



About This Guide to The Minneapolis Plan

This document, "A Guide to The Minneapolis Plan", is intended to help readers of The Minneapolis Plan, a complex and comprehensive plan for the City of Minneapolis, understand its purpose, how to use it and the nature of its contents.

"The Guide" does not replace The Minneapolis Plan, nor serve as a complete summary of it.

For a copy of The Minneapolis Plan,
contact the Minneapolis Planning Department at 612-673-2597, TTY 612-673-2157
or via online at www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/planning.



GUIDE

To The Minneapolis Plan

I. What is The Minneapolis Plan?

The Minneapolis Plan is the City of Minneapolis' comprehensive plan. A city's comprehensive plan provides:

- Analysis of trends that affect the future of the City;
- A vision for the future of the City, desired by its citizens; and
- Guidance to elected officials, city staff, business, neighborhoods and other constituents that informs the decisions they make today to ensure that they contribute to and do not detract from the achievement of the City's vision.

The Minneapolis Plan is the primary policy document for the City of Minneapolis. It describes a vision for the future of Minneapolis that its citizens desire and provides statements of what the City must do in order to achieve that vision. The Minneapolis Plan helps us to choose our future rather than stand by and let it happen to us. The Minneapolis Plan encourages us to realize that every decision we make and service we deliver today influences how our City will be tomorrow.

The Minneapolis Plan is aspirational in nature. The future it describes will come about only if the City actively pursues it. The Minneapolis Plan makes choices. It is not so generic that it describes any city or any of a variety of futures for Minneapolis. The citizens of Minneapolis know what they want their city to be and what they do not want it to be. The Minneapolis Plan articulates the desired vision.

**Analysis
of trends**

**Vision
for the
future**

Guidance

II.

Major Themes in The Minneapolis Plan

Growth Centers for Job Creation and Housing Development: Existing & Future

In the past we have concentrated on stabilizing the population of the City of Minneapolis. Today and into the future we want to grow the City. We want to accommodate the needs and interests of baby boomers, empty nesters and those migrating to the City for job opportunities. Growth means the need for housing, jobs, amenities, and business. In designated growth centers we encourage intensive development of jobs and housing and provide supporting features including superior amenities and transit and alternative transportation. Today there are three existing growth centers: downtown Minneapolis, the University of Minnesota area, and the Wells Fargo/Hospitals area. We have designated six areas as *potential* growth centers; we will study these areas and develop plans to guide future development.

Streets: Commercial & Community Corridors

In the past we viewed streets as conveyors of automobiles. Today and into the future we recognize the primary function of streets as mixed-use in character — they are places of commerce, transportation and residence. They must accommodate walkers, bikers, automobiles, business and residents, workers and shoppers. They are where we live.

The traditional urban corridors that run throughout Minneapolis have become physical and cultural pathways that link people to each other, to local institutions and to daily destinations such as work, shopping, school and home. Community Corridors are streets that connect neighborhoods, carry a moderate volume of automobile traffic, have a primarily residential character and support a limited mix of land uses at specific intersections. Along community corridors we will enhance the pedestrian character, encourage viable street life during both the day and night by encouraging mixed uses, and strengthen the residential character by developing a variety of housing types. Commercial Corridors are streets that have largely commercially zoned property, carry high volumes of automobile and transit traffic, and retain a traditional urban form in the buildings and street orientation of businesses. Many of these commercial corridors still function as a “backbone” in certain neighborhoods. We strengthen these corridors by encouraging new development along them; promoting alternative uses such as mixed residential, office and institutional uses and low-impact, clean light industrial uses; addressing issues of parking, traffic and circulation; and assisting with the rehabilitation, reuse and revitalization of older commercial buildings and districts.

Growth Centers

Corridors

Urban Character

Mixed Use

Community

Shared Facilities

8. Movement discusses alternative ways of moving people, goods and information around the City.

9. City Form encourages the incorporation of the unique physical features of urban areas into future development efforts; recognizes importance of mixed-use development and the interdependency of The Minneapolis Plan and the City’s zoning code.

10. Afterward emphasizes the importance of using The Minneapolis Plan in its entirety.

Policy Statements and Implementation Steps

The Minneapolis Plan tells a story about Minneapolis. Within that story, policy statements and implementation steps are highlights. They are the specific statements meant to direct the City. The policy statements are aspirational and broad in nature. They are meant as guides. The implementation steps are more specific actions the City must take in order to carry out the vision of The Minneapolis Plan.

As we use The Minneapolis Plan to guide our daily actions, reference to the policy statements and implementation steps is the most efficient use of the plan.

Maps

At the beginning of most of the chapters, a set of maps is provided. The maps illustrate the policies contained in The Minneapolis Plan. For example, in Chapter 4 Marketplaces: Neighborhoods, the maps highlight areas throughout the City that provide opportunity for future development. Other maps show areas for future housing development. These maps direct the City to focus resources in these areas, and in doing so, encourages the City to make choices that will lead to an improved future.

The concepts and themes in The Minneapolis Plan are interdependent. Therefore, the maps are spread throughout the document and must be used in conjunction with the text and tables of the document.

Appendices

The Minneapolis Plan includes a series of technical appendices. Many of these documents are required by the Metropolitan Council to be in a city’s comprehensive plan. Others are included because they have direct links to The Minneapolis Plan and it is important to emphasize this connection.

Appendices

Volume 2 Land Use
Transportation
Housing
Historic Preservation

Volume 3 Aviation
Parks and Open Space
Water Supply Plan
Sewer Plan
Storm Water Management
Libraries
Energy Plan

Volume 4 Implementation
Location and Design Review Standards
Capital Program and Authority
1998 Community development Block Grant Capital Report
Capital Neighborhood Revitalization Program Plans (revised)
School Master Facilities Plan

How Do We Navigate The Minneapolis Plan?

The Minneapolis Plan tells the story of the City of Minneapolis, its past, present and desired future. The Plan proposes Policy Statements to guide city actions, as well as some of the Implementation Steps or actions that will assist in making these policies reality. While drawing on the maps, policies and implementation steps for guidance, the reader is encouraged to refer to the narrative as well for a complete understanding of the Plan's intent.

Chapters

The Minneapolis Plan is far-reaching, reflecting the complexity of urban life. The chapters of The Minneapolis Plan convey this breadth:

i. Introduction states the five themes found throughout The Minneapolis Plan; describes the connection between The Minneapolis Plan and the City's eight goals; and describes the process used to create The Minneapolis Plan.

1. Community Building emphasizes the bonds of community that link city dwellers to each other and to their neighborhoods; includes public spaces and facilities as gathering spaces, arts, history, youth programs, diversity, safety, and health.

2. The Market in the City covers economic development activity, including land preparation; access to capital for businesses, labor force training, and streamlining the regulatory environment

3. Marketplaces: Growth Centers identifies three areas of the City in which intensive development will be encouraged and amenities and transit services will be provided; and identifies potential areas which with further study, might be designated for this intensive development.

4. Marketplaces: Neighborhoods recognizes the important role commercial corridors play in the life of the City; discusses housing policy and the provision of expanding housing choices in the City; introduces transit station areas and the role that they can play towards integrated land uses.

5. Learning addresses learning opportunities for people of all ages provided by public institutions and community programs.

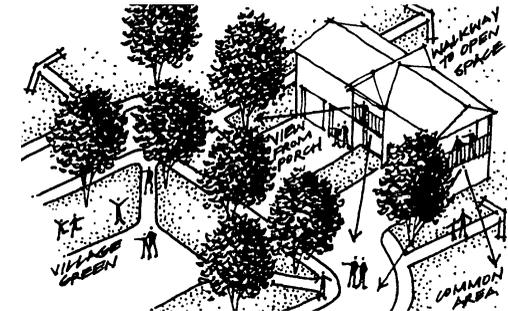
6. Leisure and Culture discusses environmental resources, recreational programming, arts and cultural events, all unique to the City of Minneapolis.

7. Natural Ecology focuses on the concept of sustainability and focuses on the protection of the environment that supports our communities and on the management of human activity.

Urban Character & Mixed-Use Development

In the past we have thought about the character of the City of Minneapolis as competing with suburban neighbors. Today and into the future we recognize the desirability of Minneapolis' unique character and physical form. We want to protect and preserve the urban environment. This goal will underlie all that we do in housing development, job creation, commercial revitalization, transit planning and public service delivery. Minneapolis' unique urban character is the key to its success as a place to live, work and play as we move into the 21st century.

As we draw up design standards for commercial and other mixed-use areas, function, beauty, convenience and accessibility are the concepts we consider. Good design must be in place to ensure that mixed land use development is well used, pleasant, and aesthetically attractive enough to withstand the test of time. The Minneapolis Plan designates several areas as Activity Centers that have higher density residential neighborhoods close by; a mix of commercial and entertainment activities that are mutually supportive and operate with low impacts on their surroundings; convenient and accessible transit service; and pedestrian friendly gather places and walking environments. In order to capitalize on the opportunities that fixed-route transit provides, The Minneapolis Plan has designated a new land use category called Transit Station Areas (TSA's). TSA's are areas within one-half mile in radius from transit stations that provide unique opportunities for integrated mixed-use redevelopment that includes public infrastructure, employment opportunities, housing density and urban design.

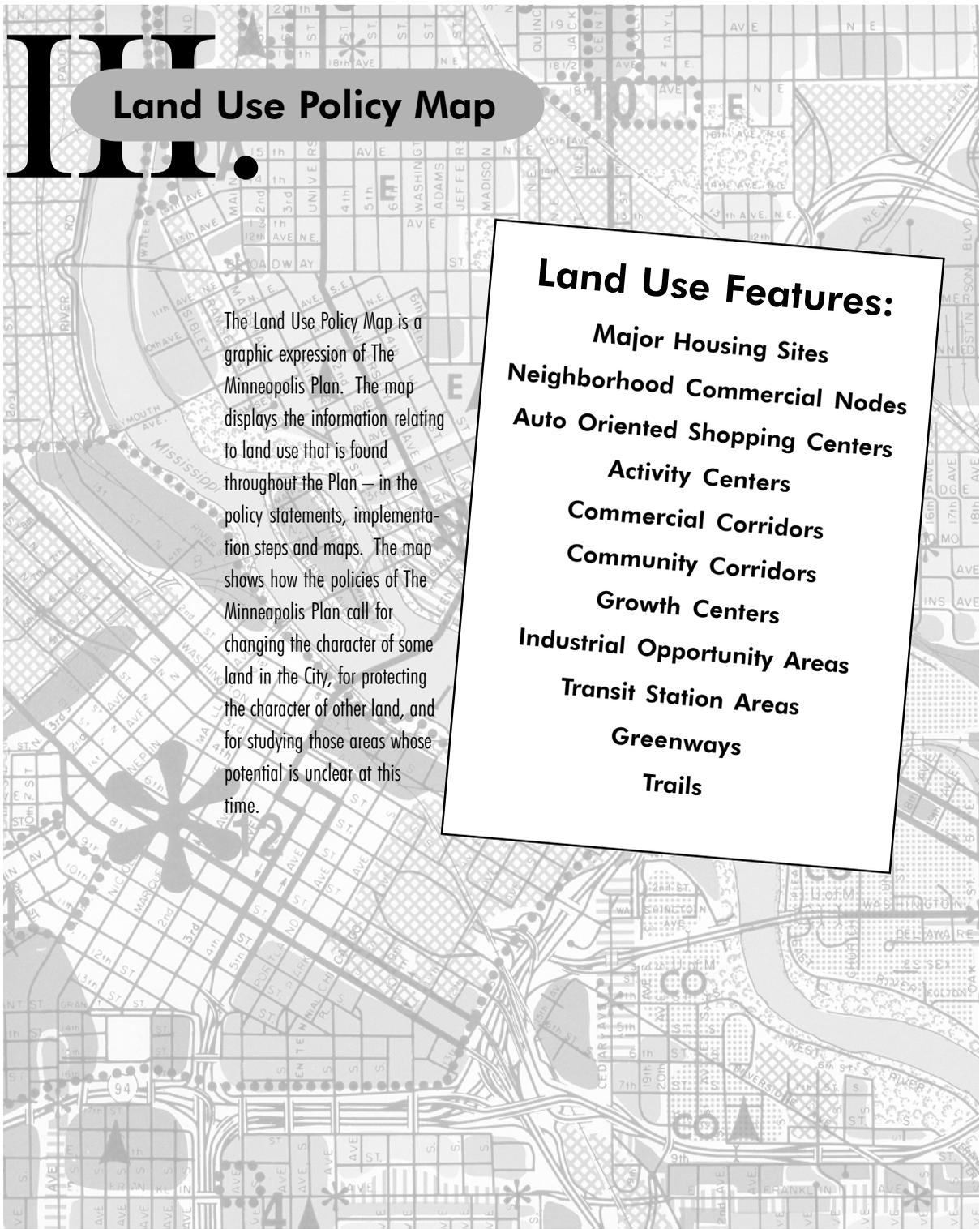


Community Building

Community building emphasizes the bonds of community that link city dwellers to each other and to the neighborhoods they call home. Today we understand the critical role that a "sense of community" plays in creating a desirable city. Gathering places and programs that serve a wide range of resident interests are important tools and contributors to making communities strong. The Minneapolis Plan points to gathering places, public facilities, institutions, a diverse population, the arts, health, safety and youth activities as necessities that must be cultivated in order to make Minneapolis a desirable community.

Shared Public Facilities

The Minneapolis Plan promotes improved coordination among governmental jurisdictions so that citizens are better served and scarce resources are conserved. We have seen combined school and park facilities that use land efficiently and provide the neighborhood with meeting space and indoor/outdoor recreational areas. We need more of this collaboration in the future.



III.

Land Use Policy Map

The Land Use Policy Map is a graphic expression of The Minneapolis Plan. The map displays the information relating to land use that is found throughout the Plan — in the policy statements, implementation steps and maps. The map shows how the policies of The Minneapolis Plan call for changing the character of some land in the City, for protecting the character of other land, and for studying those areas whose potential is unclear at this time.

Land Use Features:

- Major Housing Sites
- Neighborhood Commercial Nodes
- Auto Oriented Shopping Centers
- Activity Centers
- Commercial Corridors
- Community Corridors
- Growth Centers
- Industrial Opportunity Areas
- Transit Station Areas
- Greenways
- Trails

IV.

How Can We Use The Minneapolis Plan?

The principal role of The Minneapolis Plan is to guide implementation activities undertaken by the City and other stakeholders. We will know that The Minneapolis Plan is successful if, in the present, we are able to find wisdom and direction in the Plan that helps us in our day-to-day work, and in the future, we see some of the vision of the Plan becoming reality.

The following are some examples of how elected officials and public staff might use The Minneapolis Plan:

- 1. Zoning:** Zoning regulations are one of the tools used to implement the vision of The Minneapolis Plan. As we make daily recommendations and decisions on individual zoning matters, we check for consistency with The Minneapolis Plan policies. For example, does passage of a particular site plan further The Plan’s goal of enhancing the urban character of the City’s commercial corridors? Does new development reflect The Minneapolis Plan’s efforts to develop and promote mixed-use areas in the City?
- 2. City service delivery:** City government is in the business of providing services to citizens. We constantly review those services so that they better meet citizens’ needs. In our effort to continually improve, we can turn to The Minneapolis Plan and ask the question: is the service we deliver helping us achieve the vision described in The Minneapolis Plan? For example, as the City implements its inspections and licensing programs, we can step back and ask ourselves, do these programs contribute toward the vision of preserving the urban characteristics of Minneapolis, of maintaining the unique urban environment, as expressed in The Minneapolis Plan.
- 3. City policy and program development:** The Minneapolis Plan helps us see the complexity and inter-relatedness of the issues facing Minneapolis. For example, as we engage in debate and activity to develop light rail in Minneapolis, The Minneapolis Plan can help us understand what is necessary for light rail to be successful. By referring to The Minneapolis Plan’s policies regarding transit, we can gain a full view of successful transit and bring issues of housing, commercial development and land use to the discussion. Our solution will then be broader, more complex and ultimately more successful.
- 4. City budget:** Each year the City engages in a prioritizing and budgeting process. The Minneapolis Plan acts as a foundation for this process. It reminds us of the outcomes we are trying to achieve as we review current activities and then make resource allocation decisions. By reviewing The Minneapolis Plan and holding our service delivery outcomes up against the vision and policies described in The Minneapolis Plan, we can make educated decisions about service changes and enhancements.
- 5. Neighborhood planning:** Minneapolis neighborhoods, through the Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP), have been engaged in planning at the neighborhood level since 1990. The Minneapolis Plan provides citywide context to neighborhood planning and, in turn, is greatly informed by the plans neighborhoods have developed through the NRP. However, issues that are too broad to be solved at the local level affect many neighborhoods. The solutions to these issues require a citywide approach and commitment. This is the role of The Minneapolis Plan. The Minneapolis Plan will provide neighborhoods with an understanding of the citywide issues that need to be addressed, and will help neighborhoods work together towards the community’s vision for the City as a whole.