

North Loop Streetscape Project

The historic North Loop neighborhood, located directly northwest of downtown Minneapolis, is going through a period of redevelopment and change. The North Loop Streetscape Project meeting on February 24, 2004 examined options for streetscape improvements and coordination. The following is a summary of the key points that were discussed by the group.

Meeting goals & results

1. Goal: Agree on a palette of streetscape elements

Result: As the city assesses its lighting policy, additional options should be explored.

2. Goal: Ask questions about larger street design issues

Result: Issues discussed can be incorporated into an upcoming neighborhood master plan.

3. Goal: Visualize the larger public realm including open spaces on private land

Result: The meeting produced a map of green space proposals and opportunities within the North Loop neighborhood.

Additional questions

- How should entrances to the North Loop neighborhood be marked? Should they be obvious or subtle?
- How much diversity of materials should there be? Should there be any unifying streetscape elements within the North Loop neighborhood, or should each space be different?
- What features are needed to create a unique identity within the North Loop?

Areas for exploration

- Using “significant moments” as identifying element of the neighborhood.
- Using unique signage to create identity to the neighborhood.
- Taking advantage of the Bassett Creek tunnel as unifying green space.
- Using public art to create a neighborhood identity.
- Using lighting in both public and private spaces such as buildings and sidewalks to create a memorable and safe pedestrian experience.
- Connecting the public and private realm through a green space armature.
- Making pedestrian connections to the Mississippi River.

Action items

- The city is currently changing their lighting policy. The North Loop neighborhood has the potential to have a diverse palette of lighting. More options may help to customize lighting to relate to the building size or street type.
- A master plan that defines the goals and ideas of the neighborhood is needed before more development occurs. This could be done through the North Loop Neighborhood Association, which has plans to create such a document.
- Currently there is not enough retail to provide residents with easy access to shopping.

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