

Minnehaha
Corridor
History
Project
Hiawatha

H Hennepin County Community Works

Prepared for



Hennepin County Community Works

and

Longfellow Community Council

by

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Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor Interpretive Plan

1.0 Project Background

The landscape of the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor has been part of an important link between Fort Snelling and St. Anthony Falls since the 1820s. The corridor traces Indian trails that connected the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota rivers and Minnehaha Falls with St. Anthony Falls . . .



Stretching from E. 28th Street to E. 46th Street, the Minnehaha-Hiawatha corridor in South Minneapolis was part of the Dakota Indian landscape and the earliest Euro-American history of Minneapolis. Today it is defined by an historic rail line, grain elevator complexes, a century-old foundry, and other industrial buildings. At the west it is edged by a busy light-rail route linking downtown Minneapolis with the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport and the Mall of America. The portion of the Longfellow Neighborhood along the corridor also includes Minnehaha, Snelling, and Dight Avenues, each with a distinct residential or industrial character. Here, small bungalows on elm-lined streets share a backdrop of tall concrete elevators. This sliver of historic neighborhood is slowly transforming along with nearby new housing and transit connections.

The Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor Interpretive Plan is the outgrowth of several years of community planning. Beginning in 2007, Hennepin County approved the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works project and conducted an extensive study of the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor. Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works is a project within the Hennepin Community Works (HCW) program. The program's mission is "to enhance how the communities of Hennepin County work together to create good jobs, provide access to employment, and build the long term value of communities by investing in infrastructure, public works, parks, and the natural environment and by improving the existing implementation systems."



Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor Interpretive Plan • 2

The vision for Minnehaha-Hiawatha is focused on improvements and reinvestments in five key aspects of livability:

Mobility

A balanced multi-modal transportation system designed and operated to ensure safety and accessibility for all users of the community's streets, trails, transit, and freight rail facilities.

Land Use & Physical Resources

A sustainable, transit-supportive land use pattern that integrates a diverse range of complementary land uses and development densities.

Environment & Natural Resources

Sustainable development practices and lifestyle options support a healthy ecological environment and conservation of natural resources.

Economic Development

Diverse and vibrant districts provide jobs and retail options for area residents.

Social, Cultural & Heritage

A corridor of vibrant places and opportunities providing attractive gathering places for people and celebrating the community's diverse cultural and physical heritage.

See www.minnehaha-hiawatha.com for more information about the *Strategic Investment Plan* and other components of the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Project.



2.0 Minnehaha-Hiawatha Interpretive Plan Objectives

This interpretive plan is part of a vision for the corridor that presents and celebrates the area's social and cultural heritage. Interpretation of the area's history and development, spanning Native American occupation to the present, is at the core of the plan. Current neighborhood activities might also be incorporated into interpretation, highlighting the long tradition of community involvement in Greater Longfellow that includes the project area.

Integrated with plans for the area's wayfinding system that includes bikeways and light rail, the plan can be used by public agencies and private developers to provide information at a number of locations. The plan can also be consulted by anyone interested in the community's historic and cultural resources.

The objectives guiding the interpretive plan include:

- Identification of interpretive audiences, themes and potential installation locations
- Evaluation of current mapping and other wayfinding needs
- Recommendation of links to transportation including bicycle routes and light rail
- Recommendation of a system of graphics and materials for potential use along the corridor
- Recommendation of a system of interpretation that ranges from permanent panels to postcards distributed by local merchants
- Recommendation of potential implementation phases and funding strategies
- Development of cost estimates for selected prototypes



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3.0 Corridor Description

3.1 What is Interpretation?

The objective of the Corridor Interpretation Plan is to engage the public in an understanding of what role this prominent South Minneapolis diagonal has played in the growth of the city and region, and to reinforce the area's "sense of place. . ."



Interpretation can mean different things to different people. Storytelling—from a variety of cultural perspectives and at varying levels of depth—links most efforts across all audience groups. According to the National Association for Interpretation, interpretation is "a mission-based communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and meanings inherent in the resource." Interpretation can be presented in many ways and at many scales and dimensions. Panels and graphic displays are among ways that information about the corridor area can be provided to a wide audience. Brochures, books, public art and performance, and landscape design also offer other types of interpretive potential.



Pedestrians of all ages (especially along Minnehaha Avenue and at transit points) and bicycle users are the most likely candidates to access corridor interpretation. This audience will continue to evolve as new housing and transit is developed in the area. This diverse audience potential includes all age groups and many cultural backgrounds and languages, including Spanish and Somali speakers.



Although early 20th-century concrete grain elevators are a dramatic symbol of the city's flour milling industry, most of the corridor structures were built more than fifty years after the tracks of the Minnesota Central Railway were laid in 1864. This railroad (still in operation

above E. 46th Street) traces the direction of Indian trails between Fort Snelling to the Falls of St. Anthony and has been a constant presence in neighborhood development. Nearby railyards and shops provided employment for generations of area residents. Some of the first occupants of the houses lining the streets close to the elevators and factories were African-Americans and German, Irish, and Scandinavian immigrants. Research on these early communities can provide insight into the history and economy of early South Minneapolis.

3.2 Study Area Boundaries

The initial project study area was defined by Hennepin County (see Corridor Map, 6.1). It extended from E. 28th Street at the north to Minnehaha Parkway at the south, and included the first tier of properties along the east side of Minnehaha Avenue. It extended across Snelling and Dight (Railroad) avenues and included properties along the east side of Hiawatha Avenue as well as the transit stations at Lake, E. 38th and 46th streets. The interpretive plan study area is identical except that it begins south of E. Lake Street.

3.3 Land Use Overview

(Adapted from *Historic Context Development and Cultural Resources Evaluation* [2009]; see <http://www.minnehaha-hiawatha.com/project-information/plans-and-studies/cultural-and-historical-resources-inventory>.)

The Minnehaha-Hiawatha corridor is a prominent diagonal break in the regular street grid of South Minneapolis. Minnehaha and Hiawatha Avenues, parallel the Minnesota Central Railway. Within the study Minnehaha and Hiawatha extend about twenty blocks from E. Lake Street to Minnehaha Parkway.

The creation of an industrial corridor along Hiawatha Avenue and the urban residential development of this western edge of the Longfellow neighborhood began in the early 1880s. Despite Hiawatha Avenue's recent redevelopment as a light rail corridor, historic factories and foundries still line its eastern edge, and approximately eight blocks of tall concrete grain elevators remain a striking part of the urban landscape.



"The Prairie Back of Fort Snelling." Seth Eastman, ca. 1846-47. (MHS)

Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor Interpretive Plan • 7

For centuries the Dakota traveled across the river bluffs and prairie between the Falls of St. Anthony and the confluence of the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers along a diagonal trail (or trails) that were likely also used by Euro-American traders in the early 19th century. The location of this route may correspond to present-day Minnehaha Avenue. The construction of the Minnesota Central Railway connecting St. Anthony and Mendota was completed during the Civil War (1862-1864). The Minnesota Central was later owned by the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway (CM&StP) and its route attracted factories and foundries that shipped stoves, millwork, and glass and other products. The line also carried grain and finished flour to and from mills at St. Anthony Falls. By 1900, milling companies built a dense row of terminal grain elevators south of Lake Street. The early wood buildings were replaced with concrete structures that still line Hiawatha Avenue. Despite this early industry, nearby acreage was devoted to dairy and grain crops. Area farmers, including many natives of New England, specialized in market crops such as potatoes for the expanding Minneapolis population.

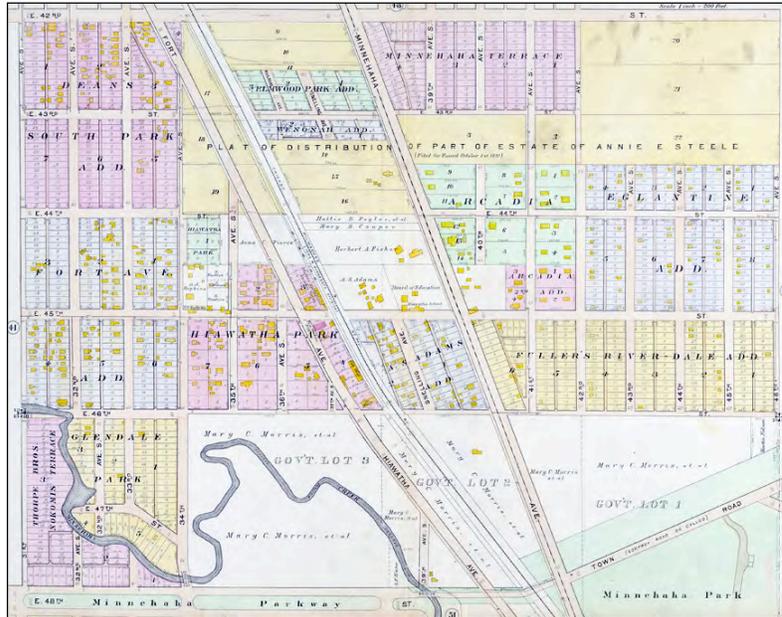


The Minnehaha-Hiawatha corridor in 1928, looking northeast.

Minnehaha Avenue and the surrounding Longfellow and South Side area surged as a residential corridor in 1895 when the electric streetcar was laid along its length to Minnehaha Park. The concurrent growth of the Minneapolis Steel and Machine Company, later the Minneapolis Moline Power Implement Company, provided jobs for hundreds in a sprawling Lake Street farm implement plant.

Bungalows of every description lined the area's streets, and in 1915, when the four-block Minnehaha Terrace was platted on former farm property between 42nd and 43rd Avenues, promoters announced it was in the “fastest growing part of the city . . . hundreds of acres east of Minnehaha Avenue that were utilized for the growing of grain and for garden purposes only a year or two ago are now almost solid blocks of good homes.”

Minnehaha-Hiwatha Corridor Interpretive Plan • 8



Development south of E. 42nd Street as shown in 1914. The area east of Minnehaha Avenue near Minnehaha Park was the last to fill with houses.

The CM&StP railyards north of Lake Street provided employment to many area residents, including a small community of African Americans who owned and rented houses along Snelling Avenue. Lake Street, like East Hennepin and West Broadway avenues and other prominent streets, served as major retail corridor. Minnehaha Avenue was lined with stores and shops served by streetcar and later bus transit.

After 1910, the single-family bungalow was a very common house type along Minnehaha and Snelling avenues. With its efficient floorplan and modest size, the bungalow was well suited to compact lots. Here and in the new neighborhoods stretching to the river, builders such as Edmund G. Walton promoted affordable, well-built bungalows. More spacious lots and larger houses were typically found at corner locations and near E. Minnehaha Parkway.



Two examples of bungalows taken right after construction in ca. 1910; at left, 4210 Snelling; at right, 4225 Snelling (Confer Collection, Hennepin History Museum).



Looking down Minnehaha Avenue at E. 45th Street, ca. 1934. (MHS)

In the 1930s, Hiawatha Avenue was designated as a segment of Minnesota Highway 55. During the 1960s, proposals for upgrade to an 8-lane freeway were studied and the west side of the avenue was cleared of houses and commercial buildings. In 1983, after years of stalemate, the City of Minneapolis and the Minnesota Department of Transportation agreed to a four-lane roadway and a light rail transit system between Franklin Avenue and E. 46th Street, and a draft Environmental Impact Statement was approved by the Metropolitan Council. In 1986, federal funds were approved for converting the road into a four-lane divided highway. A controversial part of the design was the crossing at Minnehaha Park. As resolved, a hill was built at E. Minnehaha Parkway and the road was tunneled to allow a continuous park on both sides of the avenue. Construction of the boulevard began in 1988. In 2004, the Hiawatha Light Rail Transit (LRT) was opened along the edge of a new 4-lane divided highway.



Hiawatha Avenue looking toward E. 46th Street, 1956. (MHS)

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4.0 Study Methods and Results Overview

Consultants from Landscape Research and Kathe Flynn Landscape Architecture (KFLA) worked with Hennepin County and the Longfellow Community Council staff to review existing plans for the Minnehaha Hiawatha Corridor. The consultants proposed potential themes, locations and materials, and modes of historic interpretation and completed study and mapping of the following features along the corridor:

- Historic grain elevators and other cultural resources
- Private and public spaces
- Existing bikeways and pedestrian movement
- Location of bus stops and LRT stations

The review also included research and fieldwork to evaluate several planned or existing interpretive and wayfinding installations in the area. The following sections 4 through 7 present the methods, results and recommendations of the review and study.

4.1 Initial Fieldwork and Research

4.1.1 Theme Selection

Following meetings with Hennepin County and Longfellow Community Council staff, the consultants reviewed existing plans for the area developed by the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Strategic Development Framework (www.minnehaha-hiawatha.com). Of particular use was the *Historic Context Development and Cultural Resources Evaluation* (2009). This document, along with additional historical research, suggested themes for future interpretation.

Six themes were proposed for interpretation at various locations along the corridor. They were chosen for their compatibility with remaining resources—including historic photographs and extant buildings—and for their potential broad appeal across a variety of audiences:

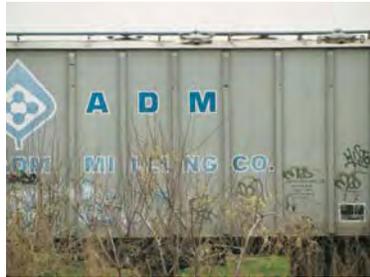
- Native American Landscape and Pioneer Euro-American Farming
- Grain Storage/Milling/Industrial History
- Transportation and Railroad History
- The Streetcar and Minnehaha Avenue
- The Bungalow: the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor and beyond
- Snelling Avenue and the Early African-American Community

The Grain Storage and Snelling Avenue themes were developed as prototype panels. Sample text and illustrations for two others follow in Section 6.0. Material of this type can be further developed for use as panels and interpretive installations as well as posters, guidebooks and tours, website and other uses. Recommended potential installation locations are shown on the Corridor Map (see 6.1).

4.1.2 Design Precedents Survey

Next, pedestrian survey of the corridor generated photographs of the diversity of buildings and spaces, and relationships among scale, materials, and details. This survey suggested a vocabulary for potential design ideas.

Corridor Graphics



Simple, unsophisticated layouts, sans-serif type faces; haphazard groupings; faded coloring

Corridor structures



Repetitive forms, monumental scale, bland anonymous facades, and vanishing perspectives



Complex, intersecting structures and systems



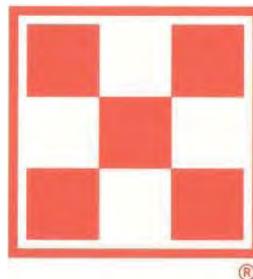
Complicated, finely textured structures juxtaposed with monumental forms

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LRT Station Graphics



Corporate Logos of the Corridor



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4.1.3 Corridor Area Interpretive Material, Existing and Proposed



During 2009-2010, Hennepin County Works (HCW) staff worked with consultants on land use and planning components of the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Strategic Development Framework. The *Historic Context Development and Cultural Resources Evaluation for the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Strategic Development Framework* (2009) and its companion *Snelling Avenue African American Community* (2010) provide background for the current interpretive plan. The consultants developed historic contexts describing the history and significance of the area's transportation, industrial and residential development, as well as recommendations for potential historic district designations. This information is the foundation of the current interpretive plan.

Recently completed interpretive projects and others planned also provide information about the area. Previously, HCW staff worked with Landscape Research and KFLA to create interpretive panels along the Midtown Corridor (above, left and center). Two installations completed in 2008 near Hiawatha Avenue, one near Cedar Avenue and the other near Brackett Park, focus on stories about railroad development and adjacent industries as well as pioneer farming (page 18).

In 2009, the Longfellow Community Council published *Longfellow: The Neighborhood by the Falls*, includes many stories, anecdotes, illustrations, narratives and photographs. Authored by Eric Hart and the Longfellow History Project, it is one of several publications that include information about the corridor.

In 2012, the Lake Street Council is planning to place bilingual markers along the length of Lake Street. This program, called Museum in the Streets, will include installations at and near the intersection of Lake Street and Hiawatha Avenue. The Snelling Avenue African-American Community is among topics planned for the area immediately south of Lake Street.



Midtown Corridor Panels

4.2 Site Evaluation Criteria and Process

In determining potential locations for installations and other interpretation, it was noted that without a single unified venue such as a park or trail system, the material could best be presented at multiple sites, depending on site availability, themes, and proximity of historic buildings and other criterion noted below. The designer considered various budgets and a range of permanency: some material may be designed for temporary display, or rotated so that frequent visitors can continue to be engaged. HCW recommended the identification of privately-owned sites as well as those in the public realm. Initial locations are shown below; see also Corridor Map 6.1.

Potential publicly-owned sites:

- LRT stations (Lake, E. and E. 46th streets)
- LRT trains-interior and exterior
- Park triangles along Minnehaha Avenue
- Proposed small park at E. 38th and Dight streets
- East Lake Library
- Possible green space on improved E. 38th St., west of the corridor; 2013-14
- Abandoned rail corridor south of E. 46th St.

Potential privately-owned sites:

- General Mills green space on E. 38th St. across from potential park at E. 38th and Dight streets (38th Street Park)
- Minnehaha Avenue businesses, including coffee shops and stores with storefront display areas
- Vacant properties with storefront display areas

4.3 Location Suitability Criteria

Each location was evaluated with the following criteria:

- Audience availability (well-traveled routes)
- Accessibility (pedestrian and ADA)
- Suitability for information presented (proximity to buildings/sites, obvious links between site and stories)
- Safety and comfort for user (including adequate lighting)
- Safety and maintenance issues for installations
- Absence of conflicts with other uses
- Absence of conflicts with other interpretive material

Next, proposed sites were mapped. Analysis pages were developed for each site, showing:

- Existing conditions photographs
- Narrative description of location
- Description of target audience
- "Pros and cons" of site based on site criteria
- Photo simulations of installations shown for some sites
- Description of potential themes and stories suited to the site

The following pages analyze potential sites for the 46th Street LRT Station, Adams Triangle, Rollins Triangle, East Lake Library, 38th Street Park, and General Mills Parcel.

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38th Street LRT Station - West side of Hiawatha at E. 38th Street



Planted median between bus lanes

Audience Availability: **Good**
Accessibility (pedestrian and handicapped): **Excellent**
Proximity to sites, links between site and stories: **Excellent**
Safety and comfort for user (Including adequate lighting): **Good**
Safety and maintenance issues for installations: **Fair**
Absence of conflicts with other uses: **Fair**
Absence of conflicts with other interpretive material: **Excellent**



Planted area at station entrance

Audience Availability: **Excellent**
Accessibility (pedestrian and handicapped): **Excellent**
Proximity to sites, links between site and stories: **Excellent**
Safety and comfort for user (Including adequate lighting): **Excellent**
Safety and maintenance issues for installations: **Good**
Absence of conflicts with other uses: **Good**
Absence of conflicts with other interpretive material: **Excellent**

Proposed Interpretation at this site: Grain Storage / Milling / Industrial History

Summary of Site Analysis: The 38th Street Station is an ideal location for presenting the milling history and industrial stories of the corridor: several of the existing grain elevators are directly across Hiawatha Avenue, and are the main feature of the local landscape. Difficulties in siting interpretive material within the station itself have led to identifying alternate sites in close proximity to the station. Two sites may prove promising, but more investigation is necessary to establish their viability.

The planted median provides a site in close proximity to the station, but is separated from the waiting area by a bus lane. It is not ideal in that people are not likely to cross over from the station to see the installation.

The site at the south end of the station, at the entrance from 38th Street, will attract pedestrians on their way to and from the station, as well as pedestrians and bicyclists in the neighborhood. The visual connection to the grain elevators is strong, and an installation in this location would work well with the station signs already installed.

Recommendation: The 38th Street LRT station should continue to be considered as a potential installation site.

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46th Street LRT Station - West side of Hiawatha at E. 46th Street



Turf adjacent to walkway at north end of station

Audience Availability: **Good**

Accessibility (pedestrian and handicapped): **Excellent**

Proximity to sites, links between site and stories: **Excellent**

Safety and comfort for user (Including adequate lighting): **Excellent**

Safety and maintenance issues for installations: **Fair**

Absence of conflicts with other uses: **Good**

Absence of conflicts with other interpretive material: **Excellent**



Walkway connecting north end of station to neighborhood

Audience Availability: **Good**

Accessibility (pedestrian and handicapped): **Excellent**

Proximity to sites, links between site and stories: **Excellent**

Safety and comfort for user (Including adequate lighting): **Excellent**

Safety and maintenance issues for installations: **Fair**

Absence of conflicts with other uses: **Excellent**

Absence of conflicts with other interpretive material: **Excellent**

Proposed Interpretation at this Site: Transportation / Rail Corridor / Industrial History

Summary of Site Analysis: The 46th Street Station is an ideal location for presenting interpretation that focuses on the corridor's transportation history. It also provides an excellent view of Fire Station #24 (1907). The site at the northern end of the station has potential to attract people waiting at the station, and those who use the sidewalk connection to the neighborhood. Close to Hiawatha Avenue, it offers good visual connection to Hiawatha Avenue and the rail line. Choosing a location as close as possible to the station will offer greater safety for both the user and the installation.

Recommendation: The 46th Street LRT station should continue to be considered as a potential installation site.

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Adams Triangle - Minnehaha Avenue at E. 41st Street



Audience Availability: **Good**

Accessibility (pedestrian and handicapped): **Excellent**

Proximity to sites, links between site and stories: **Excellent**

Safety and comfort for user (Including adequate lighting): **Good**

Safety and maintenance issues for installations: **Good**

Absence of conflicts with other uses: **Good**

Absence of conflicts with other interpretive material: **Excellent**

Proposed Interpretation at this site: Transportation / Streetcar / Ft. Snelling Connection

Summary of Site Analysis: This site offers good accessibility for neighborhood pedestrians and bus patrons. Siting an interpretive installation here will enhance this possibly under-utilized green space. Proposed improvements to Minnehaha Avenue should include designating an area close to the bus stop as a site for the installation.

Recommendation: Adams Triangle is a good potential installation site.

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Rollins Triangle - Minnehaha Avenue at E. 33rd Street



Audience Availability: **Good**

Accessibility (pedestrian and handicapped): **Excellent**

Proximity to sites, links between site and stories: **Excellent**

Safety and comfort for user (Including adequate lighting): **Good**

Safety and maintenance issues for installations: **Fair**

Absence of conflicts with other uses: **Fair**

Absence of conflicts with other interpretive material: **Excellent**

Proposed Interpretation at this site: Commercial History of Minnehaha Avenue / Bungalow

Summary of Site Analysis: This site is located across Minnehaha from the popular coffee shop, “Peace Coffee,” and adjacent to the vacant Danko Dairy building. Currently, this small green island supports several utility boxes and other city utility installations, as well as a bus stop and a large wooden planter box that does not get regular maintenance.

Recommendation: Proposed improvements to Minnehaha Avenue should include upgrades to the landscape of this triangle. It is a good potential site for an interpretive installation.

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East Lake Library - 2727 East Lake Street



Audience Availability: **Excellent**

Accessibility (pedestrian and handicapped): **Excellent**

Proximity to sites, links between site and stories: **Fair**

Safety and comfort for user (Including adequate lighting): **Excellent**

Safety and maintenance issues for installations: **Excellent**

Absence of conflicts with other uses: **Good**

Absence of conflicts with other interpretive material: **Fair**

Proposed Interpretation at this site: Possible repeat of main stories from other sites, Neighborhood stories and photographs

Summary of Site Analysis: The library would present the interpretive material to a large audience, many of them from the neighborhoods surrounding the Corridor. The library offers a safe venue, with the added benefit of having additional sources of information on site.

The indoor library facility has limited free space to mount a large exhibition, but there are a few areas that may support framed wall installations: the computer area, and the wall adjacent to the bulletin board. The outdoor area to the east of the building has a walkway and planted areas that might be a good site for a panel installation.

Recommendation: The library provides several good flexible spaces for short-term interpretive displays.

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38th Street Park - Northeast corner of E. 38th Street and Dight Avenue



Audience Availability: **Fair**

Accessibility (pedestrian and handicapped): **Good**

Proximity to sites, links between site and stories: **Excellent**

Safety and comfort for user (Including adequate lighting): **Poor, but could be improved**

Safety and maintenance issues for installations: **Poor**

Absence of conflicts with other uses: **Good**

Absence of conflicts with other interpretive material: **Excellent**

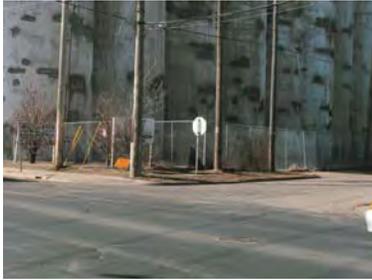
Proposed Interpretation at this site: African American / Pioneer Period

Summary of Site Analysis: This site has been evaluated for development as a neighborhood green space and as a location for interpretive installations. Its proximity to Snelling Avenue makes it a good spot for African-American neighborhood stories. Neighborhood groups have expressed interest in developing a community garden, which, could allow for more extensive planting while providing needed safety enhancements.

Recommendation: This site has good potential for installation linked to a new landscape design. A scheme that uses plant materials typical of the neighborhood residences from the pioneer period through the early industrial period would complement the interpretive installations, and provide opportunities for neighborhood involvement.

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General Mills Parcel - Northwest corner of E. 38th Street and Dight Avenue



Audience Availability: **Fair**

Accessibility (pedestrian and handicapped): **Good**

Proximity to sites, links between site and stories: **Excellent**

Safety and comfort for user (Including adequate lighting): **Poor, but could be improved**

Safety and maintenance issues for installations: **Poor**

Absence of conflicts with other uses: **Good**

Absence of conflicts with other interpretive material: **Excellent**

Proposed Interpretation at this site: Milling history / General Mills

Summary of Site Analysis: This site occupies the corner opposite the green space on Dight Avenue, and has been considered as one of the privately-owned sites that could support an interpretive installation. Much of the property is protected by a chain-link fence. Some portion of the fence would need to be removed, and landscape improvements completed before the site would be suitable for any installations.

Recommendation: This is a potential installation site, but would require considerable public/private site preparation.

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4.4 Wayfinding

The consultants reviewed existing wayfinding along the corridor and evaluated the addition of maps and other material at potential interpretative locations.

4.4.1 Summary of Existing Wayfinding in or near the Corridor

There is no unified system of wayfinding in the Corridor, although two wayfinding systems have signs posted in or near the area:

- **Riverlake Greenway Signs**
Posted by the City of Minneapolis, these signs identify the Riverlake Greenway dedicated bikeway, and show the way to parks-related points of interest, such as Midtown Greenway, West River Parkway, and
- **LRT stations offer wayfinding in the form of LRT maps, street signs and bus information, but there are no installations showing nearby points of interest, commercial hubs, or recreational facilities.**

4.4.2 Recommendations

Interpretation along the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor would benefit from well-placed wayfinding panels that identify the location of interpretive installations as well as referenced historic buildings or areas. These installations could serve several other wayfinding purposes, and illustrate:

- LRT station locations
- Bus routes
- Parks, trails, bike lanes, and recreation centers
- Schools, churches, and other neighborhood institutions
- Commercial areas

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Existing Wayfinding on the Corridor



Corridor Neighborhood Wayfinding



LRT Station street sign



LRT Station Bus Wayfinding



Sign on Minnehaha Avenue

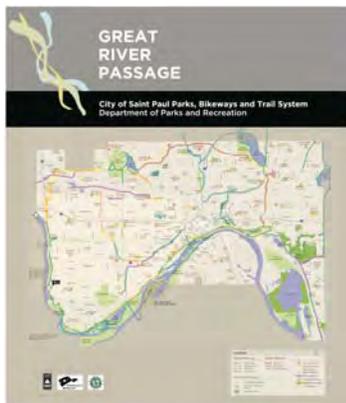
Wayfinding Examples



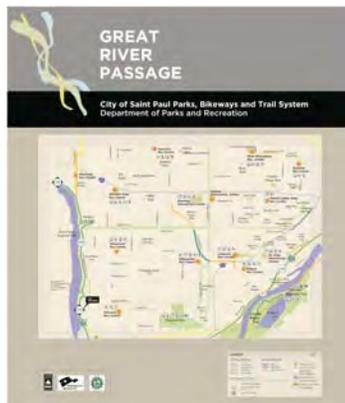
Grand Rounds



Wayzata



St. Paul Scenic Byway / Great River Passage



London

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5.0 Implementation

5.1 Graphics and Branding

HCW, the Longfellow Community Council, and the consultants identified the need to develop a strong graphic image and a system for corridor interpretation. This system—including a selection of colors, fonts, and layout guidelines—can be utilized as needed in the creation of materials including labels and logos.

This element included:

- Review of historic precedents along the corridor, spanning printed material, signage, and iconic architecture and structures such as grain elevators.
- Inventory of major signage systems currently in use in the area.

A project identity was created based on findings from the precedent review. The project identity includes:

- A project name that is memorable and concise, and that may be used on all installations and media coverage.
- A distinctive graphic style with selected color palette and fonts.
- A style guide for using variations when changing a theme or venue.

5.2 Project Identity and Logo

Establishing a name and a visual identity for the Interpretive Plan is an important first step toward promoting interest and support for the project.

5.2.1 Project Name

The project name must be specific enough to easily define the project location and purpose, and avoid confusion with other projects with themes. The project area has a very specific location, which limits the choice of names. Minnehaha and Hiawatha are both necessary to identifying location, and both must be used in tandem. Fortunately they are both euphonious and possess Native American and Euro-American significance. A distraction is their multi-syllable length, resulting in some difficulty in pronunciation. To date, the project has been identified using Minnehaha first and Hiawatha second. This order has been adopted for all recent Hennepin County planning (see Minnehaha-Hiawatha Community Works Plan; <http://minnehaha-hiawatha.com/>).

Further identification of the project purpose necessitates choosing between the straightforward designation “History Project” (which may prompt associations with the Longfellow History Project), and something less obvious, such as “Interpretive Project.”

The following names were evaluated:

Minnehaha-Hiawatha History Project

Straightforward and simple, but does not indicate that the subject is a geographical area (as opposed to Native American or literary subjects), nor does it confine location specifically to the industrial corridor area between Lake and Minnehaha Parkway.

Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor History Project

Identifies the area specifically, but use of History Project may lead viewers to assume that there are connections to the Longfellow History Project.

Minnehaha-Hiawatha Industrial History Project

This identifies more precisely the nature of most of the historical themes under current study but leaves out other potential themes.

Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor Story

This name is shorter and has a good “feel,” but lacks the specific quality of the word “History.”

Hiawatha-Minnehaha Corridor Story

This puts Hiawatha ahead of Minnehaha. Putting an “H” at the beginning gives the name an open sound at the start, which makes it easier to say and is perhaps more welcoming. This arrangement also gives precedence to the higher-profile street.

Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor Interpretive Project

The use of the word interpretive is not very user-friendly. It has many syllables and its meaning may be unclear.

5.2.2 Logo Selection

The purpose of the logo (the graphic representation of the project name) is to create a memorable image that will be used to identify all installed and printed interpretive material, linking all parts of the installation. The logo will identify the project in media releases and other promotional material.

The logo should be:

- effective in both color and black-and-white applications
- compact enough to be applied in a variety of layouts
- compatible with other project graphics
- suggestive of corridor interpretive content

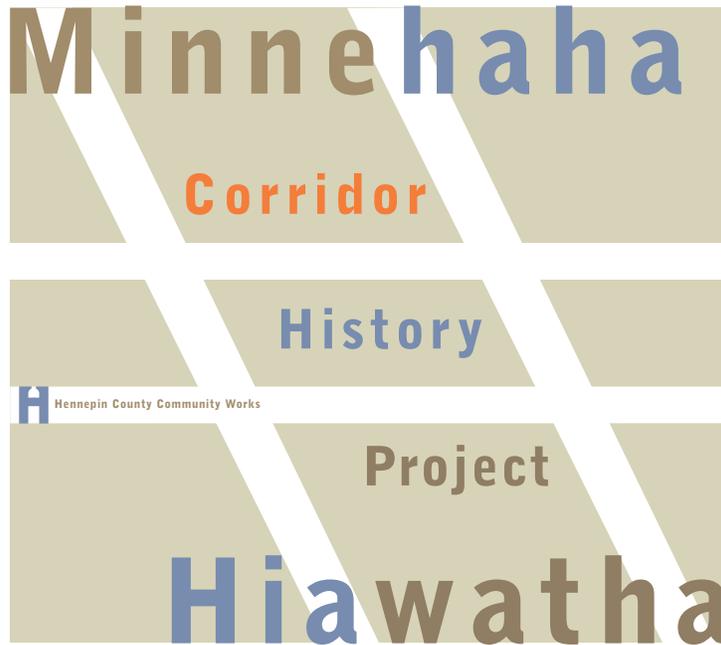
The proposed logo shown on page 43 uses the most straightforward and specific of the names discussed above: Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor History Project. The font is Bell Gothic Black, a sans serif font corresponding with the period of the corridor’s industrial prominence, spanning the 1930s to the 1970s. The font has pronounced variations in its stroke, from thin to thick, which provides visual interest and enhances legibility. The colors are chosen to correspond with the faded reds and blues found in signs on the corridor, and the “industrial beige” of the concrete grain elevators. (See Design Precedents, Section 4.1.2)

Breaking up the words "Minnehaha" and "Hiawatha" into two colors makes them less monumental (less of a mouthful). It may prompt the viewer to make up his or her own "Hollywood couple" –style abbreviation, by matching the colors across the words to make "Minne-watha" and "Hia-haha."

The Hennepin County logo should always appear with the project logo. Here it is shown as the stylized "H" flanked by the words "Hennepin County" and "Community Works." The county may choose to augment the logo with the words "Hennepin County" only. The Hennepin County logo may be modified to show only the "H" when used in applications sized too small to support the words.

A black-and-white version of the logo is shown for use in situations where color is not available.

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Proposed project logo, color



Proposed project logo, black and white version

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5.3 Engaging the Neighborhood

Throughout the process, the consultants considered ways to expand existing stories about the history and development of the neighborhood, and to expand opportunities to distribute project materials and ideas. The Longfellow History Project and Longfellow Community Council will continue to gather new information and are very important to this effort. Additional information from residents and institutions, including schools and churches, should be forwarded to the council. Much of the project information is of potential use in school curriculum activities at various grade levels. For example, model-building utilizing fieldwork, photography, and historic maps and photographs could engage students in illustrating community changes along the corridor from pre-settlement to the present.

Website and Connectivity

The consultants identified opportunities to connect new interpretive materials with existing project websites (www.minnehaha-hiawatha.com) and the Longfellow Community Council site (www.longfellow.org). QR-codes can be placed on panels and other installations linking to these and other sites.

5.4 Support Structures

The consultants reviewed the area's potential venues that offer “ready-made” support for installations, such as walls and panels at LRT stations. They also reviewed the form and appearance of major structures along the corridor, including grain elevators, factories, and LRT stations. Recommendations for various support structure types and sites were developed.

5.4.1 Proposed Freestanding Interpretive Panel and Support Structure

Permanent installations are recommended as part of Phase 3 Project Implementation. Resin laminate panels mounted on a support structure provide excellent durability. Several companies offer panel fabrication along with standard-size support components. KVO Industries, for example, makes a support structure that includes a matching frame surrounding the resin panel. This style is recommended, as it provides a finished appearance and protects the panel from damage. This framed style would be consistent with other installations in the area, including the Midtown Corridor. Custom-designed and fabricated support structures are an alternative to standard components.

Recommended Panel and Support Structure Fabricators:

KVO Industries, Inc.
1825 Empire Industrial Ct. Suite A
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
800-657-6412
www.kvoindustries.com

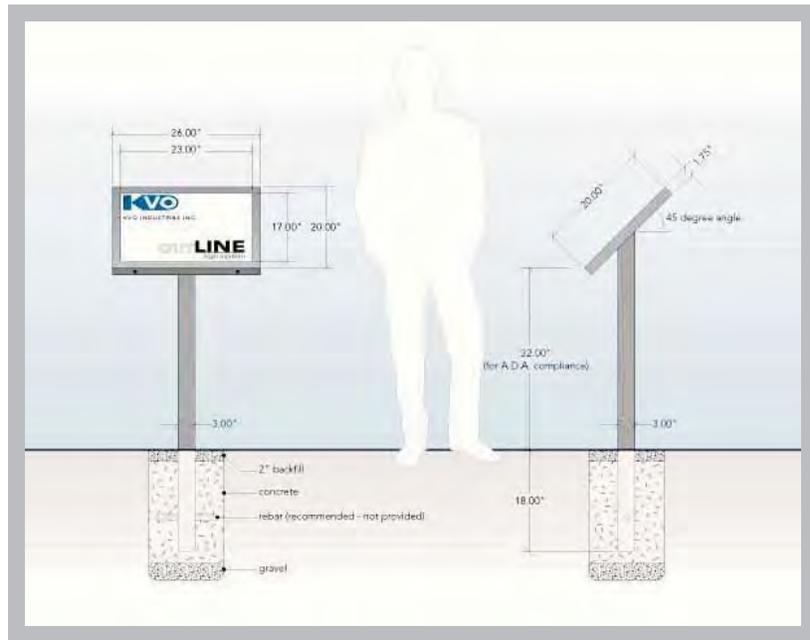
Folia Industries
110 Wellington
Huntingdon, QC
Canada J0S 1H)
800-363-5304
www.folia.com

Fossil Industries
44 Jefryn Blvd.
Deer Park, NY 11729
631-254-9200
www.fossilgraphics.com

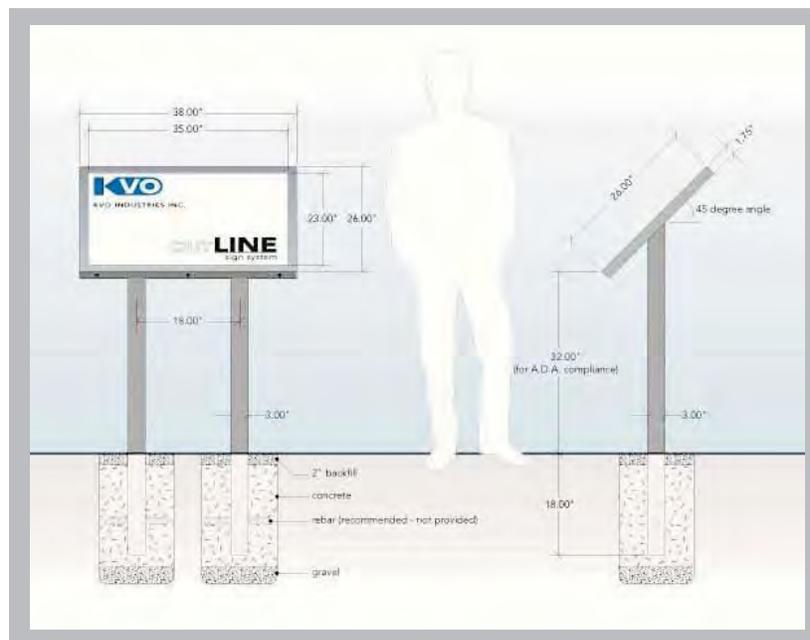


Framed panel fabricated by KVO Industries

Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor Interpretive Plan • 47



KVO Outline Angled Pedestal 26"x 20"



KVO Outline Angled Double Pedestal 38"x 26"

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5.5 Phases and Funding Strategy

HCW identified the need to identify private sector sponsors to share in project development, funding and ongoing support. There is limited public funding for interpretation, but some may be available through the Minnesota Legacy Grant program, and interpretation is often included in transportation improvement planning. However, responsibility for ownership and maintenance of the installations is a long-term challenge.

Potential partners include long-term owners of industrial and commercial property along the corridor. Some of these owners were convened by HCW during the 2008-2009 study, and introduced to the planning study then underway and especially the historic resources of the area. If this roster of property-owner participants is reconvened following the present study, potential support can be determined. Developers of newly-proposed housing and other projects should be included.

1. First Phase: 2012-2013

- Install boards and posters at temporary installations at the East Lake Library and cooperating Minnehaha Avenue businesses using existing funds (priority themes include African-American community, grain elevator history).
- Develop supporting posters, postcards, and other materials for distribution by Community Council and local businesses.
- Promote interpretive plan and web links through local media (longfellow.org) and businesses.
- Continue to evaluate feasibility of public and private installation locations.
- Begin preliminary landscape design for 38th Street Park.
- Begin targeted fundraising with local property owners.
- Evaluate Legacy and other grant programs for potential support.

2. Second Phase: 2013

- Produce and install selected panels as permanent displays as funds and locations are available.
- Continue fundraising.

3. Third Phase: 2013-2014

- Produce installations at private sites using private funding.
- Install permanent landscape and interpretation at 38th St. Park.



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6.0 Design and Installation Proposals

6.1 Corridor Map

6.2 Proposed Interpretive Site Map: E. 38th Street

6.3 Proposed Installations: E. 38th Street

6.4 Panel Prototypes

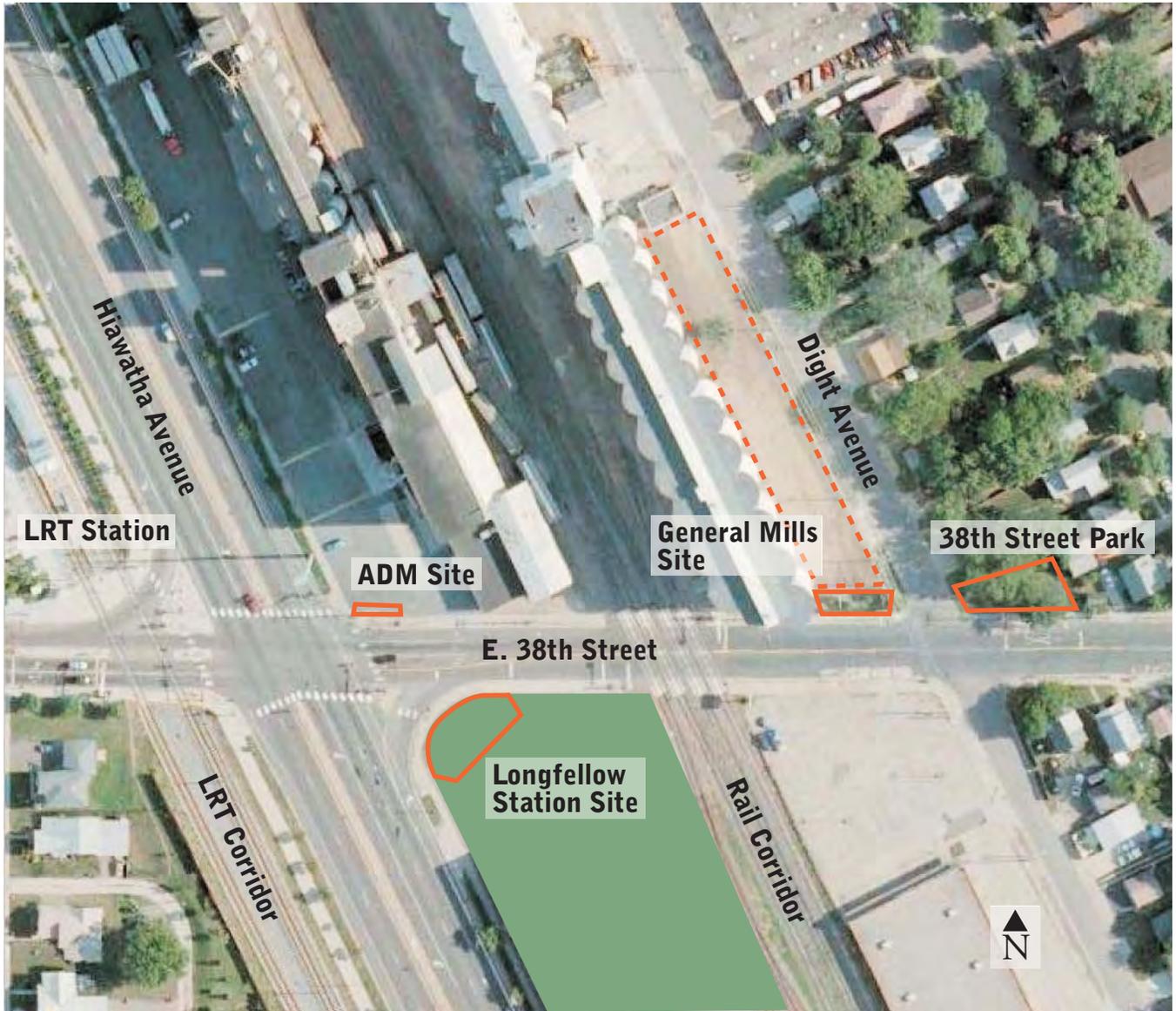
- Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor Grain Elevators
- Snelling Avenue African-American Community

6.5 Additional Interpretive Theme Narratives and Illustrations

- Native American Landscape and Pioneer Euro-American Farming
- Industries, The Streetcar and Commercial and Residential Area Development, 1905-1968

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Proposed interpretive sites on E. 38th Street.

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Proposed Installation - 38th Street Park



Existing conditions at the northeast corner of Dight Avenue and E. 38th Street.



Proposed installation at the northeast corner of Dight Avenue and E. 38th Street.

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Proposed Installation - General Mills Corner



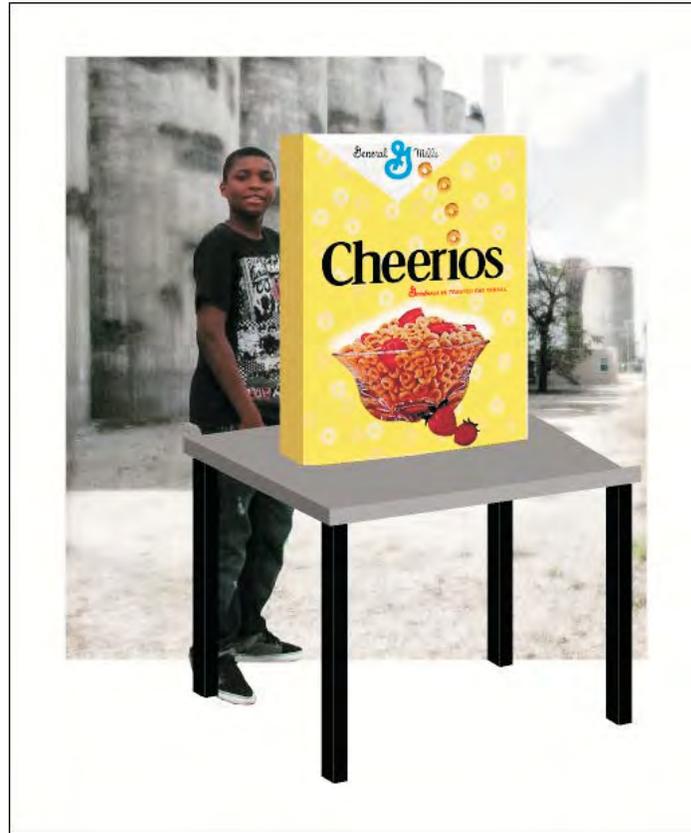
Existing conditions at the northwest corner of Dight Avenue and E. 38th Street.



Proposed installation at the northwest corner of Dight Avenue and E. 38th Street.

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Proposed Installation - General Mills Site



Alternative installation at the northwest corner of Dight Avenue and E. 38th Street.

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Grain Elevators of the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor



1931

Atkinson Mill and Elevator

William Atkinson, a 32-year veteran of the Washburn-Crosby Company, built the Atkinson Mill in 1915 at E. 37th Street, south of the Nokomis Mill. The original complex consisted of a brick mill and four reinforced concrete bins with a capacity of 80,000 bushels. Concrete bins were added in 1921, 1927 and again in 1939 to aid in the production of Freedom Flour and NW Special Flour. William's son, Frederick, partnered with his father and developed two flour production patents. The "Atkinson Temperature Method" measured the temperature of the grain rollers and the "Atkinson System" developed an



1939

efficient application to "fluidize" flour through a hose. Archer-Daniels-Midland purchased the mill a year after purchasing Nokomis and added a penthouse in 1973 and four steel bins in 1984.

Atkinson Mill and Elevator



1914

This six-story brick mill, steel elevator and six steel bins, located between E. 35th and 36th streets, were originally built in 1914 for former Pillsbury Flour mill executives, Dwight Yerxa and James Andrews. The Minneapolis Milling Company purchased the site in 1922 and upgraded the mill with six concrete bins and advanced milling equipment for the production of "Miss Minneapolis" flour. Minneapolis Milling Company president, William Sheffield, also managed Commander-Larabee Milling Company providing for a combined yearly production of 26,800 barrels. Archer-Daniels-Midland purchased the mill in 1961 and continues flour storage and milling at the site.

Nokomis Mill and Elevator



1931

Cargill's foray into the seed industry began in 1908 with the construction of the Minneapolis Seed Company built between E. 33rd and 34th streets. Seed storage as well as the grain laboratory were developed at this site, which recorded \$1.6 million in sales in 1918. The seed division was phased out under the 1935 Cargill Incorporated merger and the lab was moved to the Minnetonka headquarters in 1956. The elevator was converted into a feed grinding plant in 1952.

Minneapolis Seed



Aerial view of the Minnehaha-Hiawatha Corridor



1939

The Spencer Grain Elevator was built on this site in 1901 and featured a first generation wood-frame elevator, which was purchased by the Cargill Company in 1906 and demolished in 1930. The Cargill Elevator Company concentrated grain elevator locations along the CM&StP and by 1890 had 71 elevators along two rail lines. Located between E. 35th and E. 36th streets, Cargill's massive Elevator T complex consists of 65 reinforced-concrete grain bins connected by conveyor bridges. The grain terminal features the earliest extant concrete bins (1908) in Minneapolis and has a capacity of over 4 million bushels. The complex is currently operated by General Mills for Cheerios production.

Cargill Elevator T

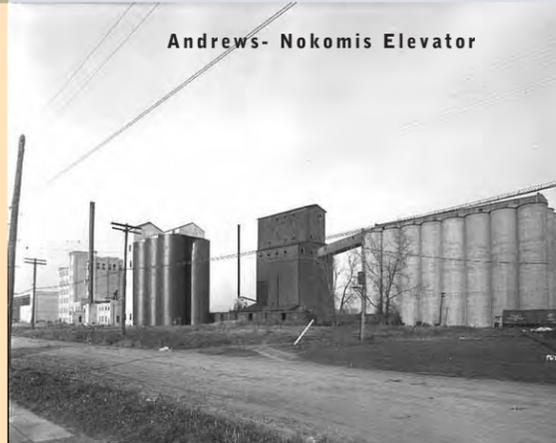
The seventeen reinforced-concrete bins of the Farmers Union Grain Association 'Elevator M' replaced the wood-frame Minnehaha Elevator (1901) in 1930. The elevator is the last grain terminal built along the Hiawatha corridor and is situated on a triangular parcel at 41st Street.



1930

With a capacity of 1.3 million bushels of grain, this elevator is the only farmers cooperative elevator remaining in Minneapolis. The cooperative merged to form Harvest States Cooperatives in 1983 and Cenex Harvest States Cooperatives in 1998.

Andrews- Nokomis Elevator



1914

The wood-frame Mississippi Elevator was first built at this location between E. 37th and 38th streets in 1902. The Banner Grain Company purchased the elevator in 1912 and added sixteen steel bins before the Sterling Grain Company purchased the elevator and added ten concrete bins in 1926. A Peavey wheat buyer, Augustus Searle, purchased the site in 1930 and rebuilt the powerhouse, elevator and added four concrete bins. The Searle Grain Company operated the elevator until it was sold to General Mills in 1975 and renamed the Checkerboard Elevator.



1935

Grain Elevators on the Corridor

William Atkinson, a 32-year veteran of the Washburn-Crosby Company, built the Atkinson Mill in 1915 at E. 37th Street, south of the Nokomis Mill. The original complex consisted of a brick mill and four reinforced concrete bins with a capacity of 80,000 bushels. Concrete bins were added in 1921, 1927 and again in 1939 to aid in the production of Freedom Flour and NW Special Flour. William's son, Frederick, partnered with his father and developed two flour production patents. The "Atkinson Temperature Method" measured the temperature of the grain rollers and the "Atkinson System" developed an efficient application to "fluidize" flour through a hose. Archer-Daniels-Midland purchased the mill a year after purchasing Nokomis and added a penthouse in 1973 and four steel bins in 1984.

Atkinson Mill and Elevator



1931



1939

The Snelling Avenue African-American Community

Neighborhood Pioneers

African-American families were among the first to settle in the neighborhood that grew south of E. Lake Street along the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul (CM&StP) rail corridor. Snelling Avenue, with adjacent portions of Minnehaha and Hiawatha Avenues, was one of a few areas of early 20th-century Minneapolis where African Americans established a long-term community with a high rate of home ownership. Tall grain elevators and mills were its noisy neighborhood backdrop; small factories were also placed between houses at the northern edge of the area. During its early history, Snelling Avenue has also been home to many European immigrants, including Germans, Swedes, and Norwegians.

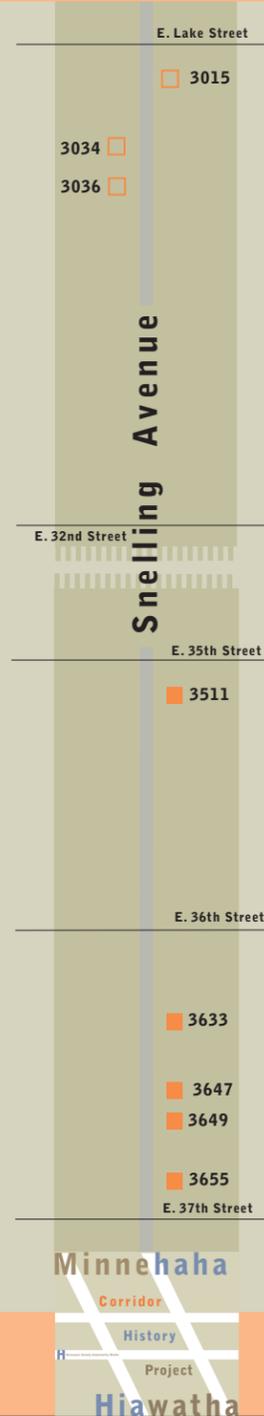
The first generation of houses owned by the African American community and others on Snelling Avenue, shown here in 1914, shifted south from Lake Street as industry expanded.



Early Years

Some of the best-paying jobs available to African Americans were provided by railroads. The CM&StP yards at Hiawatha Avenue and E. Lake Street provided a variety of labor jobs, and the CM&StP and other Minneapolis railroads also offered positions as porters, cooks, waiters, and coachmen. In 1895, J. A. McCoy, 34, a musician and native of Tennessee, lived at 3015 Snelling Avenue. His neighbor at 3034, William H. Howard, 28, a coachman and musician, was a native of Maryland. Virgil Peebles at 3036, a 33-year-old New York native, was a clerk. By 1900 Peebles and McCoy were living elsewhere in the city, but Howard appears to have been the pioneer who remained and was still living on Snelling Avenue in 1930.

Howard owned his house, as did many other African Americans in the area. In 1900, Robert Chatman, a 38-year-old native of Kentucky, lived at 3649 Snelling Avenue. His wife, Jennie, was a native of Iowa. The family of Herbert and Maggie Parker resided at 3511 Snelling by 1914. Herbert Parker was born in Canada in 1869 to parents from Kentucky. He arrived in the United States in 1870 and became a naturalized citizen in 1880. Maggie Parker was a native of Kentucky, and the Parker's two children were born in Minnesota. The family also had two lodgers who worked as a waiter and a maid.



New arrivals on Snelling Avenue by 1920 included Edward Bishop, 47, a native of Missouri who worked as a porter. He and his wife Katherine owned their house 3655 (57) Snelling Avenue. Sylvia Colell, 28, a widow and native of Mississippi, owned the house at 3647. She worked as a chambermaid. John Monroe, 69, a native of Missouri, owned the house at 3633. Monroe worked as a teamster and his son, Clarence Monroe, was a fireman for the City of Minneapolis. Toots Botts, a railroad porter and Iowa native, owned the house at 3724 Minnehaha Avenue. His neighbor at 3722, James Guibert, was a dining car porter in 1920.

Railroad workers organized local associations such as the Colored Railroad Men's Club, which was located at 212 11th Avenue S. in 1920. Cooks, clerks, hotel waiters, janitors, and porters in other occupations were also represented, along with a few employed in industries such as Minneapolis Moline and federal agencies such as the post office.

A Place of Permanence

The modest growth of employment opportunities for African-Americans in Minneapolis coincided with the wartime economy between 1915 and 1920, when recruiters scoured the South for those willing to move to northern industrial centers in return of promises of free transportation, higher wages, and a better standard of living. Few jobs in private industry, however, were open before World War II. For many on Snelling Avenue, the railroad provided a level of job security. During a period when restrictive housing covenants were still used discriminate against African Americans other ethnic groups, Snelling Avenue and the surrounding area provided a place where home ownership was possible. Like the Shingle Creek area in north Minneapolis, Snelling Avenue increasingly provided a place of permanence.

New families arriving after World War II included those employed at Minneapolis Moline. Before the war, such skilled jobs were not usually available to black workers. Modest gains in opportunities for work in public utilities, department stores, manufacturing, and government were reflected in the jobs held by Snelling Avenue residents during the 1950s.



Minneapolis Moline factory at Hiawatha and 26th St., 1925.

Photographs courtesy Minnesota Historical Society

The Snelling Avenue African-American Community

Neighborhood Stories

Sylvestus Phelps, a native of Iowa who moved to 3624 Snelling in 1917 and remained there until 1924, was a well-known business owner. She owned the Phelps Café and Hotel at 246 4th Avenue S., and operated the “Oh Boy ! Chicken” Shack at the Minnesota State Fair. Her husband, Oliver D., was a native of Louisiana and was employed as a waiter, in furniture sales, and in real estate.



National Advocate, March 31, 1922

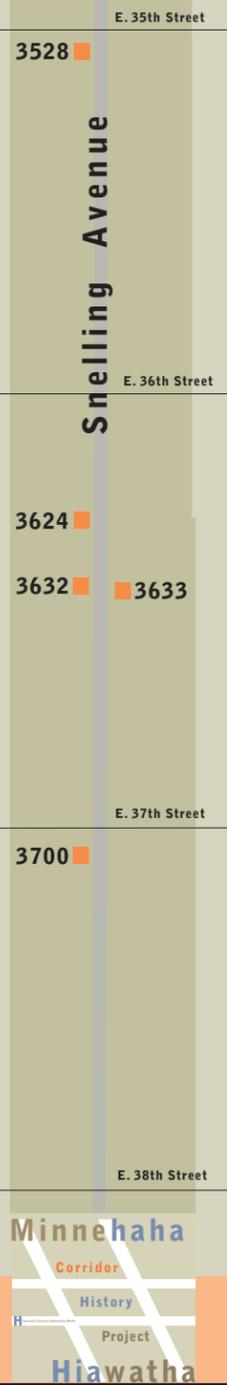
Mrs. Phillip McGruder, of 1828 Carpenter Ave., Des Moines, is the guest of Mrs. O. D. Phelps, at her beautiful residence, 3624 Snelling Avenue. Mrs. Phelps is one of our smartest business women in the Twin Cities and she is making preparations to conduct a cafeteria at the State Fair during September. *The National Advocate, July 19, 1919*

By 1930, the core of the African American community was concentrated between 3500 and 3700 Snelling Avenue but was not limited to these blocks. Heads-of-households by this time reported birthplaces that included Canada, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, Missouri, Iowa, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, and Virginia. Many households had lodgers or other family members living with them. A network of churches, social clubs, and newspapers bound members of the community.

Mary Edith James Kyle (1908-1994) spent part of her childhood at 3700 Snelling Avenue. She was born in St. Paul to Ernest and Edith James and attended grade school while living on Snelling. Ernest was a waiter in a hotel dining room. Mary graduated from Central High School and studied chemistry at the University of Minnesota. During the 1930s she and her husband, Earle Kyle, operated Southtown Meat and Grocery on 4th Street S. Mary was a well-known writer and journalist. From the mid-1960s to 1986 she owned an African-American newspaper, the Twin Cities Courier. She was the first female president of the Minnesota Press Club and first female board member of the Minneapolis YMCA. She served on many other boards, including the Minneapolis Urban League and Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts.



Above, Mary Edith James at age 5, ca. 1914. At right, Mary Edith James in 1924.



Neighborhood Stories

Carrie Hoffman Wallace grew up at 3632 Snelling Avenue, where she came to live with her parents at about age 5. Wallace, who graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1939, saw concrete grain elevators under construction as a small child and remembered picking greens along the rail corridor. She was adopted by Isidore and Hattie Holofchak (Hoffman). Hattie was a native of New Orleans whose family came from the West Indies. Isidore was a native of Russia or Germany who, according to his daughter, had stowed away on a ship bound for the United States. He served in the U.S. Army as a private for at least a decade: he was stationed in the Phillipines with the 21st Regiment of the Infantry in 1900 and 1910. In Minneapolis he worked as a janitor at the H.S. Simmons School at 3800 Minnehaha Avenue. Some Holofchak family members changed their last names to Hoffman.

Charles Young, a native of Texas joined his aunt, Lucille Ray, in Minneapolis. Young lived in a duplex at 3624 Snelling in 1942, and in 1962 he built a house at 3633 Snelling Avenue. In 1942, Benjamin Bobo owned the house at 3528 Snelling, and Dee Bannarn (1879-1949) was a renter. Bannarn, a native of Texas, was a member of an extended family that settled in the Shingle Creek area near 49th Street N. and Humboldt Avenue around 1910.

One of Dee's sons, Henry Michael Bannarn (1910-1965), known as Mike, was born in Wetumpka, Oklahoma and moved to Minneapolis with his family. He became a painter and sculptor and was a contributor to New York's Harlem Renaissance.



Henry Bannarn, 1940, upper left. Bannarn self-portrait, ca. 1950, upper right. Minneapolis Grain Elevators, Henry Bannarn, ca. 1950, at bottom.

The Snelling Avenue African-American Community



Fire Station #24 (1907), 4501 Hiawatha Avenue, 1936

Fire Station #24

In 1907, the staffing of the new Minneapolis Fire Station #24 at 4501 Hiawatha Avenue became controversial because some white neighborhood residents did not want the station to be comprised exclusively of black firemen. The Minneapolis fire chief issued a statement that the station was meant to be a “colored fire company.” Some City Council members objected that it was “an affront to the colored members of the force, who are credited with being first-rate men, to segregate them in one station.” They felt that the station should be a “berth for the older members of the force who would welcome a relief from the constant strain of downtown duty.” A petition signed by 60 women, all area residents, supported the assignment of the black firemen to the station.



Fire Station #24 (1907), 4501 Hiawatha Avenue, 2012

St. James African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church

During the first half of the 20th century, Snelling Avenue residents traveled to various locations in the city to church services; Bethesda Missionary Baptist Church in Minneapolis was especially well attended. This congregation was organized in the late 1880s by a group of waiters from the West Hotel. In 1892, a large brick edifice was completed at 1118 S. 18th Street.

Some Snelling Avenue-area residents traveled across the city to attend St. James AME Church. St. James was formally organized in St. Anthony in 1863 and was the first African-American church established in Minnesota. The congregation’s first house of worship was in a church formerly occupied by whites at 6th Avenue S.E. and 2nd Street. A storefront location followed, with a new church next erected at 1st Ave. S.E. and 2nd Street. The congregation next moved across the river to a storefront location in Minneapolis at 411 5th Avenue S. In 1881, St. Peter’s African Methodist Episcopal Church was organized out of St. James.

Snelling Avenue



In 1892 the St. James congregation erected a red brick edifice at 4th Street and 8th Avenue S. The congregation moved into a succession of rented properties during the next decades. In 1918 they purchased a former synagogue at 314 15th Avenue S. This would be their home for almost 40 years.



Three views of St. James AME Church: Top, 314 15th Avenue S., in 1936. Above, the new church soon after construction in 1958. Photo opposite, St. James in 2012.

In 1926 the St. James congregation numbered about 136, and members came from several neighborhoods in the city. At least two residents of Snelling Avenue were members, including Hattie Hoffman (Holofchak) and Sylvestus O. Phelps. Their building at 314 15th Ave. S. was sold in about 1956 and the congregation next occupied space at the Pillsbury Settlement House.

In 1958 a new building for St. James AME Church was built at the heart of the community at 3600 Snelling Avenue (MPC-HC-4254). The neighborhood was then enjoying a post-war employment boom with new jobs in area manufacturing firms. The congregation numbered 71 and raised about \$9,000 for the new structure. Pastor Cleveland O. Smalls had the job of reinvigorating the congregation in its new home.



The Native American Landscape and Pioneer Euro-American Farming

The Minnehaha-Hiawatha corridor and its surrounding urban neighborhood extend west to the Mississippi. This area was part of the Fort Snelling Military Reservation until 1855. Fort Snelling was established in 1819 at the confluence of the Mississippi and Minnesota Rivers, and the first steamboat loaded with supplies arrived in 1823. In 1821-23, soldiers built a sawmill and gristmill about six miles to the northwest at St. Anthony Falls at the heart of what would become downtown Minneapolis. The mills supplied lumber and grain needed at the fort. A trail between Fort Snelling and the Falls of St. Anthony is shown on two 1839 maps and on the 1853 government land survey map. Following the creation of Minnesota Territory in 1849, the general alignment of this route was improved as a territorial road (also called the Fort Snelling Road) corresponding to the general route of present-day Minnehaha Avenue.

The landscape at the time of permanent white settlement included well-drained prairie, with a forested belt to the east along the Mississippi River bluff. The government land survey conducted in 1853 showed oak savanna near E. 44th Street and Minnehaha Avenue. By 1895, when much of the southern portion of the corridor was under cultivation, belts of woodlands still remained along and near Minnehaha Creek. The creek drains to the east from Lake Minnetonka, and flows to Lake Hiawatha, where it continues over the 50-foot drop at Minnehaha Falls and to its junction with the Mississippi River.



Fort Snelling in ca. 1861. (MHS)



*Photo St. Anthony Falls looking west from Mississippi Island Sept. 16, 1857
Compliments of A. Nelson to J. P. Ballou, Oct. 20, 1857*
The Falls of St. Anthony, 1851. (MHS)



*"The Prairie Back of Fort Snelling," Seth Eastman,
ca. 1846-47. (MHS)*

Early Government

Hennepin County was organized in 1852 and Minneapolis was selected as the county seat. In 1867, the town was chartered as a city and Dorilus Morrison (1814-1897) was elected mayor. In 1872, St. Anthony and Minneapolis were united as Minneapolis. At this time, most of the city's southern border extended only as far as Franklin Avenue. The boundary was extended south to E. 38th Street in 1883, and to E. 54th Street in 1887. In 1884 the city occupied 35.3 square miles; by 1889 its boundaries had expanded to cover 53.3 square miles.

Farmers at the Urban Fringe

By 1853-1854, one observer noted “nearly every desirable location south of the city, and within the present boundaries,” was claimed by farmers and speculators, although the land was not available for legal recording. Proposed rumors of the reduction of the Fort Snelling Military Reservation caused excitement among the residents of St. Anthony and the new arrivals from the East in search of locations.

The first settlers were primarily from New England, although a surge of European immigration accompanied the eve of Minnesota statehood in 1858. One observer noted that in the spring of 1857, “every steamboat up the river was crowded with immigrants and speculators.” Except for intermittent steamboat traffic, however, there was no reliable transportation to connect to outlying markets, and most early farming was at subsistence level. The increasing urban population on the east and west banks of the Mississippi at St. Anthony Falls would create demand for market crops and dairy products, and the mills at the falls gained capacity to process and ship grain.

Among the early claim holders south of present-day E. Lake Street was Philander Prescott (1801-1862). A native of New York, Prescott arrived in Minnesota in 1819 and worked as a sutler's clerk at Fort Snelling. His varied career included stretches as a trader,

interpreter, and as a government farmer working with the Dakota. In 1853 he located a claim and constructed a frame house near present-day E. 45th Street and Minnehaha Avenue. Prescott died in 1862 during the Dakota conflict, and his Dakota wife Mary died in 1867. In 1910 the Greek Revival Style house was relocated to the northwest corner of E. 45th Street and Snelling Avenue. It was razed in 1980 and the site is now a vacant lot.



Philander Prescott House (ca. 1853), 4458 Snelling Avenue, in 1975. Razed. (MHS)

By 1870 farms along and near Minnehaha Avenue produced wheat, corn, barley and buckwheat crops, with their improved land averaging between 65 and 100 acres. Dairy herds typically numbered between two and four cows, suggesting that there was modest surplus.

Some farmers pre-empted their claims as early as 1852. In 1870, the household of Benjamin Parker (b. 1814) and Hannah Parker (b. 1811) west of Minnehaha Avenue included their two sons, an Irish domestic servant, and a farm laborer. Charles Brown (b. 1830) operated a farm east of Minnehaha Avenue. Like Parker, he was a native of Maine, as was his wife Abby (b. 1839). The Brown household in 1870 included six children and a farm worker, Charles Johnson. By 1880, they relocated to a farm in Grow Township, Anoka County.

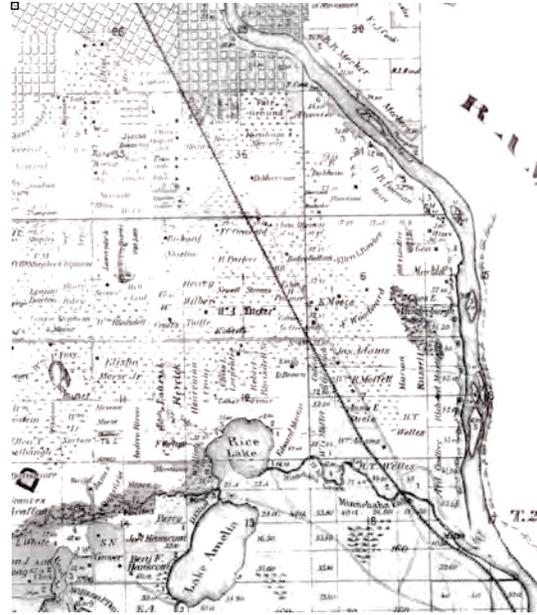
Edwin Burnell (1837-1907), another native of Maine, was Brown's neighbor near present-day Minnehaha Avenue and 32nd Street. A relative latecomer to the area, he arrived in 1867. Burnell, his wife Mary (b. 1833) and

their three children were among a few farmers who would remain in the area in later decades as gardeners and in other occupations. The now-raised Burnell House was at 3152 Minnehaha Avenue.

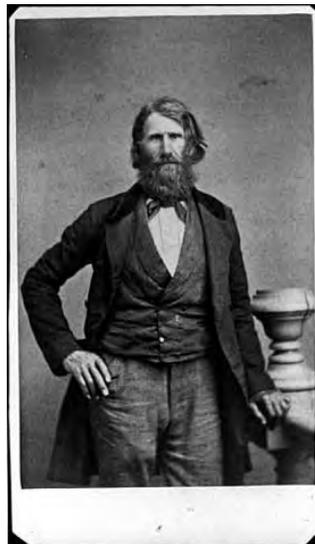
William (Willis) G. Moffett (1804-1875) and his son William R. Moffett (1831-1901) made adjacent land claims near present-day E. 42nd Street and Minnehaha. William G., a native of Kentucky as was his wife, Caroline, made his claim in 1852. The William G. Moffett House, which was at the northwest corner of E. 42nd Street and Minnehaha, was later used as the Danish Young People's Home. William R. was born in Illinois and his wife, Mary, was a native of New York.

Allan D. Libby (b. 1833), a native of Maine, was a pioneer farmer as well as grocer and dry goods dealer. His farm—where he was credited in 1881 as “having helped break the land where South Minneapolis now stands”—included the Minnehaha Avenue and E. Lake Street intersection. Libby taught in Hennepin county schools, served in the Civil War, and was the Clerk of Minneapolis Township in 1881.

To the southeast at Minnehaha Falls, Ard Godfrey farmed and operated a gristmill. Godfrey (1813-1894), a native of Orono, Maine, arrived in Minnesota in 1847 to work for Franklin Steele, the first private developer of the waterpower at St. Anthony Falls. Godfrey supervised the construction of Steele's mill and dam, and in 1849 also built a small frame house that survives today in Chute Square. In 1853, Godfrey and his family claimed land on the north side of Minnehaha Creek where he built a house and gristmill near a levee that became known as



The Minnehaha Avenue and CM&StP corridor is shown on the 1874 Map of Hennepin County, Minnesota (G.B. Wright) when the city limits extended only to Franklin Avenue. At the time, farmers occupied most of the area south of E. Lake Street and Minnehaha Avenue.



Ard Godfrey, ca. 1865. (MHS)

Godfrey's Point. Godfrey ended mill operation after it burned in 1863, but remained on the property until 1888. Minnehaha Park and the Minnesota Soldier's Home were built on portions of his property. Both are listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

One Family's Snapshot

Stephen Dutton (1830-1887) was an African-American farmer who rented land near the Burnells. A native of Alabama, in the summer of 1863 he registered for Civil War service in Brooklyn Township, near today's Brooklyn Park in Hennepin County. Traveling to Detroit, Michigan, he enlisted as a private in Company H of the 102nd Regiment of the United States Colored Infantry." The regiment had 1446 enrollees and fought across South Carolina, eastern Georgia, and Florida. The unit was organized from the 1st Michigan Colored Infantry in February 1864 and disbanded in September 1865. His service is memorialized at the African American Civil War Museum in Washington D.C.

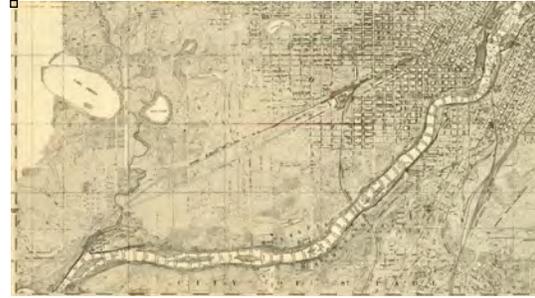
Returning from the war, by 1870 Dutton farmed near Minnehaha Avenue and E. Lake Street and produced 100 bushels of spring wheat on 20 acres. Dutton's wife, Irene (b. 1846) was a native of Mississippi. Their four children—John, Cora, Lizzie, and Mabel—were born in Minnesota. There were only 759 African-Americans in Minnesota in 1870, and many were concentrated in Mississippi River towns. The route of Dutton's journey to Minnesota is unknown; others had responded to advertisements offering jobs during Civil-War-era labor shortages.



Godfrey Mill, ca. 1888. (MHS)

By 1880 the Dutton family of five moved to 102 N. 3rd Street, in what is today the Minneapolis Warehouse District. Then it was an area of warehouses, factories, and apartment and boarding houses. Until about 1885, Stephen was a laborer at the Farnham and Lovejoy sawmill. Irene worked as a laundress. Their son, John, later of 1411 5th Street S., worked as a porter and clerk, and as a barber. In 1907 he tragically became the subject of newspaper headlines when he was shot and killed by a deranged man at the Richelieu Club at 206 S. 2nd Street. It is not known if his sisters remained in Minnesota as adults.

Pioneer farms like the Dutton's along the corridor were operating at the urban fringe, with market crops and dairy products for urban customers a significant part of their production. Some farming continued during the early 20th century, and was gradually discontinued as blocks and lots were platted along the Minnehaha Avenue streetcar route. In 1915, the four-block Minnehaha Terrace was platted between 42nd and 43rd Avenues. Promoters reminded potential buyers that it was in the “fastest growing part of the city . . . hundreds of acres east of Minnehaha Avenue that were utilized for the growing of grain and for garden purposes only a year or two ago are now almost solid blocks of good homes.”



Survey of the Mississippi River Chart No. 189, ca. 1900, shows the extent of real estate development and the largely agricultural land use south of Lake Street.

Minnehaha Terrace

NEAR THE FALLS

BIG LOT SALE TODAY JUNE 15th

Pick Your Lot Today

PRICES: \$295 TO \$695

TERMS: \$5.00 Down \$5 or \$10 Per Month According to Price

ON THE INTER-URBAN CAR LINE

Twelve blocks South of Lake Street. Schools and churches are within easy reach. The most famous of Minnesota's many beauty spots, Minnehaha Falls, is near by. The growth of the city is in this direction. This is not an idle dream. You know it's true as well as we do. Lots in Minnehaha Terrace are sold at a low value today. Tomorrow or the day after they'll be worth a good deal more.

Yes! These are city lots. Carline right beside them. Gas and electric light, sewer and water, arc lights, fire protection, street cars, graded city streets, schools and churches.

The owner makes no false home. The best property in the market today. All city improvements are here. Along Minnehaha Avenue the fastest growing part of the city. What additions have been sold out in two or three weeks. Residents of some east of Minnehaha Avenue that were utilized for the growing of grain and for garden purposes only a year or two ago are now almost solid blocks of good homes, with gas, water, gas, sidewalk and adjacent to the best and nearest to the city center.

On a Car Line—All Improvements Here—Twelve Blocks South of Lake Street. To get there take any Working Minnehaha car that stop at 42d St. St. You can drive. Come out today or early next day to see the water 42d St. St. Telephone Center 677. 4th St. 2411.

M. J. LAMBERTON COMPANY 430 Second Avenue N.P.

Minnehaha Terrace, Minneapolis Journal, June 15, 1915.

Industries, the Streetcar, and Residential and Commercial Development: 1905-1968

There is always hope for the little house on the full city lot.

Minneapolis Journal May 7, 1916

The creation of the Minneapolis Steel and Machinery Company in 1902 at E. Lake Street and Hiawatha Avenue spurred new housing construction. The city's streetcar network carried a stream of workers from the Longfellow and outlying neighborhoods.

Typically single-family, and of inexpensive frame construction of simple design, most new houses were built by or for area industrial workers. Sided in wood and placed on limestone or concrete foundations, the buildings typically had porches with simple posts and trim. The local real estate press called the smallest of these common houses "cottages," and encouraged their construction as an alternative to cheap tenement housing. In 1916, one writer noted,

Every city should encourage the building of cottages. Minneapolis is particularly adapted to this method of growth . . . there is no need here of crowding the working classes of those of small fortunes into apartment quarters . . . It would be vastly better for the civic welfare of the city that 34 families each live in a \$1,000 house on 34 city lots, than that 23 families live in a 34-apartment house costing \$34,000. There is always hope for the little house on the full city lot. It is more amendable to civilization than the huddled tenement.

"Cottage Sections in City Building Not Deplorable," *Minneapolis Journal* 7 May 1916

Small gable-roofed houses at 3120 and 3128 Minnehaha Avenue (1906) are representative of cottages popular after the turn of the century. Developers often built such houses in multiples; a single house from a nearby pair also survives at 3130 Minnehaha Avenue. All of these examples were built by F. C. Jones of Minneapolis, one of dozens of builders active in the area. Among larger frame houses and duplexes constructed along the corridor at the



3120 Minnehaha Ave. (1906).



Christian Lauritzen House, 3136 Minnehaha (1909).

turn of the century was that of blacksmith Christian Lauritzen, who built a well-detailed red brick house in 1909 at 3136 Minnehaha Lauritzen (1870-1942), a Dane who arrived in the U.S. in 1893, operated a now-razed blacksmith shop at 3012 Minnehaha just south of E. Lake Street.

After 1910, the single-family bungalow was a very common house type along Minnehaha and Snelling Avenues. With its efficient plans and modest size, the bungalow was well suited to compact lots. Here and in the new neighborhoods stretching to the river, builders such as Edmund G. Walton promoted affordable, well-built bungalows. More spacious lots and larger houses were typically found on corner locations and near E. Minnehaha Parkway.

Writing of the development of the Longfellow area, one historian notes that during the first two decades of residential growth after 1900, “many new young families built small starter homes at the back of their lot. As their family grew and their income increased, these families tore down the “back-lot” house and built a new more substantial home at the front of the lot. Not all of the back lot houses were torn down. Many of them are still standing today.”¹ There are only a few examples of such back-lot houses in the study area. Examples of very small houses typical of back-lot construction can also be seen on Snelling Avenue, but most are placed along the standard setback line.

A number of duplexes and small apartment buildings were erected along Minnehaha Avenue, as well as a few large single-family dwellings. The single-family house on its small lot, however, is the primary historic building type that defines neighborhood scale, and contrasts with the colossal scale of the grain elevators edging Hiawatha Avenue.



Two examples of bungalows taken right after construction, ca. 1910; 4210 Snelling, top; 4225 Snelling, bottom. (Confer Collection, Hennepin History Museum).



Examples of multi-family and larger dwellings, taken soon after their construction, ca. 1905: top, 3032 Minnehaha Ave. (razed); bottom, 3563-67 Minnehaha Ave. (Confer Collection, Hennepin History Museum).

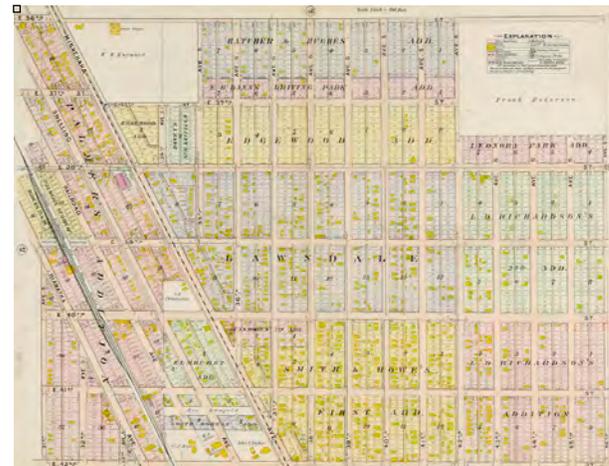
Plant expansion at firms such as Minneapolis Steel and Machinery and its successor, Minneapolis Moline, did not always result in permanent new housing. When Minneapolis Steel and Machinery expanded its workforce to produce World War I wartime munitions, it brought a need for boarding accommodations in existing area homes, rather than new housing construction. Production fluctuations at Moline had a great impact on the community along Minnehaha Avenue and far beyond. In 1918, for example, an explosion at Minneapolis Steel and Machinery Company immediately put 1,500 men out of work, and jobs were found for them locally as well as at shipyards in Duluth and at a munitions plant in Stillwater.

Community Conditions in the 1920s

During the mid-1920s, the construction of cheap housing in Minneapolis and its proximity to industry attracted the attention of the growing field of social work. In 1926, the Women's Cooperative Alliance Inc., a Minneapolis social service agency, studied the environmental causes of juvenile delinquency in the "South District," which encompassed Wards 7 and 12 including portions of the present study area. Housing and health conditions in this district were scrutinized. Much of the study's negative findings were focused north of E. Lake Street, where housing near Minneapolis Steel and Machinery and other industries was in poor condition and much of it was in rental use. The study noted, however, that the residents between E. Lake, Hiawatha Avenue, Minnehaha Park, and the river were a "thrifty, home-owning group. Pride in ownership is shown by the development of lawns and gardens, and the setting out of trees." The study's author praised the area's lack of commercialized entertainments, except for the Falls Theatre at 40th and Minnehaha and dance halls and poolrooms on E. Lake Street.



Looking north from E. 36th Street to Minnehaha Avenue in 1910, above and top. These houses were built on Palmer's Addition. (MHS)



Development south of E. 36th Street (Minneapolis Real Estate Board, Atlas of Minneapolis, 1914).

The author speculated that gambling might be occurring in small stores along Minnehaha Avenue that were “hangouts.” Finally, the author noted, “there is some alleged liquor manufacture scattered throughout the district.”

After World War II, vacant lots along Minnehaha and Snelling Avenues were infilled with single-family houses and double bungalows. Typically these buildings were one-story, with hip roofs and stucco exteriors. A number of dwellings, including remnants of 19th-century farmsteads, were razed for small office buildings and gasoline stations and other commercial construction. In the 1960s and 1970s, a number of single-family houses were replaced with large apartment buildings. 3112 Minnehaha (1965), erected as a 17-unit building, is exemplary of the three-story, brick-faced structures popular with apartment developers. Its shingled mansard roof is typical of many apartment buildings constructed during the 1960s.

Minnehaha Avenue and Commercial Development

The commercial district at E. 27th and E. Lake Streets was supplemented by a nearly continuous zone of Minnehaha Avenue businesses that provided groceries, drugstores, barbers, hardware, shoe repair, cafes, and gasoline and other automotive services. Automotive product retailers and gasoline stations were also erected along the length of Hiawatha Avenue. The southward progress of development along Minnehaha followed its streetcar-oriented housing development. By 1920, there were 11 grocers between 3460 and 4461 Minnehaha Avenue. There were also two hardware stores and four meat markets. By 1920, each of the 14 intersections between E. 33rd and E. 48th Streets had at least one retail shop or small business block. Several intersections had a block-long district of stores, most notably between E. 37th and E. 38th Streets, where a dentist and doctor were among professional offices. The Falls Theatre was located at 3954 Minnehaha Avenue.



An east-facing aerial of the 3000 and 3100 blocks of Hiawatha, Snelling, and Minnehaha Avenues (1928) shows that industrial buildings and single-family dwellings were mixed along the three streets.



3112 Minnehaha Ave. (1965), in 2008.



Minnehaha Avenue at E. 41st Street in 1954. (MHS)

The businesses comprising the Minnehaha Avenue commercial corners were housed in a diverse collection of structures, including converted dwellings as well as buildings erected by their owners. Those built as stores and shops were typically one and two stories, and of frame construction clad in brick or stucco. Rental office or apartments were provided on the upper floor of many of the two-story units, with some owners or renters living above their businesses. In 1930, Minnehaha Hardware and Paint at 3740 Minnehaha, for example, housed Minnie Johnson and her family on the second floor above the business. She worked as a housekeeper. Grocer Ed Bacon lived above his grocery store at 3736 Minnehaha Avenue.

The repeal of Prohibition in 1933 brought a new group of taverns to the avenue. By 1955, they included Herb's Inn (3675 Minnehaha), Minnehaha Gardens (3739 Minnehaha) and Krider's Bar (3960 Minnehaha).

Although E. Lake Street provided a number of halls suitable for activities of Masonic and other fraternal orders, meeting facilities were also provided by Minnehaha Hall at 4008 Minnehaha Avenue and the Hiawatha Improvement Association Hall at 45th Street and Snelling Avenue. The improvement association completed its new building in 1908, and members provided labor and materials. The organization took action on "matters pertaining to the welfare of the neighborhood." Intrusion of railroads into the neighborhood and dangerous grade crossings, street car service and lighting, and fire protection were among agenda items, and were concerns shared by many elsewhere in the city. At its opening, the new building was called a "temple to be devoted exclusively to the 'city beautiful' idea."



Minnehaha Hardware and Paint, 3740 Minnehaha, in 1954 (top, MHS), and in 2008 (bottom).

The Streetcar and Minnehaha Avenue

By the mid-1850s, Minnehaha Falls were a popular destination for recreational excursions for area residents. Until 1884, the falls could be reached from downtown Minneapolis by carriage, wagon, or passenger service of the CM&StP between downtown Minneapolis and Minnehaha Falls Station. Between 1884 and 1891, the steam-powered Motor Line (Minneapolis, Lyndale & Minnetonka Railway) also offered east-west service along E. 37th Street to Minnehaha Avenue en route to the falls. Horsecar service provided by the Twin City Rapid Transit Company was extended from downtown Minneapolis to 27th Avenue S. in 1884, and reached E. Lake Street in 1886.

A modern streetcar system aided the growth of area industries and businesses and opened the area to residential development. In 1891, the horsecar line on E. 27th Street was electrified. It followed Minnehaha Avenue as far as E. 37th Street in 1890 and reached Minnehaha Falls in 1891. In 1905 an extension was routed directly to Fort Snelling. In 1905, the Lake Street streetcar line was extended east along E. Lake Street and across the Lake Street-Marshall Avenue Bridge opened in 1889.

Minnehaha Avenue was incrementally improved from an Indian trail to a territorial road connecting Fort Snelling and St. Anthony, and then as an automobile and streetcar corridor. In 1870, the first major improvement was led by lawyer and real estate dealer Franklin Griswold. He insisted on the widening of the avenue, and the planting of trees to replace a rail fence. He challenged a state statute prohibiting county roads wider than four rods (66 feet). Because there was no park board at this time, appeal for construction funds was made directly to property owners. In 1910, one writer remembered:



Minnehaha Avenue at E. 37th St., ca. 1910. (MHS)



E. 45th St. and Minnehaha Ave., 1934. (MHS)

It was a long time ago that Mr. Griswold started agitation to establish two rows of trees on both sides of the old county and territorial road to Fort Snelling by way of Minnehaha Falls . . . Mr. Griswold got the people to stand for the expense, and the plan was to have maples next to the street and elms next to the lot lines, the elms being more likely to live.

*"Works Hard for Wider Streets,"
Minneapolis Journal 15 Mar 1910, 9.*

The creation of Minnehaha Park in 1883 and streetcar line construction provided impetus for Minnehaha Avenue paving as well as additional tree planting. The avenue was promoted as a bicycle path in the early 20th century, along with Minnehaha Boulevard (Parkway), and Lyndale and Portland Avenues. The Minneapolis Cycle Path Association was formed to oversee the building of maintenance of the municipal paths.

Despite the popularity of the streetcar along Minnehaha, the avenue was also a prime route for gasoline filling stations. By 1950, more than a dozen stations lined its length between Lake Street and E. 46th Street.



*Frank's Mobil Service Gas Station, 4601-4605
Minnehaha Avenue, 1956.*