



10. CORRIDOR CHARACTER

OVERVIEW

This chapter provides an inventory and analysis of elements that contribute to the overall “character” of the Penn Avenue corridor, including physical, institutional, and programmatic assets. Community character is addressed in this chapter at four different scales:

- The existing streetscape discussion inventories physical assets and amenities (sidewalks, lighting, seating, bus benches/shelters, wayfinding, street trees, etc.) that are present in the public realm along Penn Avenue.
- The existing intersections analysis looks more closely at Penn Avenue around key intersections and includes a summary of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.
- The corridor assets section provides a broader inventory and analysis of assets along the corridor (encompassing the area two blocks on either side of Penn).
- The neighborhood assets section addresses assets located off of the Penn Avenue corridor, but within the surrounding neighborhoods.

COMMUNITY INPUT: COMMUNITY CHARACTER

Parks and Green Space: Teens appreciated the recreation centers (especially in the winter), but asked for more soccer fields and basketball courts, places to hang out with other teens. Immigrant teens wanted places they could be with other immigrants. Current park users like the programs, recreational opportunities for children, and indoor and outdoor sports options. Many people asked for more recreational opportunities and programs for youth in the summer and year round, as well as more playgrounds for children. To access the parks, many current park users live close by and get there by foot, and a number asked for better sidewalks and walkways within the parks. For those who go to other parks, they typically get there by car (and wanted roads without potholes). Those bicycling wanted more and better bike lanes, bike paths in the parks, and one family wanted information about Nice Ride to get to the parks more easily. Teens asked for community gardens, flower gardens, cleaner parks, and better security.

As noted in other sections, there is a great deal of concern among teens and families (especially but not solely immigrants) that it’s not safe to get to parks in this neighborhood, nor are the parks themselves safe for young people or many adults – so most people we encountered outside the parks don’t go at all. Field crews found park use almost nil at less-developed parks like Bryn Mawr Meadows and Bassett’s Creek, and very low elsewhere except at locations with recreation centers and other programming; even there, however, they found almost no adults at all, nor immigrant youth or adults.

Park and green space users said these parks would be more appealing if the playground and field equipment and facilities were more updated and better maintained, provided different options for teens and younger children (like

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COMMUNITY INPUT: COMMUNITY CHARACTER (CONTINUED)

separate pools), and offered more opportunities for adults and seniors. A number of people cited the need for better lighting, more security and safety patrols, more staff, and better supervision.

Leisure Time: In their free time, both youth and adults say they spend time with friends and family most often at each other's homes or at restaurants. Immigrant families and youth said they explicitly avoided the Penn Avenue area for gatherings because they are afraid of being hurt or harassed, and instead go to restaurants and the homes of friends and relatives in the nearby suburbs, Northeast Minneapolis, or South Minneapolis. Others want movie theaters, arts and entertainment venues, more and better local restaurants, fitness clubs and classes, and specialty shops.

Neighborhood improvements: Here the focus was again on making the neighborhood safer, friendlier, cleaner, and stronger. Less violence, "no bad people on the streets," "more stuff for kids to do," and safe places to be with others are critical. Many people mentioned needing to change the negative perception of North Minneapolis, while at the same time recognizing that the reality many residents experience likely has to change first.

Lots of residents talked about filling vacant lots, sprucing up housing, lawns, and neighborhoods overall, improving lighting, sidewalks, and bus service.

Residents want a vibrant, active community that offers places and spaces where adults and children want to be together with friends and family, at community centers, participating in events and activities, and patronizing local parks, restaurants, and businesses. They want their neighborhoods to be safe, clean, attractive, interesting – as well as accessible and affordable. They want to meet their routine and special needs in the neighborhood with more variety, choices, and opportunities of all kinds.

Safety: In neighborhoods and parks, and at bus stops, common concerns related to lighting – more frequent, brighter, and pedestrian-level lighting on sidewalks and trails, and especially lighting that comes on sooner, such as at dusk rather than full dark.

In the neighborhoods, teens and parents noted a wide variety of safety concerns including prostitution, kids out alone late at night, robberies, and muggings. One teen said, "The crime pushes me out." Resident suggestions included prohibiting smoking on the streets, getting the delinquents off the streets, limiting the number of liquor stores and bars, and eliminating sex offenders in the area. One teen said, "It's hard to be independent because I need to use Penn to do a lot of things and I can't because after dark people start doing bad stuff." Another talked about what would make him want to come back as an adult: "There would be less violence, more jobs, better economy, cleaner and more businesses."

For parks, safety concerns included fights, gun activity/shootings, racism, and bicyclists riding too fast. People suggested lots of solutions to these issues, including security cameras; more police squads and bike patrols, especially at dusk and after dark; more staff, adult supervision, and lifeguards; and a variety of infrastructure improvements including fences, sturdier rails along the water, taller fences at fields to protect people from balls, cleaner swimming water, and more bike routes for safer passage. One group also thought that basketball courts attract increased crime so they should be eliminated if the police are not able to reduce crime.

At the bus stops, people were concerned about fast and high-volume automobile traffic, and wanted safer and better pedestrian crossings. They were also concerned about panhandling, harassment, and loitering at bus stops, and wanted handicapped accessible waiting areas. They also suggested more security at bus stops including cameras, emergency response buttons, and more police patrols. Residents also suggested that smoking be prohibited within a certain distance of bus stops, as well as trash receptacles (but not too close to the stop). Transit users also asked for drivers who didn't discriminate against them, as well as drivers who are more strict with the people they let on the bus.

EXISTING STREETScape

The streetscape along Penn Avenue is not a pedestrian-friendly environment. Included within the typical cross section of the Penn Avenue public right-of-way are two 12-foot travel lanes, two 10-foot parking lanes (including curb and gutter) and a five-foot sidewalk on either side of the roadway. In many cases utility poles, street signs, bus seating/shelters, utility cabinets, or street signals reduce the functional width of the sidewalk and make the introduction of additional streetscape amenities more challenging. The tree canopy along the corridor is fragmented north of 34th Avenue and almost non-existent south of 34th Avenue. While the roadway on Penn Avenue is well-lit for vehicular purposes, pedestrian-scaled lighting is very limited. Street furnishings (seating, trash receptacles, bike racks, etc.) are limited throughout the corridor and are concentrated at key nodes. Wayfinding signage and district identity elements are limited to just a few key intersections (Cedar Lake Road and Lowry Avenue). The following is a more complete inventory and analysis of the corridor streetscape and its components.

Seating

Generally, seating throughout the entire corridor is minimally available although concentrations do occur at a few key intersections. Seating related to transit stops is lacking throughout the corridor, while outdoor seating tied to businesses only happens near the ends of the corridor (44th Avenue and Cedar Lake Road). Seating distribution in the corridor occurs as follows:

- Concentrations at Lowry Avenue, West Broadway Avenue, Plymouth Avenue, and Cedar Lake Road.
- Transit-related seating at 49th Avenue, 44th Avenue, Dowling Avenue, 36th Avenue, 35th Avenue, Oak Park Avenue, and Highway 55
- Seating related to local businesses at 44th Avenue and Cedar Lake Road

The lack of seating throughout the corridor, especially at transit stops, has created an uninviting and uncomfortable environment for pedestrians and transit riders. Concentrations of quality outdoor seating, such as those at the Lowry Avenue intersection, are assets the corridor can build upon to provide adequate seating along the corridor at other key areas. Providing more seating in key areas along the corridor will increase pedestrian comfort, promote a safer environment, and provide an amenity to local businesses, transit riders, and pedestrians.



Streetscape with pavers, street trees, and pedestrian lighting at Penn and Lowry



Existing seatwall and benches at bus stop at Penn and West Broadway



Existing bench at Penn and Plymouth

Trash receptacles, planters, mail boxes, newsstands, and other pedestrian elements

Pedestrian amenities (those that enhance the pedestrian experience) are lacking along the corridor. Trash receptacles are the most widely and evenly distributed, with good coverage from West Broadway Avenue to 44th Avenue, and at least one receptacle at the other key intersections. Other streetscape amenities are limited throughout the corridor. Concentrations of these exist at:

- 44th Avenue, 34th Avenue to 39th Avenue, West Broadway Avenue, Plymouth Avenue to Oak Park Avenue, Highway 55 to Glenwood Avenue, and Cedar Lake Road

Newsstands and mail boxes (things that people frequently walk to) are limited along the corridor. The Lowry Avenue intersection is the exception. At this location, recent streetscape improvements include some of these amenities.

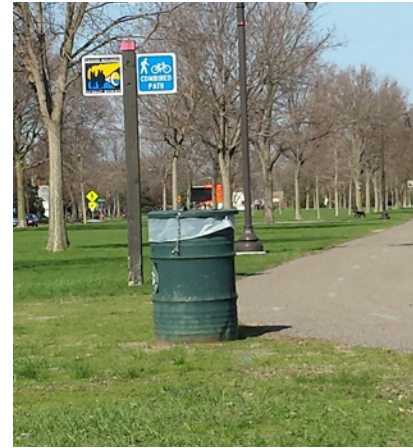
Bike parking and share stations

Bike parking (BP) and bike share stations (BS) are lacking and poorly distributed throughout the corridor. Lowry Avenue is the only intersection that provides both adequate bike parking and a bike share station.

The following intersections include bike parking and/or bike share facilities:

- 44th Avenue (BP), Lowry Avenue (BS/BP), West Broadway Avenue (BP), Plymouth Avenue (BS), Glenwood Avenue (BP)

The Lowry Avenue intersection, with both bike share and parking facilities, serves as a strong example for the rest of the corridor in terms of bike amenities. As shown below, the bike parking at Lowry is covered and integrated with the bus stop shelter. Opportunities for improving bike-related facilities exist near transit stations, businesses, and concentrated areas of higher housing density. Other bike share stations near the Penn Avenue corridor are at West Broadway/Logan (4 blocks east of Penn) and Glenwood/Morgan (3 blocks east of Penn).



Existing trash receptacle in high activity area



Existing covered bike parking as part of bus shelter at Penn and Lowry



Existing bike share station at West Broadway and Logan



Existing Pedestrian signal



Sidewalk gap and obstructions along Crystal Lake Cemetery and Penn Avenue

Pedestrian signals and signs

Key intersections along the corridor are equipped with traffic signals that have pedestrian crossing signals. Some intersections also have pedestrian crosswalk pavement markings while others do not or the pavement markings have worn off significantly and may be in need of maintenance. There are currently no pedestrian crossing warning signs on Penn Avenue. Pedestrian crossing warning signs are intentionally not used at all intersections. They are typically only used at pedestrian-only traffic signals or specific locations where crossings have been employed.

Intersections at 44th Avenue, West Broadway Avenue and Highway 55 are further complicated by their unusually large size or irregular road geometry.

Sidewalks

Although sidewalks exist along most of the corridor, the narrow right-of-way results in the sidewalk placed right up against the curb (road edge). Several types of obstructions, such as power poles, signage poles, light poles, utility structures, and site furnishings fall within the sidewalk and further constrict the sidewalk width in many areas. Significant gaps in the sidewalk system exist from Dowling Avenue north to 42nd Avenue, along Crystal Lake Cemetery, and a segment along the west side of Osseo Road. Sidewalk gaps, as shown in photo to the left, limit access to bus stops as well as space for people to wait for buses.

There are a number of urban cemeteries in Minneapolis that have sidewalks along their edges, including Lakewood Cemetery, Pioneers and Soldiers Memorial Cemetery, and St. Mary’s Cemetery, all in South Minneapolis; St. Anthony Cemetery in Northeast Minneapolis; and Roselawn Cemetery in St. Paul. An attractive precedent is the tree-lined Dupont Avenue/ King’s Highway sidewalk along Lakewood Cemetery.

Bus stops

The Penn Avenue corridor is served by multiple Metro Transit bus routes. Route 19 is the study area’s main north-south route north of Highway 55. South of Highway 55, Route 9 runs along Penn between Glenwood Avenue and Cedar Lake Road. There are also eight other routes that intersect the study area. Existing bus stop facilities range from a bus stop sign, a bench, a hard surface waiting area off the sidewalk, to a covered bus shelter. There are currently very few (seven) bus shelters and benches (six) in the Penn Avenue corridor. Many existing bus stops consist of only a bus stop sign with no delineated customer waiting area. Since sidewalks on Penn Avenue are typically right next to the curb, there is often no buffer between the people waiting for a bus and the vehicle traffic.

Lighting

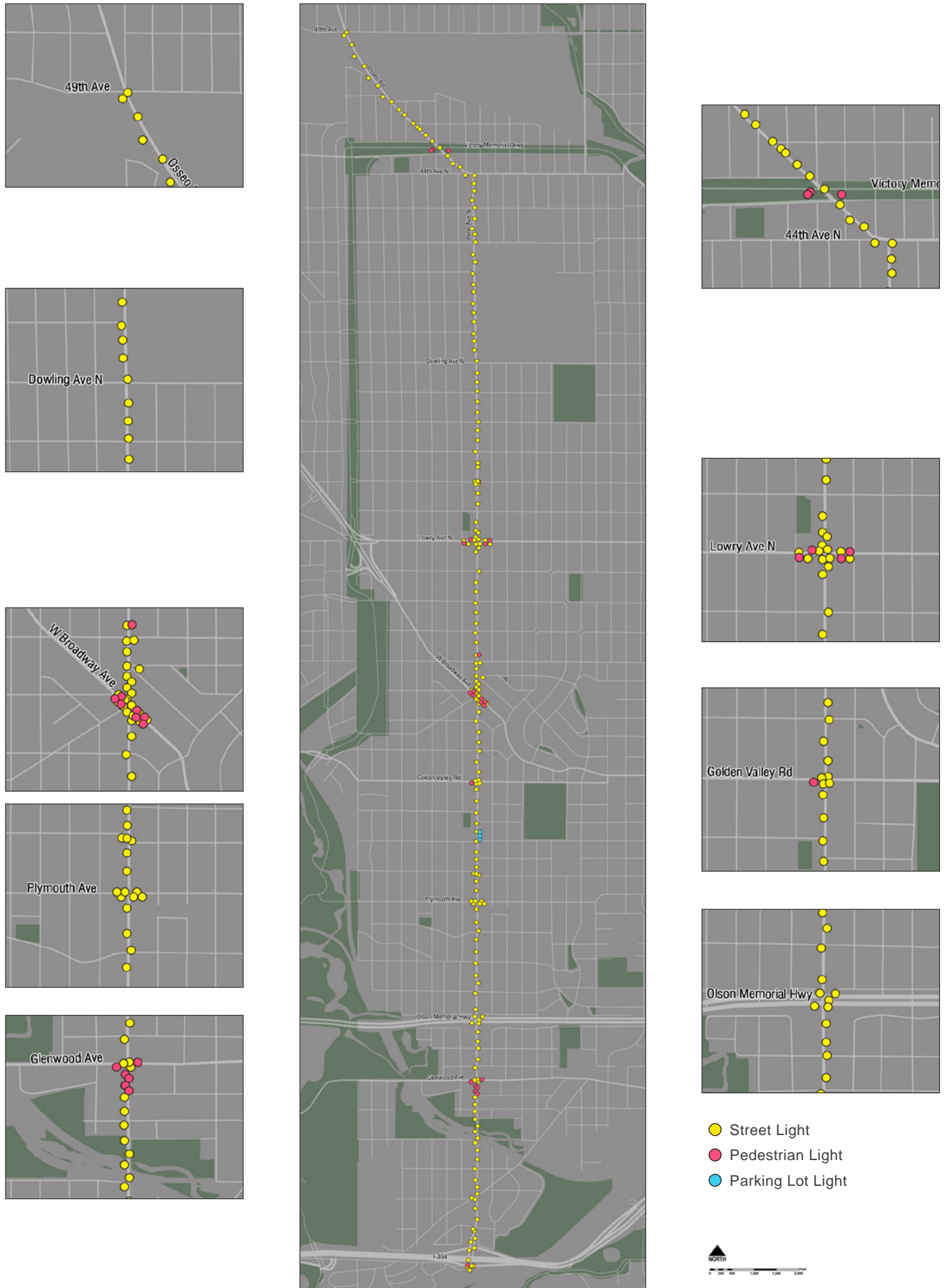
Street lighting along Penn Avenue is well distributed and adequate for vehicular purposes. However, pedestrian-scale lighting is limited throughout the corridor, creating dark areas along many sidewalks. Pedestrian safety at key intersections along the corridor is a major concern and should be addressed in the alternatives phase of the project. The Minneapolis Pedestrian Master Plan and the Minneapolis Lighting Policy designate Penn Avenue as a Pedestrian Priority Corridor. As such, it is a priority location for pedestrian scale lighting.

Signage and wayfinding:

Signage and wayfinding is lacking throughout the corridor. Some concentrations of wayfinding and identity signage exist at Cedar Lake Road, Plymouth Avenue, Lowry Avenue and Victory Memorial Parkway.

The branding and wayfinding signage at Lowry Avenue and Cedar Lake Road provides an example for other key intersections along the corridor. There are numerous opportunities along the corridor to guide users to local parks, institutions, public spaces, and places of

FIGURE 10-1: PENN AVENUE CORRIDOR LIGHTING INVENTORY





Pedestrian scale lighting



Pedestrian scale lighting



Existing identity signage



High quality street tree



Security camera

interest. Special consideration for wayfinding/identity signage should be given to areas where transit lines intersect, or where there is a concentration of pedestrian activity, or notable destinations.

Tree Canopy

There are intermittent segments of high quality tree canopy along Penn Avenue, but overall there are large and frequent gaps in the tree canopy system throughout the corridor. These gaps exist for one of two reasons: the road right-of-way is too narrow to provide tree planting or previously existing tree canopy has been destroyed by the Emerald Ash Borer and/or the May 22, 2011 tornado. Generally, street trees do not exist within the public right-of-way south of 34th Avenue due to the narrow dimensions of the right-of-way.

Security Cameras

Existing police security cameras in the corridor are concentrated between Lowry Avenue and West Broadway Avenue. Locations for additional security cameras are proposed at key intersections from 44th Avenue north to 34th Avenue and from Golden Valley Road to Cedar Lake Road. The locations of existing and proposed security cameras include:

Existing security camera locations:

- Lowry Avenue
- 30th Avenue
- 29th Avenue
- 27th Avenue
- 26th Avenue
- 25th Avenue
- West Broadway Avenue

Additional security camera locations to consider:

- 44th Avenue
- 42nd Avenue
- Dowling Ave
- 36th Avenue
- 34th Avenue
- Golden Valley Road
- Plymouth Avenue
- Highway 55
- Glenwood Avenue
- Cedar Lake Road

The security cameras already in place along Penn Avenue act as a deterrent to criminal activity and are viewed as an asset by the community. The suggested additional security camera locations along the corridor represent an opportunity to expand a surveillance program that increases the visibility of problem properties and improves safety to other areas of concern identified by the community.

EXISTING INTERSECTIONS

As previously mentioned, the Penn Avenue corridor is primarily a residential corridor, interspersed with mixed-use intersections. The Penn Avenue intersections are significant because they provide important places for the community to come together and shop, dine, work, entertain, learn, worship and play. They provide opportunities for housing density and variety, placemaking and community identity.

The following analysis includes a compilation of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) of each significant intersection along the Penn Avenue corridor. The components of the SWOT analysis are defined as follows:

STRENGTHS: Characteristics of the intersection that give it an advantage over others

WEAKNESSES: Characteristics that place the intersection at a disadvantage relative to others

OPPORTUNITIES: Elements that the intersection could exploit to its advantage

THREATS: Elements in the environment that could cause trouble for the intersection

The SWOT analysis is based on field observations, mapping analysis, community input, and review of existing plans and studies. The results of the SWOT analysis can be used to refine the key issues and set priorities for each intersection as a basis for developing and evaluating alternatives for redevelopment, placemaking initiatives, and public realm improvements.

FIGURE 10-2: PENN AVENUE AND 49TH AVENUE



INTERSECTION ANALYSIS: PENN AVENUE AND 49TH AVENUE

Strengths

- Humboldt Industrial employment center with manufacturing, construction, wholesale trade, warehousing, transportation, finance/insurance, and retail jobs
- ADA-compliant sidewalk ramps/truncated domes
- Bike lanes along 49th Avenue
- Signalized intersection
- Decorative railing at surface parking lot
- Existing bus stops north of 49th Avenue
- Truck access
- Rail access
- Ryan Lake, including fishing opportunities
- Victory Prairie/Dog Park

Weaknesses

- Lacks compact development pattern
- Density and variety of housing does not meet desired transit station area levels
- Vacant and under-utilized sites
- Surface parking lot at southeast quadrant
- Lacks district identity elements – banners, signage/wayfinding
- Lack of street trees/plantings

- Gaps in the sidewalk system
- Lack of bus shelters
- Sidewalks in poor condition
- Lack of pedestrian lighting
- Poorly marked pedestrian crossings
- Lacks security cameras
- Low transit ridership

Opportunities

- Create a more vibrant, safe and identifiable intersection through redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties
- Streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, district identity, and street furnishings will create a more desirable public realm
- Opportunity to create a sense of entry/gateway into the City of Minneapolis
- Develop retail to serve needs of area employees
- Additional security cameras may enhance perception of safety and deter crime
- Business incubator site, warehouse/mixed use with green energy
- Coordinate redevelopment with Brooklyn Park

Threats

- Vacant sites and boarded buildings may attract unwanted activities in the area (crime, loitering, etc.) and send a negative message to residents, visitors, and potential investors
- Vacant site(s) at this intersection have been identified as having a high potential for contamination, which could make redevelopment more challenging

FIGURE 10-3: PENN AVENUE AND 44TH AVENUE



INTERSECTION ANALYSIS: PENN AVENUE AND 44TH AVENUE

Strengths

- Identifiable destination restaurants (Victory 44 and Emily’s) serve corridor neighborhood residents and attract regional customers
- Traditional neighborhood commercial node
- Pedestrian-scaled buildings
- Bike racks provided
- On-street parking
- Well marked pedestrian crossings and reconstructed/enhanced intersection
- ADA-compliant sidewalk ramps/truncated domes
- Signalized intersection
- Strong transit ridership
- Existing bus stops with connections to Route 5, 721, and 724 – key transit node
- Existing bus shelter on 44th Avenue, eastbound, although its location partially blocks the sidewalk
- Intersection is being improved as part of County and City projects in 2014/2015 (roadway, pedestrian, signal, and bike lane improvements)
- Overall the intersection operates with an acceptable level of service for traffic
- Area is safe
- Walkable corridor - commercial areas on 42nd Avenue and Thomas Avenue
- Camden Farmers Market

Weaknesses

- Limited land to support redevelopment
- Lack of street wall continuity – gaps created by surface parking lots
- Confusing intersection – intersecting streets compound the problem
- Lack of street trees/plantings
- Sidewalks in poor condition
- Lack of pedestrian lighting
- Lacks district identity elements
- Overhead power lines dominate
- Just one bus shelter within node, whose location significantly blocks the pedestrian zone
- No sidewalks on Penn at the southbound bus stop
- Significant northbound stacking of cars during the evening commuter peak period
- Critical crash rate is exceeded at this intersection indicating improvements are needed
- Poorly lit street/sidewalks
- Sidewalk gap along south side of Osseo Road

Opportunities

- Opportunity site at end of Penn Avenue – potential landmark structure/development
- Build on the success of the existing restaurants
- Strengthen mix of uses
- Enhance marketing/branding of node
- Infill development could complete the street wall continuity
- Enhanced pedestrian crossings would improve the safety and quality of the pedestrian experience
- Additional security cameras may enhance perception of safety and deter crime
- Streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, district identity, and street furnishings will create a more desirable public realm
- Intersection improvements planned for 2014/2015 should mitigate safety issues and improve northbound stacking of cars
- Strengthen node's connections to Victory Memorial Drive
- Planned BRT Station on Osseo Road

Threats

- Current confusing intersection and poor pedestrian environment create a threat to the safety of visitors and residents
- Limited right-of-way impacts size of planned BRT stations

FIGURE 10-4: PENN AVENUE AND DOWLING AVENUE



INTERSECTION ANALYSIS: PENN AVENUE AND DOWLING AVENUE

Strengths

- Crystal Lake Cemetery green space/park-like atmosphere
- Dowling Avenue connection to Interstate 94
- Signalized intersection
- Well marked pedestrian crossings
- ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps/truncated domes
- Street trees
- Gas station
- Existing bus stops
- Overall the intersection operates with an acceptable level of service for traffic
- No car stacking issues during the commuter peak periods

Weaknesses

- Density and variety of housing does not meet desired transit station area levels
- Vacant site on the southeast corner
- Lacks district identity elements – banners, signage/wayfinding
- Lacks adequate street furnishings – seating, trash receptacles, bike racks
- Lacks pedestrian lighting along Penn Ave
- Narrow sidewalks located adjacent to curb creates an uncomfortable pedestrian environment
- Lacks adequate space for transit customer waiting shelter

- Traffic on Dowling Avenue can be fast moving due to direct access to Interstate 94
- Limited redevelopment opportunities
- Penn Avenue lacks sidewalk along the cemetery side (east) of the street, as well as north side of Dowling Avenue, which is an important connection to Folwell Park
- Lacks security cameras
- Critical crash rate is exceeded at this intersection indicating improvements are needed
- Site access immediately adjacent to the intersection causes friction with Penn Avenue

Opportunities

- Traffic calming through design (i.e. bumpouts, roundabout, etc.)
- Redevelopment of vacant site on southeast corner
- Streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, district identity, and street furnishings will create a more desirable public realm
- Cemetery frontage along Penn Avenue could be explored for a shady sidewalk/path, public art, corner plazas, etc.
- Additional security cameras may enhance perception of safety and deter crime
- Planned BRT Station- both northbound and southbound nearside bumpouts

Threats

- Easy access to the freeway provides criminals a convenient way to get into and out of the adjacent neighborhoods
- Vacant site may attract unwanted activities in the area (crime, loitering, etc.) and send a negative message to residents, visitors, and potential investors
- Lack of a business cluster and little potential to create one
- Not much room for geometric improvements within the curb-to-curb distance that exists
- Limited right-of-way impacts size of planned BRT stations unless bumpouts are added

FIGURE 10-5: PENN AVENUE AND LOWRY AVENUE



INTERSECTION ANALYSIS: PENN AVENUE AND LOWRY AVENUE

Strengths

- Compact, mixed-use development pattern on the south side of Lowry Avenue
- Successful neighborhood serving businesses, including North End Hardware, The Lowry Café, The Goddess of Glass and Friends, Aldi, Subway, Family Dollar, laundromat, liquor store, and others
- Lowry Post Office
- Lowry Avenue streetscape improvements
- Bike racks and Nice Ride facilities
- Parking supplies located to rear of buildings
- Public facilities/amenities – Cleveland Park, Lucy Craft Laney Community School, post office
- New playground at Lucy Craft Laney School
- North End Community Garden
- Existing security cameras
- Well marked pedestrian crossings
- Existing bus stops with connections to Route 32
- Existing bus shelters on Penn Avenue and Lowry Avenue
- High transit ridership
- District identity elements – monuments along Lowry Avenue
- Newly planted street trees
- On-street parking
- Significant off-street parking supply available

- ADA compliant sidewalk ramps/truncated domes
- Decorative railings provided to screen surface parking
- Signalized intersection
- Bike lanes along Lowry Avenue
- Overall the intersection operates with an acceptable level of service for traffic
- No car stacking issues during the commuter peak periods

Weaknesses

- Several vacant sites, particularly those on the north side of Lowry Avenue
- Lacks pedestrian lighting along Penn Avenue
- Lacks seating/benches along Penn Avenue
- Poor connections to Cleveland Park
- Lacks district identity elements along Penn Avenue
- Low housing density, which does not meet desired transit station area level, limits “eyes on the street” at the intersection, and limits foot traffic to support local businesses
- Critical crash rate is exceeded at this intersection indicating improvements are needed

Opportunities

- Vacant sites owned by Hennepin County present opportunities for redevelopment/infill
- Build on success of and complement existing businesses by recruiting new businesses through redevelopment
- Strengthen retail mix
- Create a more vibrant, safe, and identifiable node through redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties
- Placemaking opportunities could be created through redevelopment of vacant sites and by creating better physical and visual connections to Cleveland Park
- Return to historic success as a neighborhood business node
- Streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, district identity, and street furnishings will create a more desirable public realm
- Enhanced pedestrian crossings would improve the safety and quality of the pedestrian experience
- Intersection will continue to operate with an acceptable level of service for traffic under 20 year projections; indicates capacity for potential development and increased density
- Planned BRT Station

Threats

- Vacant sites and boarded buildings may attract unwanted activities in the area (crime, loitering, etc.) and send a negative message to residents, visitors, and potential investors
- Vacant site(s) at this intersection have been identified as having a high potential for contamination, which could make redevelopment more challenging
- Development market is weakened by competition from surrounding commercial nodes, including West Broadway Avenue, other Penn Avenue nodes, Brookdale, Robbinsdale, and Crystal
- Concern about resources/funding

FIGURE 10-6: PENN AVENUE AND WEST BROADWAY AVENUE



INTERSECTION ANALYSIS: PENN AVENUE AND WEST BROADWAY AVENUE

Strengths

- Unique intersection geometry (5 points) creates an identifiable intersection
- 5 Points building, plaza and public art
- Existing buildings along West Broadway Avenue (east of Penn Avenue) include attractive, historic structures
- Strong businesses and institutions such as Anytime Fitness, Hollywood School of Dance, KMOJ, and PCYC Arts and Tech High School
- Existing arts and culture destinations/institutions in the area
- Parking located to the rear of buildings, allowing buildings to front the street
- Street wall along West Broadway Avenue (east of Penn Avenue)
- Proposed developments on vacant sites in the area will bring needed vitality (e.g. Broadway Flats)
- Pedestrian-scaled lighting along West Broadway Ave
- Nice Ride nearby
- On-street parking along West Broadway Ave
- Off-street parking available immediately adjacent to the intersection
- Security cameras provided
- ADA compliant sidewalk ramps/truncated domes
- Signalized intersection
- Well marked pedestrian crossings
- Existing bus stop with connection to Route 14
- Existing bus shelter with Blossoms of Hope public art on Penn Avenue

- High transit ridership
- Overall the intersection operates with an acceptable level of service for traffic
- Bike lanes on 26th Avenue connect Theodore Wirth Park to the Mississippi River Trails and Parks

Weaknesses

- Several vacant and under-utilized sites – lacks a compact development pattern
- Boarded up buildings sends a negative message to residents, visitors, and potential investors
- Low housing density, which does not meet desired transit station area level, limits “eyes on the street” at the intersection, and limits foot traffic to support local businesses
- Confusing intersection geometry creates a challenge for movement in the area
- Lacks district identity elements – banners, signage/wayfinding
- Lacks adequate street furnishings – seating, trash receptacles, bike racks
- Lacks pedestrian lighting along Penn Avenue
- Lacks street tree plantings
- Narrow sidewalks located adjacent to curb creates an uncomfortable pedestrian environment
- Limited on-street parking along Penn Avenue
- Significant northbound stacking of cars during the evening commuter peak period
- Many buildings at risk of demolition
- Bus facilities at 26th Avenue are inadequate
- Intersection at 26th Avenue is dangerous for pedestrians
- Challenge to finance construction and operation of structured parking for more residential and economic density

Opportunities

- Provide much needed neighborhood serving businesses, shops, and services through redevelopment/infill
- Create a more vibrant, safe, and identifiable node through redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties
- Current and planned redevelopment projects, including Broadway Flats (2220 West Broadway Avenue), West Broadway Crescent (2000 West Broadway Avenue), and Capri Theater Expansion (2027 West Broadway Avenue)
- Promote arts, culture, entertainment, and dining uses to build on related existing uses and destinations
- Jobs opportunities along West Broadway Ave
- Streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, district identity, and street furnishings will create a more desirable public realm
- Enhanced pedestrian crossings would improve the safety and quality of the pedestrian experience
- Preservation/restoration and reuse of historically significant buildings will help strengthen district identity
- Potential to provide additional parking, if necessary, with redevelopment
- Planned BRT station
- Connections to future enhanced transit on West Broadway Avenue
- Traffic calming measures
- Undeveloped triangle properties owned by Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
- Several vacant sites with potential for community gardens

Threats

- Vacant sites and boarded buildings may attract unwanted activities in the area (crime, loitering, etc.) and send a negative message to residents, visitors, and potential investors
- Vacant site(s) at this intersection have been identified as having a high potential for contamination, which could make redevelopment more challenging
- BRT station spacing too close to stations south and too wide to stations north of West Broadway
- Limited right-of-way and building storefronts that abut the sidewalk make station siting challenging
- Land owner(s) failing to maintain properties; not managing nuisance tenants and tenants engaged in illegal activities
- Tough to assemble single family homes assembled into a larger development property

FIGURE 10-7: PENN AVENUE AND GOLDEN VALLEY ROAD



INTERSECTION ANALYSIS: PENN AVENUE AND GOLDEN VALLEY ROAD

Strengths

- Proposed development on vacant sites in the area will bring needed vitality (i.e. Penn Commons)
- This node has a local neighborhood “champion” in Devean George (Penn Commons developer)
- Signalized intersection
- Existing bus stop with connection to Route 14
- High transit ridership
- Overall the intersection operates with an acceptable level of service for traffic

Weaknesses

- Several vacant and under-utilized sites – lacks a compact development pattern
- Problem property – Wally’s Foods
- Low housing density, which does not meet desired transit station area level and limits “eyes on the street” at the intersection
- Lacks district identity elements – banners, signage/wayfinding
- Lacks adequate street furnishings – seating, transit stops, trash receptacles, bike racks
- Lacks pedestrian lighting along Penn Avenue
- Lacks street tree plantings

- Narrow sidewalks located adjacent to curb creates an uncomfortable pedestrian environment
- Existing SE corner buildings in need of enhanced façade treatments
- Lacks security cameras

Opportunities

- Create a more vibrant, safe, and identifiable intersection through redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties
- Planned redevelopment project – The Commons at Penn Avenue
- Streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, district identity, and street furnishings will create a more desirable public realm
- Additional security cameras may enhance perception of safety and deter crime
- Planned BRT station
- Several vacant sites with potential for community gardens

Threats

- Vacant sites and boarded buildings may attract unwanted activities in the area (crime, loitering, etc.) and send a negative message to residents, visitors, and potential investors
- Vacant site(s) at this intersection have been identified as having a high potential for contamination, which could make redevelopment more challenging
- Funding to support initiatives

FIGURE 10-8: PENN AVENUE AND PLYMOUTH AVENUE



INTERSECTION ANALYSIS: PENN AVENUE AND PLYMOUTH AVENUE

Strengths

- Strong employment intersection (NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center, Minneapolis Urban League, UROC)
- Urban League building/clock tower is a place maker/identifiable
- Proposed development on vacant sites in the area will bring needed vitality (i.e. Praxis Market)
- Parking located to the rear of buildings, allowing buildings to front the street
- Existing bus stop with connections to Route 7
- Strong transit ridership
- Existing bus shelters on both Penn and Plymouth, north and east bound
- Signalized intersection
- Well marked pedestrian crossings
- Benches and trash receptacles provided
- Nice Ride facilities
- On-street parking
- Charter school and park located nearby
- Bike lanes along Plymouth Avenue
- Proposed LRT station (Bottineau Line) located within a 10 minute walk to the west
- Located within a 10 minute walk from Theodore Wirth Park
- Overall the intersection operates with an acceptable level of service for traffic
- Nearby architectural gems/landmarks could help with area identity creation

Weaknesses

- Several vacant and under-utilized sites – lacks a compact development pattern
- Low housing density, which does not meet desired transit station area level and limits “eyes on the street” at the intersection
- Lacks district identity elements – banners, signage/wayfinding
- Lacks pedestrian lighting along Penn Ave
- Lacks street tree plantings
- Narrow sidewalks located adjacent to curb creates an uncomfortable pedestrian environment
- Lacks security cameras
- Existing shelter on Penn Avenue not owned by Metro Transit and is not maintained to Metro Transit standards
- Lacks off-street parking during the daytime hours (current parking supply is well used)
- Playground south of former Lincoln Elementary School poorly maintained and a magnet for gang and drug activity
- Fenced in school playfield has limited public access
- Area lacks retail businesses such as restaurants
- Inattentive absentee land owners do not maintain their properties/rental units, tenants do not respect the condition of their apartment/property or neighbors’ properties

Opportunities

- Build on success of and complement existing businesses by recruiting new businesses through redevelopment
- Promote health and wellness related businesses (i.e. medical office, clinics) to build on existing health and wellness facilities in the area
- Planned redevelopment projects, including NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center Expansion, Praxis Marketplace
- Create more living wage jobs
- Create a more vibrant, safe, and identifiable node through redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties
- Cluster of designated and potential historic assets, including two synagogues, two schools, Homewood district
- Streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, district identity, and street furnishings will create a more desirable public realm
- Additional security cameras may enhance perception of safety and deter crime
- Better signage and wayfinding to nearby park and open space amenities
- Planned BRT station
- Intersection will continue to operate with an acceptable level of service for traffic under 20 year projections; indicates capacity for potential development
- Shared parking facilities could be an option at this location to leverage the daytime uses versus potential evening activity developments
- Several vacant sites with potential for community gardens

Threats

- Vacant sites may attract unwanted activities in the area (crime, loitering, etc.) and send a negative message to residents, visitors, and potential investors
- Limited right-of-way impacts size of planned BRT stations unless bumpouts are added

FIGURE 10-9: PENN AVENUE AND HIGHWAY 55



INTERSECTION ANALYSIS: PENN AVENUE AND HIGHWAY 55

Strengths

- Parkway green space
- Well marked pedestrian crossings
- Strong transit ridership
- Mature tree canopy
- Public art installations – Floyd B. Olson Memorial and James and Antoinette gateway sculptures
- Direct connection to downtown Minneapolis along Highway 55
- Signalized intersection
- Existing bus shelter on Highway 55, eastbound

Weaknesses

- Wide intersection is difficult for pedestrians to cross
- Low housing density, which does not meet desired transit station area levels and limits “eyes on the street” at the intersection
- Lacks district identity elements – banners, signage/wayfinding
- Lacks adequate street furnishings – seating, trash receptacles, bike racks
- Lacks pedestrian lighting
- Narrow sidewalks located adjacent to curb creates an uncomfortable pedestrian environment
- Lacks security cameras

Opportunities

- Future transit station area – intersection/transfer point between planned Bottineau LRT and C-Line BRT corridors
- Create a more vibrant, safe, and identifiable node through increased housing density and mixed-use development
- Connections to job concentrations
- Placemaking: integrate Floyd B. Olson Memorial and public art with redevelopment/infill
- Streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, district identity, and street furnishings will create a more desirable public realm
- Additional security cameras may enhance perception of safety and deter crime
- Better signage and wayfinding to nearby park and open space amenities
- Improve pedestrian crossings/bring pedestrian ramps to ADA compliance
- Planned BRT station on Highway 55

Threats

- Under-utilized sites that cannot be monitored by adjacent residents may attract unwanted activities in the area (crime, loitering, etc.) and send a negative message to residents, visitors, and potential investors
- Potential redevelopment parcel sizes may be limiting

FIGURE 10-10: PENN AVENUE AND GLENWOOD AVENUE



INTERSECTION ANALYSIS: PENN AVENUE AND GLENWOOD AVENUE

Strengths

- Housing density nearby at Ripley Gardens
- Direct connection to downtown Minneapolis along Glenwood Avenue
- Commercial/institutional development along Glenwood Avenue
- This node has a local neighborhood “champion” in Redeemer Church
- Green space at Ripley Gardens
- Bassett’s Creek Park nearby
- On-street parking
- Bike lane and sharrows signage
- Signalized intersection
- Existing bus stop for Route 9
- Bus shelter on Glenwood Avenue
- Overall the intersection operates with an acceptable level of service for traffic

Weaknesses

- Several vacant and under-utilized sites – lacks a compact development pattern
- Low housing density, which does not meet desired transit station area levels and limits “eyes on the street” at the intersection
- Lacks district identity elements – banners, signage/wayfinding

- Lacks adequate pedestrian lighting
- Lacks street tree plantings
- Narrow sidewalks located adjacent to curb creates an uncomfortable pedestrian environment
- Lacks security cameras
- Poorly marked pedestrian crossings
- Perception of local market as a place that attracts criminal activity
- Community concerns regarding concentration of sexual offenders
- Limited transit ridership

Opportunities

- Create a more vibrant, safe and identifiable intersection through redevelopment of vacant and under-utilized properties
- Strengthen retail goods and services
- Possible Wirth Coop nearby
- Bassett's Creek Park is disconnected/isolated from Penn Avenue by bridge that crosses over the park, resulting in a lack of park visibility and "eyes on the park" for safety
- Streetscape improvements, including sidewalks, street trees, pedestrian lighting, district identity, and street furnishings will create a more desirable public realm
- Additional security cameras may enhance perception of safety and deter crime
- Better signage and wayfinding to nearby park and open space amenities
- Opportunity for community garden on vacant site(s)

Threats

- Vacant sites may attract unwanted activities in the area (crime, loitering, etc.) and send a negative message to residents, visitors, and potential investors
- Acquisition of redevelopment parcels may be difficult
- Vacant site(s) at this intersection have been identified as having a high potential for contamination, which could make redevelopment or community gardening uses more challenging

FIGURE 10-11: PENN AVENUE AND CEDAR LAKE ROAD



INTERSECTION ANALYSIS: PENN AVENUE AND CEDAR LAKE ROAD

Strengths

- Compact, mixed-use neighborhood intersection
- Proximity to future Southwest LRT station at Penn Avenue and Interstate 394
- Traditional, pedestrian-scaled commercial buildings
- Adequate sidewalk widths
- District identity – banners
- Street trees and planting beds
- Outdoor dining areas
- Parking located to rear of buildings
- On-street parking
- Existing bus stop for Route 9
- Existing bus shelter on Cedar Lake Road
- Street furnishings – seating, trash receptacles
- Bike racks provided
- ADA-compliant sidewalk ramps/truncated domes
- Overall the intersection operates with an acceptable level of service for traffic
- “Community landscapes” created in triangle properties owned by Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and downtown streetscape
- Gateway public art and identity in form of “Bryn Mawr” sculpted hedge at Penn Avenue entry from the south

Weaknesses

- Density and variety of housing does not meet desired transit station area levels
- Sites for additional density are limited
- Poorly marked pedestrian crossings
- I-394 entrance/exit ramps are challenging for pedestrian crossings
- Limited transit ridership
- Lacks significant pedestrian-scale lighting
- Skewed intersection impacts sight lines for vehicles
- Crowded sidewalks (over grown vegetation, tables and chairs encroaching into walking area)
- Character of auto-oriented use at corner, including outdoor car storage, negatively impacts node's pedestrian environment

Opportunities

- Proximity to future Southwest LRT station at Penn Avenue/I-394
- Consider future infill development to increase housing variety and density
- This intersection will be receiving improvements (potentially ADA ramps, pedestrian crossings) as part of the Southwest LRT project with specific design for these improvements still underway
- Enhance pedestrian crossings
- Additional security cameras may deter crime
- Intersection will continue to operate with an acceptable level of service for traffic under 20-year projections; indicates capacity for potential development
- Strengthen connection between intersection and Bryn-Mawr Elementary School/Anwatin Middle School
- Improve connections to Cedar Lake, Cedar Lake Park, and North Cedar Lake Regional Trail, south of I-394
- Use excess sidewalk width to introduce boulevard trees and plantings

Threats

- Proximity to Interstate 394 is perceived as attracting drug trafficking activities and unsafe traffic movements into the area

CORRIDOR ASSETS

INVENTORY

These community assets are located within the Penn Avenue corridor, which is generally defined as the area within the 2 blocks each side of Penn Avenue:

Park, Recreation, and Open Spaces

49th Avenue Node:

- Ryan Lake Park

44th Avenue Node:

- Victory Memorial Parkway
- Victory Prairie/Dog Park
- Victory Park
- Loring Community School Playfields
- Patrick Henry High School Playfields
- Victory Memorial Ice Arena (Minneapolis Public Schools)

Dowling Avenue Node:

- Folwell Park and Recreation Center

Lowry Avenue Node:

- Cleveland Park

West Broadway Avenue Node:

- North Commons Park and Recreation Center
- Russell Triangle
- Newton Triangle
- Oliver Triangle

Plymouth Avenue Node:

- Willard Park
- Former Lincoln Community School Playfield

Highway 55 Node:

- Harrison Neighborhood Park and Community Center – Irving and Highway 55 (Node: Highway 55)

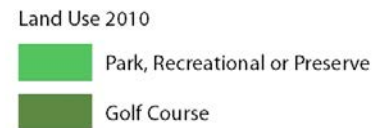
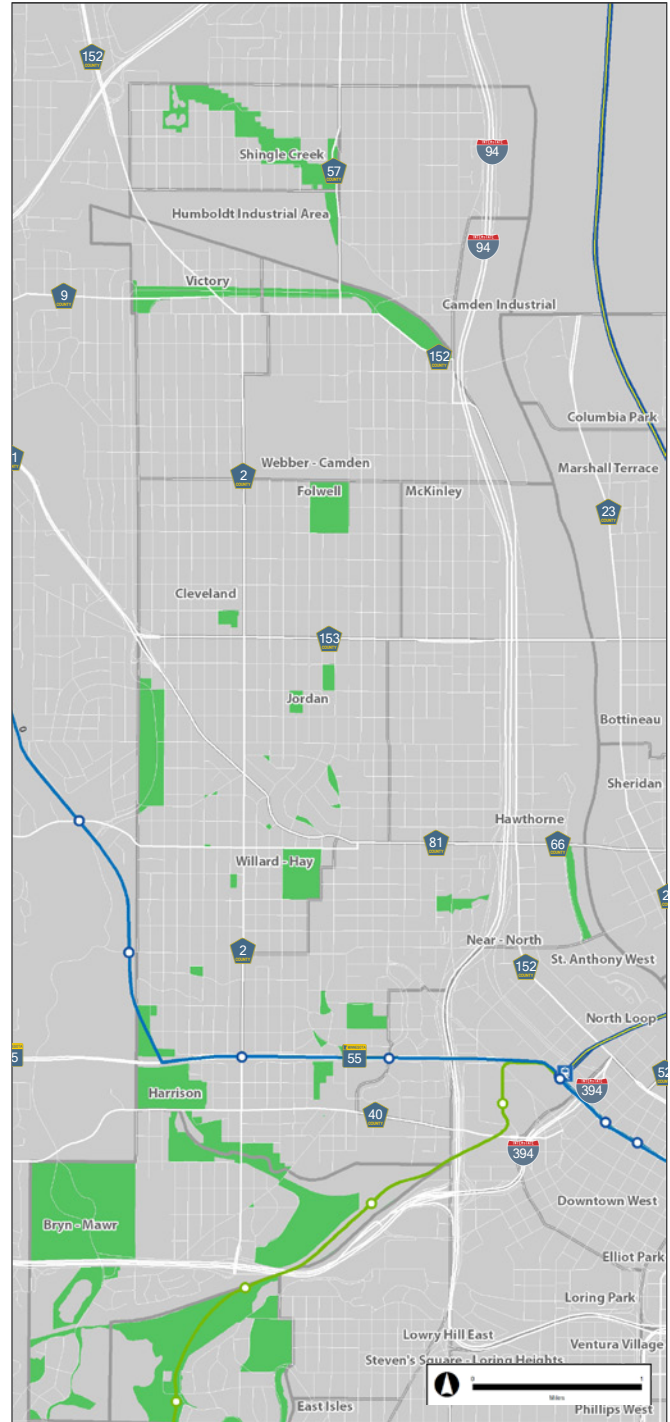
Glenwood Avenue Node:

- Bassett’s Creek Park
- Bassett Creek Trail

Cedar Lake Park Node:

- Bryn Mawr Meadows Park
- Laurel Triangle
- North Cedar Lake Regional Trail

FIGURE 10-12: PARK, RECREATION, AND OPEN SPACES



Data Source: Generalized Land Use 2010 for the Twin Cities Metropolitan Area, Metropolitan Council

Faith-Based Institutions

44th Avenue Node:

- Faith Baptist Church
- United Christian Fellowship Church

Dowling Avenue Node:

- Washburn-McReavy at Crystal Lake Cemetery

Lowry Avenue Node:

- New Mount Sinai House of Faith
- Spirit and Truth Worship
- Christ English Lutheran Church
- Washburn-McReavy Funeral Chapel

West Broadway Avenue Node:

- St. Anne’s Catholic Church
- New Creation Church
- All Nations Seventh Day Adventist Church

Golden Valley Road Node:

- Faith In The City
- Health Ministries

Plymouth Avenue Node:

- Estes Funeral Home
- Trinity Tabernacle Church
- Minneapolis Believers in Christ Ministries
- House of Israel

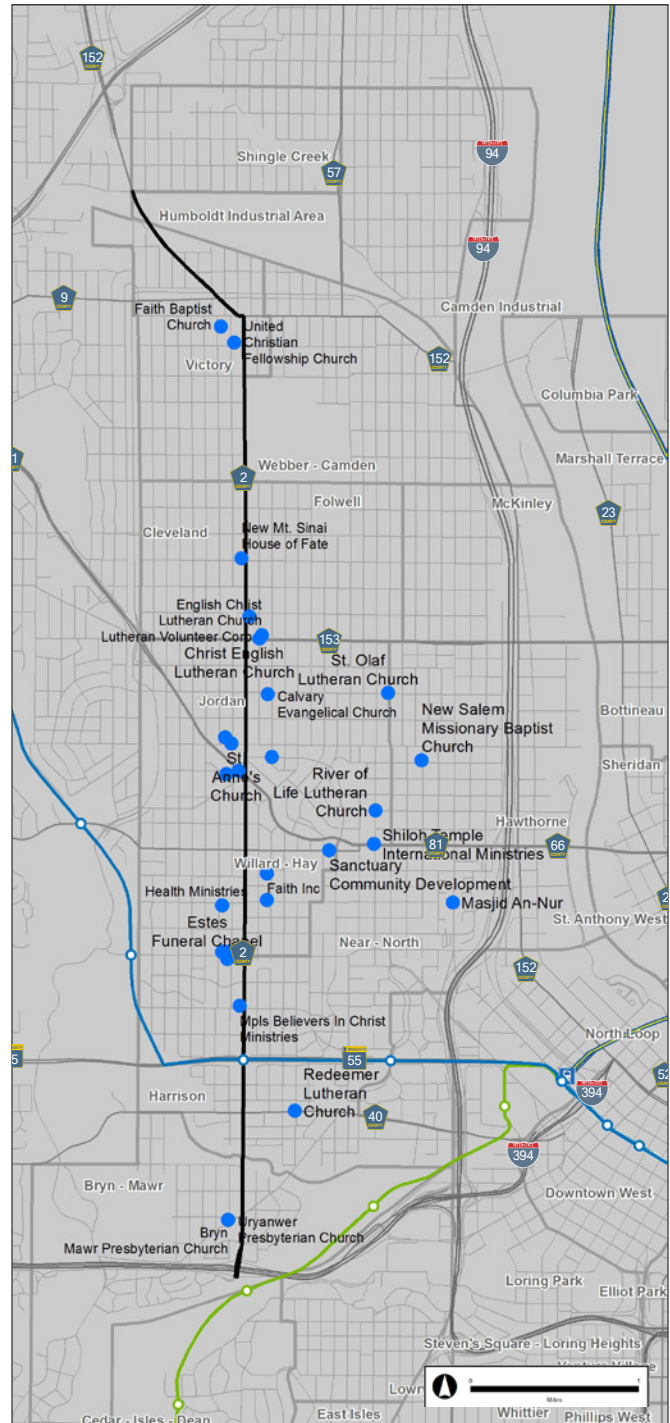
Glenwood Avenue Node:

- Redeemer Lutheran Church

Cedar Lake Road Node:

- Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church

FIGURE 10-14: FAITH-BASED INSTITUTIONS



Data Source: Hennepin County Assessor’s Office

Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture Sites/Programs

44th Avenue Node:

- Loring Schoolyard Garden/Kids Cook
- Patrick Henry High School Oak Savannah Garden

Dowling Avenue Node:

- 37th Avenue Greenway

Lowry Avenue Node

- North End Community Garden, Lowry and Penn

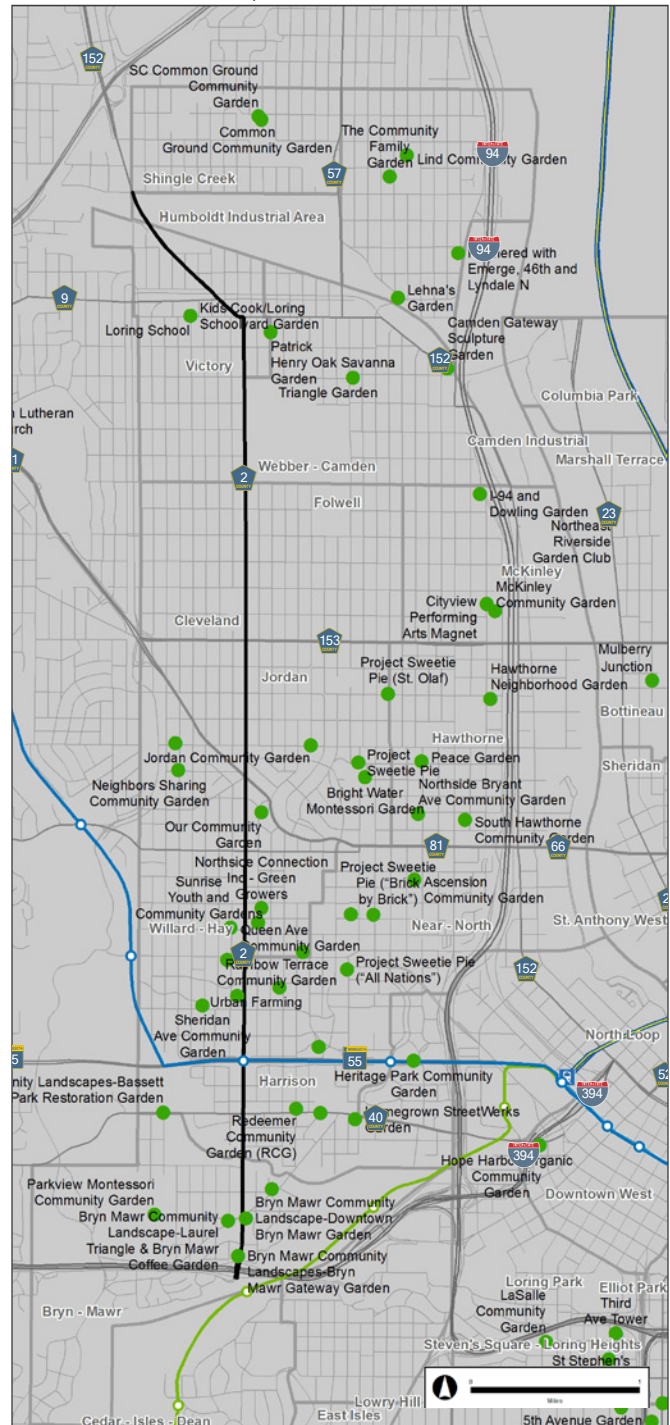
Plymouth Avenue Node:

- Sunrise Youth and Community Gardens, Queen and 14th Avenue
- The Oliver Garden, Oliver Avenue and 14th Avenue
- Urban Farming, Church at Morgan Avenue and 12th Avenue
- Lincoln Peace Garden, Lincoln playfield

Cedar Lake Road Node:

- Bryn Mawr Community Landscapes – Laurel Triangle Garden, Downtown Bryn Mawr Garden, Bryn Mawr Coffee Garden, Upton Triangle Garden, Bassett Creek Valley Park Restoration Garden

FIGURE 10-16: COMMUNITY GARDENS AND URBAN AGRICULTURE SITES/PROGRAMS



Data Source: Hennepin County Assessor's Office

Designated and Potential Historic Landmarks and Districts

Data from Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis has identified several locally designated and potential historic landmarks and districts within the corridor. These sites are identified and overseen by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC). See Figure 10-17. There are five existing locally designated historic landmarks in the vicinity of Penn Avenue, which consist of the following:

- Maternity Hospital (currently known as Ripley Gardens) at 300 Queen Avenue North (Node – Glenwood);
- Viehman Residence at 2006 Laurel Avenue (Node - Cedar Lake Road);
- Mikro Kodesh Synagogue at 1000 Oliver Avenue (Node – Plymouth);
- Sharei Zedeck Synagogue at 1119 Morgan Avenue (Node – Plymouth);
- Fournier Residence at 3505 Sheridan Avenue (Node – Lowry)

The Victory Memorial Historic District is a State Historic District, designated in 2003 by the State Legislature.

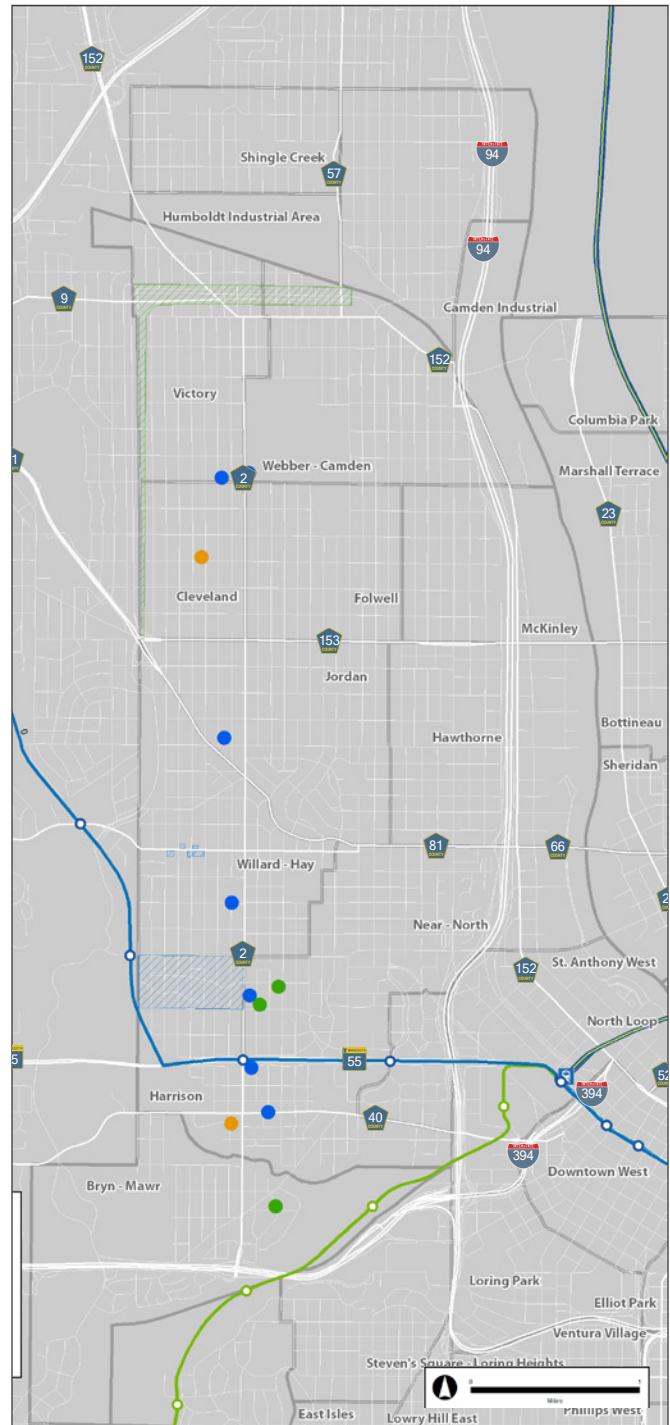
Surveys of the area by the City of Minneapolis or other agencies identify potential local historic landmarks within the study area, including the following:

- Abraham Lincoln School at 2131 12th Avenue, on Penn Avenue;
- Francis E. Willard School at 1615 Queen Avenue, block west of Penn Avenue;
- Crystal Lake Cemetery Chapel at Dowling and Penn;
- Trinity Church at 3800 Russell Avenue, two blocks west of Penn Avenue;
- St. Anne’s Church at 2306 26th Avenue, , block west of Penn Avenue;
- Floyd B. Olson Sculpture at Highway 55, on Penn Avenue;
- Commercial building at 1930 Glenwood Avenue,
- Osseo Road Bridge over CP Railroad.

There are three potential local or national historic districts in the vicinity of Penn Avenue, including the following:

- Homewood District (boundaries are Penn, Plymouth, Victory Memorial Drive, and Oak Park Avenue);
- Golden Valley Apartments Historic District (3 blocks west of Penn Avenue);
- Oak Park Jewish Community Building Historic District (4 blocks east of Penn Avenue).

FIGURE 10-17: DESIGNATED AND POTENTIAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS AND DISTRICTS



Historic Landmarks

Designation

- Landmark - local designation
- Landmark - local and national designation
- Potential Historic Landmarks
- Historic District - Local Designation
- Potential Historic Districts

Data Source: Hennepin County

While these properties identified by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) are not currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places or locally designated, their potential historic character should be considered in all aspects of the planning process.

A scan of National Register for Historic Places (NRHP) information from the National Park Service shows two NRHP-listed properties within the study area, which are both locally designated properties as well:

- The Lawrence A. and Mary Fournier House is located at 3505 Sheridan Avenue North. The architect, Lawrence Fournier, was a draftsman in the firm of Purcell and Elmslie. The design reflects the Prairie School's emergence and influences that were beginning to take root within the American Craftsman movement.
- The Maternity Hospital (currently known as Ripley Gardens) is located at 300 Queen Avenue North. Maternity Hospital is a former hospital building in the Harrison neighborhood that was established by Dr. Martha Ripley in 1896 to serve primarily poor, unmarried, and widowed women. The hospital building was redeveloped in 2007 as Ripley Gardens, which provides housing for low- to moderate-income residents.

There are also areas along the corridor that were the sites of historic events in the community. One example is the intersection of Penn and Plymouth Avenues where the 1960s riots occurred, leading to the mass exodus of the Jewish community from North Minneapolis.

National Historic Preservation Act of 1966

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Section 106) mandates consideration of a project's effect on historic sites. Projects that apply to receive federal funds must comply with Section 106 and with other applicable federal mandates. To comply with Section 106, potential impacts to historic properties (those listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places) must be taken into account during project planning and design. Section 106 requires federal agencies to consider the effects of their actions on historic properties before undertaking a project.

Potential impacts to historic sites under Section 4(f) would need to be further evaluated during future environmental documentation depending upon the type of work and construction limits of any future projects. The use of any Section 4(f) resource would require further evaluation. The extent of the use will determine the appropriate Section 4(f) evaluation process.

Department of Transportation Act of 1966

The Section 4(f) legislation, as established under the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 (40 USC 303, 23 USC 138), provides protection for historic sites (publicly or privately owned) from conversion to transportation use. Conversion to transportation use is not allowed unless all prudent and feasible alternatives to the Section 4(f) use and all possible planning activities to minimize harm have been considered.

Section 106 coordination with MnDOT's Cultural Resources Unit (CRU) and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) would be required as part of future environmental documentation to determine if a project would have any impacts to these NRHP-listed properties and to determine NHRP eligibility of the resources described here as well as others that have not been identified to date. Additional studies and coordination are also likely required to analyze other historic properties within the study area, and to determine whether there are any archaeological sites in the study area. Coordination with the Minneapolis HPC would also occur to gather information about locally designated properties. If additional cultural resources are identified, coordination with MnDOT CRU and SHPO would determine if the project has an adverse effect on these resources.

Public Art

- 5 Points Arts Plaza
- Floyd B. Olson memorial sculpture
- Harrison Neighborhood Gateway: Antoinette and James sculpture
- Bryn Mawr Gateway: “Bryn Mawr” sculpted hedge at Penn and 394



Harrison Neighborhood Gateway: Antoinette and James sculpture



Floyd B. Olson memorial sculpture

ANALYSIS

Key Connections from Corridor Community Assets to Penn Avenue

Key connections to Penn Avenue from community assets within the corridor to the east and west are along the key intersecting streets, such as 44th Avenue, Lowry Avenue, West Broadway Avenue, Plymouth Avenue, Glenwood Avenue, and Cedar Lake Road. However, key connections to some of the corridor parks and schools involve more local streets: 47th Avenue (Ryan Lake Park), 42nd Avenue (Patrick Henry High School playfields and Victory Ice Arena), Dowling Avenue (Folwell Park), 33rd Avenue (Cleveland Park and Lucy Craft Laney Community School), 17th Avenue (Willard Park), 16th Avenue (North Commons and North High School), 12th Avenue (former Lincoln Community School and playfields), 2nd Avenue (Bassett's Creek Park), Laurel Avenue (Anwatin Middle School and Bryn Mawr Elementary School), and Mt. View Avenue (Bryn Mawr Meadows Park). All three of the libraries in North Minneapolis are located substantially east of the Penn Avenue corridor. The key connection streets are 44th Avenue (Webber Park Library), Lowry Avenue (North Regional Library), and Highway 55 (Sumner Library).

Public Gathering Spaces

The Penn Avenue corridor contains a number of public gathering spaces, including public schools, playfields, parks, 5 Points Arts Plaza, and the green space on the south side of Highway 55. These public gathering spaces present some challenges for attracting people, including substantial deterioration of facilities, somewhat unstructured places, safety concerns, and disconnection from Penn Avenue.

The three parks closest to Penn Avenue – Cleveland, Willard, and Bassett's Creek – are not physically and visually connected to Penn Avenue. Cleveland and Willard are separated from Penn Avenue by single-family residences. Bassett's Creek Park is separated at a lower grade than Penn Avenue with the street bridging over the park. Identifying ways to connect them to Penn Avenue may increase their desirability and usefulness as public gathering spaces. While the playfields for the former Lincoln Community School are physically and visually connected to Penn Avenue, they are surrounded by a fence and not easily accessible to the public. In addition, the playground for this same school is in poor condition and poorly lit, making it undesirable and potentially unsafe as a play area for kids. The large green space along Highway 55 has the potential to provide an attractive public gathering space, but currently lacks any sort of design and fails to attract people.



Lincoln Junior High School



Five Points public art and plaza

Building upon the attractiveness and success of the 5 Points Art Plaza, future transit stops for the C Line Arterial BRT could provide future public gathering spaces that are attractive and functional. Since many of the Penn Avenue intersections contain vacant sites, with many being publicly-owned, redevelopment projects at these intersections should consider the potential for creating public plazas at key corners.

Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture Sites/Programs

Minneapolis's Urban Agriculture Policy Plan identifies the existence of a significant number of City-owned vacant parcels in North Minneapolis as potential opportunities for community gardens and urban agriculture sites, possibly as interim uses.

The plan also recommends that land for community gardens can be pursued through the Minneapolis Parks and Recreation Board (MPRB) and Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS) District programs. The MPRB currently has only one community garden located on park land, which is the JD Rivers' Children's Garden located along Glenwood Avenue in Theodore Wirth Regional Park. However, the MPRB has been involved with a number of community gardens, as the landholder on tax-forfeited land. The persons interested in this program must negotiate the transfer of the tax-forfeited land to the MPRB. In June 2014, the MPRB has also adopted an Urban Agriculture Activity Plan, which establishes a number of policies regarding the development of urban agriculture uses on both park land and tax-forfeited land. The MPS District allows community gardens on its school sites. Individual schools are responsible for authorizing the creation of gardens on their school site.

Neighborhood organizations are frequently involved in community garden initiatives and often have access to organizational, funding, and communications resources that are beneficial to establishing and maintaining a community garden.

Excess road right-of-way could also be a source of land for community gardens, such as a portion of the vacant land south of Highway 55. Community garden interests would have to be balanced against other opportunities, such as development, in these areas.



North End Community Garden



Historic Maternity Hospital/Ripley Gardens site at Penn and Glenwood

Historic Character

The Penn Avenue corridor is home to a variety of interesting designated and potential historic landmarks and districts. This mix of historic assets includes churches/synagogues, schools, residences, a hospital, a commercial building, sculpture, and Victory Memorial Drive. Some of these historic assets are located right on Penn Avenue or visible from Penn Avenue and could be prioritized for reinvestment, in order to capitalize on the unique character of these buildings and their positive impact on Penn Avenue's identity. While these historic assets are somewhat scattered along the corridor, there is potential to focus on a cluster of designated and potential historic sites between the Plymouth Avenue and Glenwood Avenue nodes, building upon the successful restoration and reuse of the Maternity Hospital (currently known as Ripley Gardens). This potential cluster of historic assets includes the two synagogues, the former Lincoln Community School, the former Willard Elementary School, the Homewood District, and the Floyd B. Olson sculpture.

In general, as redevelopment of sites and public infrastructure reinvestment occurs, opportunities for enhancing and connecting to historic assets should be a key consideration where appropriate. These designated and potential historic assets provide significant opportunities for enhancing the corridor's unique heritage and identity.

Potential Locations for Public Art

The existing conditions of the Penn Avenue corridor provide significant opportunities for adding public art in a variety of places. Since these potential sites for public art are distributed throughout the corridor, future public art could reflect the unique identity of each of the neighborhoods, nodes, and destinations while also linking them.

The types of places within the Penn Avenue corridor that could be considered for public art or arts districts, in conformance with applicable City of Minneapolis policies regarding public art, include the following:

- Community Parks – Cleveland, Willard, Bassett's Creek, Victory, Victory Memorial Drive
- Triangle Parks – also on MPRB land, these underutilized green spaces could be ideal locations for public art, including Russell Triangle, Newton Triangle, and Oliver Triangle (all located near the West Broadway Avenue node), and Laurel Triangle (Cedar Lake Road node)

- Crystal Lake Cemetery – some key opportunities for public art could include the prominent corners at both Dowling Avenue and 42nd Avenue; as well as the four-block frontage along the east side of Penn Avenue with artistic possibilities for the iron railing and a potential pedestrian pathway
- Road right-of-way – key locations are the south side of Highway 55 and north of the I-394 interchange, as well as the median of Highway 55
- Bridges, such as the railings or walls, could reflect gateway design features – Osseo Road bridge over Ryan Creek, Penn Avenue bridges over I-394, and Bassett Creek
- Existing and future transit stops – the 5 Points Arts Plaza, which is owned by the Metropolitan Council, is an excellent precedent for public art potential integrated with a transit stop
- School properties along Penn Avenue – school open spaces and buildings are prominent landmarks along Penn Avenue and could be sites for public art, including Lucy Craft Laney Community School, the former Lincoln Community School building/playground/playfields, and the currently closed Willard Community School site
- Other community institutions could incorporate public art on their sites, such as NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center, Minneapolis Urban League, UROC, Lowry Post Office
- Intersection corners – many of the Penn Avenue intersections contain vacant properties that are publicly owned, which could offer opportunities for public art as part of redevelopment projects and provide identity/gateway features for the neighborhoods that often have Penn Avenue as a neighborhood boundary
- 37th Avenue Greenway – the landscaped intersection of this greenway could provide a public art location
- Historic sites – Victory Memorial Drive District, Ripley Gardens at the Glenwood intersection, the potential Homewood District, and the Mikro Kodesh Synagogue at Oak Park Avenue
- Infrastructure along Penn Avenue including trash cans, systems boxes (e.g. Traffic control boxes) could be an opportunity to intersect public art and placemaking

NEIGHBORHOOD ASSETS

These community assets are located beyond the Penn Avenue corridor but within the corridor's neighborhoods:

INVENTORY

Neighborhood Organizations

- Shingle Creek Neighborhood Association (Nodes: 49th Avenue)
- Victory Neighborhood Association (Nodes: 44th Avenue, Dowling Avenue)
- Webber-Camden Neighborhood Organization (Nodes: Dowling Avenue)
- Cleveland Neighborhood Association (Nodes: Dowling Avenue, Lowry Avenue)
- Folwell Neighborhood Association (Nodes: Dowling Avenue, Lowry Avenue)
- Jordan Area Community Council (Nodes: Lowry Avenue, West Broadway Avenue)
- Northside Residents Redevelopment Council
 - › Willard-Hay (Nodes: West Broadway Avenue, Golden Valley Road, Plymouth Avenue)
 - › Near North (Nodes: Plymouth Avenue, Highway 55)
 - › U-WHO (Upper Willard Homewood/Hay (Nodes: West Broadway Avenue, Golden Valley Road)
- Harrison Neighborhood Association (Nodes: Highway 55, Glenwood Avenue)
- Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association (Nodes: Cedar Lake Road, Penn Station)

Schools

Lowry Avenue Node:

- Hmong International Academy, former Jordan Park Community School building, PK–8 Magnet School
- Pierre Bottineau French Immersion School, former Jordan Park Community School building, PK–5 Self-Governed School

West Broadway Avenue Node:

- Mona Moede - North Star Early Childhood Education, former North Star Community School building
- (Private) Ascension Catholic School, K–8

Highway 55 Node:

- Harvest Preparatory School and Seed Academy, K–8 Charter School
- Harrison Education Center, Alternative High School
- (Private) La Creche Early Childhood Center, Logan and Highway 55

Glenwood Avenue Node:

- River Bend Education Center, former W. Harry Davis Academy building, K–8 for students with emotional/behavioral/mental health challenges



Lucy Laney School

Libraries

- Webber Park Library (Node: 44th Avenue)
- North Regional Library (Node: Lowry Avenue)
- Sumner Library (Node: Highway 55)

Faith-Based Organizations and Initiatives

- St. Olaf Lutheran Church
- New Salem Missionary Baptist Church
- River of Life Lutheran Church
- Shiloh Temple
- International Ministries
- Sanctuary Community Development
- Masjid An-Nur

Health and Health-Related Organizations and Programs

- NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center
- Bryn Mawr Health Care Center, nursing home at Penn and Glenwood
- Boys and Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities
 - › Jerry Gamble Club - Irving and 24th (Node: West Broadway Avenue)
 - › Olson Beacon Club – Olson Middle School (Node: 49th Avenue)
 - › Patrick Henry Beacon Club – Patrick Henry High School (Node: 44th Avenue)
- Turning Point
- Nice Ride Bikesharing Program
- Farmers' Markets



Minneapolis Believers in Christ



NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center

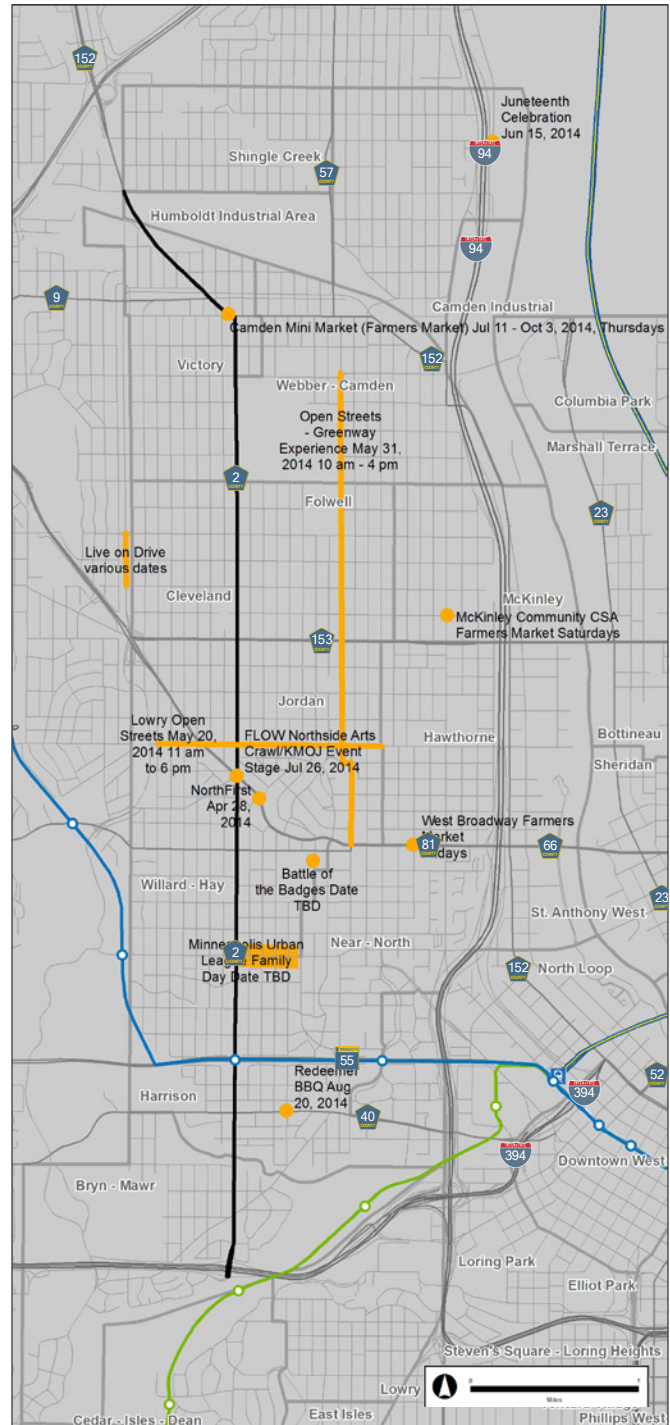
Other Institutions

- Fire Station 16
- Fire Station 14
- Fire Station 20
- Minneapolis Public Schools Headquarters
- Hmong American Partnership
- Pillsbury United Communities
- Neighborhoods Organizing for Change
- CAPI North (Centre for Asian and Pacific Islanders)
- Lao Assistance Center
- Cookie Cart
- Patchwork Quilt

Significant Community Events

- Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Festival of Garage Sales
- Juneteenth
- Carifest
- FLOW Northside Arts Crawl/KMOJ Event Stage
- Urban League Family Day
- Redeemer Lutheran Church Annual BBQ
- National Night Out
- Battle of the Badges BBQ
- Lowry Avenue Harvest Festival
- West Broadway Farmers Market (West Broadway and Emerson) – Fridays
- Camden Farmers Market (Penn Avenue and 44th Avenue) – Thursdays
- Community Gardening Day
- NorthFirst Events
- Lowry Avenue Open Streets – May 20, 2014
- North Minneapolis Greenway Open Streets – May 31, 2014
- Vikings 9th Annual Playground Build – June 4, 2014 site was Lucy Craft Laney Community School Playground
- Ice Cream Socials and Garden Tours

FIGURE 10-18: SIGNIFICANT COMMUNITY EVENTS



Data Source: Hennepin County Assessor's Office

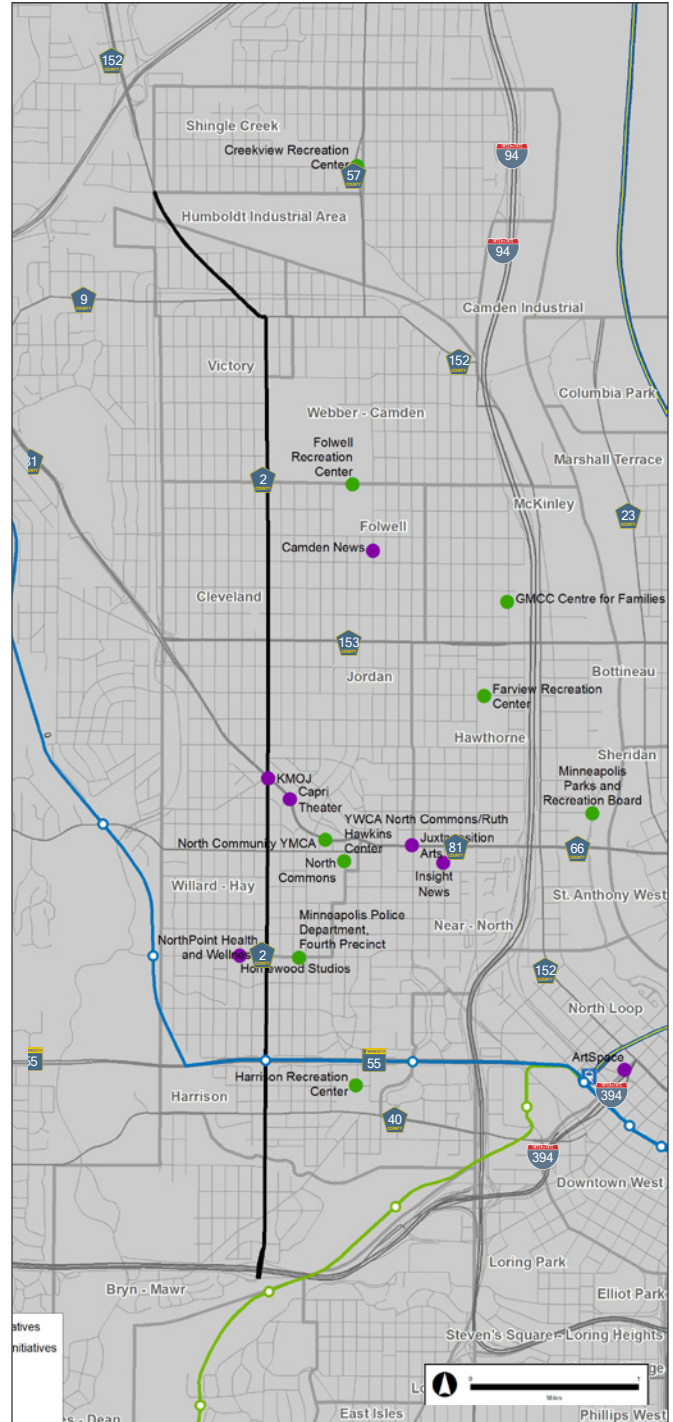
Arts-Related Institutions, Organizations, Uses, and Initiatives

- The Minneapolis Northside Arts Leadership Group (umbrella organization to which several below belong)
- Northside Arts Collective (umbrella organization to which several below belong)
- Juxtaposition Arts
- Capri Theater
- The Warren – An Artist Habitat
- The Goddess of Glass
- Homewood Studios
- UROC Gallery
- Workhouse Theater Company
- Hollywood Studio of Dance
- Iny Asian Dance Theater
- Camden News
- Insight News
- KMOJ (Center for Communications and Development)
- Asian Media Access
- KBEM Radio
- Camden Music School
- Oasis of Love

Active Philanthropic Organizations and Initiatives

- Northside Achievement Zone
- Northside Economic Opportunity Network (NEON)

FIGURE 10-19: ARTS-RELATED INSTITUTIONS, ORGANIZATIONS, USES, AND INITIATIVES



Data Source: Hennepin County Assessor's Office

ANALYSIS

Neighborhood Organizations

Nine neighborhood organizations represent the ten neighborhoods that share the Penn Avenue corridor. While some of these organizations encompass both sides of the corridor, many neighborhoods have Penn Avenue as a neighborhood boundary or edge. Engagement of the neighborhood organizations in the Penn Avenue Community Works project is vital to the overall health of North Minneapolis and the re-envisioning of Penn Avenue as a “complete street.” The following evaluation of each neighborhood organization is intended to identify points of common interest between the neighborhood organizations and the Penn Avenue Community Works project. Information regarding these neighborhood organizations’ “missions” was gathered primarily from their websites.

Shingle Creek Neighborhood Association: This neighborhood physically touches the corridor at one end, serving as a gateway to Penn Avenue and the city of Minneapolis. The intersection of 49th Avenue at Osseo Road also has the potential to bring the character and identity to an area once known as “the Country.” The SCNA partners with the neighboring communities and organizations to align with their mission to “promote neighborhood interests and the health, safety and general welfare of its residents” in a “non-partisan, educational and cooperative manner.”

Victory Neighborhood Association: The Victory Neighborhood Association has a mission statement similar to SCNA’s and promotes its vibrant 44th Avenue commercial district. The addition of the C Line to the Penn/44th Avenue intersection has the potential to elevate its character and identity.

Webber-Camden Neighborhood Organization and Folwell Neighborhood Association: Working together, these two neighborhood groups “advocate for residents on crime and safety.” They have placed a special emphasis on housing issues to stabilize the community. The intersections of Dowling and Lowry offer quite different opportunities for the C Line and will require very different solutions. Lowry offers a greater opportunity as a neighborhood connector.

Cleveland Neighborhood Association: The Cleveland Neighborhood prides itself on its diversity and defines a successful Cleveland neighborhood on three tenets: “Neighborhoodness, Urban Appeal, and Safety.” This neighborhood is bounded on its’ east boundary by Penn Avenue, with Dowling and Lowry as its’ north and southeasterly intersections respectively.

Jordan Area Community Council: Its mission is to “organize people, knowledge, and capital for the collective empowerment of the Jordan neighborhood.” The Jordan neighborhood touches Penn Avenue between Lowry and West Broadway and is the first of three neighborhoods that straddle Penn Avenue. The Penn/ Broadway intersection offers the possibility to build on one of the busiest intersections along the corridor.

Northside Residents Redevelopment Council (NRRC) represents two neighborhoods on both sides of Penn Avenue. Its mission “is to inform, engage, and facilitate the residents of the Near North and Willard Hay neighborhoods in Minneapolis to be primary agents for improving the social, economic, and livability conditions in their community.” The intersections at Broadway, Golden Valley Road and Plymouth offer the unique opportunity incorporate the C Line into new development, as each of these intersections currently have vacant parcels along Penn. NRRC can help set the precedent to strengthen the identities of both Willard-Hay and Near North.

Harrison Neighborhood Association: Harrison, like Jordan, straddles Penn Avenue and envisions itself as “a prosperous and peaceful community that equitably benefits all of Harrison neighborhood’s diverse racial, cultural, and economic groups. We will combat racism where all individuals can participate through shared power and mutual accountability.” The northern edge of Harrison, at Highway 55 (also known as Olson

Memorial Highway) has been identified as a future local regional connector, while the intersection at Glenwood is a neighborhood scale connection. This area provides the opportunity to connect the northwest metropolitan area to the city.

Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Association: Bryn Mawr serves as the south gateway for Penn Avenue. It has a thriving commercial area at the Penn/Cedar Lake Road intersection. This neighborhood also has the potential, with the addition of the C Line and the SWLRT, to connect Minneapolitans to the southwest metropolitan area.

Schools and Education-Related Organizations and Initiatives

North Minneapolis has approximately two dozen education-related facilities, many of which are near or easily accessible to the C Line. The Penn Avenue Community Works project has the potential to improve existing connections and create new connections to these schools from Penn Avenue. It should be noted that children represent 20 percent of the residents in the neighborhoods along the Penn Avenue corridor, on average, with an area in the Willard Hay neighborhood averaging close to 40%. Several schools were built in the late 1990s and early part of the 2000s to accommodate the student growth only to face closings as school choice policies were put in place, transient populations grew, and popularity of charter schools increased. Some of these closed school buildings are being used as alternative schools, adapting to the changing needs and populations of the area. Several schools are due to reopen.

In response to the prevalence of households with children, living in poverty in North Minneapolis, the Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ) was created in 2003 with the mission to end poverty in North Minneapolis and close the achievement gap through educational programs and comprehensive family support.

Existing schools located directly on Penn Avenue include the PCYC Tech High School (West Broadway Avenue node), Lucy Craft Laney at Cleveland Park Community School (Lowry Avenue node), and Minneapolis College Preparatory School (Plymouth Avenue node). All three of these schools own a substantial amount of property adjacent to key nodes along Penn Avenue and could be major players in reinvesting and improving the corridor. For example, the PCYC Tech High School is operated by the Plymouth Christian Youth Center (PCYC), which owns the Capri Theater and the redevelopment site to the east of the theater in the West Broadway Avenue node.

Faith-Based Organizations and Initiatives

The faith community has long been a partner in the North Minneapolis community. The diversity of faiths is just as diverse as the locations and outreach provided along the Penn Avenue corridor. These institutions work hand in hand with the community at a grassroots level, providing a range of services and programming from food shelves, housing, to neighborhood ice cream socials. Many are finding unique ways to reach their communities by opening their doors; one church's mission is to be a "beacon of light for the community."

Health and Health-Related Organizations and Programs

The Penn Avenue corridor has a number of health and health-related organizations, with its largest concentration at the Penn/ Plymouth node. One such organization, NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center started out as Pilot City, one of the 13 original Neighborhood Service Programs that integrate health and human services in one location. Community advocacy has also succeeded in getting a Nice Ride bikeshare station at Plymouth Avenue, a key connecting route between the Mississippi River and Theodore Wirth Parkway. Aligned with these community health initiatives, several north side neighborhoods have started hosting weekly farmers markets to promote healthy eating. The Penn Avenue Community Works project can further these initiatives and help enhance livability along the corridor by improving access to healthy foods and improving bicycle and pedestrian connections to the C Line and around the corridor.



Disciples Ministry Church

Arts-Related Institutions, Organizations, Uses, and Initiatives

The Arts community has had a long-standing presence in the north side community with a strong focus on youth programming, providing young people with an outlet for expression. These arts institutions, many of them long-standing, are housed within churches, schools, and community centers. Several organizations feature gallery space, attracting artists from outside of the community to showcase their work. These arts organizations work together to advocate for North Minneapolis through organizations like the Minneapolis Northside Arts Leadership group and the Northside Arts Collective. Two radio stations located along the Penn Avenue corridor also serve as teaching facilities: KBEM-FM is housed in North High School and currently works with 150 students on all aspects of broadcasting and production; KMOJ-FM, “the People’s Station,” grew out of the Sumner-Olson public housing development to provide broadcast training for African Americans and to serve as a public service to the community. KMOJ’s profile has increased in its 40 year history and serves as an anchor for the Penn/ West Broadway intersection.

Significant Community Events

Bryn Mawr Neighborhood Festival of Garage Sales—First weekend in May

Annual neighborhood garage sale; one of the first and most established in the city.

Juneteenth—Saturday, Mid June (June 19th is officially Juneteenth)

North Mississippi Regional Park

The Juneteenth Festival observes the June 19th 1865 proclamation of the abolition of slavery in Texas. This celebrates the freedom for people of all racial backgrounds.

Carifest—Saturday, mid to late July (usually in conjunction with FLOW)

West River Road (between Plymouth and West Broadway Avenues)

Twin Cities Carifest began as a grass-roots celebration of the Caribbean cultural heritage in 1994. Now approaching our 21st anniversary, Carifest has grown to provide festival-goers of all ages and backgrounds the ultimate arts fusion experience featuring: colorful Caribbean flair, danceable live calypso and reggae beats, vibrant parade costumes and more. Each element is as diverse as the islands themselves.

FLOW Northside Arts Crawl—Friday and Saturday, mid to late July (usually in conjunction with Carifest)

West Broadway (from West River Road to Penn Avenue)

FLOW Northside Arts Crawl is both a premier art event and community celebration in North Minneapolis. A self-guided tour of studios, galleries, theaters, commercial, and vacant spaces along West Broadway, FLOW showcases the great art being made every day on the north side.

Urban League Family Day—Saturday, August

Plymouth Avenue between Knox and Penn Avenues

From noon to dusk, Plymouth Avenue (between Penn and Knox) is transformed into an urban festival and marketplace featuring food and merchandise vendors, entertainment, family activities and community projects. Established in 1989 as a way to unite the community around simple family traditions and values, Family Day has grown from a block celebration that drew some 300 neighborhood residents to the Urban League’s lot on Plymouth Avenue to a city-wide celebration that attracts more than 3,000 residents from throughout North and South Minneapolis. It is now a widely recognized Minneapolis tradition.



Minneapolis Urban League

Redeemer Lutheran Church Annual Block Party —Wednesday, August 21st*Glenwood Avenue at Logan*

Annual church block party; community invited.

National Night Out—First Tuesday, August*Throughout North Minneapolis*

National Night Out is an annual nationwide event that encourages residents host block parties and get to know their neighbors as a way to enhance community safety, prevent crime, and promote community-police partnerships.

Battle of the Badges BBQ—Saturday, Mid August*North Commons Park*

This event brings the community together for a cook-off between officers from the Minneapolis Police Department and firefighters from the Minneapolis Fire Department. Teams cook up their best ribs for a large judging panel that includes community residents, Police Chief Harteau, Fire Chief Fruetel, and local celebrities. Other participants include MPD's Fire Safety House with life safety equipment and demonstrations, MPD's Canine Bomb Squad and Mounted Patrol units, the Police Activities League, and representatives from Housing Inspections, Problem Properties, Animal Care and Control, Traffic Control, and Minneapolis Solid Waste and Recycling.

Lowry Avenue Harvest Festival—Saturday, September 20th*North Commons Park*

The annual Harvest Festival, hosted by the Lowry Avenue Business Association, closes down a long stretch of Lowry Avenue for a day of music, food, and fun. Since 2012, an Open Streets Minneapolis event has been held in conjunction with the Lowry Avenue Harvest Festival.

Ice Cream Socials, Garden Tours—Throughout the summer*Throughout North Minneapolis*

Neighborhood social event inviting the people out to explore their neighborhoods and meet their neighbors. Many offer other initiatives and activities to promote health, recreation, and well-being.

Active Philanthropic Organizations and Initiatives

Organizations like the Northside Funders Group, Northside Economic Opportunity Network (NEON), Emerge, Pillsbury United Communities, Project for Pride in Living, Neighborhood Development Center, Urban Homeworks, and Twin Cities RISE! invest private, public, and corporate dollars into programs and projects that promote economic opportunities and enhance livability on the north side. In addition, there are three business associations in the corridor that are engaged in strengthening the economic environment of business districts within the Penn Avenue corridor neighborhoods: West Broadway Business and Area Coalition, Camden Business Association, and Lowry Corridor Business Association. The Penn Avenue Community Works project should engage these organization to help further the goals of re-envisioning Penn Avenue as a complete street, promoting economic opportunity, stimulating private investment, and enhancing livability.