



Reconnecting North Minneapolis and the Mississippi River:

from the banks to the boulevards and beyond

**A Report by Eric King, CURA Graduate Research Assistant, January 2017
Prepared for Friends of the Mississippi River**

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Introduction

Project Background

The goal of this project was to gather feedback and research the different barriers and opportunities that existed for providing better access for residents living in North Minneapolis to connect with the Mississippi River. The pedestrian and bicycle environment connecting to the riverfront currently lacks many basic safety features in providing safe and easy access, despite the Twin Cities having a nationally recognized regional park system.

An iterative approach was applied for the first two phases of this project that involved a cycle of conducting research- sharing research with community- gathering feedback from community- and developing recommendations based on this feedback.



Research Components

- GIS analysis
- Conduct background research involving city and small area planning documents
- Present findings from initial research and gather feedback from neighborhood organization leaders
- Creating recommendations for improvements based on feedback gathered
- Attending community events and administering survey online to gather more in-depth feedback on the different barriers and opportunities identified
- Researching jurisdictional control over the seven crossings over I-94 that connect to the Mississippi River
- Creating recommendations for improvements based on feedback gathered
- Conducting research of the 'bigger picture' in terms of park access, and the potential gentrification implications for some of the large scale developments being planned in North Minneapolis
- Creating recommendations for improvements based on feedback gathered

Community Background

Neighborhood	Pop.	Median Income	Below Poverty Level	HH Renter Occupied	No Vehicle	Walk/Bike Work From Home	Public Transit	% of Pop. w Disability
Cleveland	2,990	\$53,882	18%	21.11%	8%	9.3%	3.4%	5.1%
Folwell	5,118	\$34,497	36.1%	38.77%	22.6%	6.8%	11.8%	9.3%
Harrison	3,412	\$27,698	40.7%	45.99%	29.6%	9.3%	n/a	12.6%
Hawthorne	4,166	\$23,168	41.6%	67.54%	44.7%	9.9%	19.7%	11.9%
Jordan	8,098	\$35,761	36.7%	57.00%	24.6%	9.1%	16.2%	15.5%
Lind-Bohanon	4,515	\$46,055	14.2%	33.19%	11.5%	4.2%	9.6%	4.5%
McKinley	2,877	\$34,505	40.7%	45.99%	19.4%	9.2%	6.1%	10.8%
Near North	6,199	\$25,926	41.8%	67.60%	34.8%	10.4%	19.1%	11.5%
Sumner-Glenwood	1,370	\$14,875	59.2%	87.21%	49.3%	16.8%	13.6%	11.3%
Victory	4,648	\$59,673	12.8%	18.98%	11.5%	7.9%	8.4%	5.5%
Webber-Camden	5,324	\$40,638	30.0%	44.82%	24.9%	3.5%	12.1%	14.5%
Willard-Hay	8,319	\$40,276	37.2%	42.34%	16.5%	11.8%	15.9%	14.2%
All Minneapolis	394,419	\$55,956	22.6%	47.4%	18.6%	16.9%	13.5%	10.5%

Major Projects Upcoming or Under Consideration

Upper Harbor Terminal Redevelopment

Private Development & riverfront parkland

Penn Ave BRT

Rapid Bus Transit service along Penn Ave

Metro Blue Line Extension

Bottineau Transitway – Minneapolis & Northwestern Communities

26th Ave N Overlook/Pier

26th Ave N fishing/overlook pier along Mississippi River-

West Broadway Transit Study

Streetcar/BRT analysis

Northside Promise Zone

Federal Designation: 10-year partnership

North Minneapolis Greenway

Potential greenway through four neighborhoods in North Minneapolis

Homewoods Historic District

Process underway to determine if neighborhood will be designated as a “historic district”

Community Engagement

Engagement Background

One of the main components of conducting this research was the continuous community engagement that occurred throughout the project to gather feedback and comments from people in the community.

A total of eight presentations were given at the various neighborhood organizations during April and May to gather feedback regarding findings from planning documents and the initial research. Four events were attended in the community, along with a large presentation to present back findings from the first phase of the project. A survey was also administered online and in person at events in the community.

How was feedback gathered?

Feedback was collected through a variety of tools and methods throughout the duration of this project:

- Feedback from neighborhood organizations at board & committee meetings in community
- Online survey targeted through Facebook and at fmr.org
- Paper survey conducted at community events
- “Dotmocracy” survey at events in community (see figures below)
- Community presentation at McKnight Foundation
- Talking with city staff and other organizations

Who provided feedback?

Event	Date	# of People
Hawthorne Neighborhood Association	4/14	18
Above the Falls Citizen Advisory Committee	4/26	22
Folwell Neighborhood Association	5/2	12
Lind-Bohanon Neighborhood Association	5/5	14
Northside Residents Redevelopment Council	5/9	27
Jordan Area Community Council	5/19	15
Victory Neighborhood Association	5/25	14
Community Events/Online Survey	Summer 2016	300+
McKnight Foundation	7/13	59
Heritage Park Neighborhood Association	8/8	6



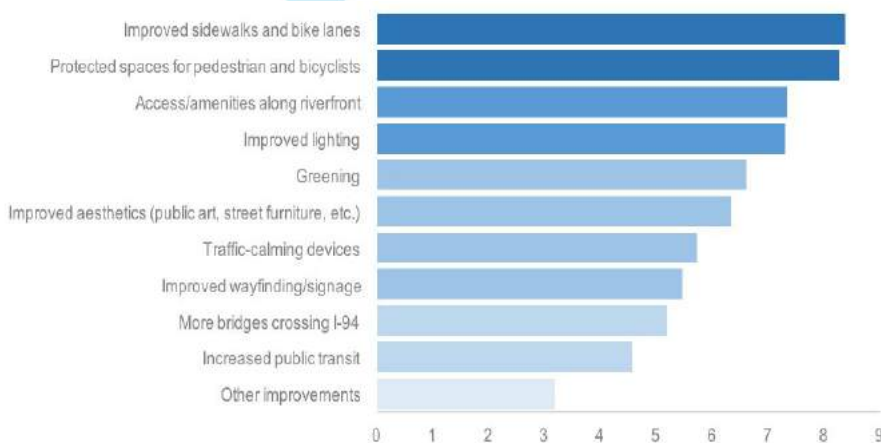
Community Engagement

What did neighborhood organization leaders have to say?

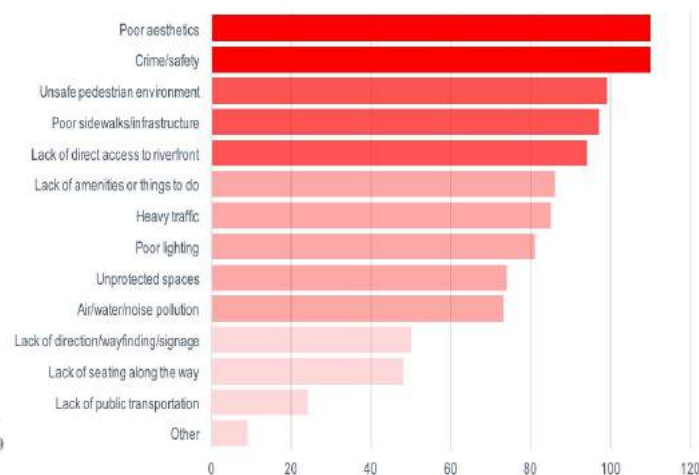
Plymouth Ave N	West Broadway	26 th Ave N	Lowry Ave N	Dowling Ave N	41st & 42 nd Ave N
Update chain-link fencing	Cultivate a safer and pedestrian friendly environment along West Broadway	Utilize design and safety elements that minimize contact with industrial activities and spaces	Enhancing access and the safety for pedestrians between I-94 and riverfront	"Straight and protected" bike lane reconfiguration	The use of vibrant and effective crosswalks
Enhance the cold and windy areas through the use of public art and other creative tactical urbanism techniques along bridge over I-94	Implementing a "complete streetscape"	Different types of "greening"	Protected bike lanes	Widening and repair of sidewalks	Pedestrian lighting needed in parks and along trails running under bridges
Improve pedestrian lighting	Street furniture	Improving the aesthetics of the landscape east of I-94.	Pedestrian lighting	Improving the aesthetic environment	Bicycle lanes along 42 nd Ave N connecting with nearby neighborhoods
Focus on aesthetics and cultivating friendly environment	Pedestrian-oriented lighting	Pedestrian-oriented lighting	Crosswalks using vibrant colors	"Greening" of the corridor	Strengthening the connection to the public art along Lyndale Ave N and 41 st Ave N
	Inclusion of "caution lights" as a method for traffic-calming	Improved wayfinding and signage	Aesthetic improvement of this corridor as a branding strategy	Pedestrian-oriented lighting	Connections should be enhanced and improved to the Camden Boat Launch
				Enhancing the bridge over I-94 with sound and wind breaks (relief from elements)	

What did the community have to say regarding the pedestrian and bicycle experience connecting to the riverfront?

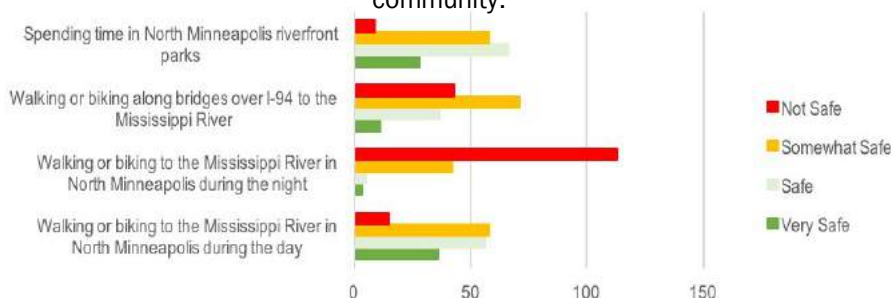
Below is a list of ideas Northsiders have identified for improving their walking and biking routes to the Mississippi River. The improvements are listed in order ranked by the community.



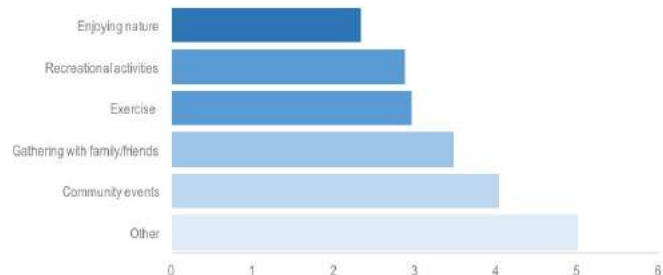
Below is a list of barriers Northsiders experience walking and biking routes to the Mississippi River. The improvements are listed in order ranked by the community.



Below is a list ranking how safe Northsiders feel in the following situation. The improvements are listed in order ranked by the community.



Below is a list of ideas that would attract Northsiders to the riverfront. The improvements are listed in order ranked by the community.



Gentrification

What is gentrification?

Gentrification can be defined as the rapid change in the political, social, and economic attributes that define a community, and typically occurs through a cycle of disinvestment followed by investment into communities, pricing out former residents in favor of new, higher-income residents. These changes can have devastating impact of the existing communities, residents, and social ties that make up these neighborhoods on both a cultural and physical level.

How does gentrification occur?

The act of displacement occurs as a result of higher income individuals forcing out lower income residents based on a mixture of different housing and neighborhood factors, often incentivized by public policy that promotes one experience and lifestyle over others. Four different forms of displacement are often discussed in relation to gentrification, and include: exclusionary displacement (the act of residents being displaced due to rising housing costs). Other forms discussed include last-resident, in which “a low-income household is “involuntarily” displaced from a housing unit that they otherwise would have been able to afford;” chain displacement, in which “multiple low-income households can be displaced from the same housing units over time at different stages of neighborhood change;” and displacement pressure, which occurs when a family leaves an area after their existing family, social, and business ties to the community are broken by others being displaced.

Why should we be concerned?

The impacts and discovery of gentrification are often not identified until it is too late to intervene, resulting in changes to the social, economic, and demographic makeup of these communities. With these changes, lower income residents become priced out of neighborhoods and forced to move, while those remaining often lack the same social ties and networks, eventually leaving the neighborhood as well. Therefore, the investments — however well intended — may end up *displacing* existing residents instead of serving or providing the benefits intended.

And how do we stop it?

There is no simple fix to stopping negative impacts associated with gentrification, although proactive measures can be useful in mitigating many of the effects. Some methods for mitigating gentrification can include organizing at the local level, advocating for proactive affordable housing policies to provide opportunities for residents to remain in the community and avoid involuntary displacement, developing local hiring policies so more money remains in the community, eliminate predatory lending practices that disproportionately impact African Americans and Hispanics, improved community engagement so new projects are developed from within and by members of the community, creating more home ownership and wealth-building opportunities for communities of color, and investments into the people living in these neighborhoods.

More information on this subject can be found at fmr.org or cura.umn.edu/gentrification

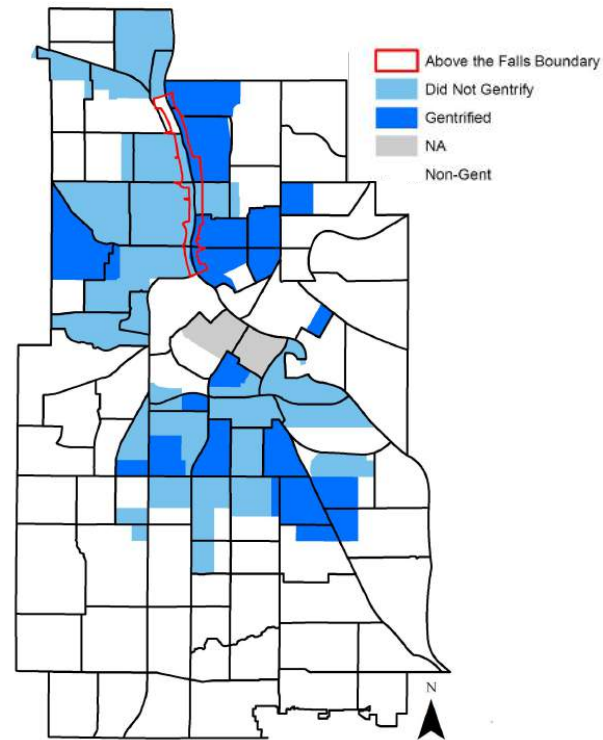


Gentrification

Where is gentrification occurring in Minneapolis?

A study currently being conducted by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) has been analyzing gentrification in the Twin Cities region using indices developed by three professionals whom are respected in their fields and include Lance Freeman (Columbia University), Lei Ding (Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia), and Lisa Bates (Portland State University). CURA authors looked for agreement between 2 of the 3 indices before labeling a tract as gentrifying.

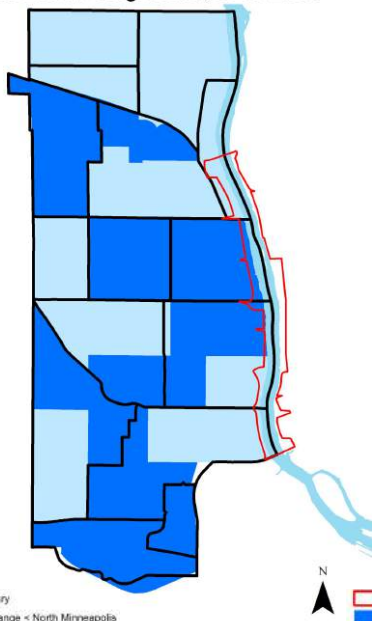
A large portion of North Minneapolis was susceptible to gentrification, though did not gentrify during the study period. The map also highlights gentrification patterns in relation to the Above the Falls area, with many tracts in Northeast Minneapolis experiencing gentrification, while those in North Minneapolis susceptible but did not gentrify. The susceptibility of these tracts emphasize the need for proactive strategies to be put in place to help mitigate these adverse impacts.



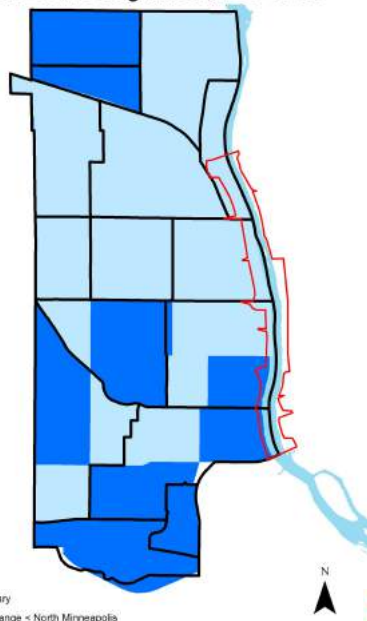
Source: CURA Calculations, 2000 Census (Normalized to 2010 boundaries using Geolytics Neighborhood Change Database), 2010-2014 American Community Survey

What evidence of gentrification can be identified in mortgage lending patterns in North Minneapolis?

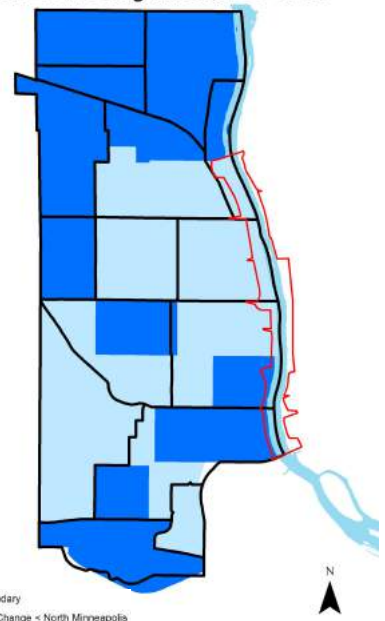
Change in Share of Non-White %
for Loans Originated, 2007-2015



Change in Average Loan Amount
for Loans Originated, 2007-2015



Change in Average Income
for Loans Originated, 2007-2015



Source: Analysis of HMDA Dataset, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, 2016

Case Studies

What has been the impact of gentrification on other communities, and how have these concerns and challenges been mitigated while still promoting redevelopment and community-building?

Concerns and challenges regarding gentrification in North Minneapolis and the Twin Cities region are valid and should be adequately considered as projects similar in nature to those being proposed are implemented. Better understanding what the process in which gentrification occurs and what best practices other communities are using to mitigate these adverse impacts can be important in helping to develop and follow effecting actionable steps and strategies.



Here's a great example...

West Town Bikes/Ciclico Urbano (WTB/CU) is a community organization located in a predominantly Puerto Rican neighborhood on the West Side of Chicago. While bicycle advocates in spirit, the true mission and work of the organization revolves around using bicycles as a mechanism for community development and building social capital. The organization attempts to take a holistic approach similar to that of other organizations doing community development work, opposed to the narrow version of some bicycle advocates who only focus on the bicycling environment. Alex Wilson of WTB/CU emphasizes the difficult, but importance, of designing for people and not things, which can help to mitigate many perceived community concerns at the onset of projects and help to develop “community buy-in.”



And here is a not-so-great example...

The Albina district, composed of an assortment of neighborhoods in Portland, OR, was historically the area within the city in which African Americans were allowed to live, whether as a result of policy or actions by those working in the housing industry that limited the opportunities and housing choices for many minority communities in the mid 20th century. A combination of disinvestment followed by renewed interest in city living and “cultural amenities” led to a changing housing market in which many residents were displaced as they could no longer afford housing and/or saw their social ties and preferred businesses and amenities displaced. Blockbusting, redlining, and abandonment were some of the practices applied at time and actors included Realtors, bankers, and other speculators working in conjunction to reduce the value of housing in certain neighborhoods.

Case Studies

What are other communities doing to connect to riverfront parks?

Put a “lid on it”

Capping freeways, putting a lid on it, floating bridges, tunnels, and land bridges are common methods for addressing the spatial barriers and separation that resulted from the placement of freeways such as I-94 through communities across this nation. More often than not, these communities were predominantly people of color and lower income, which resulted in many residents being displaced as housing was lost and social ties were broken.

Where over I-94 would residents like a land bridge in North Minneapolis?

A land bridge *capping* I-94 between Dowling and Lowry was the most desired location. Many survey respondents and people at community events were interested in this concept for the benefits it would provide, but concern regarding displacement and potential gentrification implications were also mentioned.



Here's a local example...

The Longfellow Gardens Land Bridge is a great example of how land bridges have been used to provide access to parks and the riverfront right here in the Twin Cities. The bridge was developed out of a collective partnership between numerous entities in Minneapolis including city staff at MPRB and CPED, neighborhood organizations, MnDOT, and others working on watershed, historical, and transportation related projects. The bridge now attracts many visitors due to the beautiful gardens and its direct linkage to Minnehaha Falls Park and the Mississippi River for neighborhoods in South Minneapolis.



...and here is a national example

The Vancouver Land Bridge in Vancouver, WA provides a linkage between a historic park and the Columbia River as method to provide access and overcome the spatial separation created by the placement of the Lewis and Clark Highway. Involvement from the local community, Native American groups, and a slew of other companies and organizations were crucial as part of the visioning, design, implementation, and ongoing components associated with this project.



Plymouth Ave N

Plans guiding redevelopment in the area

Above the Falls Master Plan Update

Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan

Mississippi River Critical Area Plan

Minneapolis Near Northside Master Plan

Upcoming Projects

A major resurfacing project along Plymouth Ave N will begin in 2021 as part of the I-94 resurfacing project

Who has jurisdiction?

Connection	Lyndale to I-94 streetscape	ROW over I-94	I-94 Bridge	Mississippi River Bridge
Plymouth Ave N	Minneapolis Public Works	MnDOT	Minneapolis Public Works	Minneapolis Public Works



Barriers

- Structural barriers along Plymouth that make it seem far away.
- Poor aesthetics
- There is nothing welcoming about going for a walk or bike ride
- Not safe
- Cold, windy
- No transparent or colorful connections (night & day)
- Distance
- Lack of pedestrian friendliness
- A lot of warehouses, factories.
- Road work in the summer.
- Access, safety along streets
- Lack of lighting & direction

Opportunities

- Separate bike lanes completely
- Beautify Plymouth w/gardens/seating
- Add public art to under the bridge ie beautiful murals
- Make it more aesthetically pleasing
- Provide a destination
- Make it more appealing
- Update fence and lighting
- Enhance the cold, windy areas & include public art to mark connections
- Protected spaces
- View is beautiful.
- Greenway
- Other people/activity



Community-identified barriers by constraint type

Intrapersonal Constraints

- Perception of access to riverfront
- Unaware of riverfront parks
- Crime/safety concerns

Interpersonal Constraints

- Concerns regarding harassment from other [groups of] people

Structural Constraints

- I-94
- Poor aesthetics
- Lack of clear wayfinding
- Unsafe bike lanes
- Lack of pedestrian lighting
- Lack of amenities along/near river
- Lack of safety barriers
- Unfriendly pedestrian environment





Barrier--		Strategy
1. Lack of Access to Riverfront	o	River Access
	o	Wayfinding/Signage
2. Unsafe Pedestrian Environment	.	Improved sidewalks
	.	Protected spaces
	.	Lighting
	.	Aesthetics
	.	Traffic-calming devices
	.	Wayfinding/signage
	.	More bridges crossing I-94
	.	Increase public transit
3. Poor Aesthetics	o	Improved sidewalks
	o	River access
	o	Lighting
	o	Greening
	o	Aesthetics
	o	Traffic-calming
	o	Wayfinding/signage
	o	More bridges crossing I-94
4. Poor Lighting	.	Improved sidewalks
	.	Lighting
	.	Aesthetics
	.	Traffic-calming devices
	.	Increase public transit
5. Lack of Wayfinding/Signage	o	Aesthetics
	o	Traffic-calming devices
	o	Wayfinding/signage



"Plymouth feels the safest because of the bike lanes."

"Plymouth is great in terms of protected bike lanes, but could be GREATLY improved"



"Separated and greened lanes would be a step up from the white posts along Plymouth Ave"



"Need better lighting on Plymouth between the river and 2nd."



"Plymouth over i-94 is dark and LOUD."

"I mostly use Plymouth. It is pretty good."

My Recommendations

While pedestrian-friendly features and safety barriers have been implemented along this connection, building upon these improvements further will help to enhance the pedestrian experience along this connection. Including public gathering spaces and overlook balconies along Plymouth Ave Bridge and allocating additional and separated spaces for pedestrian and bicycle usage will be useful strategies for both enhancing the pedestrian environment and providing destination opportunities to attract and engage residents. Attractions along the riverfront can include developing and enhancing the existing destination points along the riverfront and creating scenic viewpoints. Updating the chain-link fencing and including methods for addressing cold and windy areas over I-94 should also be considered as improvements are made along this connection.

West Broadway Ave

Plans guiding redevelopment in the area

Above the Falls Master Plan Update

Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan

Mississippi River Critical Area Plan

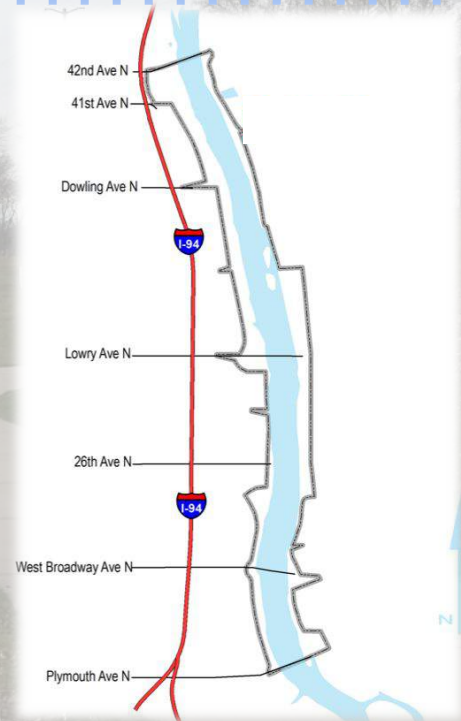
West Broadway Alive! Plan

Upcoming Projects

No major projects identified of upcoming at this time. A streetcar feasibility study along West Broadway has been considered.

Who has jurisdiction?

Connection	Lyndale to I-94 streetscape	ROW over I-94	I-94 Bridge	Mississippi River Bridge
West Broadway Ave	Hennepin County Public Works	MnDOT	Hennepin County Public Works	Hennepin County Public Works

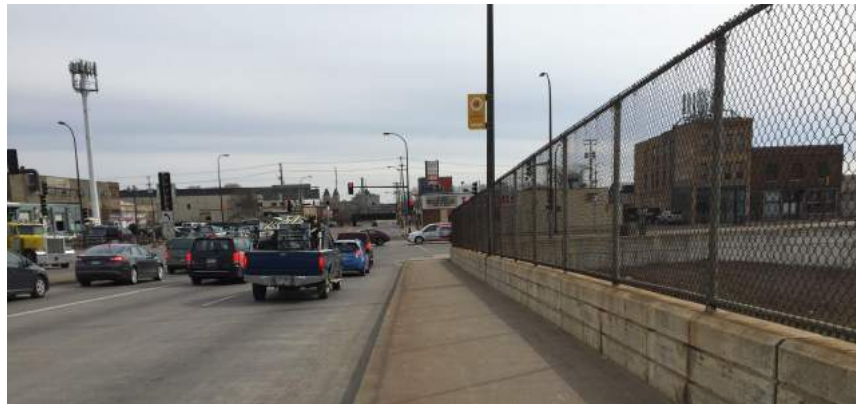


Barriers

- Broadway is too congested
- Traffic/speeds
- Cold, windy
- No transparent or colorful connections (night & day)
- West Broadway is not pedestrian friendly.
- No protection, no crosswalks.
- Too much traffic.
- Broadway has segments. It's sort of chopped into pieces. Hard to get from Washington Ave to river.
- Traffic is fast. Feel not safe.

Opportunities

- Enhance these areas (the cold, windy areas) & include public art (to mark the connections night & day)
- Broadway Beautification
- Improvements for pedestrian/cyclists- need protected space. Separated space.
- Lighting
- Bike lanes
- Barriers
- Make it more friendly to pedestrians. It's sort of a thoroughfare - cars, trucks - it doesn't feel connected to the river.



Community-identified barriers by constraint type

Intrapersonal Constraints

- Unfriendly pedestrian environment
- Safety concerns
- Poor aesthetics
- Crime/safety
- Unaware of riverfront parks

Interpersonal Constraints

- Concerns regarding harassment from other [groups of] people

Structural Constraints

- Poor sidewalks
- Lack of bike lanes
- Dangerous traffic
- Lack of wayfinding
- Poor lighting
- Inadequate riverfront access
- Lack of pedestrian amenities
- Inadequate public transit





West Broadway Ave

Barrier	Strategy
1. Lack of Access to Riverfront	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o River Access o Wayfinding/Signage
2. Crime/Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved sidewalks • Protected spaces • Lighting • Greening • Aesthetics • Traffic calming devices
3. Unsafe Pedestrian Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Improved sidewalks o Protected spaces o Lighting o Aesthetics o Traffic-calming devices o Wayfinding/signage o More bridges crossing I-94 o Increase public transit
4. Poor Sidewalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved sidewalks • Protected spaces • Lighting • Greening • Traffic-calming devices • More bridges crossing I-94
5. Heavy Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Improved sidewalks o Protected spaces o Lighting o Traffic-calming devices o More bridges crossing I-94 o Increase public transit



I am too nervous to walk or bike on Broadway because I get harassed.

Broadway needs wider sidewalks over I-94 and better buffer between walkers and cars



Broadway has too many cars and people.

Broadway is too busy because of the highway ramps.



Any designated bike paths from Northside to the River would be great!

Once you get across 94, Broadway is fine



Too many transients on Broadway that make me feel unsafe.

Bike lane on Broadway would be nice. Lyndale could also use a bicycle lane.

My Recommendations

The shared pedestrian and automobile spaces make this connection and unwelcoming and at times, often unsafe environment for pedestrians and bicyclists. Improvements for this connection should address making West Broadway a safer and pedestrian-friendly environment linking the commercial core along West Broadway with the Mississippi Riverfront including protected and separated pedestrian zones, public art, street furniture, and “green” cross streets. Overall, the beautification of West Broadway Ave should serve as a catalyst for both the commercial activity along West Broadway, as well as developing a connection more aesthetically pleasing and accessible to the Mississippi Riverfront and other trails and parkland currently separated as a result of the unfriendly pedestrian environment.

26th Ave N

Plans guiding redevelopment in the area

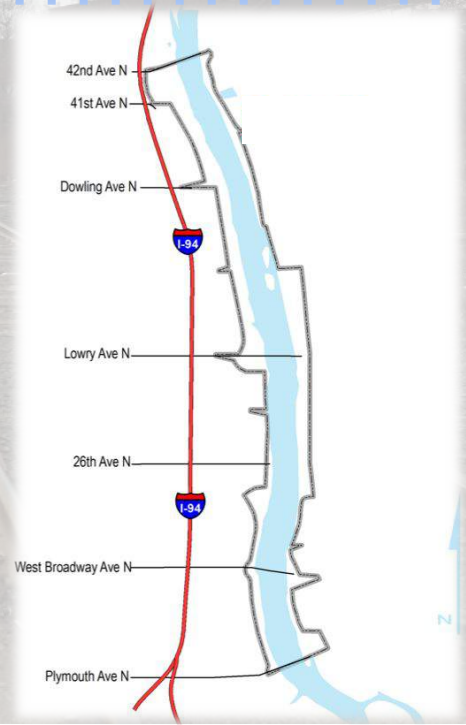
- Above the Falls Master Plan Update
- Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan
- Mississippi River Critical Area Plan
- 26th Avenue Bikeway and Greenway Plan

Upcoming Projects

A major resurfacing project along 26 Ave N is currently in the process of being completed, and included off road bike lanes

Who has jurisdiction?

Connection	Lyndale to I-94 streetscape	ROW over I-94	I-94 Bridges	Mississippi River Bridge
26th Ave N	Minneapolis Public Works	MnDOT	Minneapolis Public Works	n/a



Barriers

- I-94 bridge doesn't have protected lanes.
- Not a very good connection to the river from 26th
- Cemstone
- Lack of sidewalks on 2nd St N
- Be good connection
- No people/activity
- Removal of Aggregate Industries
- No access
- Some place to go once you get there.

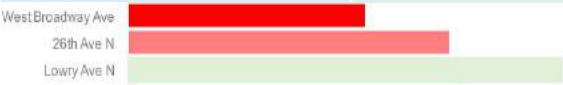
Opportunities

- Continue protected lane across bridge.
- A less industrial presence near the river & 26th
- Site acquisition
- More sidewalks
- Opportunities changes help see better
- More actual activities along river ex) parasailing, rent paddle boats or kayak
- Direct access to river by both vehicle & walking or biking.
- Green
- Lighting
- Branded (Hawthorne) way finding
- Safety
- Aesthetic connection



Community-identified barriers by constraint type

Intrapersonal Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unaware of riverfront parks Crime/safety concerns
Interpersonal Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns regarding harassment from other [groups of] people
Structural Constraints	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of bike lanes Poor lighting Lack of wayfinding Inadequate riverfront access Poor river crossing Poor sidewalks Pollution





26th Ave N

Barrier	Strategy
1. Lack of Access to Riverfront	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o River Access o Wayfinding/ Signage
2. Crime/ Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved sidewalks • Protected spaces • Lighting • Greening • Aesthetics • Traffic calming devices
3. Unsafe Pedestrian Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Improved sidewalks o Protected spaces o Lighting o Aesthetics o Traffic-calming devices o Wayfinding/ signage o More bridges crossing I-94 o Increase public transit
4. Poor Sidewalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved sidewalks • Protected spaces • Lighting • Greening • Traffic-calming devices • More bridges crossing I-94
5. Poor Aesthetics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Lighting o Greening o Aesthetics o Traffic-calming o Wayfinding/ signage o More bridges crossing I-94



Need a bike lane on 26th Ave N over I-94 and to the river, and then a land bridge connecting to NE Mpls!

more trees all along 26th, like the new section by Farview Park - extend to river

26th requires a zig-zag across busy intersection to reach riverfront.

Need better lighting and wider sidewalk everywhere.

Better lighting [referring to 26th Ave N]



My Recommendations

An off-road bike trail along the northern edge of 26th Ave N was included in recent improvements along this connection, though pedestrian-oriented lighting was not included. Different “greening” aspects along this connection should be included as mechanism for improving the aesthetics moving closer to the riverfront to the east of I-94 and for softening the harsh environment in this area. Improved wayfinding and better connections with new and existing amenities to the north and south are also much needed along this connection, particularly on the eastern side of I-94. As a result of the existing industrial activity occurring within this area, design and safety elements should be included that minimize the visual and physical contact with these industrial activities and spaces while advocating for the removal of them completely.

Lowry Ave N

Plans guiding redevelopment in the area

Above the Falls Master Plan Update
Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan
Lowry Avenue Strategic Plan; Lowry Avenue Corridor Plan
Hennepin County Pedestrian Plan

Upcoming Projects

A major resurfacing project along Lowry Ave N was finished in recent years, though a large gap in the bicycle infrastructure still exists

Who has jurisdiction?

Connection	Lyndale to I-94 streetscape	ROW over I-94	I-94 Bridge	Mississippi River Bridge
Lowry Ave N	Hennepin County Public Works	MnDOT	Hennepin County Public Works	Hennepin County Public Works



Barriers

Opportunities

- Please connect to the bridge- safely
- Not protected bike & sidewalks, bike lanes end
- Missing bike lane segment
- No crosswalks across 2nd
- Air quality
- Connection from Lowry Bridge to Pacific Street
- Industry along river. Can't get to river.
- Heavy traffic making it feel less safe to bike on Lowry
- Similar to w bro [not very bike/pedestrian friendly]
- Blight river comes Mississippi

- Ped friendly, protected walk & blvds
- How do we connect to 26th?
- Repair sidewalks, add signage, protected bike lanes
- Safety
- Paint lanes on bridge
- Connections from bridge/street to river.
- Close GAF.
- NE side is much more park like & welcoming.
- Land bridge
- Parks
- Activities
- Crosswalks
- Biking
- Visually appealing greenage along the Lowry corridor



Community-identified barriers by constraint type

Intrapersonal Constraints

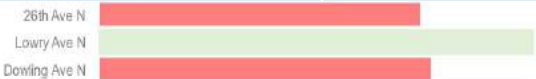
- Crime/safety concerns
- Lack of neighborhood identity
- Unaware of riverfront parks

Interpersonal Constraints

- Lack of neighborhood identity
- Concerns regarding harassment from other [groups of] people

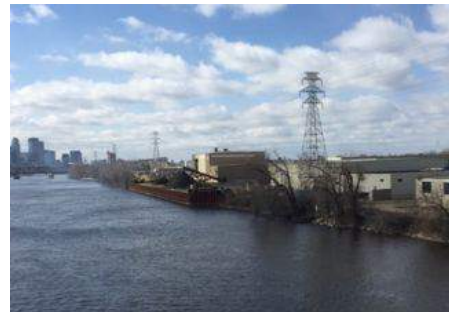
Structural Constraints

- Lack of river crossing access
- Inadequate riverfront access
- Lack of bike lanes
- Lack of wayfinding
- Poor lighting
- Lack of green space
- Pollution



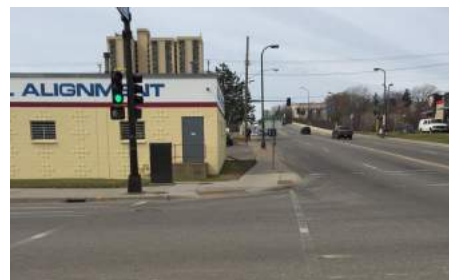


Barrier	Strategy
1. Lack of Access to Riverfront	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o River Access o Wayfinding/Signage
2. Crime/Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved sidewalks • Protected spaces • Lighting • Greening • Aesthetics • Traffic calming devices
3. Unsafe Pedestrian Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Improved sidewalks o Protected spaces o Lighting o Aesthetics o Traffic-calming devices o Wayfinding/signage o More bridges crossing I-94 o Increase public transit
4. Poor Sidewalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved sidewalks • Protected spaces • Lighting • Greening • Traffic-calming devices • More bridges crossing I-94
5. Heavy Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Improved sidewalks o Protected spaces o Lighting o Traffic-calming devices o More bridges crossing I-94 o Increase public transit



Lowry is decent, but still kind of too busy in places.

Lowry is nice, except very smelly at times with the shingle plant there



Definitely need a bike lane along Lowry over I-94



Bike lane on Lowry to bridge, need to sweep bike lanes

A dedicated bike trail on Lowry across I-94



My Recommendations

A well-developed streetscape along Lowry Ave from Theodore Wirth Parkway to I-94 on the western edge have been implemented and include many pedestrian and bicycle-friendly features, though the area stretching from I-94 to the Mississippi River is void of any of these enhancements or safety improvements. The section of Lowry Ave N from I-94 to the Mississippi River is lacking any similar features or design elements, and thus feels unwelcoming and disconnected from the nearby neighborhoods, streetscape, and riverfront. Protected bike lanes, pedestrian lighting, and crosswalks using vibrant colors are recommendations provided by the community as to how to improve this connection most effectively, as is the aesthetic improvement of this corridor for branding strategies. A lack of a physical connection between surface-streets and the Lowry Bridge presents another obstacle for creating a cohesive and connected trail system and streetscape.

Dowling Ave N

Plans guiding redevelopment in the area

Above the Falls Master Plan Update

Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan

Mississippi River Critical Area Plan

Upcoming Projects

No major projects underway or planned on Dowling Ave N, which is the most direct connection to the Upper Harbor Terminal site

Who has jurisdiction?

Connection	Lyndale to I-94 streetscape	ROW over I-94	I-94 Bridge	Mississippi River Bridge
Dowling Ave N	Minneapolis Public Works	MnDOT	Minneapolis Public Works	n/a



Barriers

- Panhandlers, no bike lanes or pedestrian crossings
- Unprotected bike lanes
- Rougher area
- No separation of traffic from bike/ped.
- Heavy, fast moving, highway-minded traffic
- Very sterile, exposed
- Bad sidewalks
- No crosswalks
- Cars coming too fast to enter 94.
- No crosswalk
- Sidewalks so close to crazy traffic
- Freeway ramps
- There is no way anyone would use that bike lane

Opportunities

- More lighting clear + dedicated routes for bikes + peds.
- Crosswalks
- Lighting
- Make Washington Av and then 2nd street a bike highway
- Land bridge
- Barriers for bikers
- Safer sidewalks
- Lighting
- More lights
- Amphitheater
- Crosswalk
- Wayfinding
- Aesthetics
- See river from river bridge??
- Sound break
- Wind break
- Nicer fence



Community-identified barriers by constraint type

Intrapersonal Constraints

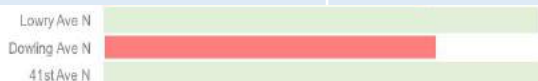
- Poor aesthetics
- Crime/safety concerns
- Unaware of riverfront parks

Interpersonal Constraints

- Concerns regarding harassment from other [groups of] people

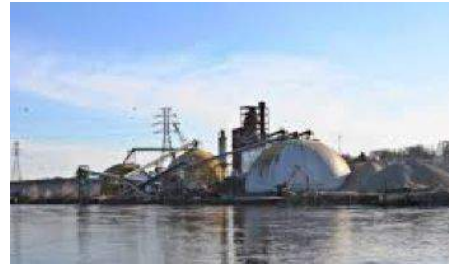
Structural Constraints

- Inadequate riverfront access
- Poor sidewalks
- Unsafe bike lanes
- Poor lighting
- Lack of wayfinding
- Traffic
- Poor aesthetics
- Pollution





Barrier	Strategy
1. Lack of Access to Riverfront	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o River Access o Wayfinding/Signage
2. Crime/Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved sidewalks • Protected spaces • Lighting • Greening • Aesthetics • Traffic calming devices
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Dowling seems empty.



Dowling bike route is suicidal.

I never take these streets to the river because I am not aware of how these street connect with the river trail system.



Crossings of I 94 feel "gritty."

Streetscape between 94 and river not aesthetically pleasing



Add art, full of possibilities to view downtown

Don't feel safe walking or biking in north Mpls.

My Recommendations

While bicycle lanes have been implemented in recent years, the connection still lacks many of the safety features identified by the community. The creation of separate zones for pedestrian and automobiles should be included in improvements, while also reconfiguring the existing bike lane so that it is "straight and protected." Widening and the repair of sidewalks, particularly those within close proximity to I-94, should include aesthetically pleasing elements as completed. Addressing the approach to freeway entrance and exit ramps through a variety of safety improvements is an essential aspect of fostering a safer connection to the riverfront and new amenities at the Upper Harbor Terminal site. Improving the environment along Washington Ave N to both the south and north of Dowling Ave N will help link together the existing trails and connections along the northern boundaries of the Above the Falls planning area.

41st Ave N & 42nd Ave N

Plans guiding redevelopment in the area

Above the Falls Master Plan Update

Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan

Mississippi River Critical Area Plan

Upcoming Projects

A major resurfacing project is planned along both Washington Ave N (41st Ave N bridge connection) and 42nd Ave N

Who has jurisdiction?

Connection	Lyndale to I-94 streetscape	ROW over I-94	I-94 Bridge	Mississippi River Bridge
41st & 42nd Ave N	Hennepin/ Minneapolis Public Works	MnDOT	Hennepin/ Minneapolis Public Works	Minneapolis Public Works



Barriers

- No clear pedestrian or bike lanes, traffic very heavy.
- No bike lane
- Clearer crosswalks
- Horrible sidewalks
- 42nd is a glorified parking lot
- I disregard the nearby "walk your bikes" sign
- I usually go under the Lyndale bridge as a pedestrian because it's easier.
- Many know the regional park is there but not how to get there. Many also don't know it's there.
- No connections to stairs or bike path

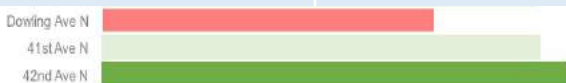
Opportunities

- Want to fish there at the dock
- MPRB should acquire rights to the land under the CP Rail Bridge and make a nicer path
- Love the stormwater retention protected bike lane example
- Bring back Camden Dock
- Take parking away from 42nd @ Lyndale there is plenty in the lot behind the building.
- Full trail with path to park. (bike lanes & wider sidewalk)
- Option to get on 2nd when going east for commuters
- Lighting
- Having a place to go to!



Community-identified barriers by constraint type

Intrapersonal Constraints	Perception of access to riverfront Unaware of riverfront parks Crime/safety concerns Unfriendly pedestrian environment
Interpersonal Constraints	Concerns regarding harassment from other [groups of] people
Structural Constraints	I-94 Lack of bike lanes Poor lighting Poor sidewalks Inadequate riverfront access Heavy traffic Lack of wayfinding Unfriendly pedestrian environment





Barrier

Strategy

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Lack of Access to Riverfront | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o River Access o Wayfinding/Signage |
| 2. Poor Sidewalks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved sidewalks • Protected spaces • Lighting • Greening • Aesthetics • Traffic-calming devices • More bridges crossing I-94 |
| 3. Poor Lighting | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Improved sidewalks o Lighting o Aesthetics o Traffic-calming devices o Increase public transit |
| 4. Air/Noise Pollution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River Access • Greening • Aesthetics |
| 5. Lack of Wayfinding/Signage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Aesthetics o Traffic-calming devices o Wayfinding/signage |



The only street mentioned above that I'd even consider biking on is 42nd Ave since it's a brief ride to dedicated trails. None of the other streets feel safe for biking and I like to spend as little time in the lower numbers as possible.

Need safer pathways to cross streets and you must cross a busy intersection ball along Lyndale to make this happen on 42nd Ave n.

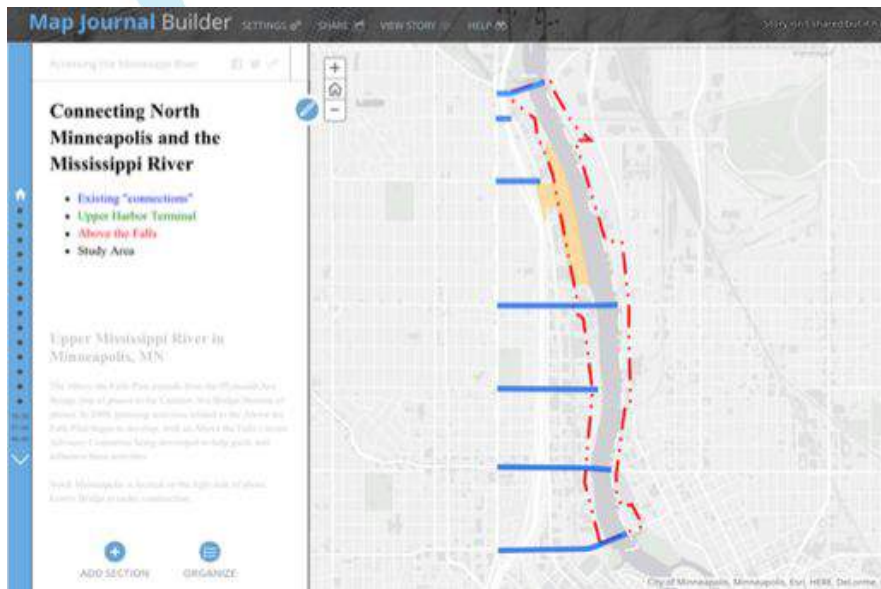
I usually access it walking along Victory parkway and through Webber Park

I don't walk on any of them. I don't feel safe walking alone.

My Recommendations

Many different improvements have been identified to make this connection more accessible and pedestrian-friendly. Improvements implemented should take into consideration the use of environmentally-friendly elements, while also strengthening the connection to the public art along Lyndale Ave N and 41st Ave N to the south. The Camden Boat Launch is a great nearby amenity, and thus connections should be enhanced and improved to cultivate public gathering and recreational spaces along the riverfront. A more direct and clear access point to the Camden Bridge and riverfront from existing trails should be considered as improvements at the Upper Harbor Terminal site begin to come to fruition.

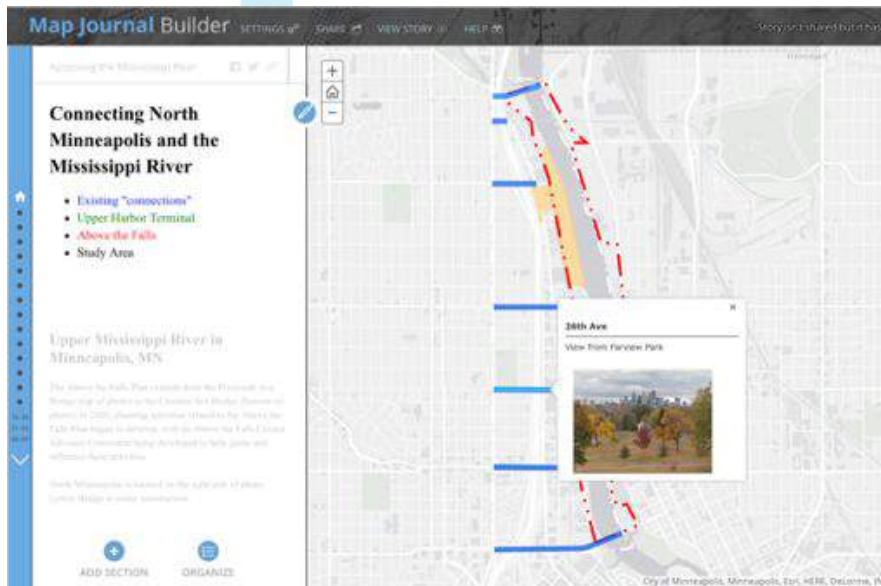
Online GIS Tool



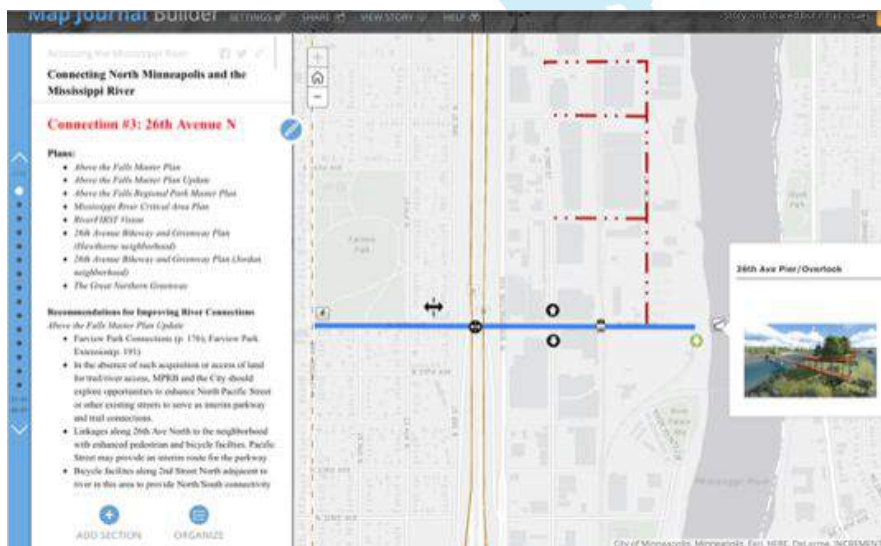
An online tool resource was developed using ArcGIS Online Story Maps. This resource will provide the opportunity to see how improvements identified in the existing plans relate to or contradict one another in a spatial context, along with ensuring improvements are distributed equitably throughout the community.

The tool can be found online at www.fmr.org/

Another benefit of this resource will be it's use in generating further excitement in regards to the new improvements and opportunities occurring along the riverfront which people may not currently be aware. Part of the difficulty of long-term planning efforts requires the engagement, continued interest, and excitement of the public, which is more attainable when they are informed and excited about the future plans of their communities.



The images on the page provide a brief overview of how the tool functions. Each of the seven "bridge connections" over I-94 were included, and allow users to click on each of the connection to have a more in-depth analysis of each connection. Relevant planning documents and recommendations from those documents are included. Other aspects of the online tool include a brief land use history of the Mississippi River in North Minneapolis and examples from other communities in overcoming different barriers in the built environment.



Conclusion

Problem statement

The pedestrian and bicycle environment connecting to the riverfront currently lacks many basic safety features in providing safe and easy access, despite the Twin Cities having a nationally recognized regional park system.

Research questions addressed

The goal of this project was to gather feedback and research the different barriers and opportunities that existed for providing better access for residents living in North Minneapolis to connect with the Mississippi River. An iterative approach was applied for the first two phases of this project that involved a cycle of conducting research- sharing research with community- gathering feedback from community- and developing recommendations based on this feedback.

Next steps

- Groups collaborate to proactively prevent gentrification
- Work together in partnership with other agencies to address complex barrier improvements
-

What can Northsiders do?

- Get involved!



Nonprofit Organizations in North Minneapolis

Nonprofit Organizations	Youth Organizations	Neighborhood Organizations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nexus • Northside Achievement Zone • Minneapolis Bicycle Coalition • Major Taylor • Cycles for Change • FSI • Emerge • Housing Link • TC H4H • PPL • NEON • NAZ • NRRC • Salvation Army • YWCA • West Broadway Business & Area Coalition • Urban Homeworks • Juxtaposition Arts • Build Wealth • Camden Neighborhood Center • Employment Action Center • Hmong American Mutual Assistance • Lundstrum Center for the Performing Arts • Minneapolis Urban League • Pillsbury United Communities • Way to Grow Program • Alliance for Metropolitan Stability • UROC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camp Capri • Center for Hmong Adolescent Development • Beacons Minneapolis • Cookie Cart • Emerge StreetWerks • Freedom School • Harrison Education Center • Juxtaposition • Phyllis Wheatley Community Center • Police Athletic League • Teen Teamworks (MPRB) • Venture North Bike Walk & Coffee • North Community YMCA Youth and Teen Enrichment Center • Appetite for Change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleveland Neighborhood Association • Folwell Neighborhood Association • Harrison Neighborhood Association • Hawthorne Neighborhood Council • Heritage Park Neighborhood Association • Jordan Area Community Council • Lind-Bohanon Neighborhood Association • McKinley Community • Old Highland Neighborhood Association • Victory Neighborhood Association • Webber-Camden Neighborhood Association • Northside Residents Redevelopment Council