

MEMORANDUM

TO: City Planning Commission, Committee of the Whole

FROM: Kjersti Monson, Director of Long Range Planning, (612)-673-5155
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DATE: June 23, 2016

SUBJECT: Downtown Public Realm Framework Policy Plan

CPED Long Range Planning has developed a thematic policy plan in collaboration with Minneapolis Public Works and the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board. The *Downtown Public Realm Framework* is the City's contributing plan to the joint *Pathways to Places* initiative of the City of Minneapolis and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. The purpose of the Downtown Public Realm Framework is to provide unified guidance to inform and coordinate the work of public and private entities that shape and invest in the public realm. The Downtown Public Realm Framework includes an inventory of existing policies, practices, and elements in the public realm as well as new policy recommendations and actions for shaping the future of the Downtown public realm. It is intended to inform and guide outcomes in capital planning, site plan review, and public/private partnerships toward the coordinated enhancement of the public realm.

The physical framework is the primary policy guiding element of the *Downtown Public Realm Framework Plan*. It is a whole systems plan that connects urban streets and plazas to the broader system of parks, trails, attractions and recreation opportunities in and around Downtown Minneapolis. As a tool, it identifies new connections and clarifies existing connections along key corridors within the downtown context and provides recommendations for enhancing the pedestrian experience through greening strategies, street furnishing and land use decisions.

The *Downtown Public Realm Framework Plan* initiated engagement in November of 2014. The process of engagement was conducted in three phases; Initiation/Analysis, Research/Outreach, and Recommendation/Comment and included the use of committees, public open houses, focus groups, events, artist engagement and online interactions. The engagement was structured to inform, educate, gain insights, and capture priorities while providing opportunities for meaningful connections and conversations with stakeholders.

We launched the public comment period on June 2nd and we will be accepting comments through July 17th. We intend to return to the City Planning Commission on August 1st.

Attached please find excerpts from the Downtown Public Realm Framework Policy Plan. We will provide additional information during the meeting, including a brief presentation on the Downtown Public Realm Framework and the recommendations.

A webpage has been created for the Downtown Public Realm Framework that includes information and presentations from Committee meetings, maps, and other documents. The webpage can be viewed at: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/cped/lrp/WCMS1P-134268>

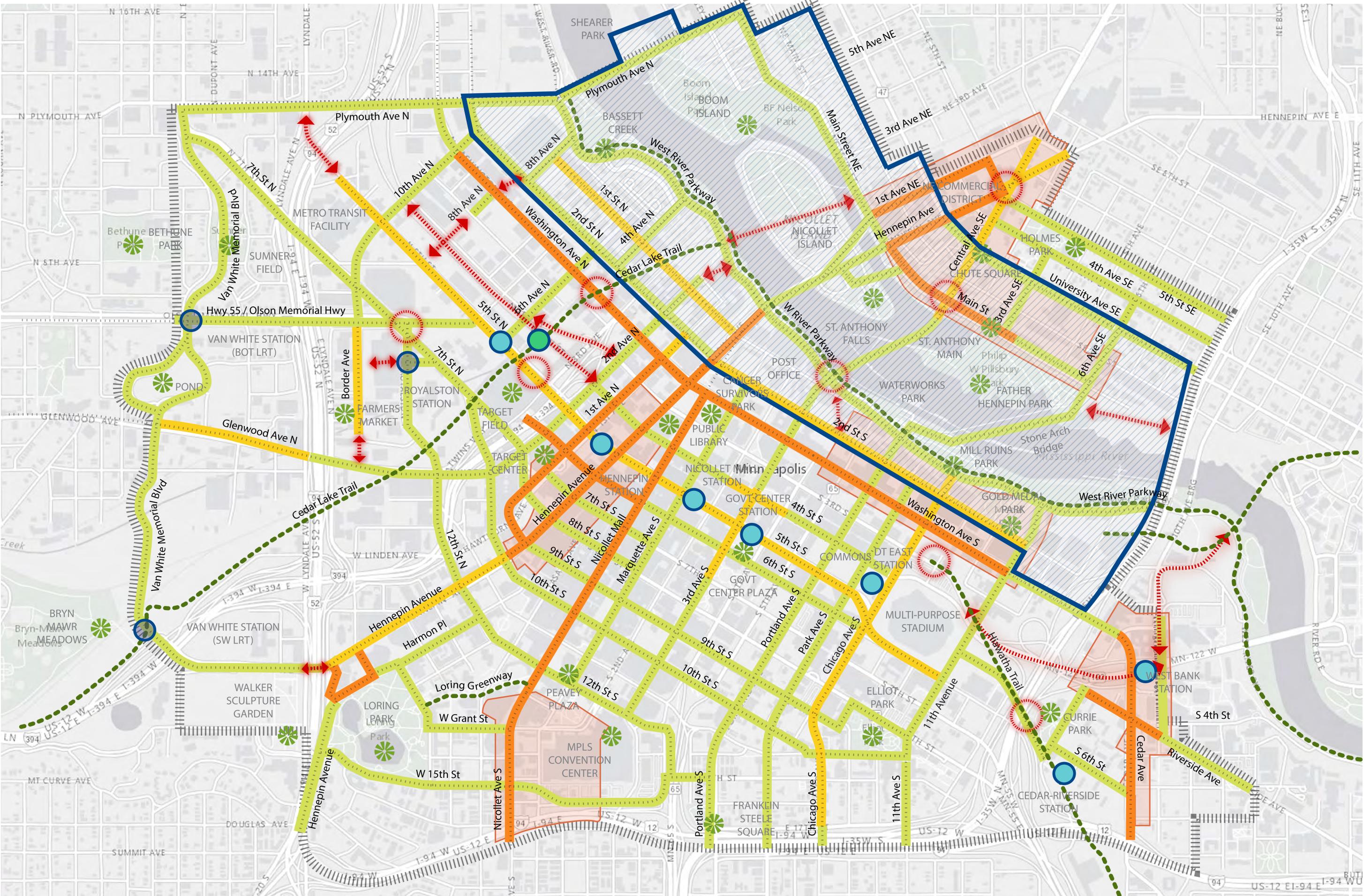
City of Minneapolis

Downtown

Public Realm Framework Plan

June 2016





- FUTURE LRT STATIONS
- COMMUTER RAIL STATION
- RIVER DISTRICT
- DESTINATION CORRIDOR
- CONNECTOR CORRIDOR
- DPRF BOUNDARY
- EXISTING LRT STATIONS
- ADOPTED ACTIVITY CENTER
- BIKE / PED TRAIL
- LOCAL COMMERCE CORRIDOR
- POTENTIAL LINKS & CONNECTIONS
- EXISTING ATTRACTION



Figure 3.1 Photograph courtesy of the Minneapolis Downtown Council

CHAPTER 3

Physical Framework

- Introduction
- Policy Principles
- Physical Framework
- Potential Linkages
- Corridor Typology
- Central Riverfront Feature District
- Incremental Implementation

Physical Framework

Introduction

The Physical Framework is a whole systems plan that connects urban streets and plazas to the broader system of parks, trails, attractions and recreation opportunities in and around Downtown Minneapolis. The Physical Framework identifies new connections and clarifies existing connections along key corridors within the *Downtown Public Realm Framework* area. It also provides recommendations for enhancing the pedestrian experience through greening strategies, street furnishing and land use decisions.

Background

The framework was created through an intensive process of community and stakeholder engagement and a thorough analysis and synthesis of existing policy guidance for streets and corridors from City-adopted plans. The Steering and Technical Advisory Committees (see Acknowledgments), in cooperation with the core staff team, conducted and

participated in numerous exercises and explored several methodologies for approaching prioritization of corridors and public realm enhancement before arriving at the final *Downtown Public Realm Framework* plan. Three lenses were considered in the analysis of the Downtown experience: visitor, resident, and worker. Understanding how Downtown works for these three types of users helped the team to clarify strategies for enhancing the experience of Downtown for a wide audience.

Through a series of mapping exercises, committee members worked to identify a hierarchy of corridors for each user group and then synthesized those findings into a framework of key corridors for prioritization. City staff, along with key stakeholders, then further clarified that data into a typology that separates key corridors into three categories of policy guidance, with differentiated recommendations. This framework for corridor planning serves as the backbone of the policy recommendations in the plan.



Figure 3.2 Anthony Bond, photograph by Stephanie Glaros

"I just come down for the nightlife...I usually drive...I think they need more parking, free parking at that. They got the transit and buses, but if they can come up with somethin' that's a little bit more convenient for those who just can't afford (it), or people who would just like to come downtown to enjoy art or whatever, have somethin' that's available for them...I think it'd be more positive if they had less club nights, and more family outing nights, or block party nights, where everyone can generally come down and just enjoy the nightlife, versus, like, a certain demographic of people just comin' down to go to the clubs...Kind of like how they do the Taste of Minnesota? Do like a Taste of Downtown Minneapolis, or somethin' like that. Food events bring me out to downtown more, and family outings, family events where you can bring your kids to. 'Cuz I got teenagers."

-Anthony Bond, Visitor

3.2 Policy Principles

Two key lenses (Whole System Planning and People First) provide the foundation of values for the plan and align with City goals and priorities. The policy principles emerged through work with staff and community stakeholders, and gained clarity and specificity through iterative reviews.

3.2.1 Whole System Planning

For the purposes of the plan, Whole Systems Planning refers to the following goals, which should be considered in capital projects and development activities impacting Downtown Public Realm Framework corridors or the Central Riverfront Feature District.

3.2.1.1 PHYSICAL CONNECTIVITY

There should be clear and pleasant pedestrian, bike, and vehicular movement supported by wayfinding and enhancements along identified framework corridors, connecting all Downtown neighborhoods to each other and to Downtown destinations.

- » 3.2.1.1.1 Where paths and connections are broken and linkages are possible (see section 3.4, Potential Linkages), actions should be taken to create connectivity. Connectivity should be pursued incrementally, as opportunities arise, according to the Physical Framework plan and identified Potential Linkages.

3.2.1.2 INTEGRATED MODES

Easily navigable transfer points from one mode to another should be a priority within the Downtown Public Realm Framework area, including all modes: walking (including to and from skyway access points), biking, driving, taxi service, car sharing, and transit.

- » 3.2.1.2.1 It should be easy to move from one mode to another, and clear wayfinding should be present at mode transfer sites.

- » 3.2.1.2.2 Consideration of accommodating multiple modes is encouraged, both in capital projects and development projects.

3.2.1.3 GREENING & RESILIENCE

Planting in the right-of-way is not only people friendly, it provides environmental services. The City of Minneapolis is committed to environmental and community sustainability as demonstrated by *The Minneapolis Climate Action Plan* and the *Great Places City Goal*. The *Great Places City Goal* focuses on how natural and built spaces work together and the environment is protected. The *Climate Action Plan* focuses on reducing emissions to shrink the City's carbon footprint. There is a benefit to not only shrinking emissions, but to growing the city's green footprint to increase carbon consumption and reduce the heat-island effect. Planting and greening in the right-of-way also contribute to stormwater management, provide urban wildlife habitat, increase property values, contribute to positive mental health outcomes, and establish a sense of place.

- » 3.2.1.3.1 Projects impacting a Downtown Public Realm Framework corridor will consider environmental services like carbon capture, stormwater management, and urban wildlife habitat in the course of capital project planning or development review.
- » 3.2.1.3.2 Street reconstruction projects, and major development projects of over \$1 million permit value, on or impacting a Downtown Public Realm Framework corridor or district will be required to have an established plan for long term maintenance of new greening in the public right-of-way. For trees, they must consult the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to gauge the feasibility of, and establish objectives for, tree planting. For other greening, they should consult with the Minneapolis Downtown Improvement District (DID) to gauge the willingness and

feasibility of, and establish objectives for, maintenance by the DID of greening. For greening that falls outside of the DID boundaries, they should consult with Public Works staff.

- » 3.2.1.3.3 Project teams engaged in greening are encouraged to make proposals that are consistent with corridor intent and context as defined in the Downtown Public Realm Framework.

3.2.1.4 SUPPORTIVE DEVELOPMENT

A strong sense of place and corridor identity will be shaped not only by enhancements in the public realm, but by supportive development. Supportive development may contribute to the character and quality of a Downtown Public Realm Framework corridor through compatible ground floor uses, design considerations, activation through density or programming, or by facilitating connectivity (especially in the case of a desired but missing link, as identified in section 3.4, Potential Linkages).

- » 3.2.1.4.1 Supportive development opportunities, including compatible ground floor uses, design considerations, activation through density or programming, and facilitating connectivity where potential linkages exist, should be considered in the review of all development applications for Downtown Public Realm Framework corridors.
- » 3.2.1.4.2 Compatible ground floor uses should be discerned based on corridor typology (see section 3.5). Downtown Public Realm Framework corridors establish a hierarchy that informs developers and plan reviewers about goals for pedestrian experience. For instance, retail storefronts make more sense in some places than others; and pedestrian-unfriendly conditions (like loading zones) are not appropriate on some corridors.
- » 3.2.1.4.3 Guiding policies of the Central Riverfront Feature District (see section 3.6) should be an additional lens in framing opportunities for supportive development on corridors within the Riverfront Feature District.

3.2.2 People First

Putting people first is crucial to building and maintaining a more cohesive and livable Downtown. A people first perspective contributes to the design of healthier spaces, areas with a strong identity, areas that serve people of all ages and all abilities, and places designed for good business. A people first perspective for all projects in the Downtown Public Realm Framework area aligns with the process identified in the City's Complete Streets Policy.

3.2.2.1 ADHERENCE TO THE COMPLETE STREETS POLICY

The Downtown Public Realm Framework is consistent with, and supplements, the City's Complete Streets Policy.

Complete Streets Policy

The City of Minneapolis is committed to building a complete and integrated public right-of-way to ensure that everyone – pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and motorists – can travel safely and comfortably along and across a street. The Complete Streets policy will inform decision-making throughout all phases of transportation projects and initiatives. The overarching policy purpose is the establishment of a modal priority framework that prioritizes public right-of-way users in the following order: people who walk, people who bike or take transit, and people who drive motor vehicles.

- » 3.2.2.1.1 Projects that are in development on an identified priority Corridor or in the Central Riverfront Feature District - whether they are capital projects (like road reconstructions) or development projects (like new

building construction) - will be expected to adhere to the process laid forth in the City's Complete Streets Policy. Implementation will adhere to the process outlined in the Complete Streets project delivery checklist.

3.2.2.2 PLACEMAKING

Social cohesion is gaining traction as a fundamental component of why people choose to live in one place versus another. Social spaces, places of gathering, and street life are key elements of successful cities, and the sense of civic identity that they generate will make our city more resilient. Sustainable partnerships and private initiatives help to create vibrant and livable places.

- » 3.2.2.2.1 Private initiatives for enhancement are encouraged when they are well-planned, have properly coordinated with appropriate City departments and processes, and are feasible to implement and maintain.
- » 3.2.2.2.2 Social spaces and activation is desirable on Destination Corridors and Local Commerce Corridors.

To facilitate more knowledge about how to achieve placemaking objectives, four companions to the Downtown Public Realm Framework plan have been developed:

- » The *Public Realm Guidelines* is a manual of the City's guidelines for public realm enhancements citywide
- » The *Placemaking Hub* is an online one-stop shop for those seeking information about public realm enhancement programs and requirements

- » The *Downtown Minneapolis Programmable Space Inventory* is a study that identified and inventoried potentially programmable public spaces Downtown
- » The *Implementation Index* is a catalogue of funding and implementation strategies that have been used locally and nationally for public realm enhancement

3.2.2.3 EQUITY

The public realm serves as the civic and social heart of our community. Where the public realm feels cared for and cared about, so does the community. Eliminating racial and socioeconomic disparities is a top goal of the City of Minneapolis. Because many of our public realm enhancements require private sector participation to pay for enhanced maintenance, those enhancements are placed only in areas where properties are willing to be assessed. Implementation challenges arise from the lack of available tools or funding to deploy projects across the city based on other criteria, such as establishing cultural identity for commercial districts or contributing to environmental justice.

Resolution 2016R-151, Street Infrastructure and Neighborhood Park Funding Plan, which passed on April 29, 2016, prescribes the utilization of a criteria-based system with a focus on racial and economic equity to determine equitable distribution of funding. The criteria have not yet been developed but racial and economic equity will be key considerations. Adopted City policy will inform the criteria, including the *Downtown Public Realm Framework*.



Figure 3.3 LeBron Patterson, photograph by Stephanie Glaros

"This is part of my biking trail that I like to utilize, mostly on the weekends. The trail system in the Twin Cities and around Minneapolis is excellent. Very smooth, very nice trails. It's a very safe, secure area that allows me to ride, and look at the scenery, as well as interact with people. So if I wanna stop at the (Farmer's) market, or if I want to just sit for a few minutes, it's an excellent area, especially when I'm riding my bike. I enjoy it, a lot."

-LeBron Patterson

3.3 Physical Framework

The Physical Framework plan is a policy map identifying priorities for creating a cohesive and dynamic public realm in Downtown Minneapolis.

The Framework establishes goals for connectivity, provides guidance for how the public realm should be enhanced, and identifies where enhancement should be focused. It is composed of the following policy features: Potential Linkages (section 3.4), Corridor Typologies (section 3.5), and the Central Riverfront Feature District (section 3.6). Policy recommendations and a clear description of intent are provided for the policy features.

The Physical Framework supplements existing City policy governing rights-of-way. It defers to existing zoning and land use regulations. It is intended to provide a more nuanced layer of policy guidance in areas identified as key to the creation of a cohesive public realm Downtown. Many considerations within the Framework are already encouraged in the City's Chapter 530-Site Plan Review Standards.

How to Use the Physical Framework

The Physical Framework is a map of the policy guidance for the Downtown Public Realm Framework (DPRF). Streets are marked according to a corridor classification system with three key corridor types: Destination Corridor, Local Commerce Corridor, and Connector Corridor. More specific descriptions of each can be found in Section 3.5, Corridor Typologies. The designations are to be read as an overlay to existing Comprehensive Plan Land Use Feature designations and guidance outlined in Access Minneapolis: Ten Year Transportation Action Plan.

The primary audiences for the Framework plan are developers seeking to enhance the public realm through a Downtown development project, system partners, and City staff in CPED and Public Works involved with development review and capital improvement project planning and implementation. The Framework provides guidance for public realm enhancement goals and shared priorities for incremental investment, whether made by the private development community or by public agencies such as the City or County.



Figure 3.4 Public Realm in Downtown Minneapolis, photograph courtesy of the Minneapolis Downtown Council

PRIVATE SECTOR

The DPRF should be consulted by the development community when considering a project in Downtown Minneapolis that impacts the public realm, including rebuilding or replacement of sidewalks, plazas, and other publicly accessible open spaces. The plan contains guidance on the placement and selection of enhancement elements that can serve as a useful resource for presenting a more complete development submittal, thereby saving time, effort and money later in the development review process.

CITY STAFF

Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development (CPED) and Public Works staff will take the following actions:

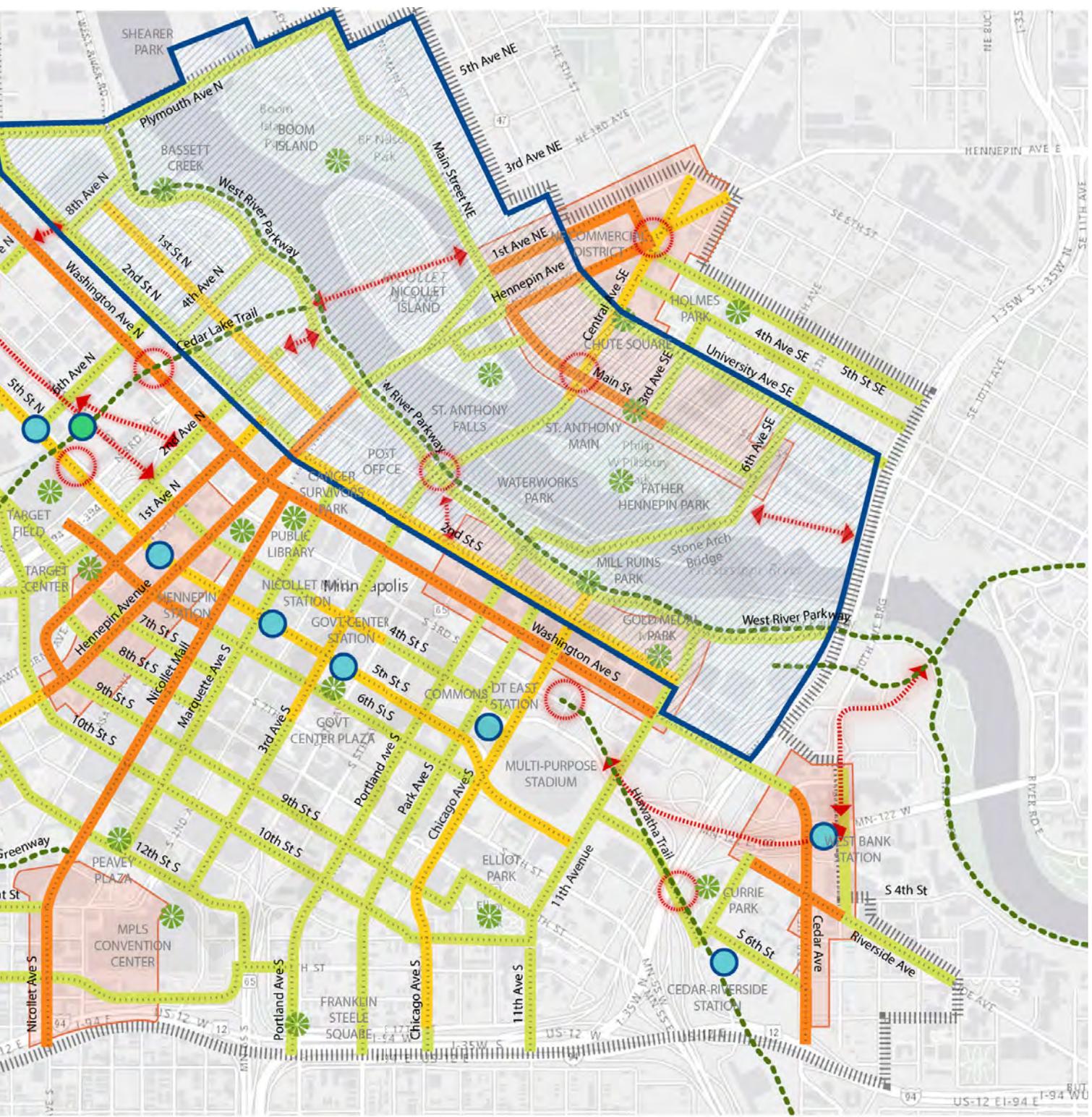
- » For development applications where the project is impacting a Framework corridor or are within the Central Riverfront Feature District, the assigned planner will engage in conversations with the applicant about fulfilling DPRF policy intent. Staff will make the Planning Commission aware of relevant policies when an application they are considering is located on a DPRF priority corridor or within the Central Riverfront Feature District.
- » For capital projects on or impacting a priority corridor, DPRF priorities will be addressed in the planning process, through the use of the Complete Streets Policy checklist. The Public Works project manager or CPED planner assigned will make the Planning Commission aware when a capital project they are considering is located on a priority Corridor or within the Central Riverfront Feature District.

SYSTEM PARTNERS

Relevant DPRF policies and priorities will be provided by CPED or Public Works staff to project managers and staff participating in a project not led by the City. Other public agencies and system partners will find the DPRF most useful in the development of complementary, overlapping and adjacent policy plans, capital improvement plans, development plans and community investment strategies. For example, if Hennepin County is planning a capital street reconstruction project on a Downtown street or if the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is considering investment in public realm amenities for parks and parkways, the DPRF and its companion documents (referenced in section 3.2.2.2) can help to align priorities for site design and layout, feature selection and placement, and inter-agency partnership on funding and maintenance activities.

Important partners include but are not limited to:

- » Metro Transit
- » Meet Minneapolis
- » Minneapolis Convention Center
- » Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
- » Hennepin County
- » Neighborhood Organizations
- » Institutional Partners (University of Minnesota, Hennepin County Medical Center, etc.)
- » Metropolitan Sports Facilities Authority
- » Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District
- » Other Special Service Districts or Cultural Districts



Potential Links and Connections Diagram

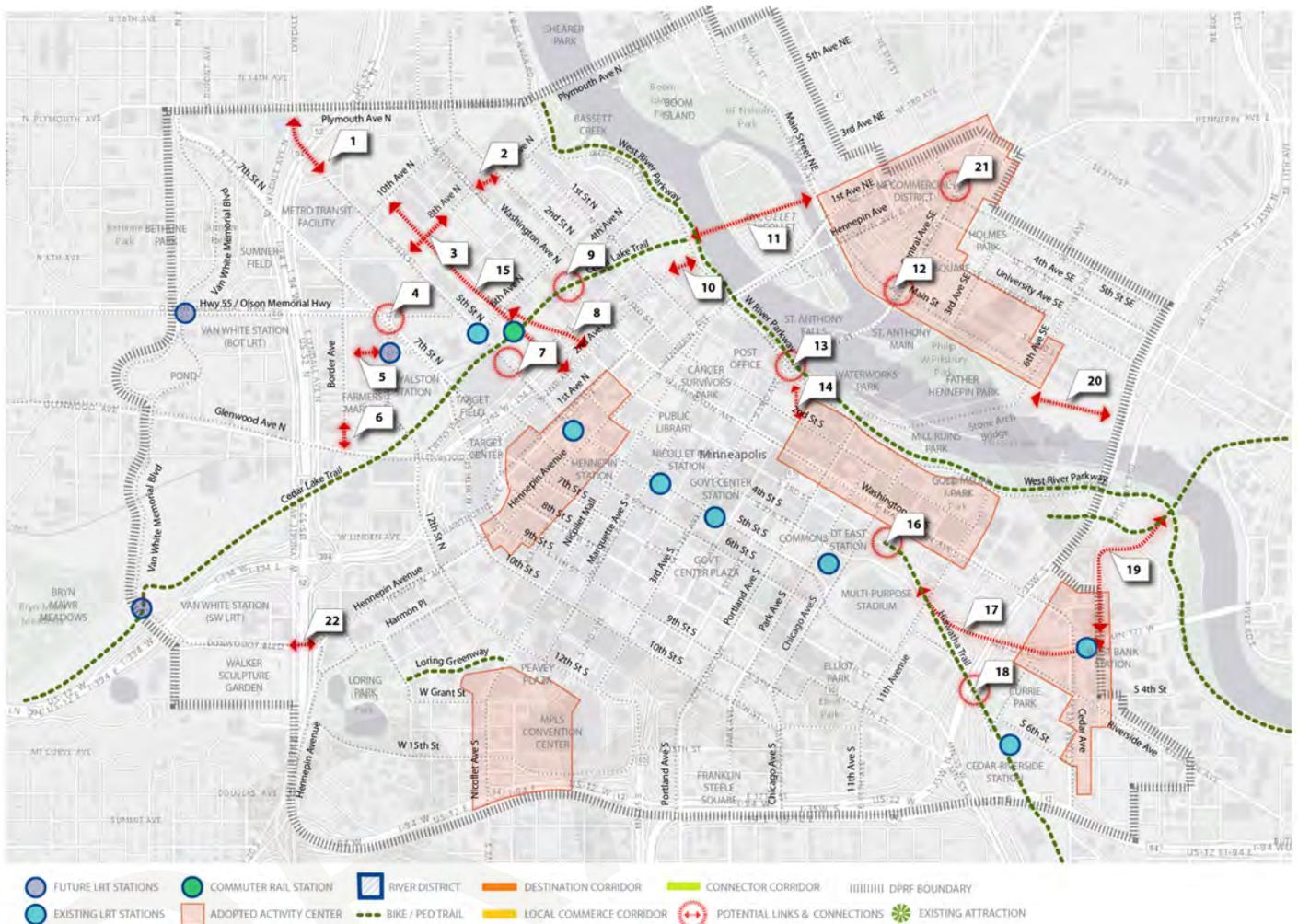


Figure 3.6 Potential links and Connections diagram

3.4 Potential Linkages

The following potential linkages are drawn from existing adopted small area plans and policy guidance as well as from the extensive engagement process conducted during the creation of the Downtown Public Realm Framework. Sources are indicated with each connection. These potential connections are highlighted for their utility in creating a more connected and accessible downtown public realm. They are not presented in any order of priority but as a catalog of existing and proposed linkage or connectivity opportunities.

Potential Links and Connections Diagram Key

- 5TH STREET NORTH EXTENSION** – Create a connection over Interstate 94 from N 5th Street to Plymouth Ave N. *Source: DPRF Engagement Process*
- 8TH AVE N CONNECTION FROM WASHINGTON TO 2ND ST N** – Create a publicly accessible pedestrian and bicycle connection between Washington Ave N and 2nd Street N. *Source: North Loop Small Area Plan*
- 8TH AVE N CONNECTION FROM 3RD ST N TO 5TH ST N** – Create a publicly accessible vehicular and/or pedestrian and bicycle connection from 3rd Street N to 5th Street N. *Source: North Loop Small Area Plan*
- INTERSECTION OF 7TH ST N, 6TH AVE N AND ROYALSTON AVE** – Create a publicly accessible

Potential Links and Connections Diagram Key, Continued

- pedestrian and bicycle connection between Royalston LRT Station and 10th Ave N.
5. **ROYALSTON STATION CONNECTION TO 10TH AVE N** – Create a publicly accessible pedestrian and bicycle connection between Royalston LRT Station and 10th Ave N.
 6. **BORDER AVENUE CONNECTION TO GLENWOOD AVE** – Create a publicly accessible vehicular and pedestrian / bicycle connection from Border Avenue to Glenwood Avenue.
 7. **TARGET FIELD STATION CONNECTION TO CEDAR LAKE TRAIL** – Create a vertical bicycle connection between Cedar Lake Trail and Target Field Station Platform / 5th Street N. *Source: Public Works Transportation Planning Staff Comments*
 8. **3rd STREET VIADUCT PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE** – Improve the Pedestrian connection along the 3rd street viaduct between 2nd Ave N and 5th Ave N.
 9. **WASHINGTON AVE N & CEDAR LAKE TRAIL CONNECTION** – Implement clear wayfinding strategies to guide bicycles from Washington Ave N to Cedar Lake Trail via Dock Street Flats connection. *Source: Public Works Transportation Planning Staff Comments / DPRF Public Engagement Process*
 10. **2ND AVE N EXTENSION** – Create a pedestrian and bicycle connection between 2nd Ave N and West River Parkway. *Source: DPRF Engagement Process*
 11. **NICOLLET ISLAND CEDAR LAKE TRAIL EXTENSION** – Explore the creation of a bicycle and pedestrian connection on the BNSF Rail bridge across Nicollet Island to Main Street N. *Source: Minneapolis Bicycle Master Plan*
 12. **3RD AVENUE BRIDGE / MAIN STREET CONNECTION** – Improve the vertical connection for pedestrians and bicycles between 3rd / Central Avenue and Main Street SE. *Source: DPRF Engagement Process*
 13. **3RD AVE BRIDGE / W RIVER PARKWAY CONNECTION** – Create a vertical connection from the 3rd Ave Bridge at the intersection of 1st St S to the West River Parkway for pedestrians and bicycles. *Source: DPRF Engagement Process*
 14. **2ND STREET SHARED STREET CONNECTION** – Continue to explore ways to connect the Mill District via 2nd St and the Mill City Quarter Woonerf to the West River Parkway. *Source: DPRF Engagement Process*
 15. **4TH STREET FREEWAY VIADUCT** – Explore options for the future of the 4th Street Freeway Viaduct, owned by MNDOT, from activation underneath up to and including its removal at the end of its useful life, shifting the 94 on-ramp north. *Source: Comments, DPRF Engagement Process*
 16. **HIAWATHA TRAIL AND 10TH AVE S** – Create a new bicycle and pedestrian connection between the Hiawatha Trail and 10th Ave S. *Source: DPRF Engagement Process*
 17. **WASHINGTON AVE BRIDGE TO HIAWATHA TRAIL CONNECTION** – Create a direct bicycle and pedestrian connection between the Washington Avenue Bridge and the Hiawatha Trail through the Green Line LRT Trench. *Source: Bicycle Master Plan*
 18. **SAMATAR CROSSING / CEDAR RIVERSIDE STATION** – Create a clear and accessible connection between Cedar Riverside LRT station and the future Samatar Crossing. Establish wayfinding between Samatar Crossing / Cedar Riverside LRT and neighborhood commercial district. *Source: DPRF Engagement Process*
 19. **BLUFF STREET BIKEWAY WAYFINDING** – Implement clear wayfinding between future protected bikeway on 19th Ave S to and from the Bluff Street Bikeway and Bridge #9. *Source: DPRF Engagement Process*
 20. **DINKYTOWN GREENWAY** – Complete the bicycle and pedestrian connection from the Stone Arch Bridge to the Dinkytown Greenway. *Source: Bicycle Master Plan*
 21. **HENNEPIN / CENTRAL AVE / 5TH ST INTERSECTION** – Simplify vehicular traffic flows and improve pedestrian and bicycle safety with updated infrastructure, wayfinding and circulation strategies. *Source: DPRF Engagement Process*
 22. **DUNWOODY UNDERPASS** – Establish a hospitable pedestrian link beneath Interstate 94 connecting Downtown with Uptown

3.5 Corridor Typology

3.5.1 Destination Corridor

Characterized by the highest level of active use, these corridors function as regional destinations that support a wide range of uses, and have a clear identity and character. They are heavily oriented toward pedestrians, are well-served by transit, and incorporate pedestrian-scale urban design including a continuously active streetwall with a high degree of transparency and interactivity. Frequently overlapping with activity centers, destination corridors are most active during mid-day, evenings and on weekends and contain the highest concentration of entertainment venues, restaurants, bars, nightclubs and other leisure-time active uses.

Destination corridors are frequently associated with highly individualized programs or with the identity of their surrounding neighborhoods and therefore may incorporate

significant place branding strategies into their public realm. This may include specialized wayfinding, customized street furnishing, and signage. These elements help to support the corridor's identity and to market their function to the city and region as a whole.

EXAMPLE CORRIDORS

- » Hennepin Avenue
- » Nicollet Avenue S
- » 1st Avenue
- » Main Street SE
- » Washington Avenue



Figure 3.7 Destination Corridor diagram

Destination Corridors

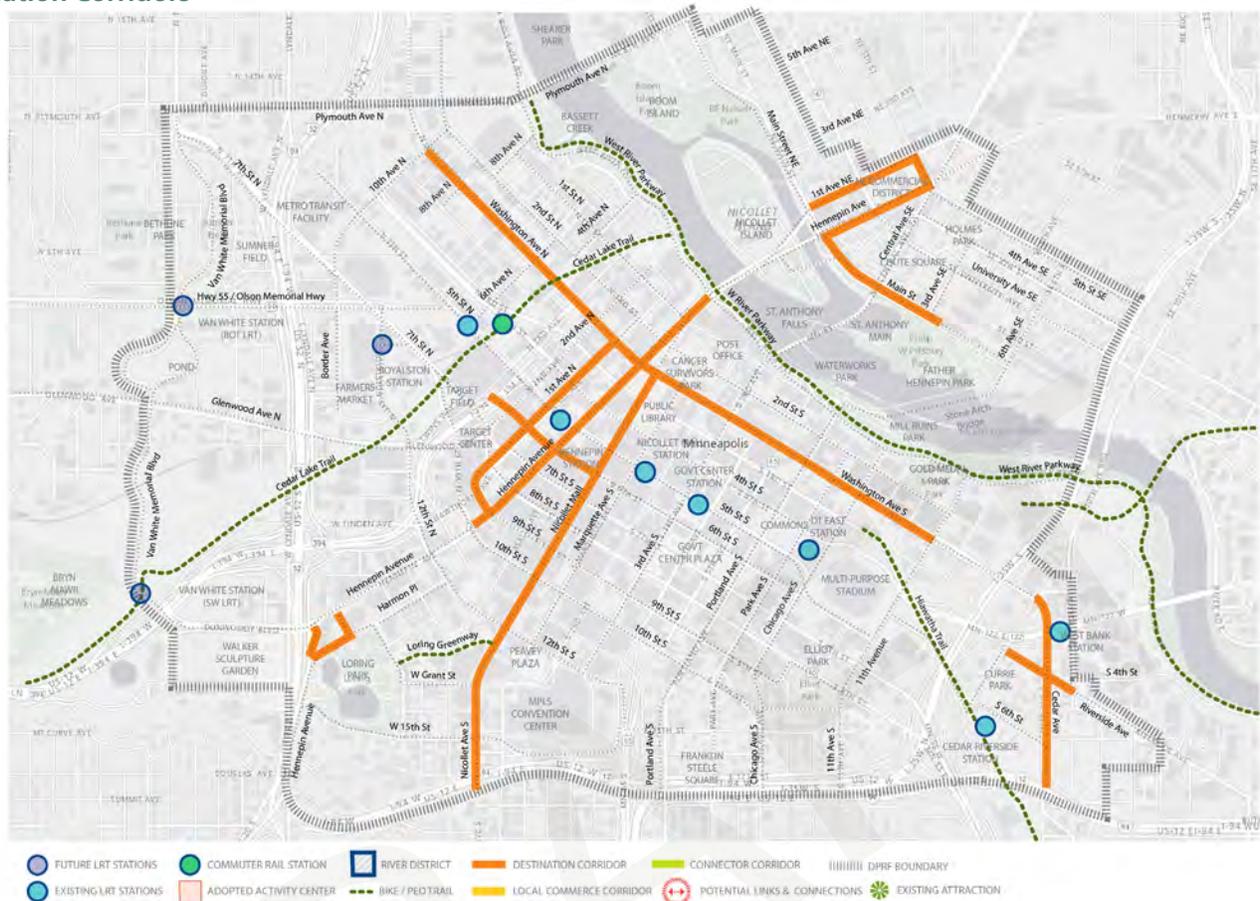


Figure 3.8 Destination Corridors

Policy Recommendations: Destination Corridor

POTENTIAL GROUND FLOOR USES:

- » Retail storefront
- » Restaurant / bar
- » Sidewalk café
- » Entertainment venue (i.e. theater, cinema, nightclub)
- » Department store / Shopping center
- » Hotel lobby
- » Publicly accessible open space / courtyard / pocket-park
- » Transit facility / station / hub

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

- » Encourage continuous active uses along the entire streetwall.
- » Discourage building utilities/mechanical / parking / vehicular access.

- » Create a high-degree of transparency / visibility between interior and exterior of buildings.
- » Encourage a high frequency of building entrances and access points.
- » Activate corners with building entrances
- » Encourage taller ground floor heights (15' min).
- » Minimize building setbacks (5' or less).
- » Plantings should be primarily hardscape such as tree grates, raised planters, and permeable pavers and spaced to allow for heavy pedestrian traffic.
- » Street furnishings should minimize conflicts with the flow of heavy pedestrian traffic and should allow for intermittent spaces for rest, interaction and public art.

Destination Corridor: Existing



Figure 3.9 Destination Corridor, existing conditions, photograph by the City of Minneapolis

Destination Corridor: Proposed

seasonal decorations
Special Service Districts

neighborhood ID signs
Public Works Traffic and Parking Services



bicycle parking
Public Works Traffic and Parking Services

boulevard trees
Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Forestry

freestanding planters
fronting property owner or Special Service District

Figure 3.10 Destination Corridor: incremental implementation by stakeholder groups.

DESTINATION CORRIDOR IMPLEMENTATION

Completing an enhanced corridor is accomplished incrementally by a variety of stakeholder groups. The figure above shows features provided by: special service districts (seasonal decorations, freestanding planters), Public Works (bicycle parking, neighborhood identification signs),

Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (boulevard trees), neighborhood organizations (neighborhood identification signs), and the fronting property owner (freestanding planters, bicycle parking).

3.5.2 Local Commerce Corridor

These corridors are characterized by more intermittent pedestrian traffic throughout the day and contain a mix of uses including single use office buildings, residential buildings and mixed-use buildings. The retail presence may include smaller cafes and restaurants and is serves the downtown population of residents and workers. Due to lower pedestrian volumes and a potentially higher residential population, local commerce corridors are encouraged to have more generous planting in the public realm including planted boulevards, street trees and green screening of non-active building functions. Street furniture such as benches and movable furniture is encouraged to provide places of respite and quiet interaction away from busier retail corridors.

EXAMPLE CORRIDORS

- » Chicago Avenue S
- » Central Avenue SE
- » 5th Street N/S
- » 2nd Street N/S



Figure 3.11 Local Commerce Corridor diagram

Local Commerce Corridors

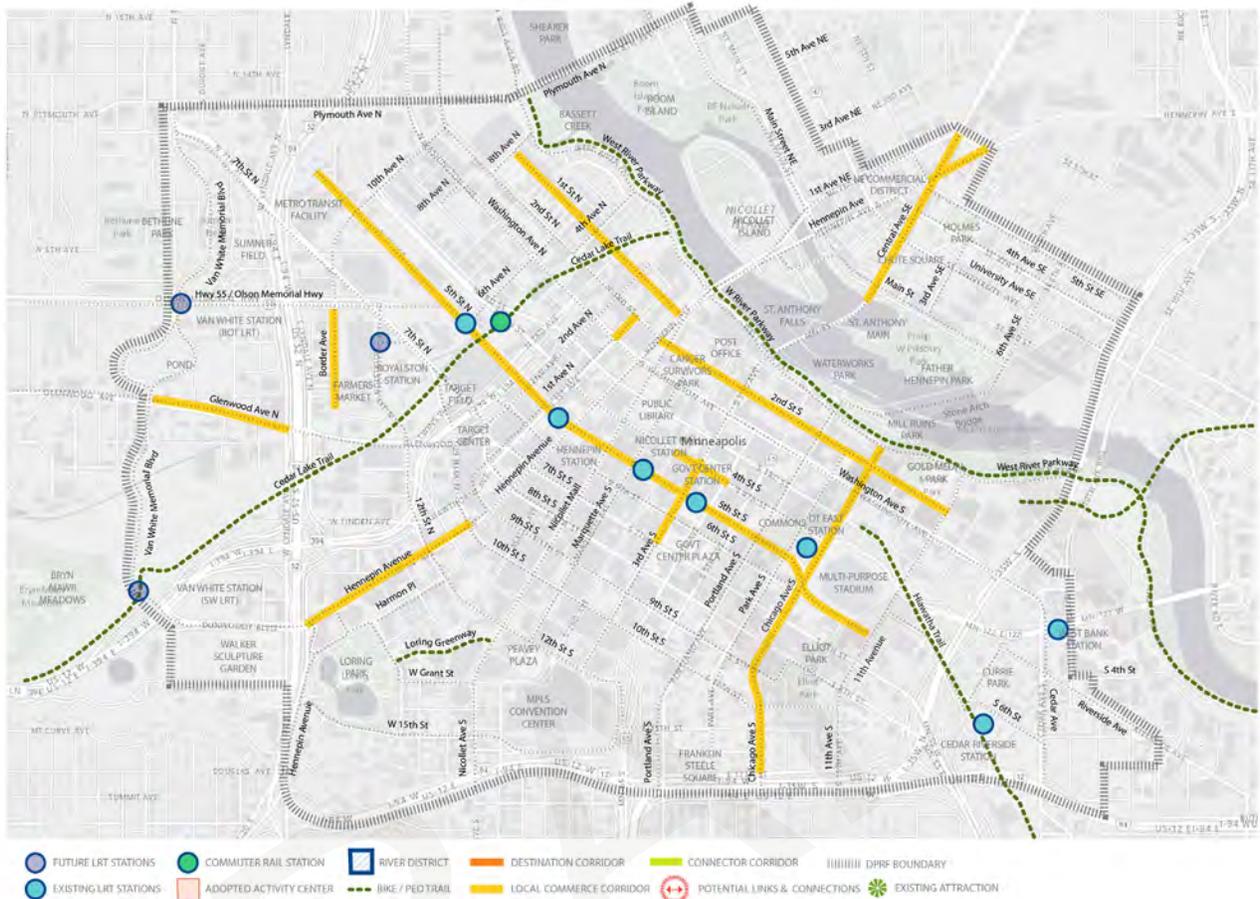


Figure 3.12 Local Commerce Corridors

Policy Recommendations: Local Commerce Corridor

POTENTIAL GROUND FLOOR USES:

- » Urban grocery store
- » Professional services/Family services (such as daycare, doggie daycare, or clinic)
- » Restaurant / Sidewalk café
- » Retail storefront
- » Residential lobby
- » Green space / Green buffer / Green wall
- » Residential amenity space
- » Pocket park
- » Office lobby
- » Hotel lobby
- » Walk-up townhomes / Condos / Apartment units

- » Transit facility / station / hub

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

- » Implement a more landscaped public realm, including planted boulevards, street trees and green screening of non-active or private ground floor uses
- » Separate walk-up residential units from the sidewalk with a green buffer or raised entryway to create privacy
- » Encourage pocket-parks, publicly accessible green space, and street furniture to create places of respite and interaction
- » Appropriately screen any non-active uses such as mechanical, parking, and other “back of house” functions or large expanses of blank street wall.
- » Whenever possible place active uses towards the corners of the block

Local Commerce Corridor: Existing



Figure 3.13 Local Commerce Corridor, existing conditions, photograph by the City of Minneapolis

Local Commerce Corridor: Proposed

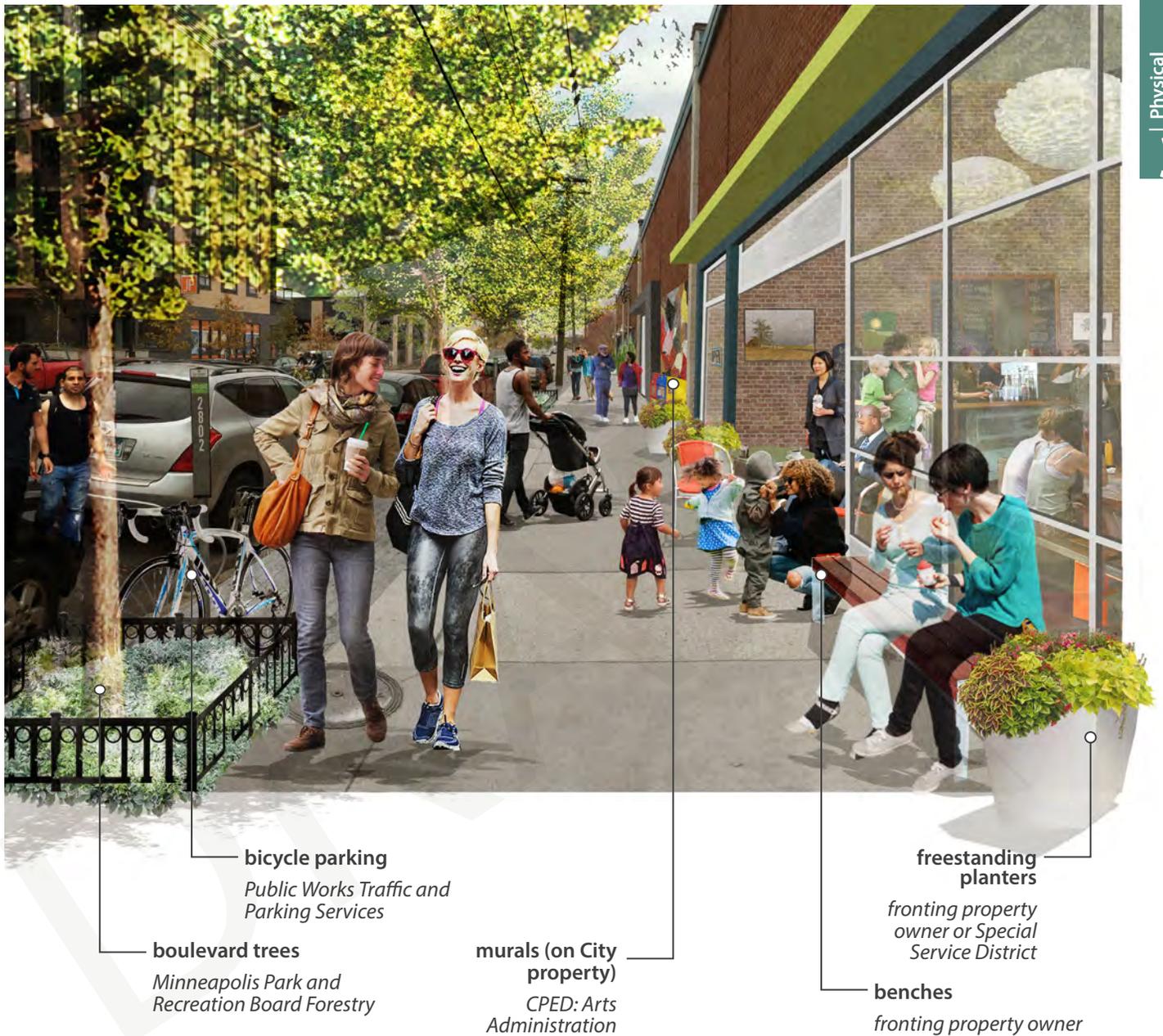


Figure 3.14 Local Commerce Corridor: incremental implementation by stakeholder groups.

LOCAL COMMERCE CORRIDOR IMPLEMENTATION

Completing an enhanced corridor is accomplished incrementally by a variety of stakeholder groups. The figure above shows features provided by; special service districts (freestanding planters), public works (bicycle parking), Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (boulevard

trees), Community Planning and Economic Development (public art), and the fronting property owner (benches, freestanding planters, bicycle parking).

3.5.3 Connector Corridor

Connectors are streets used primarily as connections between destinations. They are multi-modal and may carry large volumes of pedestrians, bicycles, and cars, particularly during peak commuting times. Their use characteristics are varied but generally contain a mix of active and non-active uses and may have swaths of industrial, under-utilized or institutional land. When considering street furnishing and planting characteristics, priority should be given to wayfinding, transit accessibility, and pedestrian safety. Similar to local commerce corridors, Connector corridors provide more opportunity for greening and should be more generously planted where space allows. In particular, any non-active uses should be appropriately screened with plantings and pedestrian scaled lighting.

EXAMPLE CORRIDORS

- » 10th Ave N
- » 11th Avenue
- » Portland Avenue
- » 7th Street N
- » 9th Street S
- » 10th Street S



Figure 3.15 Connector Corridor diagram

Connector Corridors

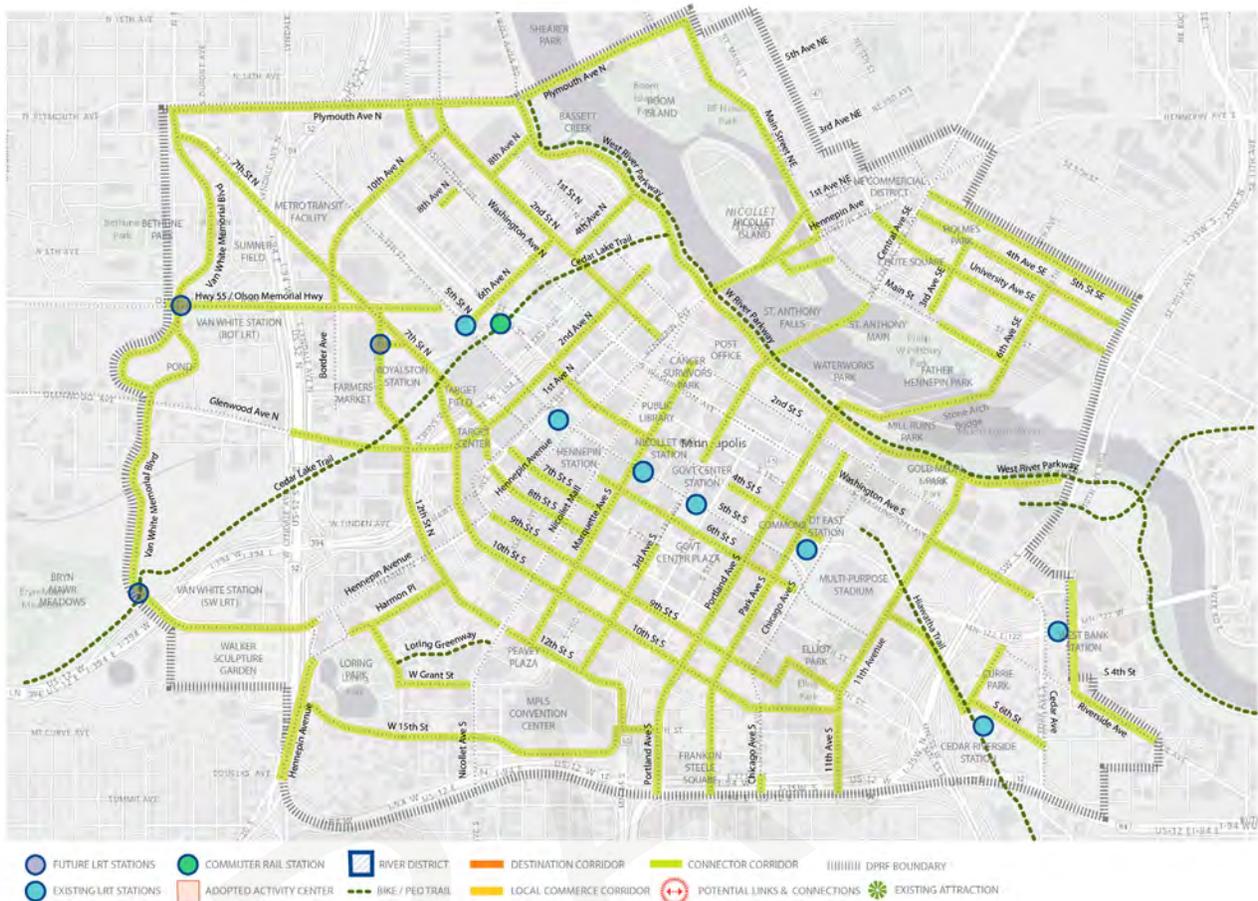


Figure 3.16 Connector Corridors

Policy Recommendations: Connector Corridor

POTENTIAL GROUND FLOOR USES:

- » Office lobby / Office space
- » Small-scale retail storefront
- » Residential lobby
- » Residential amenity space
- » Hotel lobby
- » Green space / Green buffer / Green wall
- » Light industrial / Manufacturing use (appropriately screened and planted and/or with a storefront component)
- » Walk-up residential units
- » Transit facility / station / hub

- » Institutional use (i.e. hospital, clinic, higher education, public agency)

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS:

- » Appropriately screen any non-active uses with plantings, public art or materials of visual interest
- » Provide clear wayfinding to destination places and corridors, particularly at transit stops and intersections or intermodal exchanges
- » Maximize the safety of pedestrians and bicycles with the careful placement and visual connection of any curb-cuts, loading areas or parking access points
- » Provide pedestrian-scaled lighting, particularly through non-active use corridors

Connector Corridor: Existing



Figure 3.17 Connector Corridor, existing conditions, photograph by the City of Minneapolis

Connector Corridor:
Proposed



Figure 3.18 Connector Corridor: incremental implementation by stakeholder groups.

LOCAL COMMERCE CORRIDOR

Completing an enhanced corridor is accomplished incrementally by a variety of stakeholder groups. The figure above shows features provided by; Metro Transit (transit stops), Public Works (protected bikeways), Minneapolis Park

and Recreation Board (boulevard trees), and the fronting property owner (enhanced boulevard plantings, enhanced plantings on private property adjacent to the public realm).

3.6 Central Riverfront Feature District

Background

The Mississippi Riverfront has been at the heart of Minneapolis since its birth as a city and continues to play a major role in shaping its identity. That role has evolved from what was initially a primarily industrial waterfront to a more mixed character in recent years. Today it includes many recreational and cultural destinations, along with a thriving residential population. Local planning efforts helped shape this transformation, preserving the history and character of the post-industrial landscapes while protecting the natural beauty and ecological health of the river. Today, as the character and uses of Downtown become more mixed and the population of Downtown residents and visitors continues to increase, the Central Riverfront continues to develop its role as the heart of a thriving Downtown public realm.

Foundational Planning & Policy

Minneapolis' riverfront is already a highlight of the city's cultural identity and a thriving place for recreational activities, historic interpretation and day-to-day life. Its success is no accident, but rather the result of a number of critical planning initiatives that helped shape its increasingly dynamic future. Much of the visionary work in these plans has been implemented but much has yet to be realized. The *Downtown Public Realm Framework* seeks to build on these past efforts and help shape the context around which the Mississippi River and its adjacent communities can continue to thrive.

3.6.1 Guiding Principles For The Central Riverfront Feature District

The Mississippi River is central to the public realm in Downtown both because it is a major attraction for recreation and leisure but also because it provides a natural focal point for shaping and enhancing a sense of place and identity for

the whole of downtown. While much of the Central Riverfront is already developed or park land, key sites still exist as long-range opportunities to create new destinations. Additionally there is much room for improvement in wayfinding and strengthening connections from the downtown core to and from the riverfront. The Downtown Public Realm Framework seeks to provide guidance in those areas.

3.6.1.1 ALL PROJECTS WITHIN THE CENTRAL RIVERFRONT FEATURE DISTRICT ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONSIDER AND CONTRIBUTE TO ADVANCING THE FOLLOWING GUIDING PRINCIPLES TO SUPPORT THE DOWNTOWN PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK:

- a) Strengthen and enhance connections to the Central Riverfront from Downtown
- b) Elevate the presence and visibility of the Central Riverfront
- c) Enhance the resident, worker and visitor experience by investing in public amenities and programming
- d) Create a sustainable and ecologically integrated public realm
- e) Guide future development to contribute to creating a vibrant and active Central Riverfront
- f) Work with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board to achieve an active and accessible Central Riverfront experience

3.6.2 Connections & Visibility

The DPRF is primarily concerned with creating and enhancing connections to the river, especially from key corridors identified in the Physical Framework plan. Enhancing connections involves creating a public realm that is safe, inviting, and hospitable, with clear wayfinding and access to destinations and attractions. The key connections identified in this plan rely heavily on those identified by the Central Mississippi



Figure 3.19 Young Lei and Huimin Yuan, photograph by Stephanie Glaros

Yong Lei: "We come here occasionally, probably one or two times every month I would say. We like the Stone Arch Bridge, the river, checking out the Mill City Museum. Places for my daughter, like MacPhail Music Center, and many other places we can take her to."

Huimin Yuan: "Take a walk in here, or take her to the park over there."

YL: "We also like the restaurants here, a lot of different varieties, we like to check out all the restaurants here in downtown. Yeah, that's pretty cool. It's a combination of both the natural beauty and the cultural spots. So that's really good."

-Young Lei and Huimin Yuan

Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan (CMRRP) as well as the key corridors identified through the DPRF public engagement process.

3.6.2.1 ALL PROJECTS WITHIN THE CENTRAL RIVERFRONT FEATURE DISTRICT ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING CONNECTIVITY AND VISIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS.

- a) Establish and maintain clear wayfinding to and from the central riverfront along all key corridors identified in the DPRF
- b) Complete the pedestrian and bicycle connection from the Dinkytown Greenway to Main Street
- c) Establish a new connection to the riverfront at 8th Ave N
- d) Explore the creation of a bicycle and pedestrian extension of the Cedar Lake Trail across Nicollet Island to the East Bank of the river at the existing rail bridge
- e) Create a more robust and accessible connection from the 3rd/Central Ave bridge to the Main Street SE
- f) Enhance and strengthen the Gateway Park connection from the downtown core to West River Parkway

3.6.3 Parks And Open Space

The DPRF embraces the recommendations and planning guidance contained in the Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan and defers to that plan with regard to all land currently held by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. Additionally this plan encourages the full implementation of the *RiverFirst* plan including the Scherer park site and the Water Works park concept design, adopted by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board in September, 2015. The DPRF supports these initiatives with the following recommendations:

3.6.3.1 PROJECTS WITHIN THE CENTRAL RIVERFRONT FEATURE DISTRICT ARE ENCOURAGED TO COMPLY WITH THESE PARKS AND OPEN SPACE POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) Support the development of activation, programming and maintenance strategies for parks and open space along the central riverfront
- b) Strengthen connections to and between parks and open spaces in and around downtown by creating clear wayfinding and completing missing links
- c) Explore the creation of recreational "loops" that provide

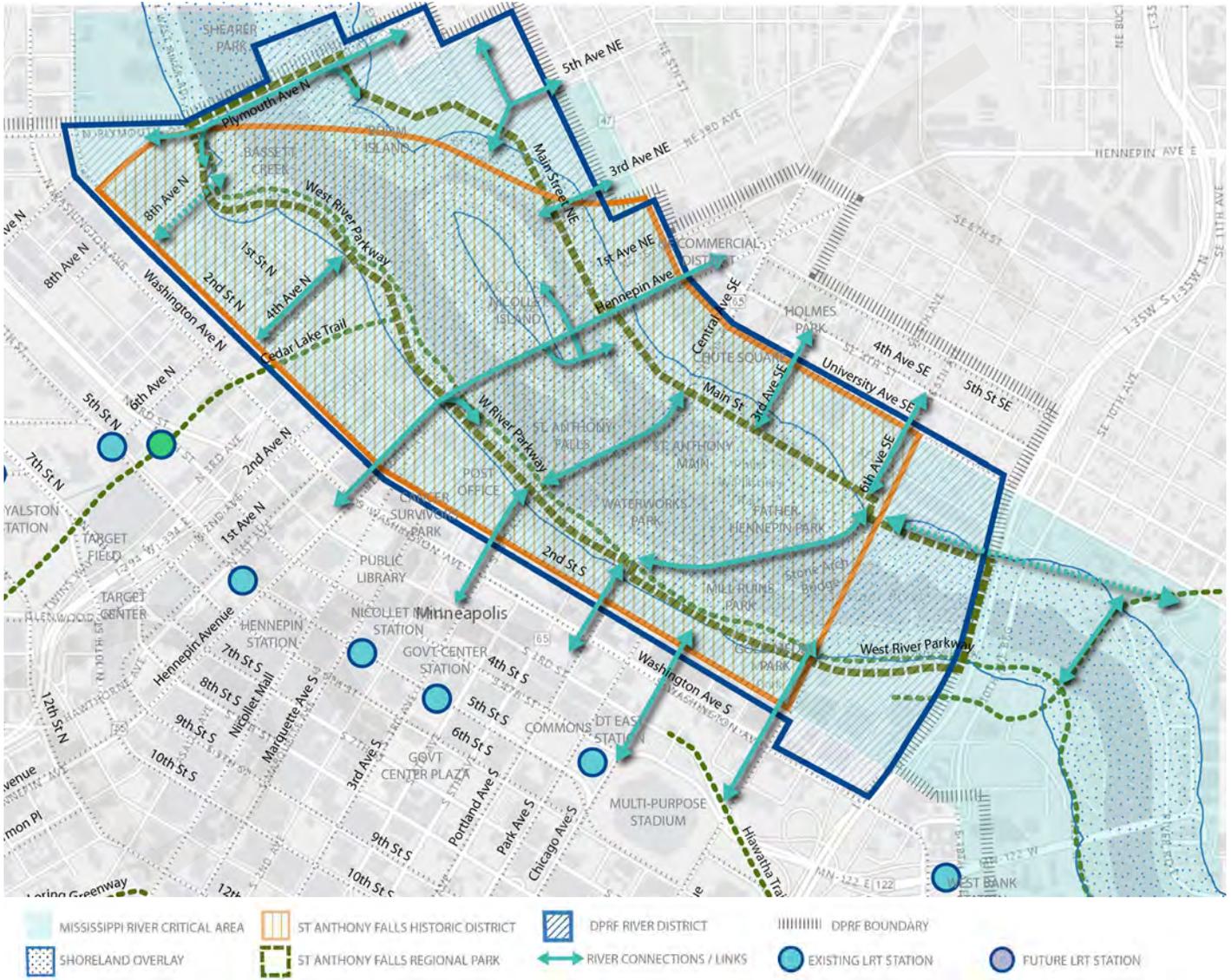


Figure 3.20 Central Riverfront Feature District map - detail

Key for Central Riverfront Feature District Map

Mississippi River Critical Area – The Mississippi River Critical Area Program is a joint local and state program that provides coordinated planning and management for 72 miles of the Mississippi River, four miles of the Minnesota River, and 54,000 acres of adjacent corridor lands. The designated Mississippi River Critical Area Corridor stretches from Ramsey and Dayton, Minnesota, to the southern boundary of Dakota County on the west/south side of the river and the boundary with the Lower St. Croix National Scenic Riverway on the east/north side of the river, and runs through the heart of Minneapolis-St. Paul.

Shoreland Overlay District – The SH Shoreland Overlay District is a zoning district within the City of Minneapolis code of ordinances. It is established and deployed in strategic areas to preserve and enhance the environmental qualities of surface waters and the natural and economic values of shoreland areas within the city, to provide for the efficient and beneficial utilization of those waters and shoreland areas, to comply with the requirements of state law regarding the management of shoreland areas, and to protect the public health, safety and welfare.

St. Anthony Falls Historic District – As defined and described in the St. Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines, this district lies at the heart of Minneapolis and includes areas of particular historic importance such as St. Anthony Falls, Marcy Holmes, the Mill District and Nicollet Island. It was written and adopted to provide guidance and standards on the appropriateness of work that is planned in the district including new structures, historic preservation, streetscapes and planting.

St. Anthony Falls Regional Park – The St. Anthony Falls Regional Park (SAFRP) takes its name from St. Anthony

Falls, which have defined the river character for centuries and lie at the heart of the park. The SAFRP encompasses approximately 350 acres and 1.75 miles of riverfront along the Mississippi River in Minneapolis. It is part of a larger continuous regional park system along the river, abutted by the Above the Falls Regional Park to the north and the Mississippi Gorge Regional Park to the south. SAFRP lies wholly within a unit of the National Park system, the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. It is served by two National Scenic Byways: The Grand Rounds and the Great River Road. Also, it is served by the first and only state bikeway, the Mississippi River Trail.

Downtown Public Realm Riverfront Feature District – The Central Riverfront feature district as outlined in the Downtown Public Realm Framework in a policy feature that brings together guidance from multiple sources, plans and existing policy tools to reinforce the connection of the Mississippi River to Downtown Minneapolis. It highlights key elements of existing plans including critical connections, design standards and values that seek to continue to develop the riverfront as a focal point of the downtown public realm.

River Connections / Links – River Connections and links as defined in the Downtown Public Realm Framework are critical routes and connection points from the downtown public realm to the riverfront. They include major thoroughfares, side streets and pedestrian / bicycle access points as well as connections across the river. The DPRF strives to strengthen these connections through the establishment of clear wayfinding, visibility and access to and from the riverfront.

opportunities for pedestrians and bicyclists to move between parks and open spaces downtown in clear, legible and minimally interrupted movements

3.6.4 Ecology and Sustainability

The DPRF supports the establishment and maintenance of a sustainable and ecologically integrated public realm that manages stormwater to help improve water quality and public health. It also encourages enhancing the public realm in a way that is complimentary to the natural ecological systems of the Central Riverfront. This includes planting native species that will thrive and that connect visitors to historic and contemporary cultural and natural landscapes.

3.6.4.1 PROJECTS WITHIN THE CENTRAL RIVERFRONT FEATURE DISTRICT ARE ENCOURAGED TO COMPLY WITH THESE PRIORITY ECOLOGY AND SUSTAINABILITY POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) Wherever possible, plantings in the public realm should reflect and complement the existing and historic landscapes of the Central Mississippi Riverfront
- b) Continue to implement stormwater best management practices for new capital improvements and development projects

3.6.5 Existing St. Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines

Adopted by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission in 2012, the St. Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines prescribe very specific requirements for how infrastructure, historic preservation, rehabilitation and infill development should proceed within the St. Anthony Falls historic district. Guidelines that are particularly relevant to the goals of the Central Riverfront Feature District are listed in Figure 3.21.

Existing Critical Policy Guidance for the Public Realm: St. Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines^{2,3}

- » 5.4 – Preserve the location and width of existing street and alley rights-of-way
- » 5.5 – Preserve historic paving materials; otherwise, provide new compatible materials
- » 6.1 – Retain existing features of historic landscapes including but not limited to plant materials, waterways and grade changes
- » 6.2 – Design new landscapes to be in harmony with the overall historic character of the district
- » 6.3 – Use landscape designs to promote energy efficiency and water conservation
- » 6.4 – New or replacement street furnishings, such as street lights and street furniture, shall be compatible with the context of the individual character areas
- » 6.5 – Consider integrating interpretive materials into street furnishings
- » 6.6 – Streetscape plantings should be compatible with the context of the individual character areas
- » 6.7 – New designs for open spaces and parks should be compatible and reflective of the historic context of the individual character areas

Figure 3.21 Existing critical policy guidance for the public realm: St. Anthony Falls Historic District Design Guidelines

3.6.6 Guiding Principles for how the Central Riverfront Feature District Contributes to the Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan ⁴

Adopted by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board in 2015, the Central Mississippi Riverfront Regional Park Master Plan seeks to provide guidance on the redevelopment and enhancement of existing facilities and resources, as well as the acquisition of additional property and expansion of the regional park boundary.

3.6.6.1 PROJECTS WITHIN THE CENTRAL RIVERFRONT FEATURE DISTRICT ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING GUIDING PRINCIPLES FROM THE CENTRAL MISSISSIPPI RIVERFRONT REGIONAL PARK PLAN:

- a) Connect people to the river by foot, bicycle, transit, boat, and private vehicle
- b) Restore and enhance natural resources, improve wildlife habitat, and water quality
- c) Reveal and interpret past and present, nature and culture
- d) Engage visitors through activities, amenities, food, and events
- e) Adapt within the changing social, economic, and ecological realities

3.7 Incremental Implementation

A key characteristic of the *Downtown Public Realm Framework* plan is the groundwork that it lays for incremental implementation over time, as opportunities arise.

The Central Riverfront of Minneapolis is largely built out with existing uses and structures. It was the first place to be settled in the city and is fully developed. It exists today as a mix of historic industrial landscapes as well as more recent residential and cultural developments.

Still, the city is a living thing, and as growth continues in Downtown, evolution and change will continue to occur.

The Downtown Public Realm Framework is designed to serve as a platform for partnership with the goal of incremental implementation. Public, private, and nonprofit partners are invited to contribute to the holistic vision in the many ways that they can, incrementally over time.

3.7.1 Public and private actors will be encouraged to participate in incremental implementation of the Downtown Public Realm Framework.

Over time, as Downtown continues to grow and as the riverfront continues to evolve, opportunities will arise for development investment and capital projects to contribute to Potential Linkages, Corridors, and the Central Riverfront Feature District.

3.7.1.1 PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT & REDEVELOPMENT PROJECTS WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK AREA ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DPRF POLICIES.

3.7.1.2 PUBLIC PROJECTS, INCLUDING CAPITAL PROJECTS, WITHIN THE DOWNTOWN PUBLIC REALM FRAMEWORK AREA ARE ENCOURAGED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DPRF POLICIES.