

Community Planning and Economic Development Planning Division Report
SMALL AREA PLAN / COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT

DATE: December 20, 2005

PROJECT NAME: South Lyndale Corridor Master Plan

SUBMITTED BY: Planning Division

CONTACT PERSON AND PHONE: Beth Elliott, Senior City Planner, 673-2442

WARDS: 11, 13

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS:

- Lynnhurst Neighborhood Association
- Kenny Neighborhood Association
- Tangletown Neighborhood Association
- Windom Neighborhood Organization

CURRENT MINNEAPOLIS PLAN DESIGNATIONS:

Community Corridors: West 54th Street, Lyndale Avenue South

Neighborhood Commercial Node: West 54th Street and Lyndale Avenue South

PROPOSED MINNEAPOLIS PLAN DESIGNATION:

Neighborhood Commercial Node: West 58th Street and Lyndale Avenue South

BACKGROUND:

The South Lyndale Corridor Master Plan is a proposed policy framework for the future of the corridor. The study area includes Lyndale Avenue in South Minneapolis between Minnehaha Creek and State Highway 62 as well as Trunk Highway 121, a state highway spur that leads from the southbound lanes of Lyndale at 56th Street to Interstate 35W several blocks to the south. The plan identifies opportunities and preferences for redevelopment as well as enhancements to the character and identity of the area. It identifies locations, priorities and guidelines for new development, as well as strengthening a "sense of place." As such, it serves as the primary guide for Planning Commission review, zoning changes, capital investment, and housing and commercial development activities in this part of the city.

The Minneapolis Plan is the principal planning document for the City of Minneapolis (the City's "Comprehensive Plan", as defined by State statute). It is used to guide and evaluate City activities and ordinances (including capital improvements, redevelopment, and regulatory tools like the zoning code). Currently, The Minneapolis Plan identifies Lyndale Avenue South and West 54th Street as Community Corridors; the intersection of these two corridors is a designated Neighborhood Commercial Node. In addition to these already-existing land use features, the South Lyndale Corridor Master Plan proposes a new designated Neighborhood Commercial Node at 58th and Lyndale Avenue. Therefore, amending The

Minneapolis Plan is an important task in providing a clearer path for development, redevelopment and public infrastructure along the South Lyndale Corridor.

Many visioning, education, and planning processes occurred in this area that led up to the work of this small area plan. About five years ago, the four neighborhoods formed a collaborative group called Lyndale Avenue South Renewal – Creek to Crosstown (LASR-CC). LASR-CC was pivotal in directing a community visioning process that has become the foundation of our small area plan. In addition to visioning, the neighborhoods also worked with the City in the fall of 2004 to conduct a Corridor Housing Initiative (CHI) process prior to master planning. The community meetings held during the CHI provided an opportunity for education on planning issues, housing, and urban design. It also provided the neighborhoods and city staff with some valuable input on how to shape the scope of services for our current plan.

The South Lyndale planning process was guided by a steering committee with representatives from each of the neighborhoods, the business community, and City staff. Three public workshops as well as two business community meetings were held to present work products and incorporate input. Staff and consultants supported the work of both the steering committee as well as activities at public meetings. The steering committee met monthly to provide input into the public process as well as review and provide direction on plan elements related to land use, public infrastructure, and urban design. All meetings were open to the public.

PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS:

Urban Character and District Identity

- Establish a sense of identity at important portals into district at the north (Minnehaha Creek) and south (Crosstown Interchange) gateways.
- Establish the presence of identifiable nodes within the district by supporting the development of mixed-use buildings that front streets. The nodes have been identified at 54th (existing) and 58th (proposed).
- The market study suggests that residents in these four neighborhoods spend more money per capita on gardening than other neighborhoods in South Minneapolis. Build on the gardening traditions of the South Lyndale Area.

Street System

- Fund and construct the streetscape design between the creek and 56th Street in conjunction with the Hennepin County plans for the roadway reconstruction per the design plans adopted by the community in 2004 (prepared by SEH).
- Fund, design and reconstruct Lyndale Avenue from 56th Street to the Crosstown Highway based on the Hennepin County and neighborhood design plans for the section north of 56th Street.
- Fund, design and reconstruct State Trunk Highway 121 per recommended realignment studies prepared by the City of Minneapolis
- All streets in the corridor should include on-street parallel parking.
- All intersections in the corridor should include the design and construction of safe and visible pedestrian crossings in conjunction with roadway reconstruction.

Potential Redevelopment Opportunities

- TH121 “turn back” sites offer a tremendous opportunity to catalyze positive development activity in the corridor, build on the goals articulated in the vision statement, address growth objectives, and add important new uses to the corridor including residential, neighborhood commercial, and open space. Today these sites are unusable open areas contained within the TH121 right-of-way and owned by MNDOT. The plan identifies the narrow sites adjacent to the realigned TH121 for attached single-family residential (townhomes). Immediately to the north of 57th Street, the pie-shaped turn back site has been identified for open space. The plan recommends this site be developed as a village green civic park space for the community to enjoy.
- Immediately south of 58th Street, between Lyndale and TH121, exists a small single-family residential enclave, a rehabilitation home and an auto service station. The master plan recommends as the South Lyndale corridor develops and Lyndale Avenue improvements proceed, this area be given careful consideration for greater land use density in a mixed-use format.
- The sites located at the northeast intersection of 58th and Lyndale today include a recently-closed Hostess bakery outlet and a couple of small office spaces located in a strip development. The site located to the north of this parcel is one of the motel sites in the corridor. The master plan recommends as redevelopment activity occurs in the corridor, that these sites be considered for multi-story mixed use development with ground level, neighborhood retail uses and residential or office uses located in upper stories. The other motel site, north of this node, is recommended for future multi-family residential use.
- The industrially zoned site located at the southeast end of the Lyndale corridor is currently occupied by Centerpoint Energy. The master plan recommends the future of this site be considered for commercial use.
- As the corridor densifies, reuse of surface parking lots should be considered for redevelopment activity.
- Another site identified for future residential uses is the Borton Volvo site located between 55th and 56th Streets. The master plan recommends this site be considered for future multi-family residential uses.
- The node located at 54th and Lyndale has been identified in the comprehensive plan as a neighborhood commercial node. The master plan recommends as the corridor grows and densifies, that this node be given particular consideration for a greater mix of uses, including upper story multi-family residential above ground level retail uses. The plan suggests development build to the street corners and surface parking lots be filled in with other uses. Structured parking is recommended to free up land for uses that support pedestrian activity.

Public and Pedestrian Places

- With the reconstruction of TH121 several sites may become available for redevelopment, including the site between 56th and 57th Street along the west side of Lyndale. This site presents difficult challenges for development due to its unorthodox shape and small dimension on the north half of the site. The master plan recommends the City take steps to secure this site for public open space and design it to accommodate passive uses for the benefit of the community.
- Other sites may become available for redevelopment with the reconstruction of TH121, including the west portion of the existing right-of-way. These narrow sites have been designated for future townhome development in the master plan, but they also provide the opportunity to integrate a combined pedestrian and bicycle trail corridor along TH121. This trail corridor is proposed to connect the open space at Grass Lake with the future “village green”.

- The community has expressed a desire for a more direct connection to the Minnehaha Creek trail system from the south side of the creek. The master plan recommends the City consider designing and constructing this trail connection when future funds become available for park improvements in the South Lyndale Corridor.
- All street intersections should include safe and accessible pedestrian crossings.

Alternative Modes of Transportation

- Lyndale Avenue and 54th Street are designated bus routes. The master plan recommends that bus stops be uniformly improved and regularly maintained to encourage greater ridership.
- The plan identifies key bus transit stops at the neighborhood commercial nodes located at 54th and 58th Street intersections along Lyndale. These transit stops should become well integrated with the future streetscape design for Lyndale.
- The proposed open space recommendations provide for a combined bike and pedestrian trail connection between Grass Lake and the “village green” along the TH121 right-of-way.
- At the proposed neighborhood commercial nodes of 54th and 58th Streets and Lyndale, an adequate supply of bicycle parking should be provided to encourage bicycling and make it more convenient for residents to park their bikes and shop.

Implementation

- It is recommended that most parcels within a designated neighborhood commercial node be rezoned in a Neighborhood Commercial District (C1 or C2).
- For the stretch of Lyndale between the two nodes from 55th to 57th, it is recommended that future zoning regulations in this segment encourage medium to high density residential development.
- It is recommended that the CenterPointe Energy site, located in the southern most parcel on the east side of Lyndale, be rezoned to a Commercial District due to its excellent visibility and transportation access from the highway, the site’s strategic location at the gateway to the South Lyndale Avenue Corridor, as well as the City of Minneapolis, and the large size of the property.
- To accommodate single-family attached homes in the western portion of the TH121 right-of-way, it is recommended that this area be rezoned to a medium-density district.
- In order to achieve a dense, walkable environment, it is recommended that the Pedestrian-Oriented Overlay District be applied to the corridor between 53rd and 59th. Possible additions to the existing overlay district may be:
 - Minimum FAR or height to achieve the 2-4 stories called for in the plan
 - Minimum lot coverage requirement
 - Minimum percentage of first-floor retail in the Neighborhood Commercial Nodes
 - Maximum parking requirements
 - Additional design regulations for parking facilities
- Coordinate the design, funding and timing plans with Hennepin County for Lyndale Avenue Reconstruction from the creek to 56th. Make sure the plan includes streetscape improvements. Special assessments and a special service district offer the best fit for these improvements.
- State Trunk Highway 121 is planned for reconstruction from 58th Street to the Crosstown within the next five years. Implementation of this project requires several actions:
 - Place project on City capital improvements plan (CIP).
 - Determine scope of State funding.
 - Facilitate “turn back” of roadway to Hennepin County or the City of Minneapolis.

- Coordinate site development of the Village Green with Hennepin County and work with stakeholder to create a plan.

FUTURE RELATED ACTIONS:

City Council action

Amendments to the City's Comprehensive Plan require action by the City Council. Following action by the City Planning Commission, staff will forward these amendments to the Zoning and Planning Committee for their review and action.

Metropolitan Council review and approval

Adoption of amendments to a municipality's comprehensive plan requires review and action by the Metropolitan Council. Staff will recommend that the Minneapolis City Council adopt these amendments contingent upon review and approval by the Metropolitan Council, at which time the amendments will take effect. The Metropolitan Council has the authority to recommend or, in some instances, require changes to a municipality's comprehensive plan. If this were to occur, the Minneapolis City Council would address these issues at a future time.

Regulatory alignment

According to State statute, regulatory controls must come into alignment with proposed changes to land use as identified in the comprehensive plan. Planning Division staff will be analyzing current zoning against proposed long-term land uses in the South Lyndale study area at a future time. The proposed master plan includes a basic zoning analysis as preparation for an official rezoning study of the corridor.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

That the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council adopt the South Lyndale Corridor Master Plan as a small area plan and as an articulation of and amendment to the comprehensive plan's policies, subject to review and approval by the Metropolitan Council, and subject to the following changes to *The Minneapolis Plan*:

1. Add 58th St. and Lyndale Ave. So. to Table 4.3, *Neighborhood Commercial Nodes*.
2. Change the classification of the *Lyndale Gateway* from a *Tier 3 Potential Growth Center* to a *Tier 3 Growth Center* in Tables 3.1 and 3.2.
3. Delete the *Lyndale Gateway* from Table 3.3, *Potential Growth Centers*.

Furthermore, that the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council direct Planning Division staff to complete the necessary procedural requirements for comprehensive plan amendments, including submitting summary information and analysis related to impact on regional systems and consistency with regional policies.

Furthermore, that the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council direct Planning Division staff to report back to the Planning Commission and/or City Council in the event of any issues arising from Metropolitan Council review that would require plan modifications or otherwise prevent the comprehensive plan amendment from taking effect.

Furthermore, that the Planning Commission recommend that the City Council direct CPED and the Department of Public Works to move forward with planning and design of TH 121/Lyndale realignment.

Reference Materials / Attachments:

- ❖ Comments received during the 45-day public review period
- ❖ South Lyndale Corridor Master Plan
- ❖ The official plan website: <http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/planning/south-lyndale.asp>.