edge
- New 200-bed addition to existing Middlebrook Residence Hall, with store, dining
- New 700 stall parking ramp on 22nd Avenue to replace lost parking and add more
- Significant improvements to landscaping, lighting, and signage on campus
- Improve entrances and edges (particularly along Riverside Ave.) to relate better to surrounding neighborhood, better define campus area, and generally make it a more welcoming place
- Strengthen main entrance to this area of campus (21st Ave) with streetscape, signage
- Improvements to streets and auto/bus circulation within campus, including bus staging areas; did traffic simulation they will share upon request
- Identifies problem with interface between Carlson building and neighborhood, provides guidelines for improving streetscape with existing and new buildings

Noted involvement from Fairview, Augsburg, city, and neighborhood residents.

Summarized concerns included:

- Parking and transit issues
- Neighborhood access to the river
- Recognition and integration of neighborhood cultural and historic characteristics
- “Porous” campus borders
- Pedestrian oriented development along Riverside Avenue

A Livable Campus: University of Minnesota Twin Cities Campus Master Plan
University of Minnesota, 1996

Plans for improvements to the West Bank portion of campus include the following:

- A new River Bluff Road/pedestrian promenade along the bluff line on campus
- Extension of Washington Avenue S onto campus as a local street, linking to new River Bluff Road
- A new north-south mall on the northern portion of the campus, framed by a series of buildings; the side along the river would be prioritized for student housing, while the side facing Seven Corners would be mixed use to fit in with the neighborhood
- Athletic fields now on northern portion of campus would be relocated to East Bank
- Along Riverside, mixed use infill with ground-floor retail and potentially new student housing above; create a “green campus edge” along Riverside

Identified Issues

The plans listed above were reviewed, and a compilation was made of the common issues facing the neighborhood that were identified as part of the various planning processes. Naturally, there was significant overlap, with some strong themes emerging. Many of these themes were consistent across a diverse range of individuals and organizations. These issues are summarized below:

Economic development
Marketing to potential customers, expanding customer base
Promoting infill of vacant and underutilized properties
Enhance streetscape through trees, street furniture, façade renovation, litter control, etc., to address concerns about appearance
Address need for convenient, affordable parking for businesses
Promote development of neighborhood-serving businesses which are currently lacking
Improve area's prosperity without displacing current business mix
Bicycle and pedestrian movement
Improve bike routes, sidewalks, paths, and crossings
Improve connectivity within neighborhood – river, housing, LRT, bus routes, business areas, institutions, etc.
Improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians, including both traffic calming and public safety issues
Add signage, lighting, and other elements to improve way-finding
Transportation and parking
Investigate ways to limit 94/35W cut-through traffic in neighborhood and make it more pedestrian-friendly
Link bus routes and stops better with each other and with LRT station(s), and improve signage for all
Shuttle bus within neighborhood to improve linkages
Address parking issues throughout neighborhood – affordability, overcrowding, parking problems in residential areas, etc.
Improve street and sidewalk maintenance – road condition, plowing, etc.
Institutions and major projects
Work with large institutions to make sure planning efforts better integrated with the rest of neighborhood
Investigate new major projects (public and private) to ensure they are a good fit for neighborhood needs
Concerns regarding development of existing city-owned parking lots
Public spaces and parks
Improve linkages to public spaces and parks
Improve and increase facilities within parks and open spaces
Increase availability of public meeting spaces – e.g. Dania Hall proposal
Add new facilities, including active recreation space, community gardens

Public safety
Improve lighting and general environment along Cedar and Riverside to enhance feeling of safety
Similar safety-oriented improvements along pedestrian corridors and in parks and open spaces
Increased police presence and other crime reduction strategies
Address issues with transient/homeless population in the area
Housing
Address condition and maintenance of rental properties
Help promote homeownership opportunities for residents who wish to Purchase homes in the area
Address student housing issues
Communication
Increase communication between groups in neighborhood, including immigrant populations
Address fragmented geography that splits neighborhood physically and ideologically
Create and support community organizations and events
Improved access to technology/internet for all residents, including immigrants
Human services provision
Improved services to promote mental and physical health for all ages
Improved educational and recreational opportunities for youth and others
Culture-specific programs to reach immigrant groups and meet their needs