Midtown Greenway
Regional Trail Plan

Adopted December 2024

Minneapolis
Park & Recreation Board

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DF/ DAMON FARBER LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

We collectively acknowledge that the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) system is located on the traditional, ancestral and contemporary lands of the Dakota people. This land holds great historical, spiritual and personal significance for its original stewards, the Native nations and peoples of this region.

The Midtown Greenway Regional Trail connects to the East Phillips neighborhood, which is home to the largest population of American Indian or Alaska Native people within Minneapolis. The MPRB is continuing to work on Indigenous reconciliation, acknowledgment, and commitments.

View of the Midtown Greenway trail under the Bloomington Avenue Bridge; Photo credit: Damon Farber Landscape Architects

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Chapter 1 | INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

Plan Purpose

Partners in Planning

Related Planning Efforts

Introduction

The Midtown Greenway, a 5.9-mile bicycle and pedestrian trail in Minneapolis that runs from the eastern to western boundary of the city, follows a former commercial railway trench, and seamlessly weaves through the urban landscape. Established in 2000, the trail is a vital part of the city's bicycle network providing a key east/west connection across Minneapolis between St. Louis Park and the Mississippi River. The Midtown Greenway Regional Trail boundary also includes five existing park areas that connect to the Midtown Greenway trail. They include The Mall, Soo Line Garden, Cepro Site, the ramp connecting to Brackett Park, and a small part of West River Parkway.

The Midtown Greenway has an uninterrupted route, mostly free from car traffic, thanks to a grade-separated setup situated beneath bridges or on a levee. Over a million visits annually attest to its popularity.** Looking ahead, the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) is the primary underlying landowner and the City of Minneapolis operates the trail. This plan lays the foundation for Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to bring the Midtown Greenway into the regional trail system.

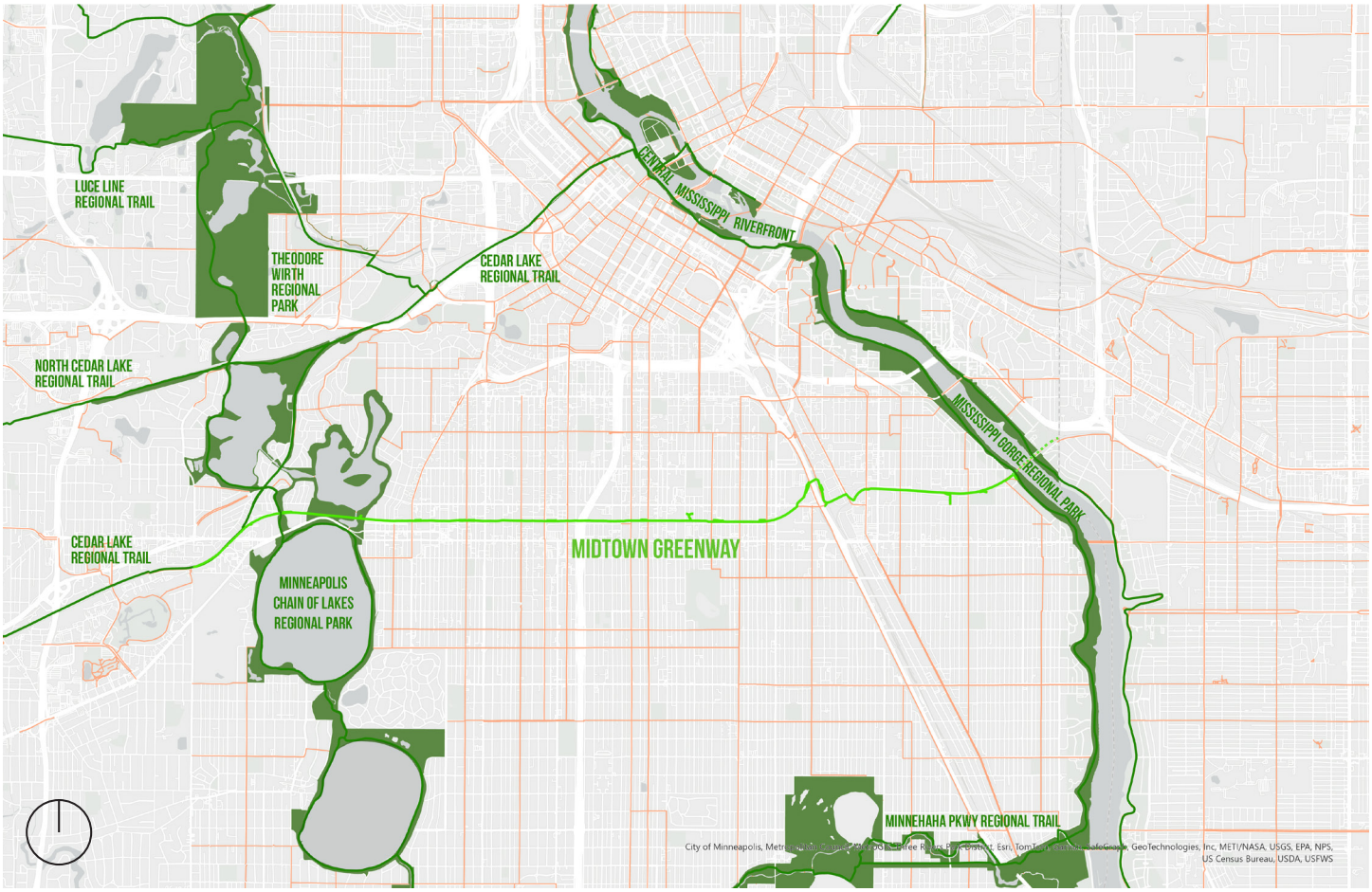
The idea for the trail emerged from community-driven efforts and advocacy. One of the groups heavily involved in its initial development was the Midtown Greenway Coalition, a non-profit organization that remains deeply engaged with the Midtown Greenway today. Their mission is 'to empower communities to develop, improve, protect, and enjoy the Midtown Greenway as a green urban corridor that enhances people's lives.'*

The regional trail plan covers the existing paved trail and the proposed expansion over the Mississippi River. Detailed maps throughout the plan illustrate the corridor, highlighting connections to local trail networks, existing amenities, crossing treatments, and recommendations for future improvements.***

**Source: Midtown Greenway Coalition, About the Coalition and About the Greenway: https://midtowngreenway.org/*
***Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration: A Crown Jewel of Bikeways: https://highways.dot.gov/public-roads/novemberdecember-2016/crown-jewel-bikeways*
****See "FIGURE 1: Context Map - Midtown Greenway Regional Trail" on page 9, and "FIGURE 13: Segment 1 - Midtown Greenway Regional Trail" on page 34 through "FIGURE 23: Segment 11 - Midtown Greenway Regional Trail" on page 44*

View of the Midtown Greenway

FIGURE 1: CONTEXT MAP - MIDTOWN GREENWAY REGIONAL TRAIL



KEY: MIDTOWN GREENWAY | FUTURE EXTENSION | LOCAL BIKE NETWORK | REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS

Plan Purpose

Park planning plays a critical role in the Park Board's mission. Objectives of a park or trail plan include the following:

- Set a vision to guide long-term development and improvements to a park, trail, or group of parks,
- Guide stewardship and help ensure that park features and amenities reflect the needs of the communities they serve,
- Help ensure long-term financial and ecological sustainability,
- Involve engagement with individual and group stakeholders, other community partners, and governmental entities, and
- Achieve approval by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) of Commissioners and Metropolitan Council.

The completed regional trail plan will direct policy and design implementation for the parkland within the regional boundary for the next 20 to 30 years. This plan will also guide how regional capital funding is spent throughout the entire regional trail boundary in accordance with Cooperative Agreement between MPRB, City of Minneapolis (City), and HCRRA.

Partners in Planning

The Metropolitan Council designated the Midtown Greenway as a Regional Trail Search Corridor in the 2020 Amendment to the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan, which was a step towards getting regional status and funding for the Midtown Greenway. In order to unlock regional park system funding as a regional trail, MPRB led the development of a regional trail plan as the only eligible regional park implementing agency for regional parks and trails within Minneapolis.

Most of the Midtown Greenway is on land owned by HCRRA with a few segments owned by others. HCRRA and the City are the primary operators of the HCRRA owned segments. There are also a few properties owned and operated by MPRB that are included in the regional trail boundary. To align with MPRB Resolution 2023-127, regional funding will only be for low-cost capital improvements. Any low-cost capital improvements constructed by MPRB located on land not owned by MPRB must be maintained by other agencies. To clearly identify the roles and responsibilities between the City, HCRRA, and the MPRB for the Midtown Greenway, a Cooperative Agreement was developed between the three agencies focused on ownership, operations, and use of regional funding. This agreement is in addition to the existing operations permit agreement between the City and HCRRA.

View of the Midtown Greenway
Photo courtesy of Hennepin County

FIGURE 2: TIMELINE OF PLAN PROCESS

Related Planning Efforts

Prior Midtown Greenway Planning and Community Driven Initiatives (1999-2022)

Since its beginning, a number of plans have been developed for planning, operations, and implementation of the Midtown Greenway. They've included input from different agencies, the owners and operators of the trail, and community members and organizations. In addition to plans, there's also been a number of community-driven initiatives related to the Midtown Greenway and/or surrounding area. Prior plans, community-driven initiatives, and recommendations were reviewed, synthesized, and informed the development of this regional trail plan. Prior plans and initiatives include:

- Lake Street Midtown Greenway Corridor Framework Plan (1999)
- Bikeway Report (2000)
- Chicago Milwaukee and St. Paul Railroad Grade Separation Historic District (2005)
- Greenways Alternative Analysis (2014)
- Making the Connection: Midtown - Greenway to Lake Street (2016)
- Midtown Greenway Reevaluation (2017)
- Midtown Greenway Community Safety Design (2020)
- Creative CityMaking (2020)
- Wayfinding Inventory (2020)
- Lake Street Alignment (2021)
- Truth and Repair on Lake Street (2021)
- Lake Street Recovery (2022).

See the Appendix for more information about these plans and initiatives.

MPRB Park and System-Wide Plans (2016-2023)

The South Service Area Plan (adopted 2016, amended 2017) and Southwest Service Area Plan (adopted 2020) are community driven neighborhood park plan documents that set 20-30 year visions for Minneapolis parks south of I-394 and I-94. These plan documents are guides for park improvements and include cost estimates for improvements, operations, and maintenance. Included in these plan documents are the MPRB adopted park plans for the Cepro Park site (south) and The Mall Park (southwest). These two parks are included in the boundary for the Midtown Greenway

Regional Trail along with their adopted park plans.

In addition to the service area plans for neighborhood parks around the Midtown Greenway, Mississippi Gorge Regional Park (adopted 2019) has a plan and Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park has two plans, Bde Maka Ska-Harriet (adopted 2017) and Cedar Lake and Lake of the Isles (adopted 2023), with recommendations that enhance and expand connections to the Midtown Greenway.

Parks for All: MPRB Comprehensive Plan 2021-2036 (adopted 2021) and the Ecological System Plan (adopted 2020) are system-wide plans that set policy direction for the organization and provide a framework for how environmental considerations can be addressed. Information in these plans informs the plan development and implementation, and lays the groundwork for MPRB to work in collaboration with other agencies on the regional trail system.

New Nicollet Redevelopment (In Progress)

With the removal of KMart, the Nicollet Avenue area adjacent to the Midtown Greenway is in the planning stages led by the City of Minneapolis (City). As part of this planning process, it has been proposed by the City for the entrance ramp for the Midtown Greenway to be moved from Nicollet Avenue to 1st Avenue. As the project continues to unfold, the Amenity Zone proposed in this area will adjust as needed.

Midtown Greenway Bicycle and Pedestrian Trail Expansion Project (In Progress)

The Metropolitan Council is conducting this project, as directed by the State Legislature, to develop a conceptual implementation plan for extending the Greenway across the Mississippi River to provide a new regional transportation connection between the Twin Cities and an enhanced recreational opportunity for the region. In the future, the Short Line Bridge may become a potential addition to the Midtown Greenway Regional Trail. The bridge is included within the regional trail boundary and shown as a dashed line to demonstrate this possibility. However, operations and ownership of this segment are not in the regional trail plan at this time. This planning project includes exploring options to retrofit or replace the Short Line rail bridge which may inform the future function, ownership, and operations of the bridge.

Chapter 2 | COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Overview and Process

Advisory Committees

Community Context

Project Stakeholders

Summary of Engagement

Plan Approval

Overview and Process

Through a number of previous planning process, community and partner feedback was gathered and developed into recommendations. To carry this input forward, a synthesis of prior plan recommendations and feedback have been incorporated into this plan document. Since MPRB does not own or operate the majority of the Midtown Greenway and a number of previous plans have been developed, many of the conversations for this project were focused with community and agency partners. Direct community engagement for this plan took place primarily during a 45-day comment period on the Draft Plan document. During this time, MPRB engaged a number of stakeholder groups to ensure the plan reflected a diversity of voices. This chapter goes into detail about identified stakeholders, engagement strategies, and how feedback was incorporated into the development of this plan. The Metropolitan Council's Equity Analysis requirement is embedded throughout this chapter as its requirements closely overlap with this reporting. During engagement for this project, participation from stakeholders was at the consult level of the IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation.

Advisory Committees

There were three advisory committees integral to this process including a Project Advisory Committee, Technical Advisory Committee and Operations Workgroup. There was no Community Advisory Committee (CAC) appointed to this regional trail planning process because this is a fully built regional trail and a number of previous plans have been developed and synthesized for this project.

Project Advisory Committee

The Project Advisory Committee (PAC) was made up of MPRB staff representatives from departments across the organization. The PAC provided insight and expertise about existing conditions, maintenance, and programming within the project area and shared feedback on draft materials.

Technical Advisory Committee

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was made up of staff from different agencies and organizations that have a connection to the project area. Representatives on the TAC worked for agencies and non-profit organizations that have a relationship to the Midtown Greenway and have a city, region, or state-wide focus. TAC members provided feedback on the draft materials and how work their agencies were doing may overlap or require future coordination.

Operations Workgroup

The Operations Workgroup was made up of staff from the City, HCRRA, and the MPRB that have a direct role in operations and ownership of the Midtown Greenway. The workgroup focused on the details, roles, and responsibilities related to operations of the Midtown Greenway, and ultimately were integral contributors to the Cooperative Agreement between the three agencies.

Community Context

Several prominent north/south streets intersect with the Midtown Greenway, such as Bloomington, Chicago, Hennepin, Hiawatha, and Lyndale Avenues. There are also a number of bike connections, including but not limited to: Cedar Lake Regional Trail, Minneapolis Chain of Lakes Regional Park and the Grand Rounds, Bryant Avenue S, Portland Avenue, 18th Avenue S, Hiawatha, 26th Avenue S, and Mississippi Gorge Regional Park. Notably, the eastern segment of the Midtown Greenway, starting just west of Hiawatha Avenue, exhibits a less dense residential pattern, marked by fewer multifamily units and a substantial allocation of land to industrial uses as well as a cemetery.

The Midtown Greenway serves as a vital connection within a diverse community, spanning a wide range of ethnicities and economic backgrounds. "FIGURE 3: Demographics" illustrates the demographic makeup of the Midtown Greenway adjacent neighborhood areas in comparison to the Twin Cities region. This corridor acts as a unifying bridge, bringing together residents from various income brackets across Minneapolis neighborhoods and surrounding cities.

However, significant racial and ethnic segregation is evident along the corridor. In areas adjacent to the Chain of Lakes and Mississippi River, people of color constitute less than 10% of the population. In contrast, the Phillips, Central, and Powderhorn neighborhoods boast a much higher representation, with people of color accounting for up to 87% of residents (see "FIGURE 5: Corridor Population Percent People of Color"). A parallel trend emerges in income distribution, with median household incomes along the Midtown Corridor ranging from as high as $209,000 to as low as $14,700, compared to the citywide median of $62,583 for Minneapolis as a whole (see "FIGURE 6: Corridor Household Median Income").

Image of Midtown Greenway
Photo credit: The Greenway Guy

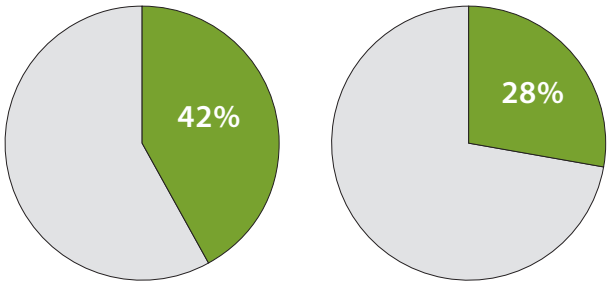
Image of CEPRO Site
Photo credit: Philip Hussong, courtesy Hennepin County

Image of Midtown Greenway
Photo credit: Phillip Hussong, courtesy of Hennepin County

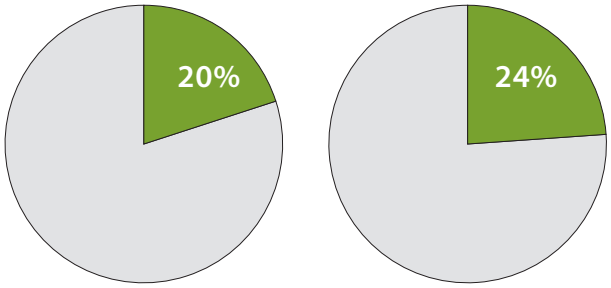
FIGURE 3: DEMOGRAPHICS

AGE

BETWEEN AGES 25-45

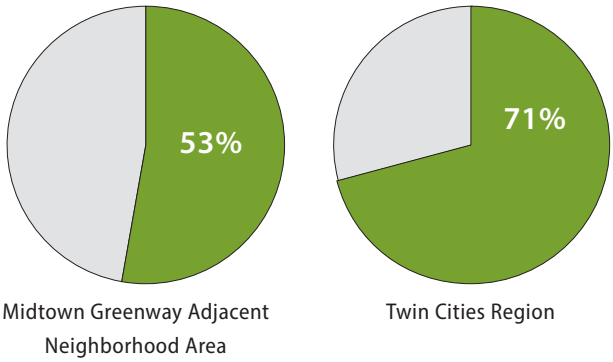


UNDER 18

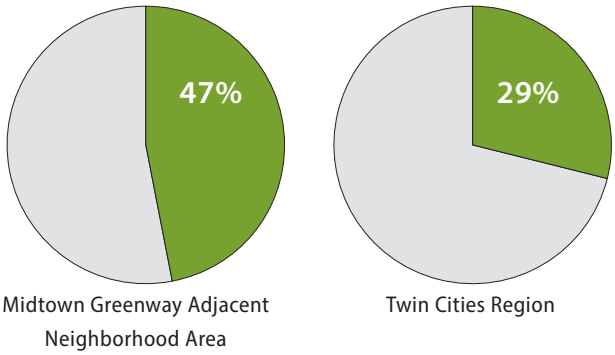


RACE/ETHNICITY

IDENTIFIES AS WHITE

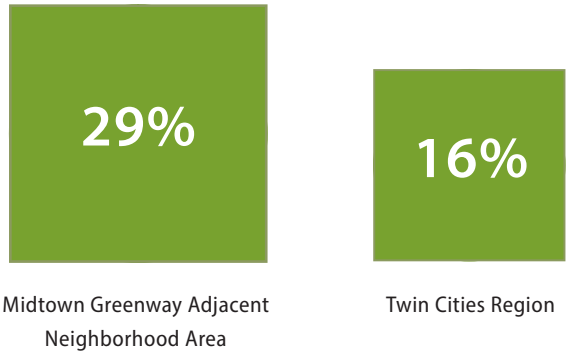


IDENTIFIES AS BLACK, INDIGENOUS, AND PEOPLE OF COLOR (BIPOC) OR MULTI-RACIAL



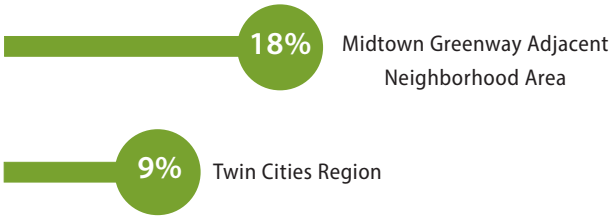
LANGUAGE

SPEAKS A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN ENGLISH



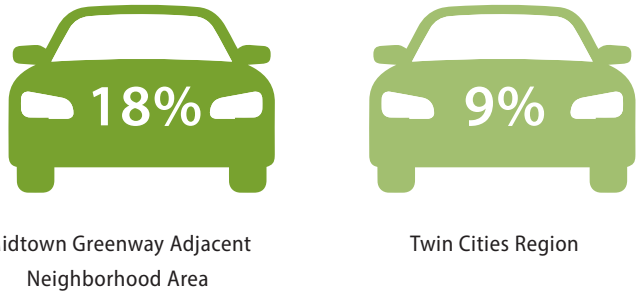
INCOME

PEOPLE BELOW THE POVERTY LINE



TRANSPORTATION

DOESN'T OWN A CAR



DRIVES TO WORK

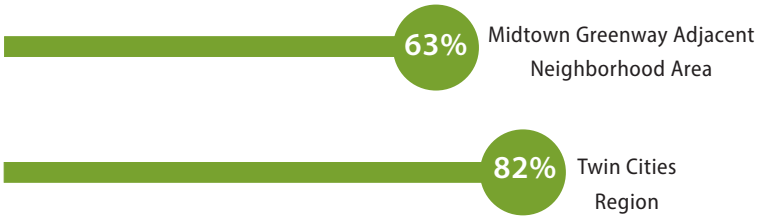


FIGURE 4: CORRIDOR POPULATION DENSITY

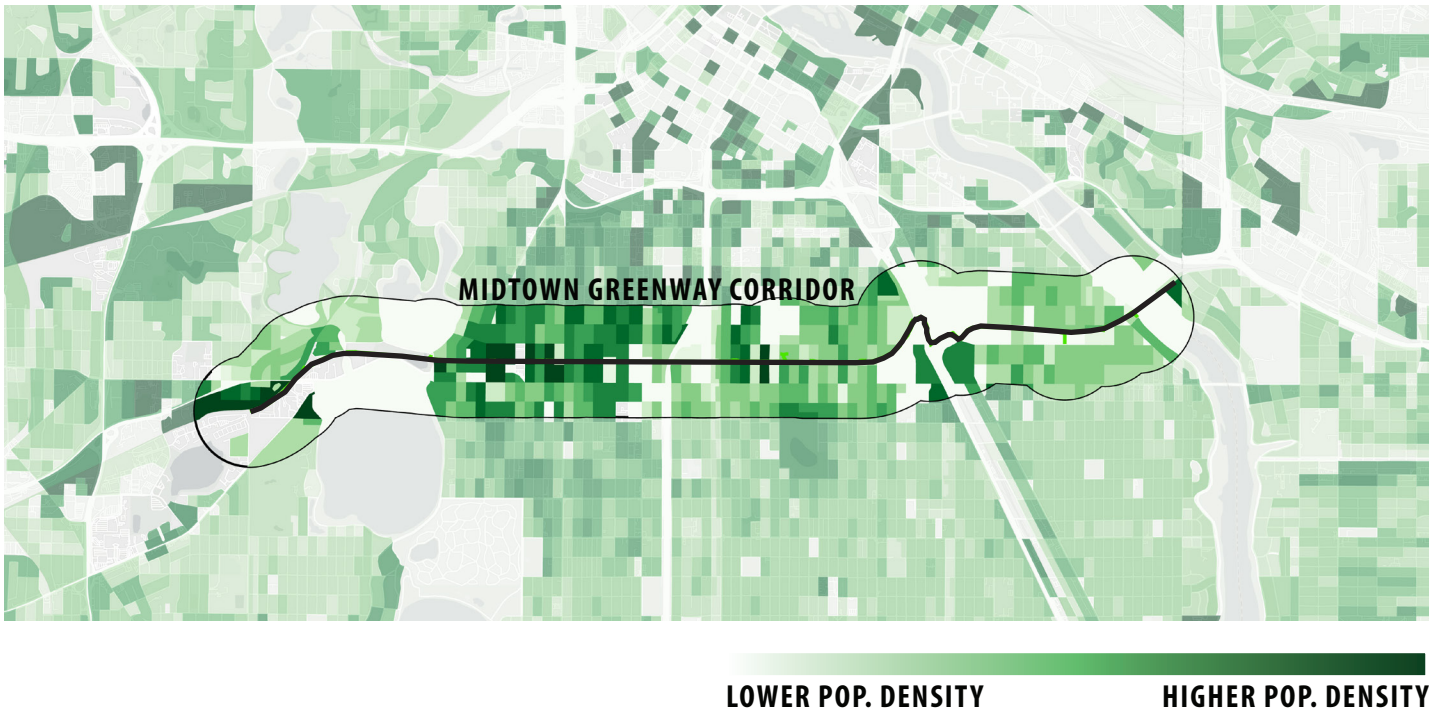


FIGURE 5: CORRIDOR POPULATION PERCENT PEOPLE OF COLOR

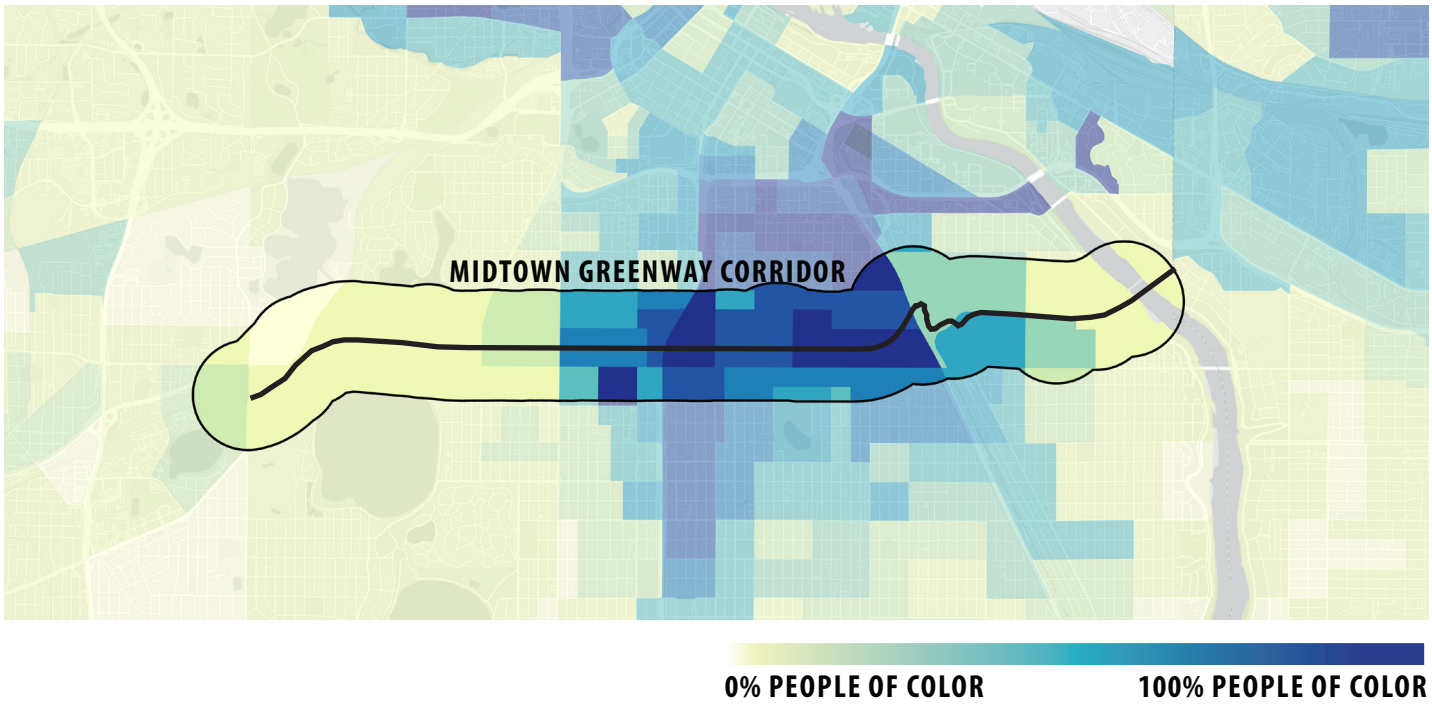
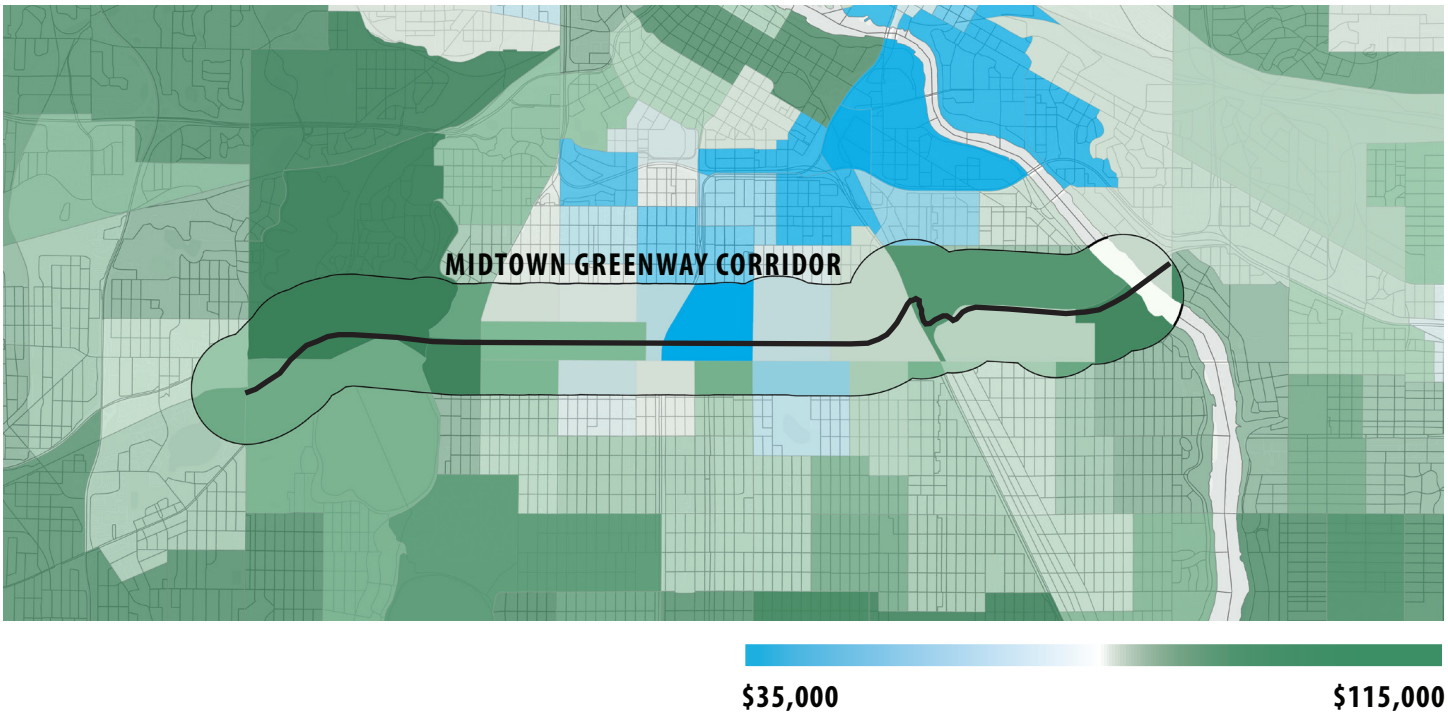


FIGURE 6: CORRIDOR HOUSEHOLD MEDIAN INCOME



Project Stakeholders

The Midtown Greenway Regional Trail Plan involved a diverse range of stakeholders, encompassing local residents, community organizations and advocates, planners, government officials, and business leaders. This collaborative effort ensures a comprehensive and community-driven approach to the project's success. "FIGURE 7: Project Stakeholders" details the engagement of these stakeholders, illustrating their roles, participation, and the incorporation of their feedback into the ongoing project progress and outcomes.

FIGURE 7: PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

Project Stakeholder	Outreach: How will you reach out to the stakeholder?	Engagement: How will they participate?	Reflecting Back: How will Stakeholder groups be reflected back to about the project progress or outcomes?
Neighborhood Organizations	At key project milestones, presentations to resident boards and share out news alerts with neighborhood newspapers and social media	Review of draft. Survey and in person feedback. Input opportunities will be limited to low cost capital improvements.	Circle back online with final plan when adopted by MPRB and Met Council
Community Organizations and Activists working on Reimaging Lake Street post-unrest and uprising	Review recommendations from community	Review of draft. Survey and in person feedback. Input opportunities will be limited to low cost capital improvements. Slow Roll engagement hosted by Cultural Wellness Center.	Circle back online with final plan when adopted by MPRB and Met Council
Residents along Midtown Greenway	Signage on Midtown Greenway, at key project milestones, presentations to resident boards and share out news alerts with neighborhood newspapers and social media	Review of draft. Survey and in person feedback. Input opportunities will be limited to low cost capital improvements. Latino and Somali focus groups at cultural centers along the Greenway and Lake Street convened by Midtown Greenway Coalition.	Circle back online with final plan when adopted by MPRB and Met Council
Cyclists and Pedestrians and Advocates	City Bike and Pedestrian Committees, Hennepin County Active Transportation Committee meeting presentations, project website, news releases, and signage on Midtown Greenway	Review of draft. Survey and in person feedback. Input opportunities will be limited to low cost capital improvements.	Circle back online with final plan when adopted by MPRB and Met Council
New or Potential Park Users	Project website, news releases, and signage on Midtown Greenway and multilingual outreach	Review of draft. Survey and in person feedback. Input opportunities will be limited to low cost capital improvements.	Circle back online with final plan when adopted by MPRB and Met Council
Partner Agencies	Attend meetings, project website	Input on key operations and design decisions	Circle back online with final plan when adopted by MPRB and Met Council
Local Businesses	Reach out to local business associations like LSC, Midtown Business Assoc., Longfellow Business Assoc., and NDC via email, website and meetings	Review of draft. Survey and in person feedback. Input opportunities will be limited to low cost capital improvements.	Circle back online with final plan when adopted by MPRB and Met Council

Summary of Engagement

The project team developed a draft plan document that built on a number of previous plans that provided a wealth of context, analysis, community engagement, and recommendations. This was used as the starting point in recognition that the community around the Midtown Greenway Regional Trail has been engaged in a number of planning efforts since its inception and this plan could utilize the feedback and recommendations from those plans as the starting point. A summary of these related planning efforts is included in the Appendix. The draft plan also included information provided through the project's advisory committees and operations workgroup along with community feedback gathered to date. Once completed, the draft document was shared for public review and comment from June 20, 2024, to August 5, 2024.

During the public comment period, there was extensive engagement to share the plan document with key stakeholders for feedback. The following is a summary of the engagement strategies used:

- Sharing the draft plan online with an online survey in Spanish, Somali and English.
- Distributing printed copies of the plan to area recreation centers.
- Posting lawn signs along the Midtown Greenway advertising the plan and comment period.
- Slow Roll bike rides along the Midtown Greenway hosted by the Cultural Wellness Center and

View of the Midtown Greenway
Photo courtesy of Damon Farber Landscape Architects

Melanin in Motion.

- Somali and Spanish language focus groups hosted by the Midtown Greenway Coalition.
- Two online open houses hosted by MPRB staff and the project's Operations Workgroup staff.
- Outreach to neighborhood organizations, project email list, and media advisory.
- Presentations to the City of Minneapolis Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committees and Hennepin County Active Transportation Committee.
- Meetings with the Project Advisory Committee, Technical Advisory Committee, and Operations Workgroup.

The engagement for this plan focused on the Amenity Zones, wayfinding and ecological enhancements throughout the regional trail, and the regional trail boundary to align with Park Board of Commissioner direction in fall of 2023. The focus on Amenity Zones created a structure for feedback on low-cost amenities. The Amenity Zone graphics and information about project communication are located in the Appendix. The following are themes that came out of the engagement period. Note: Items in bold were noted with higher frequency.

Summary of Themes from Spanish Language Focus Group:

- **Suggestion to improve safety on the Greenway through lighting, staffing, cameras, maintenance, and other means.**
- Suggestion to add restrooms along Greenway
- Concern related to safety on the Greenway
- Suggestion for additional trash cans
- Suggestion to add picnic tables

Summary of Themes from Somali Language Focus Group:

- **Suggestion to improve safety on the Greenway through lighting, staffing, cameras, maintenance, and other means.**
- Suggestion to add drinking fountains along the Greenway
- Suggestion related to Greenway trail design
- Suggestion to add restrooms along Greenway
- Suggestion to add or relocate amenity zones
- Suggestion related to wayfinding form and content

Summary of Themes from Other Public Comment Feedback:

- **Suggestion related to Soo Line Garden future improvements**
- **Question or General statement**
- Support for the plan
- Suggestion to prioritize trail user safety at vehicle crossings
- Support for Greenway extension across the river
- Suggestion to clarify/modify document text or graphics
- Suggestion related to wayfinding form and content
- Suggestion to add drinking fountains along the Greenway
- Concern about the park planning process
- Suggestion to add or relocate amenity zones
- Suggestion to improve safety on the Greenway through lighting, staffing, cameras, maintenance, and other means.

At the close of the public comment period, MPRB staff compiled and reviewed all comments. Feedback that aligned with the focused engagement for this plan was used to revise the plan as warranted. Feedback for other agencies or projects was shared accordingly. A few things that changed as a result of this engagement period include:

- Adding additional amenity zones, with a particular focus on the eastern end of the trail.
- Incorporating funding for some additional low-

cost amenities into the cost estimates for each amenity zone.

- Expansion of guiding principles to support design and implementation.

Overall, this plan brings together a synthesis of a number of plans developed across a number of years to create a vision for the regional trail coordinated across multiple agencies. By developing this plan and a Cooperative Agreement, the MPRB will be positioned to provide some financial support to this fully built trail for park-like amenities. MPRB funding for this regional trail will be allocated through the six-year capital improvement program for all MPRB regional parks and trails. The MPRB has a limited role in ownership and operations of the Greenway, which is detailed in roles and responsibilities for implementation within the Cooperative Agreement.

Plan Approval

The Midtown Greenway Regional Trail Plan, which included commissioner amendments, was approved by the MPRB Board of Commissioners on December 4, 2024.

Chapter 3 | EXISTING AND FUTURE CONDITIONS

Natural Resources and MLCCS

Surface, Groundwater, and Wetland Resources

Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area

Demand Forecast

Natural Resources and MLCCS

The Midtown Greenway Regional Trail extends through developed urban fabric within a former railroad corridor in Minneapolis. Natural resource features of this corridor are classified by the Minnesota Land Cover Classification System (MLCCS), provided by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The MLCCS defines the area immediately adjacent to the Midtown Greenway Regional Trail as: artificial/ impervious surfaces with pockets of planted or cultivated vegetation, herbaceous, shrublands, and woodlands land cover ("FIGURE 8: MLCCS Map - Midtown Greenway Regional Trail"). The predominant water features identified in the area are the Mississippi River, Bde Maka Ska, Lake of the Isles, and Cedar Lake.

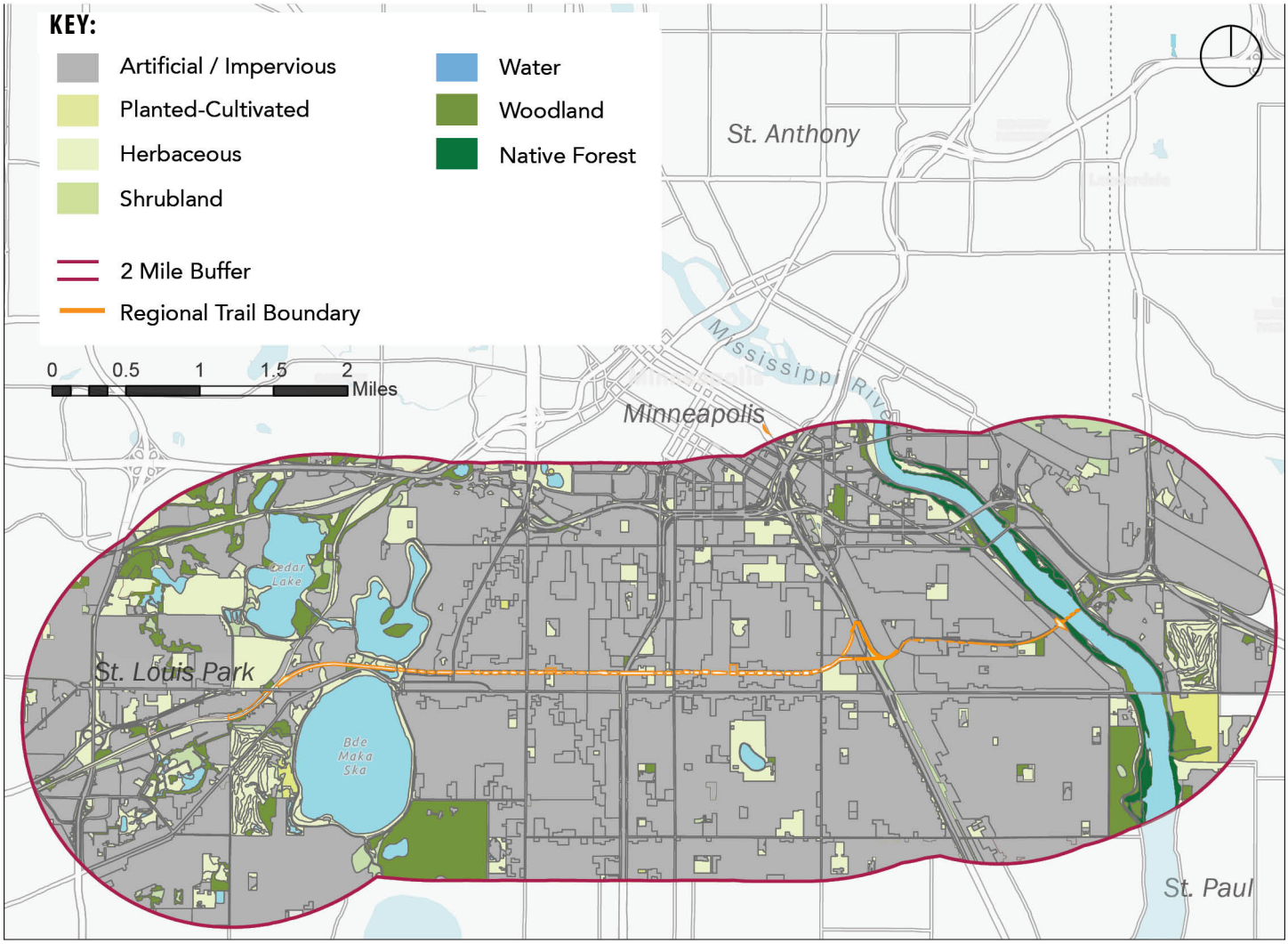
The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources manages the National Historic Information System (NHIS), which provides specific key information regarding Minnesota's rare plants, native plant communities, animals, and other rare features of a landscape. Current NHIS data indicates that there is potential for state listed endangered or threatened species within 1-mile of the Midtown Greenway Regional Trail. NHIS reviews are completed for construction projects only. When a construction project occurs, proposed construction documents should be submitted and a detailed review with comments and recommendations will be provided.

Image of Midtown Greenway at 5th Avenue South
Photo credit: Damon Farber Landscape Architects

Surface, Groundwater, and Wetland Resources

In order to safeguard the surface water resources of the watershed, the Midtown Greenway will strategically and intentionally adhere to the protection of all surrounding water resources included in the project scope. To achieve a high level of protection, the project, as applicable, will employ best management practices (BMPs) for stormwater and groundwater resources as identified by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA). Reduction in pollutants of concern and excess sediment loading will be achieved by utilizing infiltration, pretreatment, and other BMPs of stormwater runoff. Trail activities will avoid any potential wetland impacts. Vegetation on site will be managed in accordance with all ecological standards set by municipal and state standards.

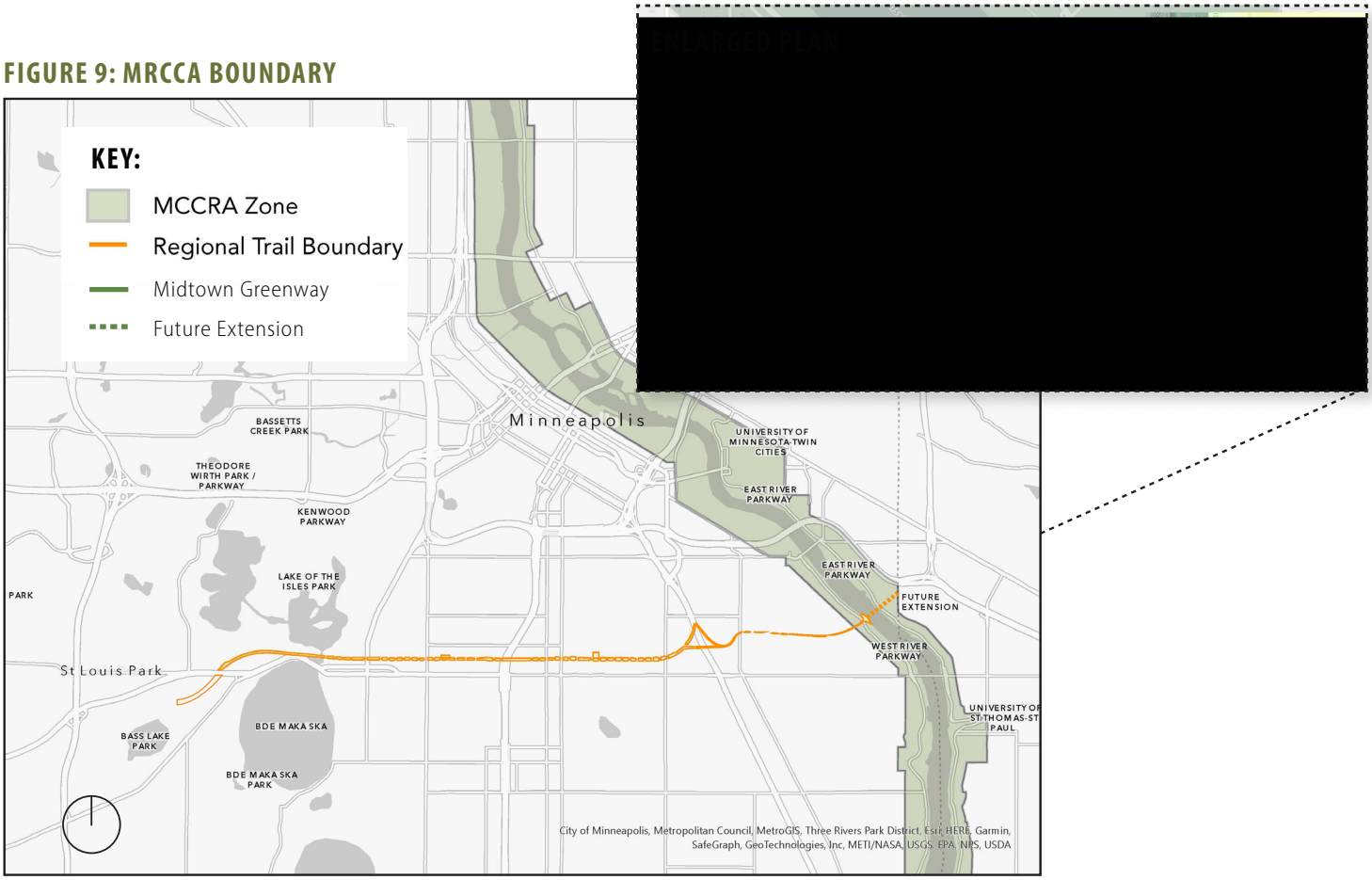
FIGURE 8: MLCCS MAP - MIDTOWN GREENWAY REGIONAL TRAIL



Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area

The far eastern portion of the Midtown Greenway Regional Trail is located within the boundary of the Mississippi River Corridor Critical Area (MRCCA), and provides an essential connection for Minneapolis residents to the river. The entire length of the Greeenway from the lakes to the river can be considered a connection to the MRCCA from the urban fabric. Providing oversight and regulation of the area and coordinated land planning endeavors, the MRCCA is a state critical area created to protect natural, cultural, and scenic resources as detailed in Minnesota Statutes, section 116G.15, subd. 1. Protection of primary conservation areas and public river corridor views as identified by local government comprehensive plans are strategically protected by the site's planning, design, and construction. Spanning over seven metropolitan counties, the MRCCA protects natural resources through development standards at various levels of government, and the trail will comply accordingly with these important regulations within the MRCCA boundary (Minn. Rule Chapters 6106.0010 - 6106.0180). Viewing the Midtown Greenway's interface with the MRCCA as an asset, the trail will work cooperatively with the standards for the critical area and continue this compliance through future management. The MRCCA overlap is illustrated in "FIGURE 9: MRCCA Boundary" on page 26, demonstrating the portion of the trail that is subject to MRCCA standards. The trail design and construction will comply with all required standards contained in Minn. Rules 6106.0130. In addition to MRCCA standards, protection of primary conservation areas and public river corridor views as defined by local government comprehensive plans will strategically protected by the planning, design, and construction of the site.

FIGURE 9: MRCCA BOUNDARY



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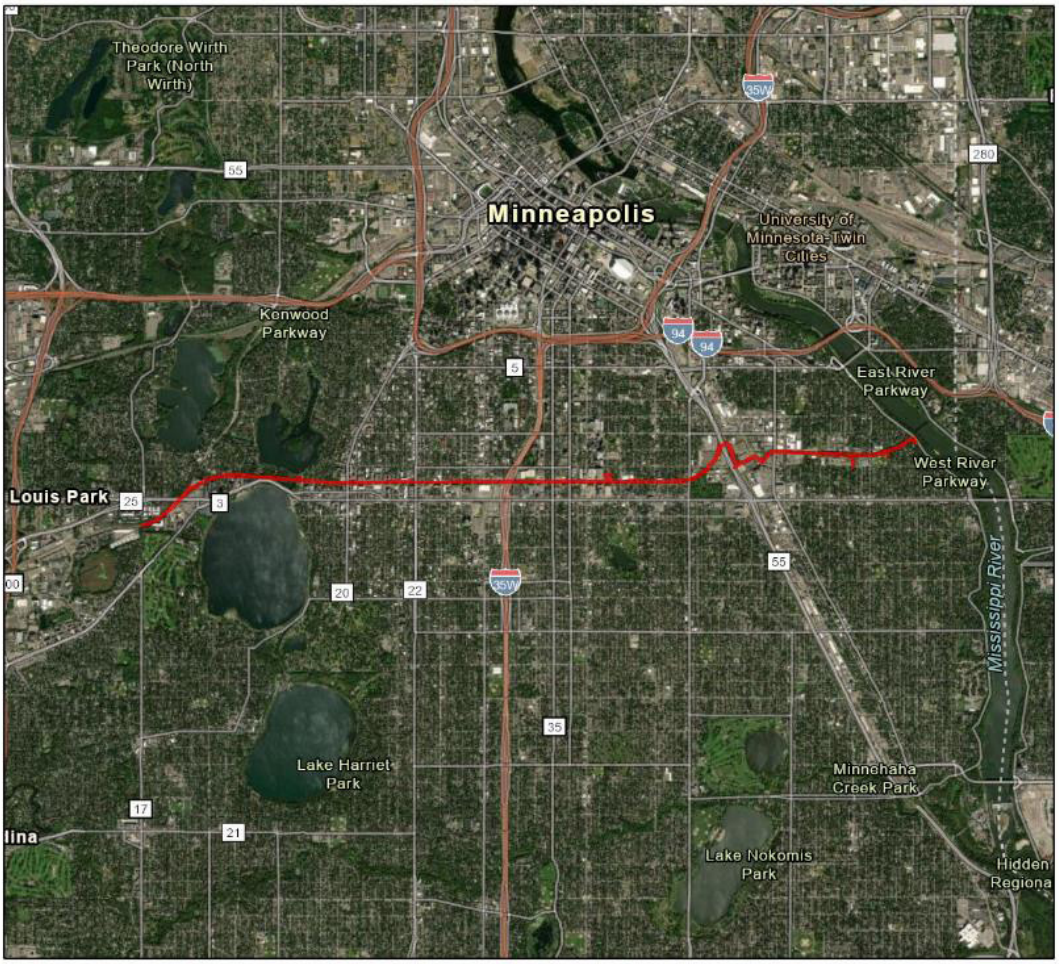
Midtown Greenway

Aerial Imagery With Locator Map



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0 0.42 0.85 1.7 2.55 3.4 Miles

Project Boundary

Project Type: Planning, Other

Project Size (acres): 22.41

County(s): Hennepin

TRS: T28 R24 S5, T28 R24 S6, T29 R23 S31, T29 R24 S32, T29 R24 S33 +

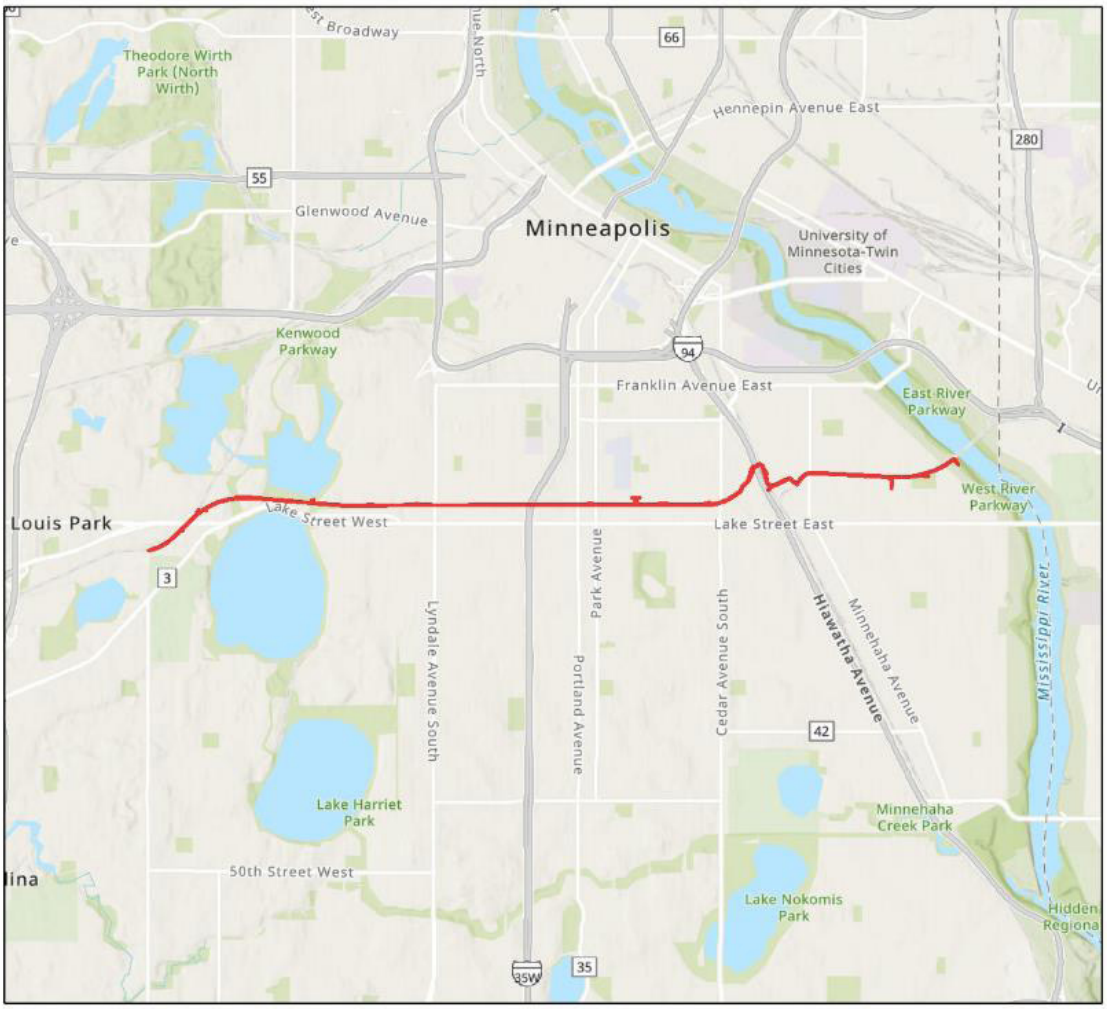
Earthstar Geographics
Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA
City of Minneapolis, Metropolitan Council, MetroGIS, Three Rivers Park District,

2/6/2023 11:42 AM

Midtown Greenway
MCE #: 2023-00082
Page 4 of 4

Midtown Greenway

USA Topo Basemap With Locator Map



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Project Boundary

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Esri, NASA, NGA, USGS
Esri, HERE, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA
City of Minneapolis, Metropolitan Council, MetroGIS, Three Rivers Park District,

CEPRO Site Park Packet

Excerpt from Adopted MPRB South Service Area Master Plan

Appendix I:

CEPRO Site

Site Location and History

The Cepro Site is located in the Midtown Phillips neighborhood of south Minneapolis. The 1.65-acre green space is bounded by 10th and 11th Avenues South on the west and east, the Midtown Greenway on the south, and residential properties on the north. It lies in very close proximity to the Midtown Global Market and the Allina Health Campus. Hennepin County purchased the site in 2000 to support implementation of Phase 2 of the Midtown Greenway. It was the former home of the Stewart Cepro Grain Elevator, which was demolished in 2004. The elevator was the last rail customer in the Greenway and the County needed to buy it out in order to acquire rights to the railway. In all, the County spent $7.5 million on acquisition, demolition, and phase 1 construction of the Cepro Site.

In 2004 Hennepin County initiated a community input process to determine how to use the site. The community overwhelmingly felt the site should be entirely used for open space, because the surrounding neighborhoods are highly dense and have lower percentages of green space than other neighborhoods. The community vision for the site at that time included universal design and accessibility, bike and pedestrian safety, healthy foods, physical activity, and community and family programming. To begin implementing this vision, in 2007 the County constructed paved pathways and stairs to establish an accessible route from neighborhood streets down to the Greenway. From 2011 through 2016, it continued improving the site with seating, sidewalks, plantings, and trees.

In 2017, with the Midtown Greenway nearing 20 years old, Hennepin County decided to closeout the original Midtown Community Works program, which had provided management and funding to greenway-associated initiatives. Along with this closure came the need to divest from properties being maintained by the program. It is this closure that initiated conversations between MPRB and the County about possible land transfer.

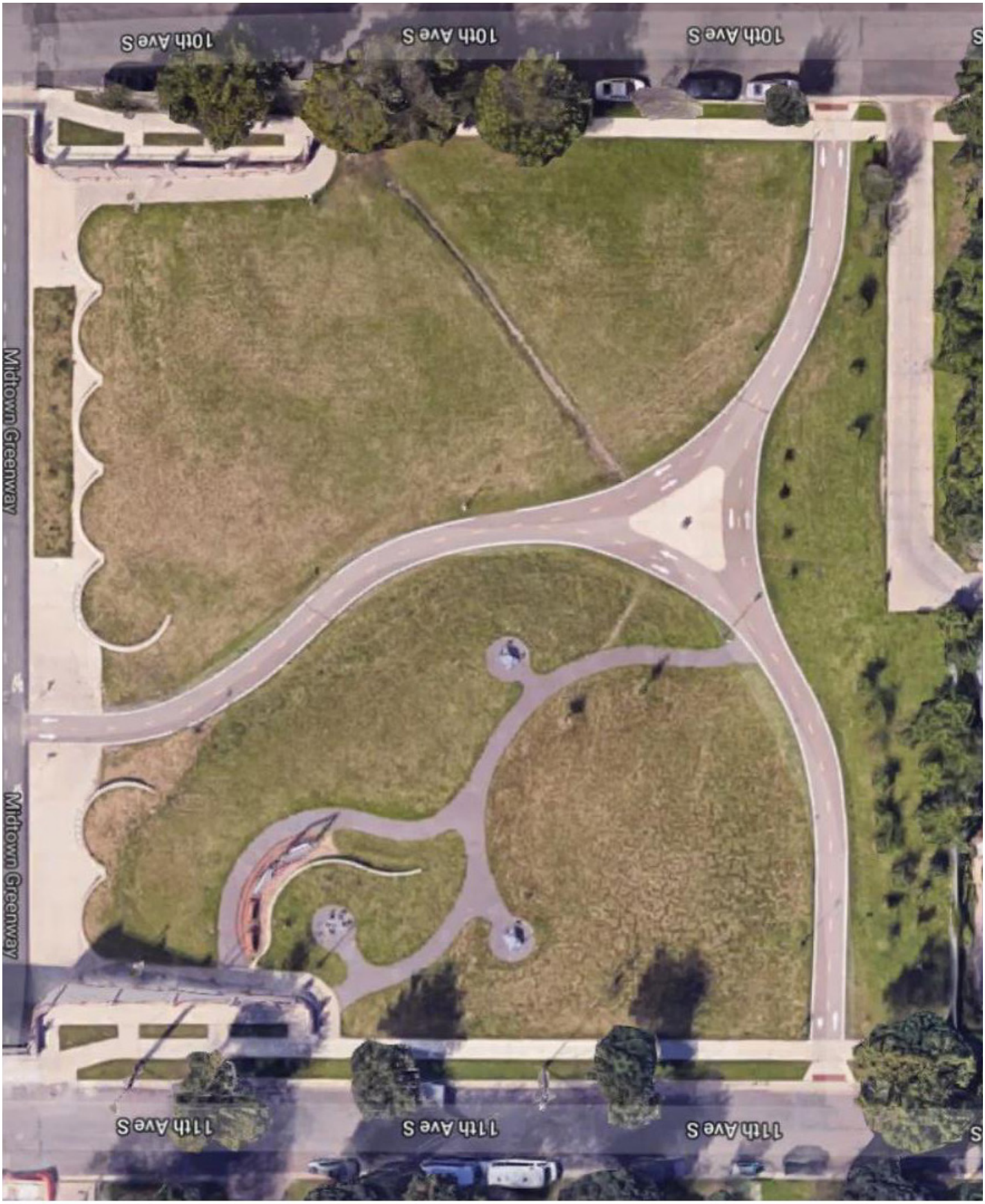
Existing Conditions

Today the Cepro site is a mostly open green space with relatively steep grades descending from surrounding streets to the Midtown Greenway. Hennepin County's improvements (all of which are considered the "phase 1" improvement of the site) allow for both pass-through and stay-a-while use. A Y-shaped trail occupies the center of the site and provides the only fully accessible ramp into the sunken portion of the Greenway. On the eastern edge of the site are a variety of seating options—picnic tables, benches, and swing benches—located on several different terraced elevations. Native landscaping and trees cover the eastern slopes, while a small grouping of fruit trees offer fresh snacks at the northern edge of the site. Adjacent to the Greenway at the lowest edge of the site, a portion of the old elevator has been preserved as a seating wall. Stairways descend into the site adjacent to both 10th and 11th Avenues.

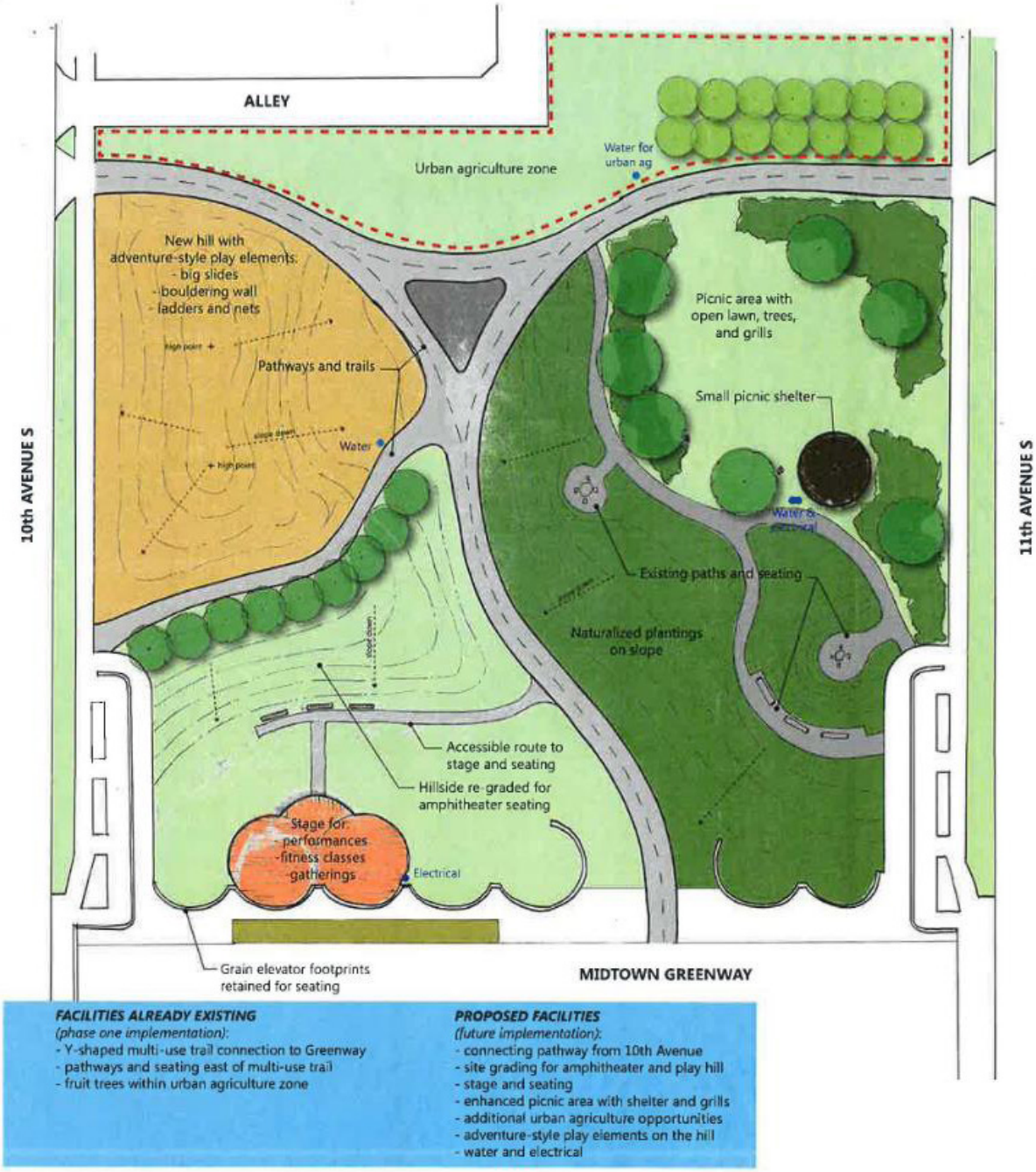
The Cepro site comes with an environmental covenant (Attachment B). Hennepin County, upon purchasing the site, did some environmental investigation and mitigation on the site. The covenant places restrictions on the property and requires careful consideration during site improvements. Because MPRB would intend to operate the park as an open space and expects to perform limited grading and earthwork, the covenant is not a concern for staff.

Proposed Design

In 2016 Hennepin County and the neighborhood organization approached MPRB about the potential divestment of the Cepro Site. The three entities worked together to finalize the ultimate complete design of the site and a cost estimate for improvements (Attachment C). Building on years of engagement organized by Hennepin


11th Ave S
11th Ave S
11th Ave S
Midtown Greenway
Midtown Greenway
10th Ave S
10th Ave S
10th Ave S

Cepro Green Space Concept Plan



FACILITIES ALREADY EXISTING
(phase one implementation):
- Y-shaped multi-use trail connection to Greenway
- pathways and seating east of multi-use trail
- fruit trees within urban agriculture zone

PROPOSED FACILITIES
(future implementation):
- connecting pathway from 10th Avenue
- site grading for amphitheater and play hill
- stage and seating
- enhanced picnic area with shelter and grills
- additional urban agriculture opportunities
- adventure-style play elements on the hill
- water and electrical

County (in which the neighborhood organization and local community had been involved), the three entities convened a design charrette to create a concept level master plan for the site. The charrette involved representatives of Hennepin County, MPRB, the Midtown Phillips neighborhood, and other area stakeholders. After the charrette, MPRB assisted the process by finalizing drawings and preparing a cost estimate for the property.

The proposed design retains the phase 1 improvements implemented by the County but adds several desired amenities and further improves accessibility. The picnicking and seating area is enhanced with the addition of a small open air picnic shelter. The small orchard forms the foundation for a larger designated urban agriculture zone occupying the northern edge of the property—an area that could see additional fruit trees or garden plots. The stairways and Greenway trail access are unchanged, but a new accessible path connects a clear desire line between 10th Avenue and the northeastern corner of the site.

The western half of the site is home to a new stage for performances, fitness classes, and /or group gatherings. The stage utilizes the elevator footprint and is connected to the main trail by an accessible path. Seating for the stage is on a slightly re-graded south-facing slope, with accessible seating at its base. Atop the slope (and utilizing the significant grade change on the site) is a small adventure playground, which could feature bouldering, big slides, net climbers, and other play options focused on physical activity and challenge. Water and electrical services provide additional functionality to the picnic shelter, urban agriculture area, and stage.

Due to the environmental covenant referenced under existing conditions, careful design and consultation will be necessary for any re-grading for the amphitheater and play area.

This concept builds on good community-engaged implementation work performed by Hennepin County over the years, but adds amenities not found nearby. All additions respect the initial community desires for the site: accessibility, healthy foods, physical activity, and community and family programming.

CEPRO SITE

Park Name	Asset Type	Project	2017 ESTIMATED COST
Cepro Site	n/a	Site and Boundary Survey	$ 40,000
Cepro Site	Play	Adventure Play Area	$ 698,158
Cepro Site	Landscape	Naturalized areas within park	$ 12,320
Cepro Site	Landscape	Tree plantings	$ 24,641
Cepro Site	Landscape	Urban Agriculture Area	$ -
Cepro Site	Landscape	Grading and Earthwork	$ 164,273
Cepro Site	Other	Outdoor stage, gathering space, and seating	$ 43,861
Cepro Site	Other	New connecting path	$ 9,856
Cepro Site	Other	Group picnic shelter	$ 90,350
Cepro Site	Other	Renovate existing walking paths	$ 74,908
Cepro Site	Other	Utilities	$ 41,068
Cepro Site	Other	Miscl. Signs and furniture	$ 23,189
Cepro Site		TOTAL	$ 1,199,435

The Mall Park Packet

Excerpt from Adopted MPRB Southwest Service Area Master Plan

THE MALL PARK- PROPOSED PLAN

PROPOSED DESIGN FEATURES

1. INFORMAL PLAY AREA (*with option for small play spots to be incorporated along The Mall)*
2. PLAZA WITH PLANTINGS *(design based on proposed Hennepin County and MPRB plan)*
3. SHARED USE WOONERF/FLEXIBLE MARKET STREET *(potential temp. road closures, permeable surface, vehicles and parking accomodated but guided by urban design features focused on pedestrians)*
4. MIDTOWN GREENWAY MULTI-USE TRAIL CONNECTION AND UPDATED WALKWAY
5. ENHANCED NATURALIZED AREAS AND PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS (*stewardship gardens near north-south and east-west crossings)*
6. COMMUNITY GARDEN/URBAN AGRICULTURE *(work with Hennepin County to explore opportunity to engage with Midtown Greenway)*
7. NATIVE PLANTINGS AND/OR RAINGARDENS *(in collaboration with Hennepin County)*
8. ENHANCED PEDESTRIAN CROSSING TO MINNEAPOLIS CHAIN OF LAKES REGIONAL PARK
9. FORESTED AND OPEN GREEN SPACE
10. RELOCATED PATH
11. THROUGH-ALLEYS *(one-way through-alleys without parking)*

EXISTING FEATURES

A. ONE-WAY ROAD CONFIGURATION WITH ON-STREET PARKING

PROPOSED DESIGN FEATURES

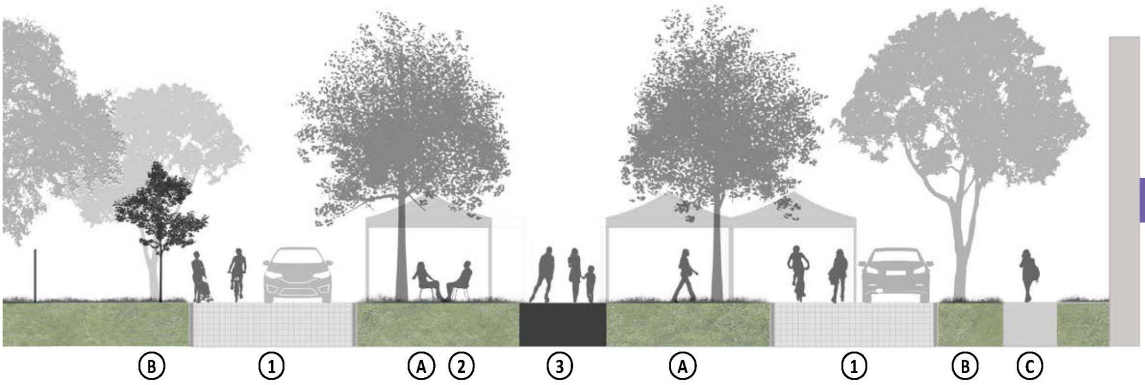
1. SHARED USE WOONERF/FLEXIBLE MARKET STREET *(potential temp. road closures, permeable surface, vehicles and parking accomodated but guided by urban design features focused on pedestrians)*
2. FLEXIBLE SEATING AREAS
3. MIDTOWN GREENWAY MULTI-USE TRAIL CONNECTION AND UPDATED WALKWAY

EXISTING FEATURES

A. FLEXIBLE OPEN PLAY/MARKET AREA AND TREES

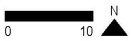
B. BOULEVARD/TREES

C. SIDEWALK



Looking East

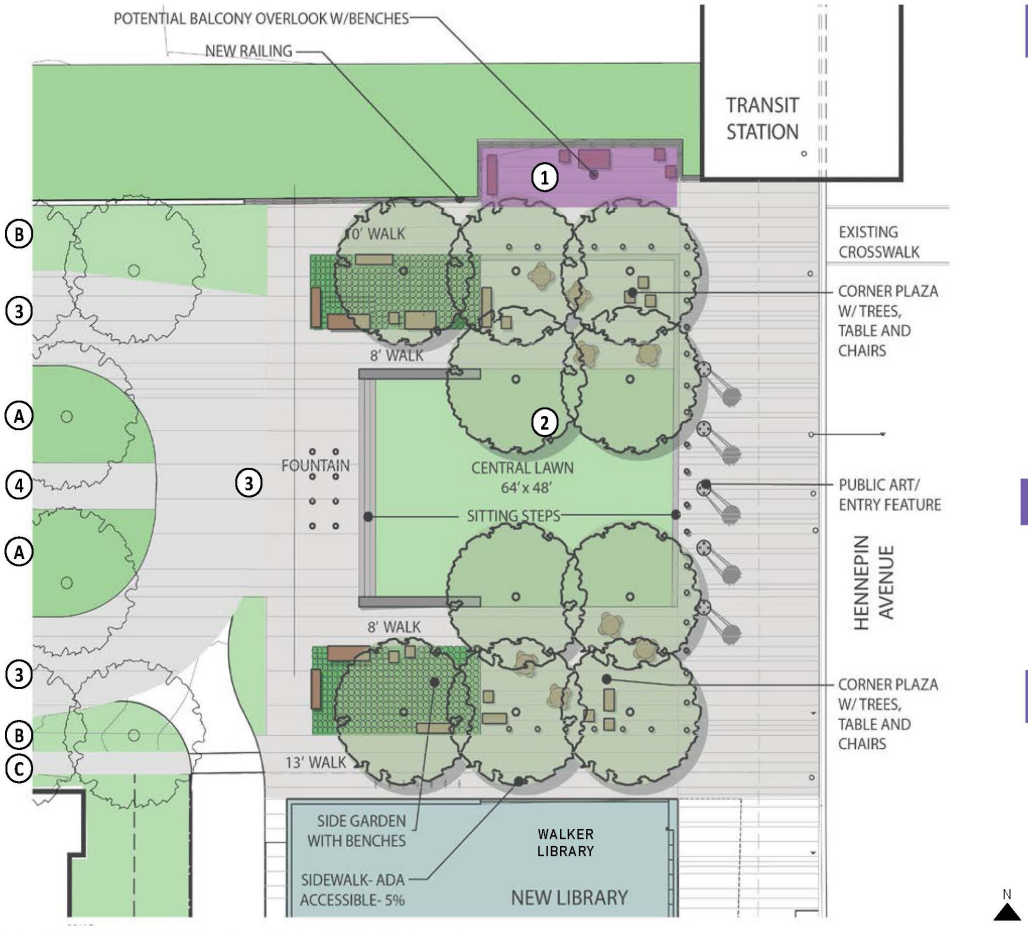
This section depicts a shared-use woonerf and flexible market street. This proposed concept would be located between Humboldt Avenue and the plaza adjacent to Hennepin Avenue. See The Mall park proposed plan for more information.



THE MALL PARK - SECTION VIEW

	1: General Input Spring-Winter 2018 *Input themes prior to initial concepts*	2: Initial Concepts Winter-Spring 2019 *Input themes on initial concepts*	3: Preferred Concept Now *Key elements of the concept*
aquatics	No comments	No comments	No aquatics facilities planned at this park
play	Interest in nature play Need more activities near library	Support for adding play areas or features	Play area at the eastern end of the park with play spots incorporated along The Mall Plaza with Plantings
athletics	No comments	Divided interest in field space here	Open green space added but not a formal field
courts	Nothing here to engage people	Divided interest in sand volleyball	No court facilities planned at this park; instead recommended for adjacent regional park
winter	No comments	No comments	No winter facilities planned at this park
landscape	Like trees and shade Like flowering gardens Interest in pollinator habitat Interest in community gardens Consider no-mow grass Like quiet green space here Needs open plaza space	Keep tree canopy Support for existing gardens Support for native plantings Support for urban agriculture	Preserve and protect tree canopy Enhanced stewardship gardens included Native plantings/raingardens included Community gardens and urban agriculture included Vegetated buffer added to protect pedestrians from street traffic Move pathway to one side to create forested green space Flexible market street including permeable surface and plaza added
other	Bikes on sidewalks are a concern Great farmers market space – expand it Good space for events- need more! Speeding traffic Need better pedestrian crossings Need usable park features, benches Interest in public art, color Need gateway entry at Hennepin Like walking path Like west end quiet and east end active	Like connection to Greenway, separation of bikes from cars and peds Like space for farmers market, events Some concern woonerf is confusing Support flexible street–cars, bikes, peds Support enhanced pedestrian crossings Concern about loss of parking Concern for north-south & alley access Support for plaza at eastern end	Trail connection to Midtown Greenway Shared use woonerf for market and events (accommodates vehicles and parking but focused on pedestrians) Enhanced pedestrian crossings included Direction to explore with City resident parking options nearby North-south through streets remain open Preserve through-alleys on west end Plaza with amenities included near Hennepin Keep walking path, adjust route at west end of park Green space added to west end, plaza to east end

THE MALL PARK PROCESS



THE MALL PARK - ENLARGED PLAN

PROPOSED DESIGN FEATURES

1. INFORMAL PLAY AREA (*with option for small play spots to be incorporated along The Mall)*
2. PLAZA WITH PLANTINGS AND CENTRAL LAWN *(design based on proposed Hennepin County and MPRB plan)*
3. SHARED USE WOONERF/FLEXIBLE MARKET STREET *(potential temp. road closures, permeable surface, vehicles and parking accomodated but guided by urban design features focused on pedestrians)*
4. MIDTOWN GREENWAY MULTI-USE TRAIL CONNECTION AND UPDATED WALKWAY

EXISTING FEATURES

A. FLEXIBLE OPEN PLAY/MARKET AREA AND TREES

B. BOULEVARD/TREES

C. SIDEWALK

NOTE

This design originated from the Uptown Mall Study by Close / Landscape Architecture and VJAA for Hennepin County and MPRB, 2011.

Park Name	Asset Type	Project	2020 Estimated Cost/Project	Notes
The Mall Park	Play	Traditional Play in New Container	$ 216,830	
The Mall Park	Landscape	Community Garden/Urban Agriculture	$ 61,223	Urban Agriculture Areas will be implemented in partnership with specific programs or community members. Estimate includes water service
The Mall Park	Landscape	Naturalized Areas: includes native plantings and/or raingardens, plantings, and stewardship gardens	$ 51,253	
The Mall Park	Other	Plaza with Plantings	$ 233,919	Cost of plantings estimated under naturalized areas
The Mall Park	Other	Shared Use Woonerf/Flexible Market Street	$ 494,629	Implemented in collaboration with City
The Mall Park	Other	Renovate paths: includes relocated walking path and multi-use trail	$ 847,418	Some funding through collaboration with partners
The Mall Park	Other	Miscl. signs, trees, furniture	$ 38,105	
The Mall Park		**TOTAL**	**$ 1,943,378**	

COST ESTIMATE