

PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Plan-It Hennepin's *Talk-It* Hennepin Conversation + Workshop Series

The *Talk-It Hennepin* series is part of the broader *Plan-It Hennepin*, a year long initiative in 2012 to re-imagine Hennepin Avenue as a revitalized cultural corridor from the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden to the Mississippi River. The project is led by partners Hennepin Theatre Trust, Walker Art Center, Artspace and the City of Minneapolis and funded by a National Endowment for the Arts 'Our Town' grant. *Talk-It Hennepin* consisted of four pairs of events consisting of conversation + workshop:

March 8 conversation

Honoring History: The Avenue Through the Ages

March 10 workshop

Putting Our Stories On The Street: Our Best Experiences of Hennepin

April 26 conversation

Creative Urban Interventions: A Dialogue with Candy Chang

April 28 workshop

Creating Urban Visions

May 7 conversation

A Week Long Visit by Charles Landry

May 12 workshop

Coming, Going & Staying on Hennepin Avenue

June 7 conversation

Owning Public Space: The Power of Place Identity

June 9 workshop

Putting It All Together—Naming and Claiming

March 8, 2012

History Panel

Honoring History:

The Avenue Through the Ages

Minneapolis Central Library



This document includes writing and editing contributions from Andrew Leitch, Karen Nelson and Tom Borrup. Historical imagery provided by Minnesota Historical Society. This document was produced by Peter Musty, urban designer, consultant to Plan-it Hennepin.

The photograph on the next page was provided by Minnesota Historical Society by way of Tom Borrup. Caption provided: "1877: Minneapolis City Hall in Bridge Square (center), built in 1873. Parade or civic event in progress...Hennepin Avenue at right, Nicollet to the left. The Tribune also occupied this strange triangular building."

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A Place of Many Stories

Panel summary by Andrew Leitch & Karen Nelson

Hennepin Avenue is a place of many stories — stories about the history of a people and a city. It is this collection of individual memories, journeys, and experiences that define a place and its spirit. And as part of Hennepin Theatre Trust's *Talk-It Hennepin*, a new series of public conversations and workshops about city planning and design, a coalition of arts organizations is gathering those stories to get a clearer understanding of what we value as we plan a future Hennepin Avenue cultural corridor. The *Plan-It Hennepin* process (of which the *Talk-It Hennepin* series is a part) models values that we see as important to the future functioning of Hennepin Avenue — openness, transparency, collaboration, inclusivity and most of all, creativity.

Image: *Douglas Volk's painting of Father Louis Hennepin "discovering" Saint Anthony Falls on display at the State Capitol.*

So it was especially fitting that the first *Talk-It* evening opened at the Minneapolis Central Library with the Miziway Desjarlait drum circle setting the stage to honor and learn from our history. After the drumming ended, Minneapolis Mayor R.T. Rybak introduced the panel and further reminded the crowd of the Avenue's inclusive nature: "Hennepin, more than any street, should be of this place, of these people, what we are today and where we are going. Everyone should be welcome. ... At

its root, it's about who we are. ... *Plan-It Hennepin* is about bringing something much deeper, much richer."

Evening of Hennepin Storytellers

Guided by moderator **Dorothy Bridges** from the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, the panel helped identify the unique roles that Hennepin Avenue has played throughout history, how it has evolved, and its impacts on the City's development and cultural history. To walk through the Avenue's transformation from Native American-footpath to bustling metropolitan street, *Plan-It* organizers employed four guests with very diverse historical interests.

Syd Beane is a community organizer, documentary filmmaker, author, and adjunct professor at Minneapolis Community and Technical College (MCTC). He is currently working on a book about Dakota Sioux land in Minnesota before 1862 to be published by the Minnesota Historical Society.

John Diers is a transit consultant, writer, and researcher on transportation history. He is the coauthor of *Twin Cities by Trolley* and writes for various transit publications. He is active in historic preservation, serving on the editorial board of the Ramsey County Historical Society as the president of the Scott County Historical Society.

Kevin Murphy is an Associate Professor in the Department of History at the University of Minnesota. His areas of study include gender, the history of sexuality, and GLBT history. He recently coedited *Queer Twin Cities*, a collection of oral histories and essays about GLBT life in the Twin Cities.

Penny Petersen is a historian and researcher at Hess Roise and Company. She has written numerous articles on the history of upper Mississippi River and the Minneapolis riverfront for local publication. She is also the author of

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Hiding in Plain Sight, a history of the Marcy-Holmes neighborhood.



Image above: *St. Anthony Falls, engraving by John Coakley Lettsom 1778*

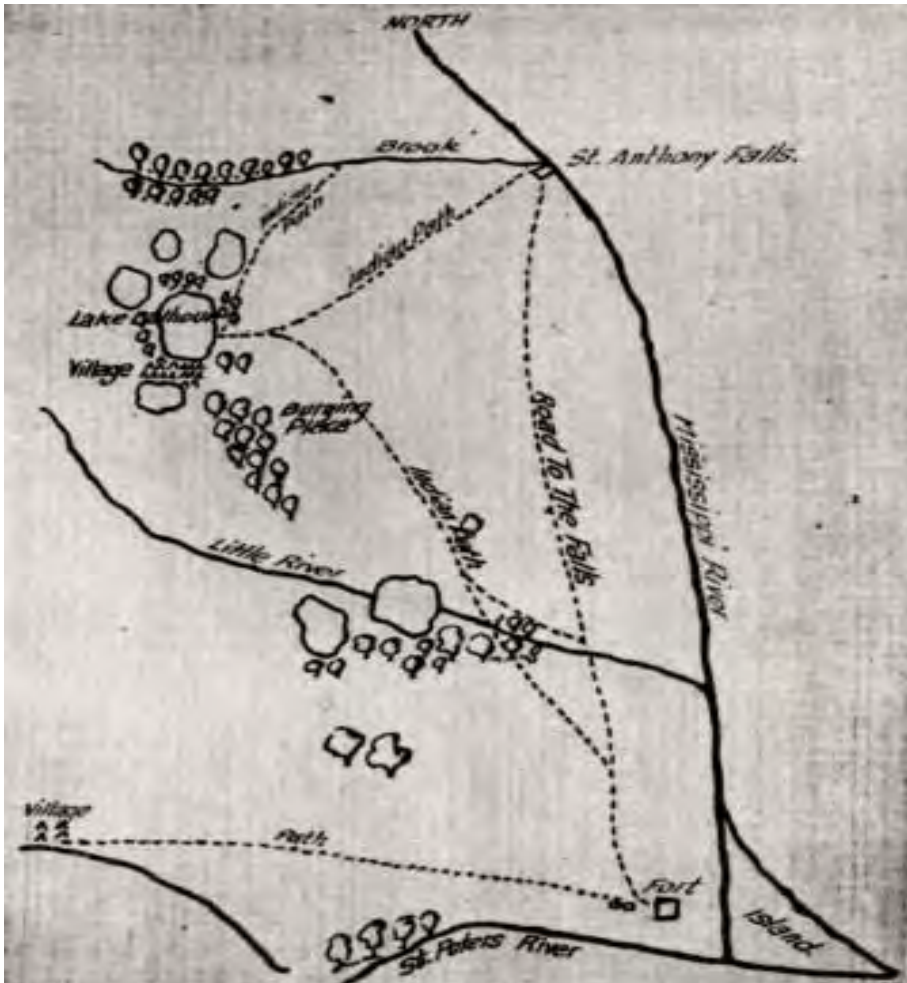
From “Indian Path” to Modern Thoroughfare

Penny Petersen began with a broad overview of the history of Hennepin Avenue and Downtown Minneapolis.

The Mississippi River and St. Anthony Falls, she explained, not only provided power for Minneapolis’s early industries, but were a significant landmark and point of trade to the Dakota Sioux who inhabited the land long before Europeans arrived. From that beginning, it has become the modern thoroughfare we see today, encompassing commerce, culture and educational and religious

institutions. She also countered the widely-held belief that most of the early settlers to Minneapolis were of Scandinavian stock. As it turns out, the majority of the earliest white settlers to Minneapolis were New Englanders, who used the state legislature to create laws that mimicked their Puritanical roots—no work, shooting, sports, dancing, or going to shows on Sunday.

Image left: *Hennepin Avenue represented as an Indian Path that more-or-less connects St. Anthony Falls to Lake Calhoun, drawn by Samuel Pond, about 1830 (Source: Minneapolis Collection, Original map at the Minnesota Historical Society)*



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Peterson also offered a fascinating overview of the impact of the destruction of Gateway Park, the Metropolitan Building and a wide swath of other downtown buildings. This was part of a slum clearance effort intended to make way for better development that didn't fully materialize.



Image left: *Looking south at what used to be Gateway Park , early 1960s* Image above: *The Gateway (housing & park), today.* Image below: *Gateway Park, 1929*

Transit historian **John Diers** chronicled the history of the streetcar and its importance to the development of Downtown Minneapolis. Diers fondly remembered riding the streetcars in



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Downtown Minneapolis as a child. He recalled that during rush hour, the cars ran a minute apart on Hennepin Avenue and were so close together they formed solid rows up and down the street. He

explained that every major downtown streetcar line either ran on or crossed Hennepin Avenue. In the 1920s, the privately-owned transit system in the Twin Cities was carrying some 230 million annual riders, compared to about 80 million rides a year on the current Metro Transit system.

Image above: 7th and Hennepin, 1952 Image left: 'Burning the Last Streetcars in Minneapolis'; man in a raincoat is watching the streetcar burn. Mpls MN Photographer: Don Berg 1954



He also told the audience about the demise of the Twin Cities streetcar system and how it coincided with larger societal trends. Postwar prosperity and the increased affordability of cars meant that families looking for a fresh start moved to the

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suburbs. Buses were cheaper to maintain than streetcars and their routes could be easily extended into the rapidly developing suburbs. Diers explained that streetcars can be a highly efficient and cost-effective mode of transit, but require the kind of density that was lost in Minneapolis in the post-war era.

Syd Beane, an activist and expert in Minnesota's tribal roots, spoke about shared symbolism and how his ancestors interacted with early French and British traders. In fact, Beane is a direct descendent of the well-known watercolorist Seth Eastman who served as a Commander at Fort Snelling and Chief Cloudman, a Dakota, who established the first year round settlement in the City of Minneapolis. Beane explained that in early Minneapolis, soldiers and traders would often try to gain influence by marrying chiefs' daughters. After explaining the symbolism of his tribal shield, he noted the impact

that diversity is having at MCTC, where he is an adjunct professor, and the need for the *Plan-It Hennepin* effort to be conscious of what the Downtown population will look like in the future.

Image below: *1940 aerial photo from southwest; showing Lyndale-Hennepin civic corridor and Loring Park, showing the urbanism before interstate and Lowry tunnel construction. Armory gardens in the bottom left is the current site of Minneapolis Sculpture Garden.*

Kevin Murphy, University of Minnesota history professor, reminded us that the Avenue was early on a place where LGBT populations came to live, work and play, just one of the many diverse groups that lays claim to Hennepin Avenue. He told the story of a former Twin Cities LGBT hotspot, the Nicolett Hotel, which sat for years just east of the current Minneapolis Central Library. He also gave some background on the annual Pride Parade and commented that this event has become a “dramatic



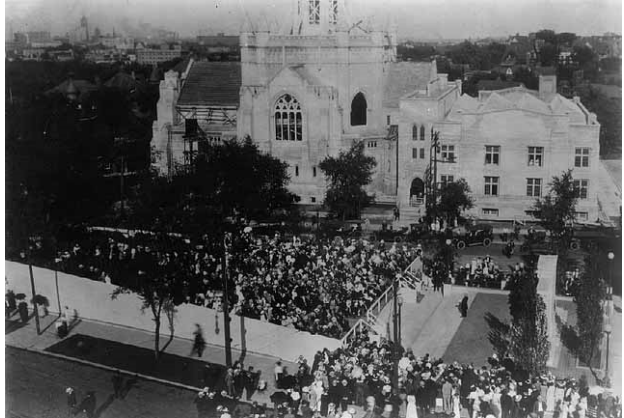
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expression of the visibility and political power of the LGBT community.” He also recalled city efforts to “clean up” downtown in the 1980s that were perceived as being unfriendly to LGBT business owners.

Image right: 1915, dedication of Lowry Memorial at the Virginia Triangle (Hennepin, Lyndale, and Groveland) Image below: Northern end of Lowry Tunnel (today), carrying convergence of Hennepin & Lyndale Avenues. Copyright William Wesen.



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“Sidewalks were carnivals of boisterous capitalism, a chaotic medley of sights, sounds, and smells.”

- Larry Millett in *Lost Twin Cities*, on the “visual clutter” of Downtown Minneapolis in the late-19th century



The conversation was held at the Minneapolis Central Library on Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis. The library’s multi-story glass atrium helps to restore to street level the historic northward convergence of Nicollet and Hennepin Avenues.



Image above: Gateway Pavilion and Park and the intersection of Nicollet and Hennepin Avenues, about 1918 - Charles P. Gibson, photographer | Minnesota Historical Society Collection

Image inset: Migrant workers standing in front of a Bridge Square employment bureau, about 1908 | Minnesota Historical Society Collection



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This project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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March 10, 2012

Values Workshop

**Putting Our Stories on the Street:
Our Best Experiences of Hennepin
Avenue - Minneapolis Central Library**

This document includes writing and editing contributions from designers Bob Close & Nicolas Ramirez of AECOM, Tom Borup (Project Lead), urban designer Peter Musty, Karen Nelson of Hennepin Theatre Trust, and four volunteer recorders attending the sessions. Photography is by Mark Vancleave. This document was produced by Peter Musty.



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The photograph on this page, by *Plan-It Hennepin* photographer Mark Vancleave, was taken at the end of the morning workshop as participants joined sound artist Mankwe Ndosi (yellow shirt on the left) in a collaborative expression of the sounds of Hennepin Avenue. The 40 foot model pictured, built by AECOM, functioned as both a design tool and a traveling exhibit in venues along the Hennepin Avenue corridor study area from the Mississippi River to Walker Art Center.

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Energy and Synergy

by Bob Close

Energy and synergy, these two words describe the *Talk-It Hennepin* Workshop that took place Saturday morning, March 10, 2012 at the downtown Minneapolis Central Library, where a diverse group of people gathered as part of the *Plan-It Hennepin* initiative to share personal stories of their memories of Hennepin Avenue.

Organized by Hennepin Theatre Trust, the event was the first in a series of four *Talk-It Hennepin* conversation/workshops that ran from March to June of 2012.

The goal of *Talk-It Hennepin* series was to generate ideas and excitement about future scenarios for Hennepin Avenue, a central and historic corridor.

The question of the day for this workshop was...

What are your best experiences of Hennepin Avenue?

The Saturday workshop was facilitated by Tom Borrup and four artists Mankwe Ndosi, Leah Nelson, Ta-coumba Aiken and Harry Waters Jr., each of whom focused on a different approach to communicating ideas and feelings. Participants brought their personal energy to the event. But in the end, it was people sharing memories, thoughts

and ideas – people working together – that created a synergy that was delightful to watch.

The Agenda

Tom Borrup's challenge to participants: *"There are plenty of things about Hennepin Avenue we might like to change. Let's begin by identifying the positive things – the qualities, characteristics and functions of this street – that we have experienced, that we most value and want to keep as part of our future experience. During the entire session a team of roving "journalists" or "witnesses" will circulate, listen, and record many of your thoughts and reflections."*

9:00 Space Opens: Participants were asked to write on large map two words or make a mark/image to indicate how they feel about Hennepin Avenue.

9:40 Welcome and Agenda – Tom Hoch, Hennepin Theatre Trust President/CEO, Tom Borrup

9:50 Warm up – Leah Nelson, Harry Waters Jr

10:00 HE-NN-EP-IN Break-out Sessions: Reflect on your **best** experience of Hennepin Avenue: a daily routine, one-time event, some other way you fondly remember the Avenue. Why was this a good experience? What were you doing? What did you see? What did you hear?

Sounds – Mankwe Ndosi

Sights – Ta-Coumba Aiken

Movement – Leah Nelson

Stories – Harry Waters Jr

10:45 Group Reflections

11:00 BREAK

11:15 Assembly Reflections

11:45 HE-NN-EP-IN Group Reflections

11:55 Move to the Scale Model of Hennepin Avenue.. Participants offer one current and one aspirational sound of Hennepin

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Warming Up

Movement artist Leah Nelson started the warm-up portion of the morning by introducing herself and inviting the participating artists to introduce themselves. She asked the audience if anyone in the room was non-English speaking to accommodate translation.

She invited the audience to remove anything that might get in the way of them moving freely, and slowly re-arranged the room by asking participants to roll themselves into a circle of chairs around a clear central space. (*Pictured below.*) Guests then stood and observed who was in the room. They were asked to close their eyes, check in with themselves and were invited to center themselves in the room. Following Leah's guidance, participants then mingled, slowly walking while remaining quiet and observant. They were asked to move backwards, freeze and then go back to back with the closest person to them, introduce themselves, and then share a magical moment they had experienced in the past week. After the 'pair

and share' they moved amongst each other again to find their HE-NN-EP-IN partnerships, and were guided into groups of four based on matching the letters on their nametags with others to spell HE-NN-EP-IN.

Harry Waters Jr. led the HE-NN-EP-IN groups of four in another short mingling exercise, then explained the goal of the breakout sessions. Participants were then sent on their way to their respective break out spaces; *Sights, Movement, Sounds & Stories.*



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Creating a List of What Stakeholders Value

From the assembled input, project team leader Tom Borrup created a short list of themes that emerged at the workshop: “Hennepin Avenue supplies...”

- 1 **A feeling of being connected** to a larger whole, an around-the-clock river of energy, togetherness, spontaneity and interaction
- 2 **Non-stop activity** - things to explore and anticipate, an abundance of creativity, sounds, lights, food, beverages, tastes, smells and fun
- 3 **Enjoyment of being with people** on the street; being yourself in a safe, walkable environment where everyone is welcome and comfortable
- 4 **Spaces for solitude and being with others** - it's noisy and meditative, public and private, playful and relaxing, an urban oasis
- 5 **A cosmopolitan feeling** - being among new and different people, crowds talking, music spilling out of the theatres, hearing different languages
- 6 **Connection to the natural world** - the river, green space and places to gather, all seasons, day and night

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Breakout Session Sounds of Hennepin Avenue

Mankwe Ndosi, an artist and music-maker who specializes in sound and expanding the vocabulary of singing, had her group explore the sounds of Hennepin Avenue, from the winds along the river to the bustling pedestrians; honking at 7th Street and the steady hum of the freeway to the refuge of the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden by Walker Art Center.

The group quickly got past any inhibitions to completely engage with the moment. Their sounds zeroed in on the incredible variety of noises along Hennepin and how sound helps create a powerful sense of place. Mankwe Ndosi shared the following:

“The sound group was encouraged to notice the sounds, the music of Hennepin Avenue and to sink deeply into their good experiences on the Avenue.

We circulated and summoned the sounds of the Avenue from the River to the Walker (the good AND the bad sounds).

We got into groups of three to make soundscapes for each person's good Hennepin Avenue story.

We wrote down the regular sounds/songs we hear on the Avenue. We got a demonstration of how partners could accompany a storyteller with sounds/soundscapes, listening and following.

We worked in trios, describing the settings, time, places, who we were with, directing and getting ideas from our partners.

Then we shared our stories with the entire group.

We talked about the range and type of experiences, times of day, and the era of Hennepin Avenue in which our stories happened.

We also talked about how people engage, how all sorts of people use Hennepin for both private and public experiences walking down the Avenue. Often people do not look up or at people's eyes or at the sky.”

- Mankwe Ndosi

Summary Reflections

These were themes highlighted for the larger group:

- noisy vs. meditative
- range and depth - base vs lead
- round the clock
- anticipation on way to events
- room for all kinds of people
- clubs → solitary
- medley → cumulative
- late eighties
- public - private
- connected to Hennepin even if in a building

From Their Flipchart Pad

Volunteer recorder Jamal Aiken assisted the group in getting their values, ideas and expressions down on paper.

- traffic
- light rail
- the river
- church bells
- children's laughter
- Holidazzle
- Pride Parade

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- tap dancing at the Cowles
- scalping at dawn
- inclusive
- laughter
- sparkle
- space (early morning or when nobody is downtown)
- bar goers
- fighting
- conversations
- music
- dusk on Hennepin Avenue
- laughter, anticipation, conversation about what folks see
- secret, silent spot by Nicollet Island. Bonfires and firewalls. Golfballs from Nicollet Island.
- buckets and tap shoes at the Cowles Center.
- The Loft
- living in the towers
- watching *The Big Lebowski* on top of Solera. Street sounds and Crave in the background
- night club loft above Bar Fly - dancing
- dancing with the wardrobe racks in winter outside of Cowles



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Breakout Session

Movements of Hennepin Avenue

Leah Nelson is a Zimbabwean dancer, choreographer and actor with a passion for organizing for social change through the arts.

Leah specializes in movement and immediately broke down barriers by having her group form a circle and move together rhythmically as they quietly talked, quickly becoming comfortable with one another.

Then, one at a time, participants moved into the center of the circle, adding their own unique body movement. Others would follow the lead of the person in the center, bringing unity and camaraderie to the group.

Later in the session, participants sat in a semi-circle and told stories of Hennepin Avenue, some very recent and others that went back decades. Many of the descriptions were sensory and about moving along the street, adding another dimension to the temporal quality of the stories.

Leah Nelson's description:

"Moving the Good Times on Hennepin Ave! We gathered in the room and I introduced the idea of going deeper into remembering the moment or moments that were good experiences on Hennepin Avenue using movement as the vehicle.

I invited everyone to stand up and create a circle including our scribe. I welcomed the circle and explained the ideas I had for our time together. I asked for feedback about peoples' comfort level with movement/dance, which was varied and mostly self-critical. I showed them an example of what I meant by moving together using call and response. Then we moved around the circle. Each person created a gesture to go with their name which the circle repeated back to them. This idea introduced movement and words going together and was easy to access. I asked "What did you notice about the movements?" Responses included "...bold...open...generous..."

I explained how I wanted us to make images out of our good times ... a tableau of moving snapshots of a good time.

We sat in a circle around our scribe's board. Each person was asked to close their eyes and use their five senses to go deeply into their memory. Isolating each sense I asked them to isolate the details, the taste of the moment. Responses included "...tasted like cold air in winter...good food...spring..."

Other prompts included: What did it smell like? What did it feel like to touch/on your skin? What sounds were around you? What were you seeing?

We noted each person's memories and then we checked in to see if our scribe had collected the information. The sense memory practice led to some vivid recollections with strong imagery as well as emotional resonance...

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....A teen female participant said she felt like she "belonged to something" as she rejoined the crowds in the street after watching a great theatre performance ...

At the end of our information sharing we recreated the circle and shared a final call and response using a physical movement that embodied the good experience accompanied by a spontaneous poetic metaphor phrase. Phrases were drawn from the writings and each person shared the essence of their good time.

We thanked each other and the session closed.

Summary Reflections

These were themes highlighted for the larger group:

- like Chicago - river of energy
- festivals; Aquatennial, marathons, plays
- feeling part of the larger city
- smell of winter
- diverse
- nature, connection to river
- food, taste of Hennepin
- Sixties: bussing downtown to Best Steak House
- coming from Northeast- Energy to Downtown
- Seventies: fun, safe, people on the street

From The Flipchart:

Volunteer recorder Teo Aiken assisted the group in getting their values, ideas and expressions on paper.

- tap dance on Hennepin - 1979
- suburbs to the city- 1997-2000
- Hennepin Bridge crossing on bike
- Basilica views- 2009-12
- Opening of Sculpture Garden - 1988
- 50th Anniversary of Carlson
- meeting the cast of *Les Mis* - 2012

Charles 1992 - Minneapolis vs Chicago. Flow of energy through a city → 'river up' \$\$ (creative energy) excess energy → the rushing of energy. Standing at the bank of the river, metaphor for harnessing dreams in the city to build and create a vision for Hennepin Avenue. Changing dreams throughout time and history. Smells. Murrays. The sense of community...

Bill ...1997/98 Festival and events/ marathon/ Aqua(ennial). Parade/ light parade/pride. Smashing Pumpkins, fried festival food/beer. All kinds of people. Ended at 10:30. Rock the Garden

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Zoe ...as a teenage girl. December, 2010. Saw first musical at Orpheum (food). Walking around, feeling like you are part of something. Smells- winter/cold/lights on marquee. *Billy Elliot*. Orchestra Hall.

John ...taking the bus in the 60's, going to Daytons. Busboy at Best Steakhouse - reading sales ads/ activity/ traffic/ busy/ vibrant / alive/ noise of the city/ Great Northern Market/ bins of produce/ swarms of people. From Northeast - coming off the bridge - gateway expansion coming onto the Avenue - Loring Park area walkable; lots of places you can go - festivals.

David ...Basilica Block Party energy - last night/ grand-daughter just moving to Minneapolis. Crave/food (scent)/cool glass/watching crowds pour into theatres and the

diversity/energy of the crowd.

JoEllen ...late afternoon/early evening. Loring Park and Walker Sculpture Garden / feels like city oasis/relaxing. Watching the birds and ducks. Feeling the richness of nature and of art (feeling fortunate).

Pam ...early 70's walking in the rain from 1st Ave to Moby Dicks/ the 90's- feeling safe with friends/exciting/fun.

Dale ...cold crisp air on a fall afternoon/crowds/ different people talking/music spilling out of the theaters/taking brother in law and sister out/different languages.



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Breakout Session

Stories of Hennepin Avenue

Harry Waters Jr, an actor and director with a love of community facilitation through his craft, used storytelling as the vehicle. Memories ranged from recollections about how the Avenue promoted spontaneity and synchronicity for one man who bought a ticket for a Bonnie Raitt concert on impulse and shared an exciting musical experience with a packed theatre, to how the Gay Pride March filled the street with a large, diverse and peaceful group, and how a building on the Avenue – the new library – makes a strong social statement by allowing all people, including the homeless, to enter and rest in the foyer of the building.

The group distilled their stories into a series of single words, all evoking the qualities that make Hennepin equitable, unique and exciting.

Summary Reflections

These are themes highlighted when the group reported back to the larger group:

- going underground
- togetherness
- dynamic
- abundance
- soul
- play
- discovery
- energy

- crowds
- people
- spontaneity
- showing up
- lights
- events
- public space
- creativity
- mobility

Recorded At the Session:

Plan-It team member Nicolas Ramirez, a designer, assisted the group in getting their values, ideas and expressions down on paper.

Aaron *City Planner City of Minneapolis*

- energy
- people
- Twins
- concerts

Tom *Hennepin Theatre Trust*

- theatre restoration
- buildings
- evolution of the Avenue
- How do we consolidate all this great things to turn them into cultural corridor?
- How do we create a sense of community?

Marcus

- Hennepin of the Late 70's/Late 80's
- misses Borders Bookstores
- Gay Pride
- worked on Hennepin and loved it
- the street doesn't have a soul as Minneapolis didn't seem to have one and now it is a Cosmopolitan city
- bring the spectacle, food festivals to Hennepin

Seth

- worked downtown and loves walking down Hennepin.

Mark

- Holidazzle on a warm night everybody's having a blast.
- lacks opportunities for the "After glow"

PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

- How do we create spaces where the performers and audience can interact after the shows?
- create a bond with the Avenue
- city branding: it is very important to call something what you want it to be

Ben *Critical View Program, Senior in high school*

- playing in the Sculpture Garden as he grew up.
- picnics
- bring back the “play” to the streets

Steve *New to Minneapolis*

- involved with The Cowles Center for the Arts
- Historic preservation should play a key role in this process
- bring back the onion domes to the buildings
- 5K
- marathon

Michelle *Lives in Loring park*

- grew up in New York City
- loves urban living
- anonymity
- watching *The Big Lebowski* at the top of Solera was an amazing experience

- loves the *City*
- *loves* the new Central Library

Nicolas *Observer/Reporting*

- Hennepin Avenue as a place to “hang”, not just circulate
- reclaim the streets / give the public space back to the people
- reduce the car flows down Hennepin Avenue
- landscape trees
- street theatre
- involving the users will create a sense of ownership

Keith *Volunteer*

- Ivy Awards
- Torch Light Festivities
- 5K
- lights



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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Breakout Session

Seeing Hennepin Avenue

Ta-coumba Aiken is a well-known Twin Cities visual artist who has a passion for engaging people of all ages and abilities in creative self-expression.

Ta-coumba had his group multi-tasking. As members sketched they reflected on their experiences along the avenue.

Then, each participant used the graphic they produced to tell a story, such as an image of the suspension bridge to help describe the beauty of the sky and water when biking across, or a brightly colored abstract which reflected the “big city” feel of noise, light and activity further down the street, or a series of colored words to help tell the story of a late night walk down the Avenue with all the lights and activity at full force.

Summary Reflections

These are themes highlighted when the group reported back to the larger group:

- everybody is human on Hennepin
- interactions: diverse
- meeting people of all groups
- electric feel
- multiple levels of activity

- Native American history
- pedestrian friendly
- connected to nature
- social freedom and interaction
- all seasons
- expansion of theater district

Recorded At the Session:

Plan-It team member Jillian Battenhoff, designer, assisted the group in getting their values, ideas and expressions down on paper.

- 24 hour activity on street
- connections to culture and people
- diversity
- nature, green space
- Native American history
- Mississippi
- the need to connect to Basilica on foot
- getting out of the Skyway
- use in all seasons
- expansion of theatre district; Broadway, concerts, dance
- places to gather- ‘ice bar’, ‘fire’ rooftop use
- interacting with performers



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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

- social freedom, and interactions- the ability to be yourself
- everybody is human on Hennepin
- the crowds on game day
- clean and safe environment
- Downtown Improvement District
- Cowles opening gala - dancers weaving through street



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Event Record



The workshop was held at the Minneapolis Central Library on Hennepin Avenue in Minneapolis. The library's multi-story glass atrium helps to restore to street level the historic northward convergence of Nicollet and Hennepin Avenues.



ART WORKS.
arts.gov

This project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

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Plan-It Hennepin's *Talk-It Hennepin* Conversation + Workshop Series

The *Talk-It Hennepin* series is part of the broader *Plan-It Hennepin*, a year-long initiative in 2012 to re-imagine Hennepin Avenue as a revitalized cultural corridor from the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden to the Mississippi River. The project is led by partners Hennepin Theatre Trust, Walker Art Center, Artspace and the City of Minneapolis and funded by a National Endowment for the Arts 'Our Town' grant. *Talk-It Hennepin* consisted of four pairs of conversations + workshops:

March 8	conversation	<i>Honoring History: The Avenue Through the Ages</i>
March 10	workshop	<i>Putting Our Stories On The Street: Our Best Experiences of Hennepin</i>
April 26	conversation	<i>Creative Urban Interventions: A Dialogue with Candy Chang</i>
April 28	workshop	<i>Creating Urban Visions</i>
May 7	conversation	<i>A Week Long Residency by Charles Landry</i>
May 12	workshop	<i>Coming, Going & Staying on Hennepin Avenue</i>
June 7	conversation	<i>Owning Public Space: The Power of Place Identity</i>
June 9	workshop	<i>Putting It All Together—Naming and Claiming</i>

April 26, 2012

Candy Chang

**Creative Urban Interventions:
A Dialogue with Candy Chang**
Walker Art Center



This document includes writing and editing contributions from Lucas Erickson, a coordinator for Plan-It Hennepin. This document was produced by Peter Musty, urban designer.

Image next page: *The image was provided for use at Plan-It Hennepin webpage at The Hennepin Theatre Trust, to promote the Talk-IT Hennepin Event titled 'Creative Urban Interventions: A Conversation with Candy Chang' on April 26, 2012.*

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Before I die I want to

off

”Make Your Own Discipline...”

Summary by Lucas Erickson

Candy Chang, artist, designer, urban planner and co-founder of the New Orleans-based studio Civic Center, likes to make cities more comfortable and alive for people for the people who live in them. Many of her projects combine street art with urban planning and social activism, sparking conversations among strangers in public places and providing people with easy and innovative ways to have a say in the evolution of their environment.

One of her shaping experiences was learning about Joseph Paxton, a gardener who grew the biggest water lily in the world. He put five kids on the pad to see how strong it was. From there, he used this architectural concept to make the Crystal Palace for the London exhibit. She liked that a gardener could be an architect and a leaf could be a building. “Make your own discipline,” became her motto.

Chang wanted to be an artist when she grew up and started by drawing book covers when she was young. She studied architecture and graphic design and moved to New York where she designed the page layouts for the *New York Times*. She then began to find books and information on people who made a difference in cities, leading to her studying urban design at Columbia University.

After she graduated, she started working on various projects, taking jobs that allowed her to work on her own time. She worked in several places around the world including Vancouver, Africa, India, New Orleans and New York.

She became interested in New York street vendors, and all of the daily challenges that they have with the city regulations. Thousands of tickets were issued to vendors, mostly for parking too far away

from the curb. She went to meetings to understand their problems, and helped re-write a vendor guide that included vendor rights in different languages called *Vendor Power: A Guide to Street Vending in New York City*.

She also started dabbling in street art and street art psychiatry. She wrote messages on the street such as “Does she know how you feel?” and “Then why do you do it?” She thinks about how to make streets more comfortable and why some public spaces work better than others.

“I wish this was...”

Her first major project in New Orleans was called “I wish this was...” in which she put laminated sticky notes on vacant buildings and gave people a chance to say what they wanted to be there. It was a way for neighbors to talk to each other and share ideas.

“ [I]... provide a platform for what is already there...”
– Candy Chang

Neighborland

Her current project, “Neighborland”, uses similar concepts online and focuses on what people want in their specific neighborhood. This project provides more opportunities for people to get involved on their own time through the Internet.

Jack Becker, executive director of Forecast Public Art (which helped host Chang’s visit), also worked

PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

with Clear Channel to activate Neighborland in Minneapolis, using the evolving electronic billboards downtown to drive people to the website.

Image below: May 19, 2012 screenshot from website
Neighborland Minneapolis...

<https://neighborland.com/cities/mpls>

write on the wall of an abandoned building their stories of the building and ideas for what they wanted the building to become as well as stories about their experiences living the complex. The data was then collected and used by the downtown neighborhood association and the developer of the property.

“Before I die...”

Chang’s latest major project, “Before I die...” invites people to share their own bucket list with others. She believes that asking questions that prompt people to pause in their lives and share ideas that touch on more transcendent subjects makes for a richer community life. She first wrote this question on the sidewall of an abandoned house in her neighborhood in New Orleans using chalkboard paint. It was soon filled with both quirky and touching ideas. It shows how powerful our public spaces can be and how much people have to say when given the opportunity. Chang even inspired a Minneapolis neighborhood to put up one.

Chang is modest about the work that she does, “[I] provide a platform for what is already there.” She wants to reach out to as many different types of people that she can. The “Before I die...” project has been in different languages and set up in different countries. How can this all be useful? She says she is not so sure herself, but calls it all an experiment.



“Looking For Love Again”

Another recent Candy Chang project, in Fairbanks, Alaska, focused on abandoned buildings. She wanted to learn the stories behind a building, as if the building could talk. The project was called “Looking For Love Again,”. She invited people to

PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



The conversation was held at Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. The Walker's Skyline Room (pictured in the photo below at the top right) overlooks the Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor, Loring Park, Basilica of St Mary, the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, the Armajani Bridge and, as shown above, the Lowry Tunnel carrying Interstate 94. Photo above courtesy of Bill Weber.



ART WORKS.
arts.gov

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Event Record



Plan-It Hennepin's Talk-It Hennepin

Conversation + Workshop Series

The *Talk-It* series is part of the broader *Plan-It Hennepin*, a year long initiative in 2012 to re-imagine Hennepin Avenue as a revitalized cultural corridor from the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden to the Mississippi River. The project is led by partners Hennepin Theatre Trust, Walker Art Center, Artspace and the City of Minneapolis and funded by a National Endowment for the Arts 'Our Town' grant. *Talk-It Hennepin* consisted of four pairs of conversations + workshops:

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April 28, 2012

Vision Workshop

Creating Urban Visions

The Walker Art Center (Skyline Room)



This document includes writing and editing contributions from designers Bob Close of AECOM, Tom Borrup (Project Lead), urban designer Peter Musty, consultant Anne Gadwa Nicodemus, and Karen Nelson of Hennepin Theatre Trust. Photography is by Mark Vancleave. This document was produced by Peter Musty.

The Talk-It Hennepin series is part of the broader Plan-It Hennepin, a year long initiative to re-imagine Hennepin Avenue as a revitalized cultural corridor from the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden to the Mississippi River. The project is led by partners Hennepin Theatre Trust, Walker Art Center, Artspace and the City of Minneapolis and funded by a National Endowment for the Arts 'Our Town' grant.

The photograph on this page, by *Plan-It Hennepin* photographer Mark Vancleave, was taken at the end of the morning's final exercise, led by visual artist Ta-coumba Aiken. (Aiken is in the yellow shirt with scarf facing photographer in the middle) Called the *Hennepin Avenue Re:model*, the exercise generated personal expressions of vision for a transformed Hennepin Avenue. Participants used cardboard boxes, magazine clippings, markers and glue. Everyone was invited to place their creation on an abstract future Hennepin Avenue stretching from the Walker Art Center to the Mississippi River, each then explaining their visions.

Throughout the morning, participants were invited to locate 'barriers', via red sticky note, on the 40-foot scaled model. Their comments were transcribed and posted on Google Earth. (Google Earth projection seen in the photo behind Mr. Aiken and project leader Tom Borrup who is facilitating with microphone.)



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Event Record

How might I transform Hennepin Avenue?

Event summary by Bob Close, Tom Borrup and Peter Musty

An engaged group of people gathered in the Skyline Room of the Walker Art Center on a rainy Saturday morning, April 28th, to share ideas about the future of Hennepin Avenue. *Plan-It Hennepin's* artist facilitation team continued the creative energy from the March 10th workshop at the Central Library, and once again inspired people to think big about how this street might look in five, ten or twenty years. Team members Harry Waters Jr., Ta-coumba Aiken, Leah Nelson and Mankwe Ndosi conducted the session in moving fashion, beginning with an animated review of the previous workshop through interpretive dance and song. The performance was



also to preview the intent of the day: to creatively envision a future Hennepin.

It was an enjoyable morning for many of the *Plan-It* team and participants. Many of the activities took place in front of the Skyline Room's huge window overlooking the Basilica of St. Mary and the Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor between the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden and Loring Park, providing a panoramic yet quirky perspective of Hennepin. Preparations were facilitated by Walker staff Ashley Duffalo (manager), Joey Heinen (registration), and Doug Livesay (technical assistance). The 40 foot scale model of Hennepin Avenue, by *Plan-It Hennepin* design consultant firm AECOM, was set up along the back wall of the room. Round tables were ready for participants with post-its, pens and notecards. Projected on the wall were photos from the last workshop and a Google Earth map ready to track written notes from the day. The event record of the last workshop was pinned up near the entry. Videos of street interviews played in the lobby near the registration tables. Small stickers were available, allowing participants to self-identify roles: live,



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Event Record

work, play, travel. Materials for the final box-making exercise were stacked and ready to go on a rolling cart. The space in front of the Skyline's big northern window was left clear for performance and exercises.

Visions from the Skyline Room

After a greeting from Olga Viso, Director of the Walker Art Center, project leader Tom Borrup introduced Mankwe Ndosi, Leah Nelson, Harry Waters and Ta-coumba Aiken. The artist team got participants out of their chairs, moving around the room, telling stories, role playing, singing, and, finally, building their dream of Hennepin Avenue. A new street literally appeared before everyone's eyes and it was an inspiring outcome. The following is the event record:

10:15 Opening Review



The photo above by Mark Vancleave shows Harry Waters Jr, Leah Nelson, Ta-coumba Aiken and Mankwe Ndosi 'reviewing' the results of the previous Values workshop, setting the tone for creative visioning through song and movement.

10:25 Welcome!

Warm greetings and thanks were delivered by Olga Viso, Director of the Walker Art Center, a *Plan-It Hennepin* Partner.



10:30 Overview



Tom Borrup explains *Talk-It Hennepin*, *Plan-It Hennepin* and previews the morning activities.

10:35-Noon Visioning Exercises



Four interactive exercises began and continued in sequence, each challenging participants to express their vision for the future of Hennepin Avenue. Notes were taken at each table to be compiled and synthesized later. Each exercise in different ways drove at the same basic question:

***How would I transform
Hennepin Avenue?***

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Event Record

Throughout the Morning Identifying Barriers



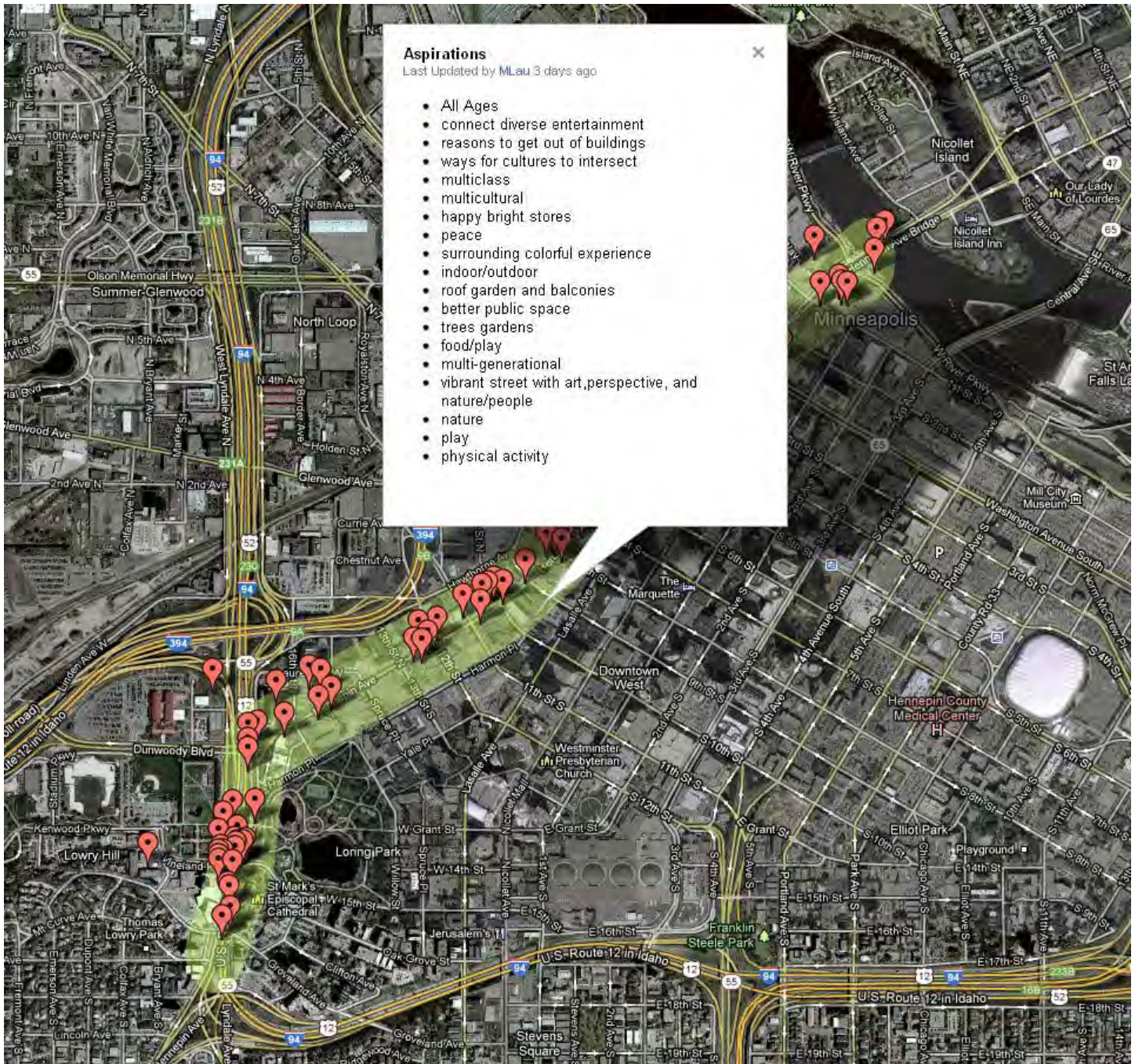
Participants were invited at their discretion throughout the morning to place red post-it notes on the 40-foot scale model expressing what they see as obstacles or barriers to a better future on Hennepin Avenue. These comments were mapped immediately onto the on-line version of Hennepin Avenue within Google Earth and later made available on Hennepin Theatre Trust's website: www.hennepintheatretrust.org/plan-it



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Event Record

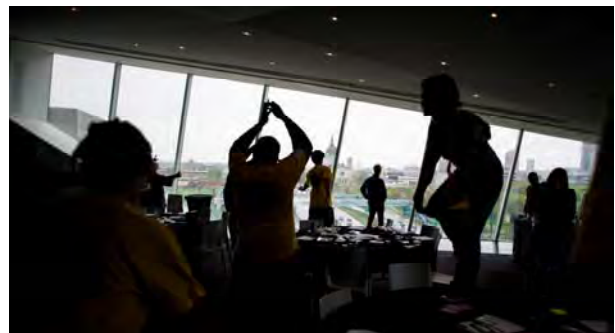
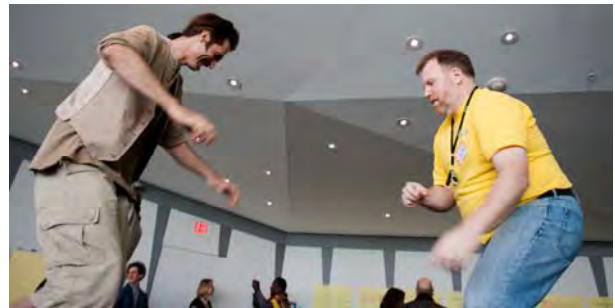


Visioning Exercise #1

A Movement is Beginning

Led by Leah Nelson

Leah got everyone moving, warming up, orienting participants to the room and preparing them for interaction with others. People were paired and asked to perform, through body movement, a favorite activity on Hennepin. From baseball to dining and drinking, to plays, musicals, and being with family, to being a part of the scene ...to being anonymous... participants had fun expressing the range of things that happen on Hennepin Avenue. The ice was broken, everyone left laughing and was ready to share further.



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Visioning Exercise #2

Vision Circles: In Twenty Years...

Led by Harry Waters Jr.

Participants were each asked to share, in depth, a vision of Hennepin in 20 years, speaking from the perspective of someone living, someone working or or someone playing on Hennepin Avenue. The following sample is a series of verbal visions by participants from one of the six person tables, as transcribed by Anne Godwa Nicodemus, consultant to *Plan-It Hennepin*, from her own notes:

A.: "...I would like to walk down Hennepin Ave...smorgasbord of sparkly lights, marquees, lights overhead, interactive things that are changing. Environmental extremes of a lot of lights that you would not experience anywhere else. Less commercial than time square. A 3D experience..."

C.: Wants to see, at the river, a gathering space for informal gatherings and events. A place where people that don't live, work or play on Hennepin Avenue can gather and begin their experience."

B.#1: "...I want more green. I don't like this concrete mess going down the center. Want it to feel like a park: trees, green, sidewalk cafes.

Feels more alive than a solid thing w/cars making it hard to go across it.

K.: "...I want it to feel safe...not be worried that anything bad is going to happen...24 hours. I don't want my friends that don't work here to be concerned if they come to a show..."

N.: "...I like the idea of openness, the lights and things. I envision a big, big celebration every summer. No traffic for the whole weekend. Lights of canopies...Northern Lights Festival...at night it would look like a giant illuminated city. ...People meeting each other and sharing their lives and doing it in a safe environment. This is a great place to live...at heart, we all love each other. Want to share what's great about this city and why we live in this area. Start with celebration..."



B.#2: "...I see it as a living room for the city and not a conduit for cars moving through. I would love to see it very green, very pedestrian friendly...a place to stroll...a place to linger.

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...Love to see the cars diminished. ...Wonderful to be able to catch transit and activate the street that way. Different, but equally inviting as Nicolett Mall..”

T.: “...I’m very much a newcomer (barely 2 years). I live in one of the high rises. I look down at certain parts. My idea is: Hennepin as one of major downtown thoroughfares. I disagree on the green(ery) idea. Green/parks are already a huge attraction of Mpls as a city—green is so close...Parks everywhere. A lot of thought lately given to something happens in dense urban environment; people interact, meet each other—generate thoughts and ideas that aren’t present when all spread out.”

“...Grass doesn’t talk back to you, but buildings and people in buildings do...”

“...A long stretch (of Hennepin should be) a pedestrian zone—very few bus drops. Commercial aspect. Liveliness, generates income. I would love to see a bakery. I would love to see a bookstore. What will be profitable enterprise (bookstores have closed)? ...”

“...One last thing—I don’t have a car, I do everything on foot and by public transit. There has been very unfortunately mutuality between major bus stops and people that don’t want to take a bus, just hang out—shout at each other,

use foul language. I have changed my bus route to not be exposed to that. Doesn’t invite pleasure, strolling around, or safety. ...”

A.: “...not too sanitized. Authentic. Not like a suburban mall. Maintain some urban grit. If you can understand history—gateway, came for leisure activities. ...Understand role it’s played in city, then it will be authentic.

T.: “...If don’t sanitize grass, it’s ugly.”

B.: “...I was thinking trees, not lawn. I want flowers, trees. Less concrete, more organic...”

T: “...I like concrete, some of the very old buildings; The Lumber Exchange (at 6th where LRT crosses), ... (and) Masonic temple. I think those are icons. Any kind of new architecture that takes place would be good to have it along those ways. Candy Chang talk on Thursday—showed many images of small American downtowns. She advocated that. I don’t think that has any place in the cities. Raise density...”

A: “...Increase density, but also open spaces to improve breathing room...”, “...The light concept, what would it look like in the daytime?...”, “...Sculptural, grid work to hold up the lights...”



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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Visioning Exercise #3

Why am I here?

What do I need (from this place)?

What do I want (from this place)?

Led by Mankwe Ndosi

Inspiring and inquiring through song, Mankwe Ndosi invited all participants to express themselves through writing, explicitly from the perspectives of an elderly person, a young person, a differently-abled person, someone on the Avenue who frustrates you, and then another being (plant or person) trying to survive. The following sample is a series of reflections by participants, as transcribed by Anne Godwa Nicodemus, consultant to *Plan-It Hennepin*, from her own notes:

...from the perspective of **an older person**:

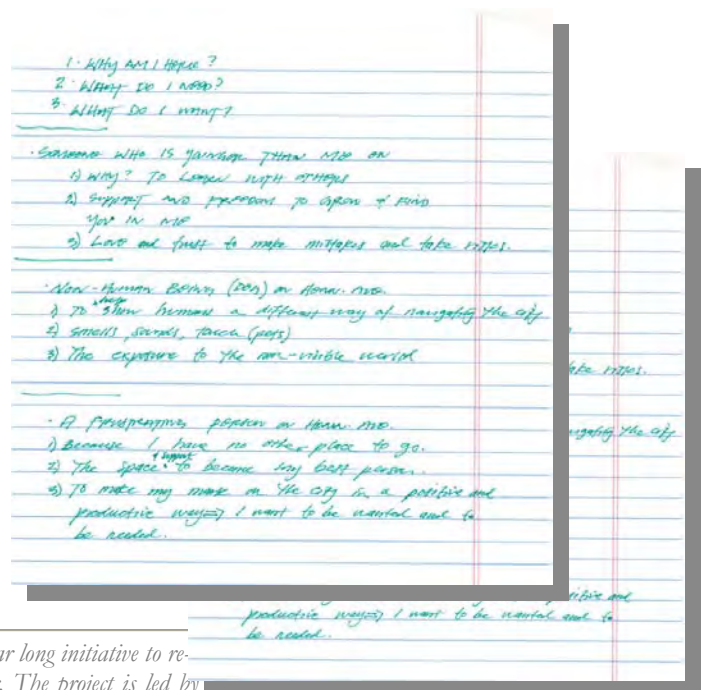
"...I thought about how an older person would need places to sit, to pause, step back from the bustle, see people and be a part of it. Street crossing—enough time. Be around people younger than you, still be around that bustle...." – K.

...from the perspective of **someone with less**:

"...People who, 'I don't call it begging. It's work.' I don't think we need to chase them away, be removed. We need to accommodate their poverty

into the street. They need to be allowed to make their living. If that means people donating to help them out, then we should do it. It's great to tell them "go get a job." But there are people who just can't do it. We need to make a space for them—on the street, in your psyche. Because they're going to be there...." –S.

"...Noticed how there's a lot of overlap among mine [imaginings for different people]. People want something outside of themselves. Kids want to play and discover something for themselves. People want enjoyment, relief from the daily grind. An elderly person stuck inside, has a hard time getting



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around. Low-wage job, a lot of struggles. Getting to/from the job is struggle. Want something to take them outside of themselves. The person who irritates—they want you to acknowledge them....”

...if I were a plant on Hennepin, part of ecosystem:

“...Need to be nurtured and sustained. Just want to live my life and play my role. Parallels with people....” -K #1.

“...I agree that every answer has basically formula: want to be safe. Street that they can walk to. Don’t want to have to stay inside because there is no where to go—a place to go, spend money, do nothing, whatever they want to do....” – K. #2

“...“enjoy” was in a lot of mine....”

“...Other cultures. Identify people, history. Other than icons and brands, things that they can identify with and reflect on....” – T.

“...I think that it’s an interesting situation. In a utopian sense, there is a limitation to what we can

do to peoples’ behavior that can change. As a microcosm of the society that we have...If there was something that would allow—event driven, physical, turns changes within us, so that when we get to the space, it’s an opportunity to step into something greater than our everyday lives. Looking for something that could be...it’s inclusive, celebratory. Giant celebration. Memories of that would that linger, and go on throughout the year. ...” – N. (#1)

“...One of biggest problems is that there are no public restrooms. People have no place to go to the bathroom. Basic preservation of human dignity, people have to have some place to go. It’s a growing issue. Public sanitation. It’s hard on people when they come downtown. Especially the homeless or transient....”

“...should be a way to learn the ways of this place or how do I fit in here. Sense of what’s where isn’t evident anywhere. How am I supposed to fit in, if I’m an outsider? ...” – K.



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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Visioning Exercise #4 **The Hennepin Avenue Re:model** Led by Ta-coumba Aiken

This exercise produced personal visions of Hennepin via cardboard boxes cut, folded, transformed and/or decorated with magazine collages and/or drawings, ready for placement on an imagined future Hennepin Avenue.

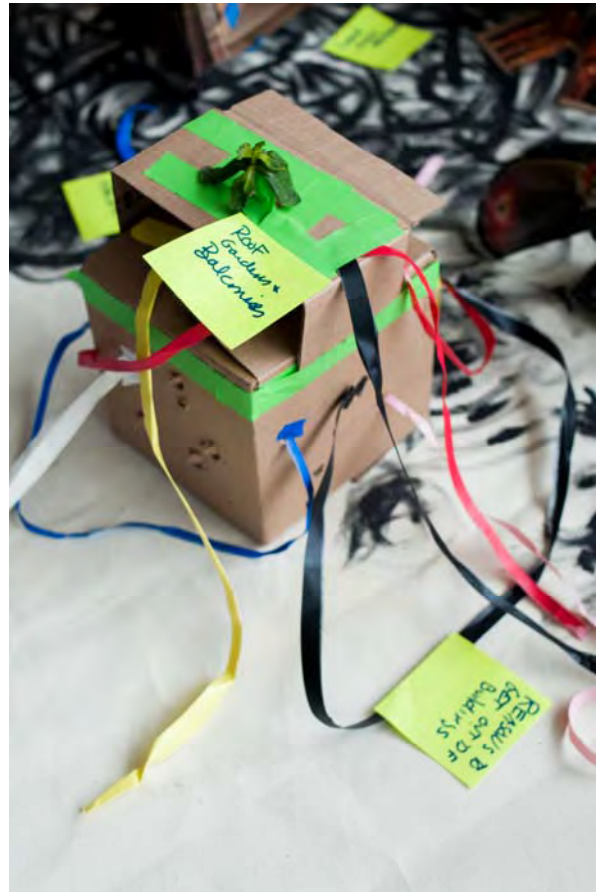
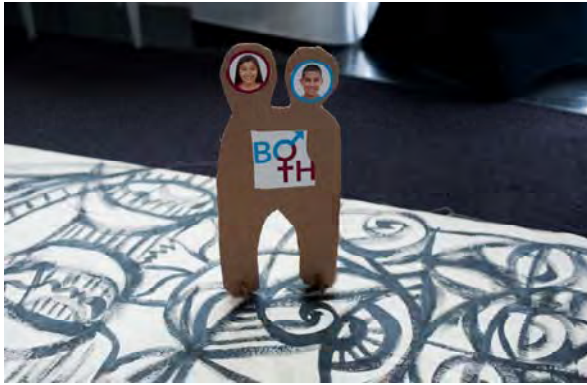
Participant boxes were then assembled on the floor, forming an abstract *future* Hennepin. Participants prepared one phrase on sticky note to describe the images, shape and placement of their box. Participants were each invited to describe what their creations represented.



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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

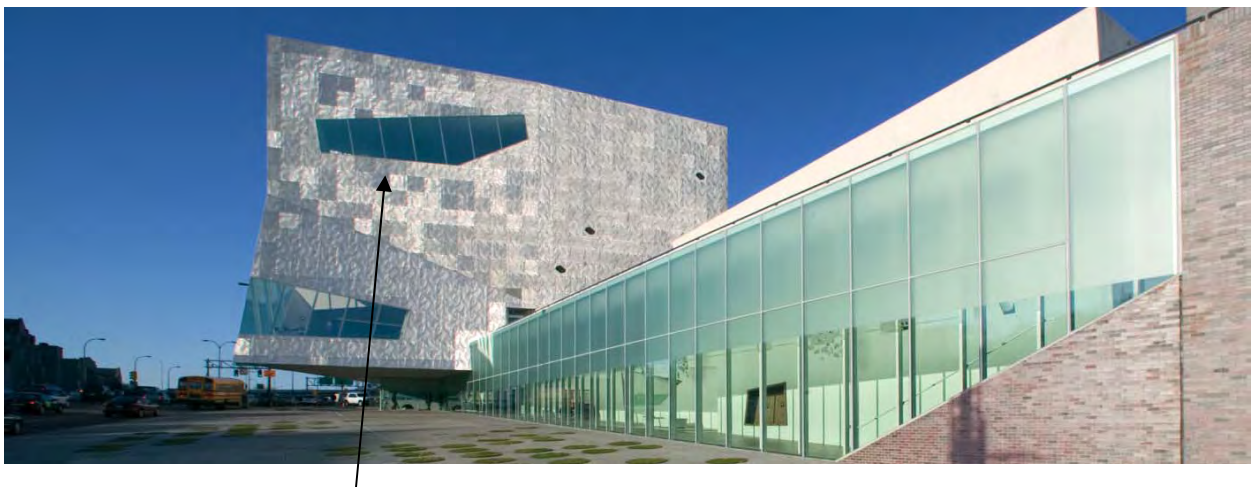
Event Record



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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



The Saturday workshop was in the Skyline Room of Plan-It Hennepin partner Walker Art Center. As the anchor of several large civic and religious institutions, the modern face of the Walker looks east to downtown over the historic Loring Park Neighborhood. Positioned at the convergence of Hennepin Avenue, Lyndale Avenue and the Lowry Tunnel of Interstate 94, the Walker and its' civic neighbors form a logical west end to the Plan-It Hennepin study area.



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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Plan-It Hennepin's *Talk-It Hennepin* Conversation + Workshop Series

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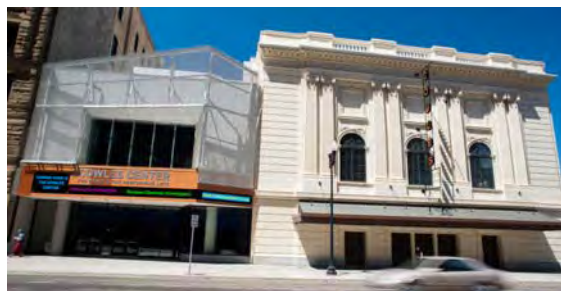
March 8	conversation	<i>Honoring History: The Avenue Through the Ages</i>
March 10	workshop	<i>Putting Our Stories On The Street: Our Best Experiences of Hennepin</i>
April 26	conversation	<i>Creative Urban Interventions: A Dialogue with Candy Chang</i>
April 28	workshop	<i>Creating Urban Visions</i>
May 7	conversation	<i>A Weeklong Residency by Charles Landry</i>
May 12	workshop	<i>Coming, Going & Staying on Hennepin Avenue</i>
June 7	conversation	<i>Owning Public Space: The Power of Place Identity</i>
June 9	workshop	<i>Putting It All Together—Naming and Claiming</i>

May 7, 2012

Charles Landry

A Weeklong Residency

Cowles Center



This document was produced by Jeffrey Schommer and Peter Musty, urban designer with writing and editing contributions from Karen Nelson of Hennepin Theatre Trust, and contributions from Lucas Erickson, a coordinator for Plan-It Hennepin.

Photos were taken by Karen Nelson during the bus tour with Charles Landry of Hennepin Avenue and downtown Minneapolis, with project partners, various agency staff and stakeholders.

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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



“The key is to try new things...”

*Summary by Karen
Nelson with Lucas
Erickson contributing.*

Bridges, roads, buildings, stadiums, skyways, sidewalks, streets—traditional city planning has historically focused on the ‘hardware’ of urban engineering versus the ‘software’ of a passion-driven, personal, “What do I want in my city?” approach. But there is a global movement afoot which now has a toehold in the Twin Cities, reflecting a paradigm shift in how communities can come together and build creative cities.

Among the challenges for Minneapolis / St. Paul is responding to the question of how we can harness our much ballyhooed creative impulses to drive healthy, intercultural, sustainable urban planning. In May, an innovative city visionary visited our Twin Towns, pointing the way to revisiting our thinking, discovering connections and negotiating solutions for the public good.

Charles Landry, who travels internationally as a ‘critical friend’ to cities, was invited for a weeklong residency dubbed *Creating 21st Century Intercultural and Creative Cities*. He was hosted by a community coalition including the partners of *Plan-It Hennepin* and a broader consortium of organizations with interests ranging from ethnic tourism to the Central Corridor light rail development and the Saint Paul Riverfront.* The big picture goal was to understand how art, culture, creativity and diversity can accelerate both economic and social growth—critical elements in strengthening the Twin Cities as a world-class region.

Landry has been thinking about and advising creative cities for 25 years and his landmark publications, such as *The Creative City: A toolkit for urban innovators*, have paved the way to a global movement.

The “Yes-No” Test

To boil down some of his many concepts to a literal street level, he has developed a simple “Yes-No” test, which he describes as using when encountering a building, street or neighborhood. Landry identifies these places as “Yes” - if they feel welcoming, make you want to go in and walk around and inspire you to engage. He says, however, that many building and cities say, “No” to their environment and those who enter it.

Kicking off his residency week, Landry spoke at The Cowles Center for Dance and the Performing Arts. Some of his comments included the following:

In the ‘Yes’ spaces, “You can feel and sense the buzz; it is obvious to residents and visitors alike...,” said Landry. ‘No’ spaces are the opposite. He used Minneapolis’ infamous Block E as an example, calling it “an unwelcoming, ill-conceived structure that looks cheap and unsatisfactory,” and asked, “What is its intent?” “What is the common denominator that would attract the community?”

He believes too much money and energy are spent in retro-fitting after traditional planning has failed. So an immediate, yet graspable, challenge for us is to determine how the Twin Cities can embrace and build “Yes”?

“If a city considers culture and its representations the DNA of authentic city planning the result can be a community in which everyone feels recognized and welcomed; but if the diverse marks of culture are seen as obstacles to planning, many people will feel excluded,” paraphrased Camille LeFevre, who covered the speech for *The Line*.

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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Touring Hennepin Avenue with Charles Landry

The next day, Landry led a mini-bus tour down Hennepin Avenue with people including stakeholders Tom Hoch, President/CEO of Hennepin Theatre Trust, Olga Viso, Executive Director of the Walker Art Center, Sarah Harris, then director of the Downtown Improvement District and Ann Calvert of the City of Minneapolis.



The purpose of this bus tour was to educate Landry about the city with help from a handful of local experts and show him key areas downtown. "I'm an outsider," he said. "The disadvantage is that I'm ignorant."

The bus first stopped at Nicollet Island and the Mississippi River where participants reviewed plans. The tour then proceeded down Hennepin stopping at the historic theatres, the Basilica and the Walker Art Center. Landry took many photographs, learned about the area and concentrated on getting a feel for the unique nature of Hennepin Avenue, noting "Yes" and "No" spots along the way.



Next up was a luncheon at Minneapolis Community and Technical College, where Landry reflected on his recent tour. In attendance were nine of the 13 Minneapolis City Council members including Council President Barb Johnson and 30 others from other organizations.

Sensing Opportunities, Landry Challenged Paradigms

Landry's visit provided the opportunity to challenge existing assumptions, while also facilitating conversations about possibilities. The question, as Landry posed, is not whether there is value in creativity, culture, heritage and the arts - but what is the cost and consequences of *not* valuing these elements?

At the MCTC he quickly pulled together a slideshow based on the tour and talked about some "Yes" and "No" spaces he viewed. One place that he mentioned was the Minneapolis Central Library, including the area around it, which would be a perfect place for a park.

Also, the Fifth Street and Hennepin Avenue

PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

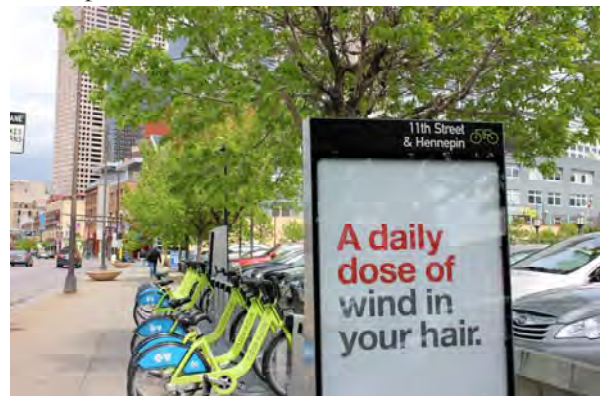
intersection / light rail stop and the I-94 underpass were mentioned as opportunities.



How do we get people downtown? "Its very much about food and markets," said Landry among other comments.

He later said that a key is to try new things, and have places take on temporary uses, such as artists showing their work in abandoned storefronts. "If you have disgusting spaces, try *something*," he urged.

According to Landry, the old paradigm of planning, which was to plant one monolithic entity — an anchor store or a corporate headquarters — in a development, is over.



“...an appreciation of culture should drive the technicalities of planning...”

— Charles Landry

The rest of the week included Central Corridor Station Area Tours and Workshops in Minneapolis and St. Paul, as part of Jane’s Walk USA. Landry also provided the keynote address for the Great River Gathering in St Paul, an annual celebration of the ecological, economic and historic significance of the Mississippi River. At week’s end, Landry spoke about his experience in Minneapolis and Saint Paul including observations, recommendations and a regional call to action.

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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Charles Landry's weeklong Twin Cities residency included a bus tour of Hennepin Avenue, Central Corridor station walking tours, a keynote address for the Great River Gathering and an introductory presentation at The Cowles Center. Photos by Karen R. Nelson.



This project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Plan-It Hennepin's *Talk-It Hennepin* Conversation + Workshop Series

The *Talk-It* series is part of the broader *Plan-It Hennepin*, a year long initiative in 2012 to re-imagine Hennepin Avenue as a revitalized cultural corridor from the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden to the Mississippi River. The project is led by partners Hennepin Theatre Trust, Walker Art Center, Artspace and the City of Minneapolis and funded by a National Endowment for the Arts 'Our Town' grant. *Talk-It Hennepin* consisted of four pairs of events consisting of conversation + workshop:

March 8	conversation	<i>Honoring History: The Avenue Through the Ages</i>
March 10	workshop	<i>Putting Our Stories On The Street: Our Best Experiences of Hennepin</i>
April 26	conversation	<i>Creative Urban Interventions: A Dialogue with Candy Chang</i>
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May 12, 2012

Design Workshop

**Coming, Going & Staying on
Hennepin Avenue
FAIR School**



This document was produced by Peter Musty, urban designer, based on information collected from the May 12th Talk-It Hennepin workshop. Photography of the teams and workshop activities throughout the document is provided by Mark Vancleave. Photography in the field of subject areas is provided by various participants from six designer-artist-participant teams. Aerial images throughout the document are web screenshots from Google's Google Earth Pro and Microsoft's Bing.com.

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This image shows Team 5, led by Harry Waters Jr and Nicolas Ramirez, walking back to the studio at FAIR school after scouting for ideas in the eastern district of Hennepin Avenue in downtown Minneapolis. The photograph was taken by Mark Vancleave.

PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Starting at Ground Level

Summary by Peter Musty

Plan-It Hennepin hit the streets on Saturday morning, May 12, 2012, taking over ground level of FAIR School at 10th and Hennepin. A smaller but diverse group of community members and creative professionals gathered for a creative placemaking (urban design) exercise.

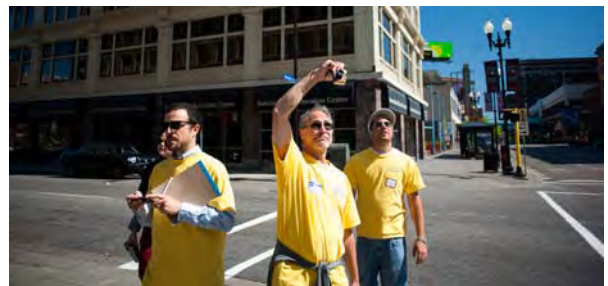
Organized by Hennepin Theater Trust, the event was the third in a series of four *Talk-It Hennepin* conversation/workshop combinations that ran from March to June of 2012. The goal of the four sessions was to generate ideas and excitement about potential future scenarios for Hennepin Avenue, a central and historic corridor.

Moderated by Tom Borrup (*Plan-It Hennepin* Team Leader) and urban designer Peter Musty, and facilitated by a local team of artists and designers (see next page), a core question was asked of six teams of participants;

How would you transform Hennepin Avenue?

The Agenda

- 9:00 **Doors Opened** - participants were asked choose a table; Hennepin Avenue sub-district of their choice: East, Central, West
- 9:15 **Sounds & Spirits from the Walker** – the *Talk-It Hennepin* artist team performed an interpretation of the input from the April 28 Visioning Workshop, with accompaniment by trio of FAIR School Downtown student keyboard musicians
- 9:35 **Welcome and Agenda** – Tom Borrup
- 9:45 **PLACEMAKING CHALLENGE**
 - Task 1: Identify the No-to-Yes(s)
 - Task 2: Identify Major Transformational Opportunities
- 11:00 Teams Reconvene to Prepare Slideshows
- 11:50 **DISTRICT SLIDESHOWS**
- 12:30 Adjourn



Finding Placemaking Opportunities

The core exercise was a simple challenge to participants: identify, via images in slideshow, a short list of opportunities to improve the sense of place and vitality of Hennepin Avenue. Six artist-designer-participant teams were asked to walk, talk and take pictures in three sub-districts of Hennepin. Teams were asked to find small ways large ways to make Hennepin a better place. By the end of the exercise, six teams had carefully selected about three dozen images – collectively developing a catalogue of important opportunities to transform the Avenue.

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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

West

Tenth Street west through the Loring Park Neighborhood to Walker Art Center including Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor and Lowry Tunnel carrying Interstate 94

Team #1 Captains

Josh Bergeron, designer, AECOM

Eric Morin, Ryan Companies

Team #2 Captains

Leah Nelson, movement artist

Tionenji (Tio) Aiken

Central

The 'Theatre District' from Fifth (Light Rail Transit Station) to Tenth Street

Team #3 Captains

Ta-coumba Aiken, visual artist

Michael Lau, urban design- PETER MUSTYLLC

Team #4 Captains

Bob Close, AECOM, Plan-It Hennepin design lead

Colin Harris, Community Design Group

East

Mississippi River to Fifth Street (LRT)

Team #5 Captains

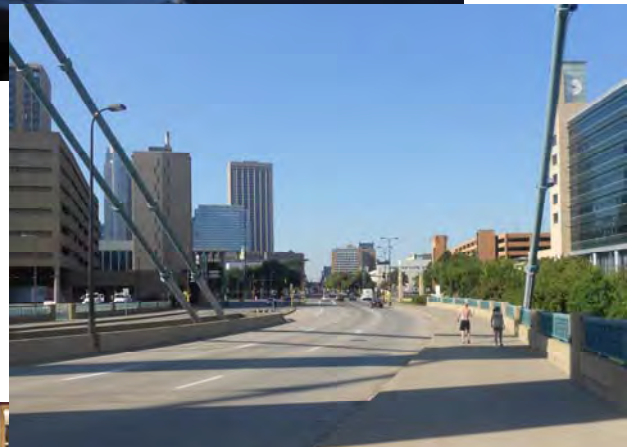
Harry Waters Jr, actor, professor at Macalester

Nicolas Ramirez, designer, AECOM

Team #6 Captains

Mankwe Ndosi, sound & vocal artist

Mollie O'Connor, architect & artist, AECOM



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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Sounds & Spirits

From the April 28 Visioning Workshop

Talk-It Hennepin's four artist facilitators interpreted the participant input from the Visioning Workshop at Walker Art Center on April 28th. (See *April 28th event record*). This was an abstract and very engaging review. Leah Olsen, Ta-coumba Aiken, Harry Waters Jr, and Mankwe Ndotsi generated and coordinated a mix of vocals, movements, and selected readings from participants. The collaborative expression took place next to, around, and on top of the *Plan-It Hennepin* scale model.

Before participants began their exercise, Tom Borrup gave a brief summary of the *Talk-It Hennepin* process, outlining the morning agenda, framing it within the larger context of the *Plan-It Hennepin* initiative.

Six teams were formed at six tables, three on either side of a central model. Each table had two 'yellow-shirt' designer or artist captains.

The teams stayed together throughout the morning and presented their work on the two tasks via six separate screen presentations at the end of the session.



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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

Team Task #1

Turning “NOs” into “YESs”

The core exercise of the morning was a simple challenge to participants: identify, via images in slideshow, a short list of opportunities to improve the sense of place and vitality of Hennepin Avenue. The method used was to be based on Charles Landry's simple test:

*“Does this place
say ‘No’ to
you...or does it
say ‘Yes’?”*

- Charles Landry

The teams were each asked to find five ‘nos’, and explain what they might do to make them into ‘yess’. The following pages describe the results of this challenge.



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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



West

Tenth Street west through the Loring Park Neighborhood to Walker Art Center including Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor and Lowry Tunnel under Interstate 94. – *Aerial imagery from Google Earth. Photos at left by Mark Van Cleave; photos on the following pages provided by workshop participants.*

Team 1

- 1 Improve Street Condition
- 2 Activate Street w/ 'Liner' Retail
- 3 Enliven The Underpass
- 4 Visually 'Open Up' Sculpture Garden
- 5 Put a Lid On It!

Team 2

- 6 Warm the Bus Shelters
- 7 Create More Places to Sit
- 8 Continue to Make Bicycling Accessible
- 9 Greener, Softer, Friendlier Street Walls
- 10 Make More Inviting Places for People

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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



1. **Improve Street Condition** - Major Avenue looks poor- not cared for; sidewalks, streets, etc.



2. **Activate Street w/ 'Liner' Retail** MCTC parking- can it have retail on ground level?



3. **Enliven The Underpass** - Potential here for food trucks, portable art between pillars, projection lights, colors....



4. **Visually 'Open Up' the Sculpture Garden** - Sculpture Garden wall and entrance by Dunwoody- big granite wall: make a better 'invitation'.



5. **Put a Lid On It!** - Lowry Tunnel and traffic lanes="black hole" in a primary civic location.

PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



6. **Warm The Bus Shelters** - All of them.



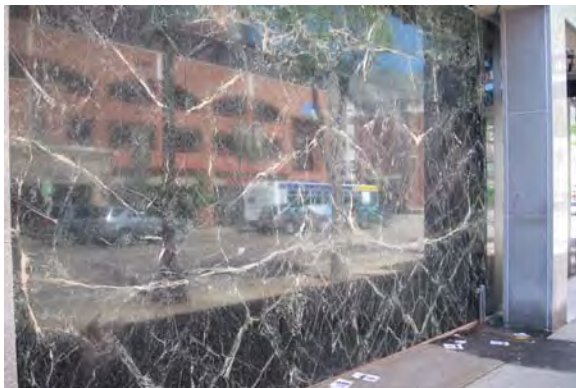
8. **Continue Making Bicycling More Accessible!** - Nice Ride kiosk is in English only; contract information is small and hard to read for some...may cost too much for some and assumes access to credit card. Bike lanes need more discernment. Could sign be more versatile as a digital electronic board combining mural, street and neighborhood related messages...and perhaps integrated with interactive audio for hearing impaired and language translations?



7. **Make More Places to Sit**

PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



9. **Greener, Softer, Friendlier Street Walls**

Minneapolis Community Technical College (MCTC) parking ramp; looks like a prison yard and back of utility building. Redesign/remodel along street or add landscaping, color and seating. The Butcher and the Boar Restaurant; the marble wall, while expensive, makes this restaurant seem inaccessible to a certain income as well as creating a stark landscape on a block which needs softening with landscaping and color.



10. **Make More Inviting Places for People** – at MCTC, in empty lots, Basilica yard; need water, bathrooms, food... **More human culture can be represented.** Clarify: Am I allowed to sit here? Underpass says: do not walk through here!

PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Central

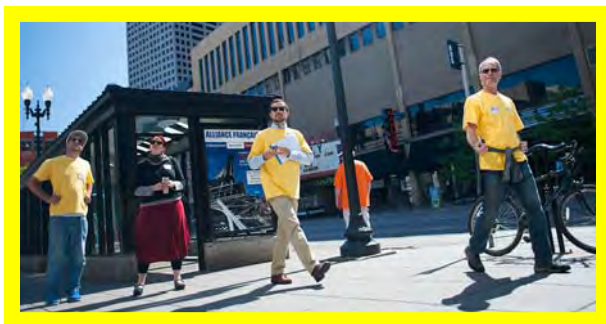
The 'Theatre District' from Fifth (Light Rail Transit Station) to Tenth Street – *Aerial imagery from Google Earth. Photos at left by Mark Van Cleave; images on the following pages provided by workshop participants.*

Team 3

- 11 See Surface Lots as Opportunities
- 12 Eliminate/Prohibit Parking Garage Entries
- 13 Engage the Street in More Diverse Ways
- 14 Capture Opportunities for Interactive Art
- 15 Transform 5th & Hennepin!

Team 4

- 16 Transform 5th and Hennepin!
- 17 Clean Up the Street
- 18 Eliminate Visible Surface Parking
- 19 De-clutter Sidewalks
- 20 Address Street with More Respect



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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



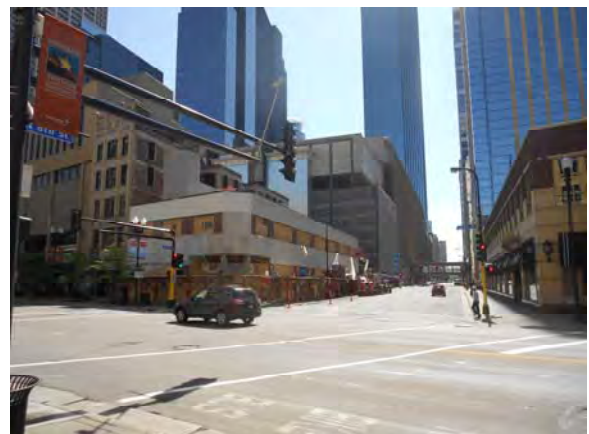
11. **See Surface Parking Lots as Opportunities -**
Do something creative... parking at Pantages needs green ...



12. **Eliminate/Prohibit Parking Garage Entries on Hennepin** - improve Bar Fly 'parking hole' frontage



13. **Engage the Street in More Diverse Ways—**
create more places for elders, youth etc.



14. **Capture Opportunities to Add Interactive Art** - Block E cubby hole; could have interactive sculpture for children...

PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



17. **Clean Up the Street** – its messy and the bike lane painting has disappeared



18. **Eliminate Visible Surface Lots** - soften parking lot frontages and gradually eliminate off-street visible surface parking lots



15. **Transform 5th & Hennepin** – Team 3 ... 5th & Hennepin has space for festivals and a large wall for film projection

16. **Transform 5th & Hennepin** – Team 4 ... add a park, public art & projections (bottom image by Colin Harris)



19. **De-clutter Sidewalks to Make Them More Accessible** – some stretches are too ‘crowded’ with fixed obstacles

PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



20. **Address the Street with More Respect at Ground Level** — doors should open to the street on Hennepin. Cowles Center (old Schubert's) front doors are blank and cannot be opened to Hennepin— a harsh gesture.;...Block E 'emptiness'; State & Pantages — orientation to spaces not visible on sidewalk.

PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



East

Mississippi River to Fifth Street (LRT) – *Aerial imagery from Google Earth. Photos at left by Mark Van Cleave; photos/images on the following pages provided by workshop participants.*

Team 5

- 21 Transform Riverfront with Grand Terrace
- 22 Replace Surface Parking with Public Space
- 23 Design/Enhance the Gateway Park
- 24 Improve the Bus Stops
- 25 Benches Needed Here

Team 6

- 26 Occupy ING
- 27 Activate the Blank Wall
- 28 Improve 5th & Hennepin
- 29 Unlock the Doors!
- 30 More Than Just a Transit Facility?

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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



21. **Transform Riverfront at the Bridge w/ Grand Terrace** - before/after image by Nicolas Ramirez



22. **Transform Surface Parking Lot into Public Space**



23. **Design/Enhance the Gateway Park**

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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



24. **Benches Needed Here....**



25. **Occupy ING** – © ...More seriously: is this park public or private?



26. **Improve the Bus Stops** – Add seating and make these easier to use, with more thought to street furnishings. The stop at 4th and Hennepin, right in front of an apartment building, has no seats or benches...the other side of this bus stop is very crowded too with newspaper kiosks and clumsy street furnishings.



27. **Activate the Blank Wall!** – Lumber Exchange parking lot at 5th and Hennepin: Parking lot is inactive and unfriendly. Building façade is too blank. Do people occupy this building? Can the façade be enlivened with balconies or art? Can the building become residential?

PLAN – IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



28. **Improve 5th & Hennepin – near station area:** Can buildings be improved and the upper levels better utilized? *(Don't chase away, improve!)*



30. **More than Just a Transit Facility?** – As a hub, can this be more? Can the curved roof host murals on the inside and/or outside? This is a wonderful singing space – acoustics are good.



29. **Unlock the Doors!** – It's a summer Saturday morning on Hennepin; why is the street level retail and building entry so blank and uninviting?

PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

Team Task #2

Locating Major Transformational Placemaking Opportunities

The second task asked of each team was to collaboratively identify one or more key spots

where major transformations could occur to improve Hennepin Avenue. Teams then were asked to present their findings along with their images from the locations they'd selected.

1. Lid (1-94)
2. Underpass (1-94)
3. Ramp Liner (MCTC)
4. Redevelopment (near 10th - 11th)
5. Light Rail Station Area
6. Gateway Park
7. Riverfront



West
Teams 1 & 2

Central
Teams 3 & 4

East
Teams 5 & 6

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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



**Major
Transformational
Placemaking
Opportunity**

**I-94
Lid**

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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

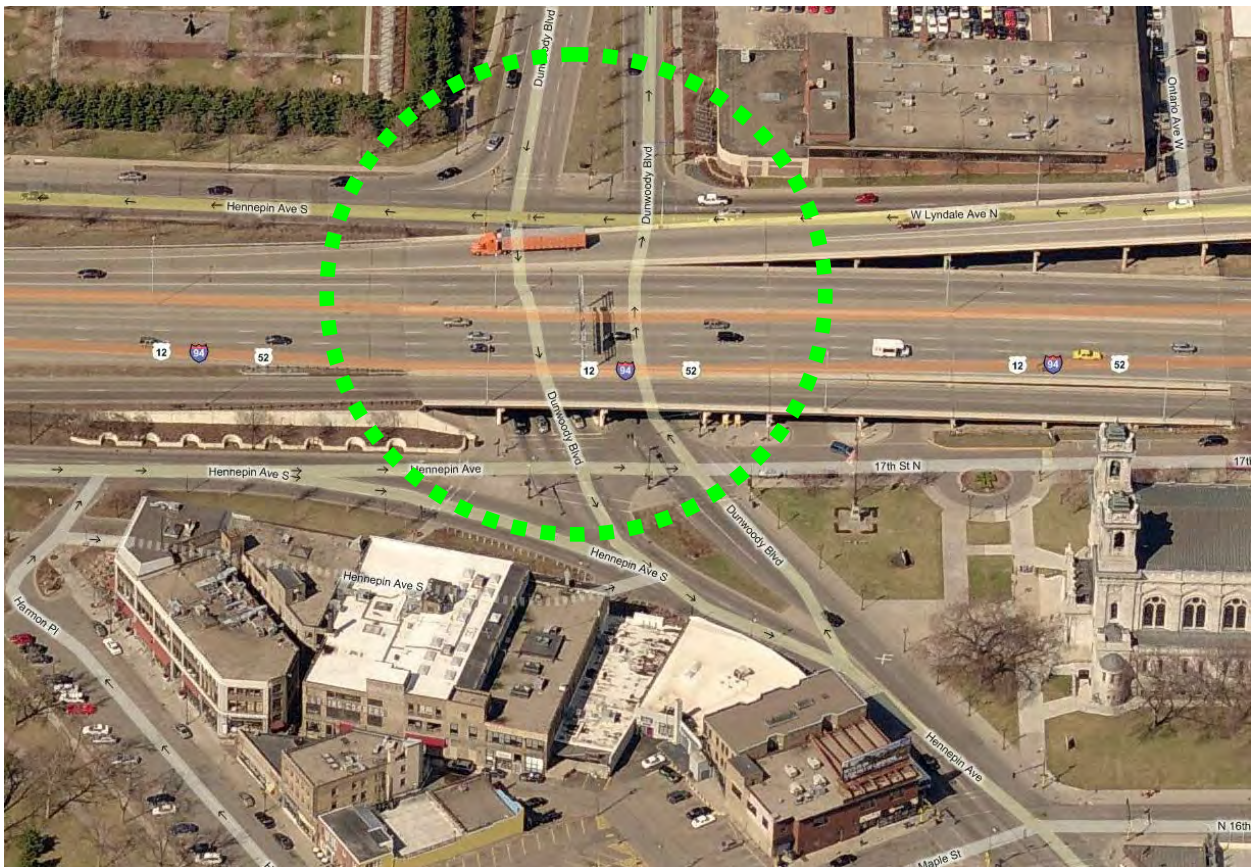
Event Record



Major Transformational Placemaking Opportunity

I-94

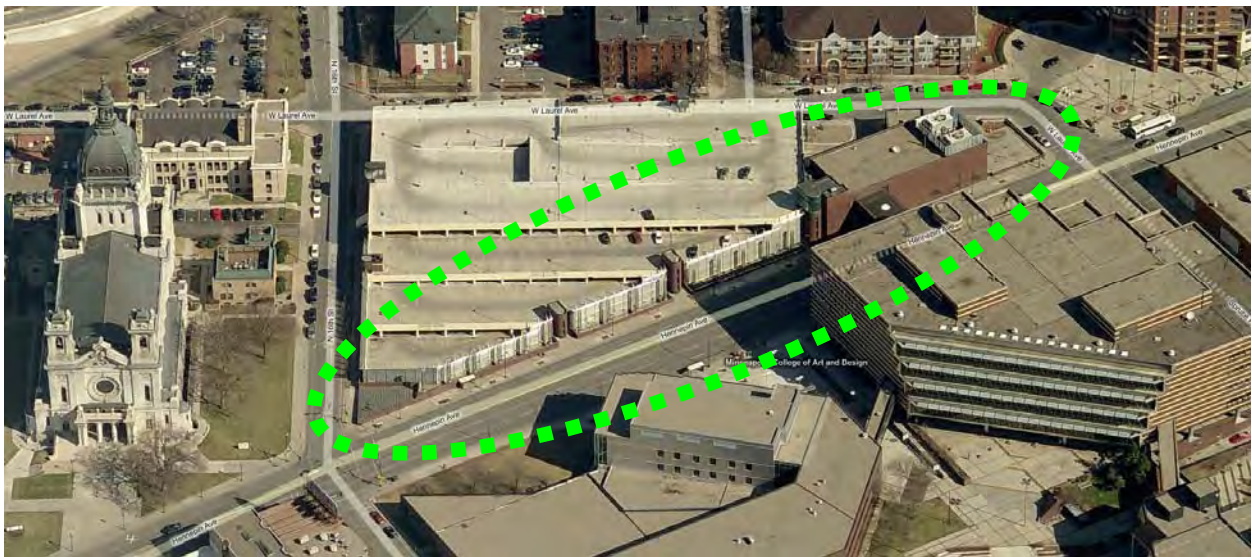
Underpass



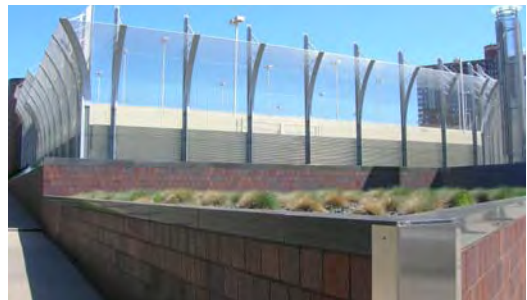
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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Major Transformational Placemaking Opportunity MCTC **Ramp Liner**



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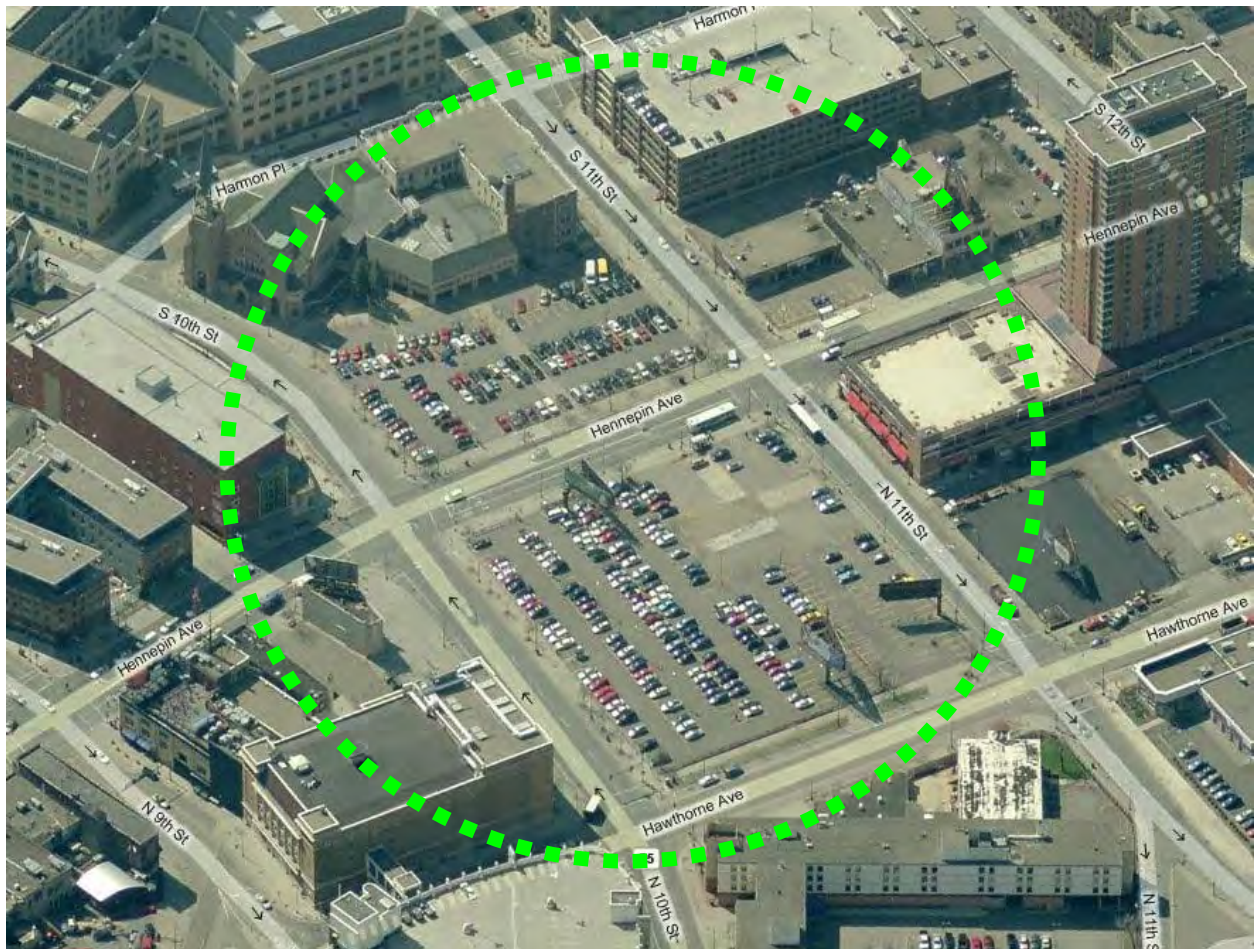
PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

Major Transformational Placemaking Opportunity

10th to 11th

Redevelopment



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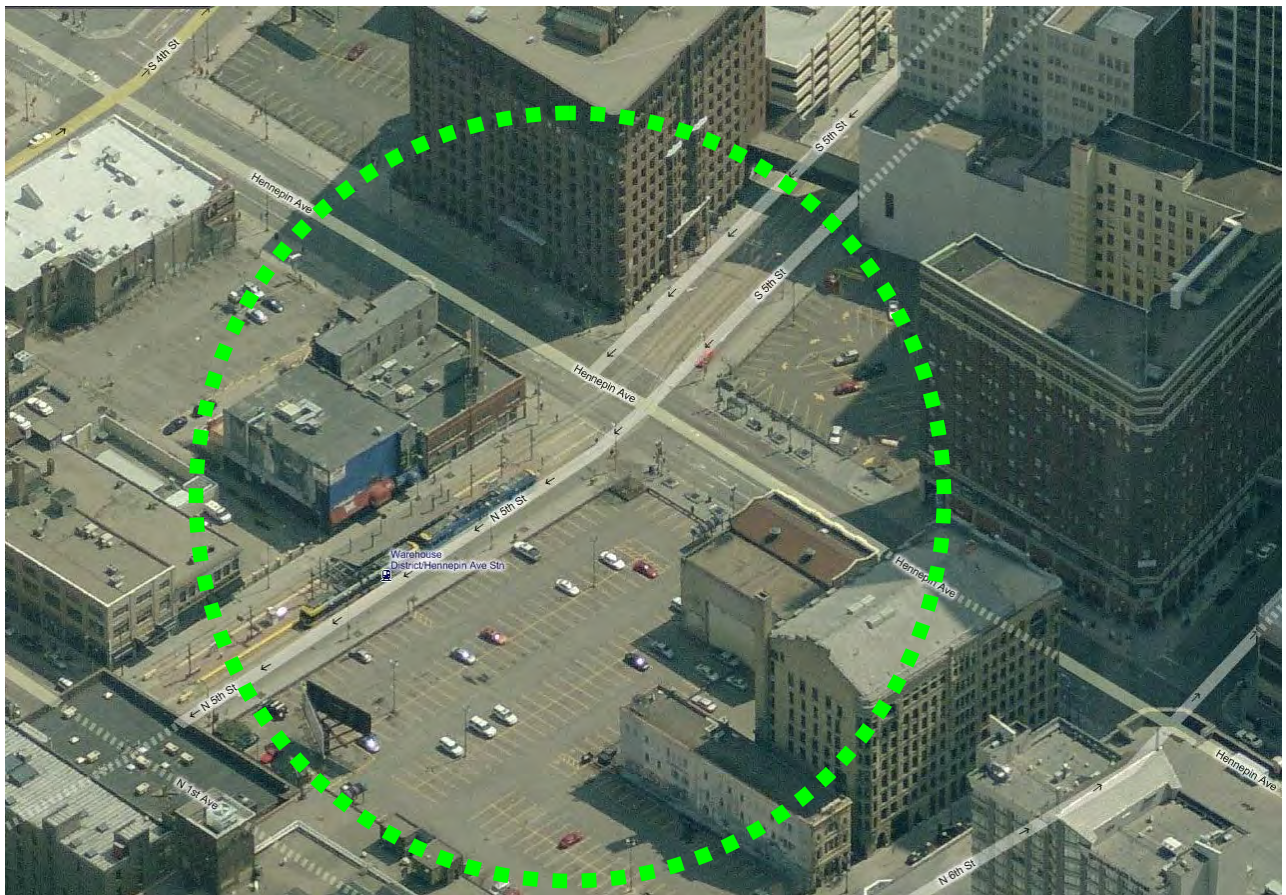
PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

Major Transformational Placemaking Opportunity

Light Rail

Station Area



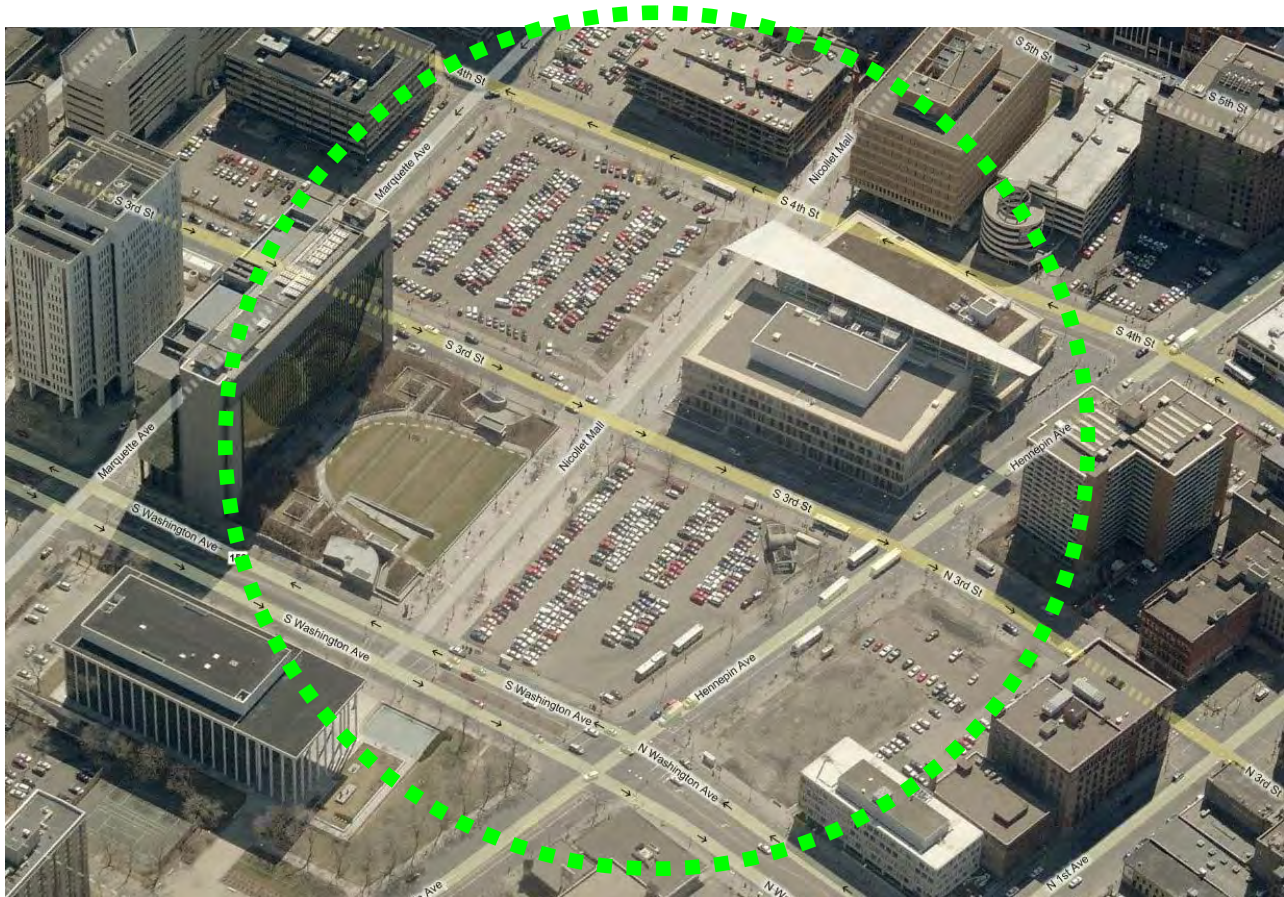
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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Major Transformational Placemaking Opportunity **Gateway Park**



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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

Major Transformational Placemaking Opportunity

Riverfront



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PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

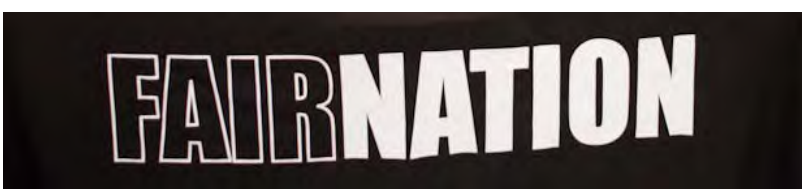


*The workshop was held at
FAIR School Downtown at 10th
& Hennepin Avenue.*



ART WORKS.
arts.gov

This project is supported in
part by an award from the
National Endowment
for the Arts.



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Plan-It Hennepin's *Talk-It Hennepin* Conversation + Workshop Series

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March 8	conversation	<i>Honoring History: The Avenue Through the Ages</i>
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June 9	workshop	<i>Putting It All Together—Naming and Claiming</i>

June 7, 2012

Don Mitchell, Chanchanit

Martorell and Seitu Jones

**Owning Public Space: The
Power of Place Identity**

New Century Theatre



This document includes photography, writing and editing contributions from Karen Nelson of Hennepin Theatre Trust and Lucas Erickson, a coordinator for Plan-It Hennepin. Selected photos by Bill Kelley. This document was produced by Jeff Schommer & Peter Musty, urban designer, of PETER MUSTY LLC.

Large image on the next page by Mark Vancleave was taken from the Skyway bridge near 8th Street looking east over Hennepin Avenue.

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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



The photo above by Bill Kelley shows speakers Don Mitchell, Seitu Jones, and Chanchanit Martorell, on June 7, 2012 during Talk-It Hennepin's conversation 'Owning Public Space: The Power of Place Identity'.

Who Belongs?

Conversations often bring as many questions as conclusions. The June finale of the Talk-It Hennepin series of conversations and workshops, titled "Owning Public Space—The Power of Place Identity", raised some of the most provocative issues affecting the year-long *Plan-It Hennepin* initiative to revitalize Hennepin Avenue. Namely, "What is public space for?" And just "who belongs" in public spaces like streets, skyways and on the sidewalks?

The conversation tapped into the collective wisdom of **Seitu Jones**, **Chanchanit Martorell** and **Don Mitchell**. Together, the three explored the challenges of creating shared space in multi-cultural, urban environments.

Don Mitchell is an influential cultural geography professor at the Maxwell School at Syracuse University in New York and director of the People's Geography Project. In 1998, he became a MacArthur "Genius Grant" Fellow and in 2008 a Guggenheim Fellow. Mitchell was awarded the Anders Retzius Medal from the Swedish Society for Anthropology and Geography.

Los Angeles, California based **Chanchanit (Chancee) Martorell** studied political science and public law at UCLA where she received her B.A. and her M.A. in Urban Planning with a specialization in Urban Regional Development/Third World Development. Martorell is the founder and director of Thai Community Development Center and East Hollywood's Thai Town.

Seitu Jones is a Twin Cities artist and former artist-in-residence for the City of Minneapolis. His environmental public art has become part of the Twin Cities' landscape, including the Dred Scott Memorial at Fort Snelling and Harriet's Portrait in front of the Harriet Tubman Center in South Minneapolis. His recent work blends art with nature in mediums including collared green pottery and public drinking fountains.

Don Mitchell:

What is "Public Space" for?

Mitchell focused on the production and meaning of public space and the relationship to the law and individual rights, particularly in attempts to control the behavior of marginalized people. He led the discussion about how streets, plazas, parks, churches and skyways are rife with legal and popularly held expectations about who has the right to gather in these public spaces. The answers, of course, depend on perspective. Mitchell pointed out that food carts, bus stops and even the homeless may be seen by traffic engineers, for example, as "obstructions," impeding the flow of traffic. He observed that "democracy diffuses power, which opens up a place for struggle."

Mitchell mentioned how remarkable it is to have artists, planners and engineers coming together to plan the future of Hennepin Avenue. He shared a story about a town square in Boston, MA, that proved to be a very successful public space with a farmers market and a lot of residents. In 1993,

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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

Food Not Bombs, a group that serves free vegetarian and vegan food to people, started handing out free food in Copley Square. It was good for a while, but then poor people started coming from all over to collect, and it looked bad for tourists. This started a tug of war. The Boston Globe defended Food Not Bombs' mission to hand out free food in public space, but not in Copley Square.

Mitchell posed open questions; "What is public space for? Who belongs in public space? Public spaces include plazas, which are good for hanging out, protesting and meeting new people. They include streets and sidewalks, which are good for moving, protest marches, sitting down, eating. Mitchell states that some people use streets and sidewalks as a place to gather and assemble ideas. People and parked cars, he asked, "...should they be reduced simply to obstructions that get in the way of movement on the street?"

"Democracy diffuses power, which opens up a place for struggle."

- Don Mitchell

The street is a place for encounter and it allows communication among citizens. Places take on meaning, and we start to think of them as 'ours'. Public space should be a place and provide a chance for inclusion, not exclusion.

Chanchanit Martorell

Creating Authentic Places

Chanchanit Martorell talked about the economic problems that the Los Angeles Thai community faced: lack of jobs, housing and limited access to public benefits. She helped found Thai Town as an answer to some of these issues and to Thai culture. Part of Martorell's economic strategy was to attract tourism to the area and help provide affordable housing, business counseling, a marketplace and a streetscape project to add more green space. Martorell said that they want to avoid "packaging" Thai culture for tourists and to keep it real. Local members of the community helped organize Thai Town. They use this area as a tool to help educate people about their culture. Thai New Years Day now brings in over 100,000 visitors each year.

"Grow communities as organically as possible."

- Chanchanit Martorell

In talking about the successes of her organization, the Thai Community Development Center, Martorell warned listeners of the risk of a "Disneyfication" of culture in trying to capture diverse visitors or in pursuing cultural tourism, stressing the need to "grow community as organically as possible."

Seitu Jones

For Love of Self, Family and Community

St. Paul based environmental artist, **Seitu Jones**, reflected on his local memories of Hennepin Avenue—traveling to the Great Northern Market with his mother—and invoked Martin Luther

PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

King's call for "beloved community" in the creation of new public space.

"We must...dig into our moral courage."

- Seitu Jones

Born in Minneapolis, Jones remembered how his mother used to take him to the downtown northern market each week and the experience when a policeman stopped his father crossing Hennepin Avenue on Christmas and gave him a ticket for jaywalking. These memories have inspired and affected his work and he believes peoples' memories of a place should be recorded. Some of his public art projects include poetry etched in bronze on Nicollet mall, steam bent wood in the shape of a boat, a Harriet Tubman statue and a stainless steel drinking fountain in the shape of a muscle. He draws from physical and cultural aspects of a place, along with his and other people's memories of a space. His art gives people a sense of ownership. Jones challenged listeners to "dig into our moral courage" and create space that "reflects love of self, family and community."

The speakers agreed:

Honor what came before,
do not forget about the
history of a place.

History forms the
foundation for the future
and the present. Include
the people who were here
before and give people a
place of their own.

Image below: Audience members, many who had participated in the entire process, actively engaged the speakers with questions and comments. Photo by Karen Nelson.



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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Photo above by Bill Kelley.

The “Owning Public Space: The Power of Place Identity” conversation was held at Hennepin Theatre Trust’s New Century Theatre in the City Center, downtown Minneapolis, which “hosts a rich mix of live performances and inspiring arts education experiences that will advance a thriving Hennepin Avenue and a lively, healthy downtown.”



*Pictured above, left to right: **Don Mitchell, Tom Hoch**, President/CEO of Hennepin Theatre Trust, **Chanchanit Martorell**, and **Seitu Jones**. Photo by Karen Nelson.*



This project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Plan-It Hennepin's *Talk-It Hennepin* Conversation + Workshop Series

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June 9, 2012

Design Workshop

Putting It All Together – Naming and Claiming

New Century Theatre in City Center




This document includes writing and editing contributions from designers Eric Morin, AIA, (Ryan Companies), Mollie O'Connor, AIA, (AECOM) and Jeff Schommer, Beth Koeppel and Peter Musty (PETER MUSTY LLC). Photography is by Mark Vancleave. The forty foot model used during the workshop was developed by AECOM. The modeling symbol system profiled on the next page was developed for the workshop by PETER MUSTY LLC.


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The photograph on this page, by *Plan-It Hennepin* photographer Mark Vancleave, is of a 40-foot scale model (built by AECOM) of Hennepin Avenue in downtown Minneapolis, stretching from the Mississippi River in the east to the Walker Art Center in the west. Participants designated locations for transformation with green foam balls or yellow cones or placed flags on the cones and balls, “**naming and claiming**” those sites.



The large green balls represent **major transformational ideas**.



The smaller green balls were used to identify **specific physical improvements**.



The yellow cones identified ideas for new events, programming or **activities**.

PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



Name It and Claim It!

by Jeff Schommer & Peter Musty

The popular 40-foot three dimensional scale model of Hennepin Avenue (constructed by project design consulting firm AECOM) stretched across the atrium of the City Center in downtown Minneapolis for the final workshop of the *Talk-It Hennepin* visioning process. A small, but diverse, group of community members and creative professionals gathered for the final creative placemaking exercise. Many had participated before, but new participants were also welcomed.

This event was the final in a series of four *Talk-It Hennepin* conversation/workshops that ran from March to June 2012. *Plan-It Hennepin* combined the efforts of Hennepin Theatre Trust, Walker Art Center, Artspace and the City of Minneapolis to gather input and ideas for the re-invention of Minneapolis' oldest street.

Moderated by Tom Borrup, *Plan-It Hennepin* Team Leader the June 9 workshop was facilitated by a local team of artists and designers (*see next page*). This final workshop allowed participants to focus attention and creativity on four distinct districts of Hennepin Avenue. Each district has a unique identity, character and role and its own set of opportunities and challenges. Each was examined for creative planning and design solutions.

The final activity of the morning's workshop was a group exercise inviting participants to declare commitment to an action that would help move the emerging vision forward.



The Agenda

- 9:00 am **Doors Opened** - participants gathered in the New Century Theater for coffee, networking and introductions before moving out into the City Center atrium.
- 9:45 **Review of Previous Workshops** – Workshop participants regrouped surrounding the Hennepin Avenue scale model. The *Talk-It Hennepin* artist team reviewed the discussions and outcomes of the three previous workshops and described the goals of the day.
- 10:05 **Welcome and Agenda** – Tom Borrup, present the agenda
- 10:20 **Name It and Claim It** - Participants self-selected one of four focus areas; began with small group discussion; to identify small and large transformational ideas, design solutions, public policies, implementation and pivotal stakeholders. The groups placed flags and cones on model to target areas for potential change. Large group discussion.
- 12:30 pm **Declarations** of Individual Action.

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“The Gateway
District”

“The Theatre
District”

“The Hennepin-
Harmon District”

The Four Districts of Hennepin Avenue in Downtown

The *Plan-It Hennepin* workshops developed focus on four study areas along Hennepin Avenue. It could be said that the districts “chose” themselves as each has a distinct feeling (and function) within downtown. Travelling west along Hennepin Avenue from the Mississippi River, the street and surrounding areas change through a progression of unique human uses, architectural styles, developed (or undeveloped) public spaces and energy.

Aerial photographs source: Google Maps.

“The Hennepin-
Lyndale Civic
Corridor”

PLAN – IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

Each district named on the previous page (described further below) became the focus of interdisciplinary teams challenged with finding creative interventions reflecting the cumulative input from the *Talk-It Hennepin* process. The solutions developed are profiled in the pages following by a member of each team.

“The Gateway District”

The Gateway District is the historic title used for the district along Hennepin from the first ever bridge crossing the Mississippi River to the historic convergence of Hennepin and Nicollet Avenues. The district is still a primary vehicular and pedestrian entrance into downtown Minneapolis from the north and east. It includes a mix of large scale land uses, including the 9th District Federal Reserve Bank, The Minneapolis Central Library, the U.S. Post Office and hundreds of residential units. Many of these projects were built during the era of Urban Renewal.



“The Theatre District”

Continuing west on Hennepin Avenue is the Theatre District, the epicenter of downtown Minneapolis’s theater scene. The densely developed district stretches five blocks from the 5th Street Light Rail stop to 10th Street. Included in the Theatre District are the historic State, Orpheum and Pantages Theatres, as well as the Cowles Center for Dance and the Performing Arts, the New Century Theatre, the Brave New Workshop Comedy Theater and the headquarters of the non-profit Hennepin Theatre Trust. This section of Hennepin Avenue is also home to a thriving restaurant scene, acres of office space, upscale



hotels, the large retail and entertainment complexes of City Center and Block E and educational institutions Fair School Downtown and the International Education Center.

“The Hennepin-Harmon District”

The Hennepin-Harmon District begins at 10th Street and continues to the Basilica of St. Mary at 17th Street. This area derives its name from Harmon Place, the street that parallels Hennepin Avenue through the district. West of 12th Street, this district is part of the Loring Park Neighborhood. The eastern part of this district is dominated by large surface parking lots. As one travels west, residential intensifies in mixed use buildings with retail spaces at the street level. Minneapolis Community and Technical College is also a part of this district. The Basilica and the historic Fawkes retail block anchor the western end of the Hennepin-Harmon District.



“The Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor”

West of 17th Street, Hennepin Avenue passes under Interstate 94 and makes a turn to the south. The Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor was the title given to this area during previous design processes and adopted by *Plan-It Hennepin*. This district is dominated by transportation as Interstate 94 emerges from the Lowry Tunnel at the same location that Hennepin and Lyndale Avenues intersect. Aside from the vehicular traffic, the district is also home to some of Minneapolis’ most iconic and most visited places: Loring Park, the Walker Art Center and the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden and Dunwoody Institute.



PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



The Gateway District



The Mississippi River to 5th Street

*Summary by Eric Morin, AIA -
Ryan Companies*

Walking off Hennepin Avenue from a warm sunny summer day into the beautiful, already quite hot, City Center atrium space at 9:30 am, it was clear that those gathered were there for a purpose. After an introduction from Tom Borrup, participants

selected one of four districts for a focused collaborative planning and design exercise.

One of the four groups focused on the east end of the downtown corridor of Hennepin Avenue, encompassing the buildings, street and public spaces from 5th Street (the light rail station) to the Mississippi River. Historically this area was known as the Gateway District. Today the art deco Hennepin Avenue bridge and light rail station still provide highly visible and well-traveled connections to and from the city. The former Federal Reserve Building offers a stunning backdrop to Cancer Survivors Park. The Minneapolis Central Library, completed in 2006, is a landmark and an amenity to the area. Construction is underway on a mixed-use midrise with a Whole Foods Market and apartments on the corner of Washington and Hennepin. Even with all of these features, the area is ripe with opportunity for public art, welcoming spaces, and improvements in accessibility.

The purpose of the workshop was to focus on actions to improve Hennepin Avenue, including modifications to the streets and buildings, ideas for events, and suggestions for public artwork. The group focused on the Gateway District included participants from city government, architects and motivated citizens.



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PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record

The Gateway District (continued...)



Make Open Spaces Useable!

The Gateway District group began its discussion by asking, “what draws people to space?” Remembering a time before the construction of Cancer Survivors Park, some recalled when the area was very actively used by skateboarders. This led to a discussion about ambiguous “green space,” and the group concluded that manicured lawns and parks behind walls do not bring people to the space or invite people to stay. The group focused on the parking lot/bus shelter east of the Minneapolis Public Library and the block north of the old Federal Reserve Building as areas with great potential.

The group discussed ideas for the Avenue to be more welcome and to better serve the needs of the residents and the Senior Living Facility. Several ideas were discussed including adjustment of the timing of the lights at the intersection of Hennepin and Washington. The possibility of a pedestrian bridge was also raised, prompting discussion of the constraints of such solutions.

Actions: Study Centennial Lakes in Edina for programmable park space. Engage the City in making existing open space more accessible with benches, curb bump outs, etc. Revive Gateway Park. Revamp bus stops. Improve safety at pedestrian crossings.

Design Inviting Places Surrounding Transit Stops

The block bounded by 3rd Street and Washington Avenue and Nicollet and Hennepin Avenues, not only has great potential, but also very specific requirements. It previously received federal funding requiring that the site be used for transportation purposes. The group discussed the need for better bus shelters for the city buses, similar to those already provided for the suburban buses.

Entering the city by light rail likely means getting off at Hennepin Avenue and 5th Street, a major transit hub, yet the first views are of the adult entertainment district. This is a site where change could have a great impact. The group noted that this could not realistically be changed over a short time span; however, the facades and signs of this area could be improved.

Actions: Collaborate with Metro Transit to understand the requirements of the space and how to secure public funding for improvement or adding bus shelters. Ideas include music, heating, art, digital schedules & unique lighting.

PLAN-IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



The Gateway District (continued...)



Incorporate Art Connecting to History, River...

The history of Minneapolis is very closely linked with the Mississippi River, and the group thought this would be a great location for some historical artwork and exhibits on the street.

Ann Calvert from the City of Minneapolis suggested combining a Legacy Grant and an Art Grant to provide funding for an installation. One member suggested an installation with open frames on specific views with corresponding historical photographs and explanations.

The northwest corner of Hennepin and Washington is currently a vacant lot with a large blank brick wall facing it. The group discussed the potential for multi-media focused art presentations, or simply showing movies. This area will be directly across the street from Whole Foods Market, with potential for their involvement.

Actions: Research requirements and possible integration of Legacy and Arts funding. Talk with the National Parks Service to learn from their recent initiative.

PLAN - IT HENNEPIN

Event Record



The Theatre District



5th Street to 10th Street

Summary by Mollie O'Connor, AIA, NCARB, LEED BD & C - Project Architect, AECOM

The Hennepin Theatre District group had an interesting discussion about how and why there are not more places for people to linger and meet. Where is the 'Place of Understanding'? Where are the activities or events or places along the street to wait in or visit prior to a theater event? These questions fueled the discussion which is documented in a bullet point format on the following pages.



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The Theatre District (continued...)



Establish 'Place'

- Be careful not to overbuild, need plazas, need art
- Can the street pavement be a material other than concrete? Perhaps artful pavement can cross the street – even become part of the street. Perhaps the area between 9th and 6th could be of a more uniform color/material so when it is closed for a temporary or regular event it reads as a plaza-like space.
- Whatever happens to Block E – make certain there is flow - through to 1st Ave
- Create places that invite interaction
- Investigate a multi-level parking facility with shops at each level and a residential penthouse. The key thing was the business / retail at each level of parking. The parking was at the rear of the development and all the businesses fronted the street; kind of a vertical strip mall. This was in Miami – could there it be done here? Dense commercial development.

- Develop a Community Cultural Center with office spaces as an incubator for businesses and art, a full time “Minneapolis Mosaic.” This facility could also include artist housing at different economic levels, a temporary two year opportunity that would help ensure a living, working, practicing presence on the Avenue.
- Transitional housing and green space
- Level sidewalks, accommodate wheelchairs. Currently, the slope required for drainage is great enough that it makes it difficult to navigate in a wheelchair.
- Is there room for a boulevard down the middle of this stretch of the Avenue? The sidewalks are too wide, perhaps some of that extra space can move to the middle of the street, and accommodate different activities. This would also calm traffic and allow for safer pedestrian crossings.
- Sixth Street Place. To one participant the core of this downtown area is along Sixth Street where it feels very urban and comfortable. Sixth Street could link the three important streets of this area: Hennepin and First Avenues and Nicollet Mall. These streets could be seen as sisters – Nicollet Mall being the older sister and Hennepin, the middle child while First Avenue is the youngest. This should be a permanent pedestrian way – it could be seen as the entry to the Theater District as well as to the sporting events district.

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The Theatre District (continued...)

Plan for a Range of Activities

Offer an evening or a night market. With food carts or trucks, table vendors and street performance. Fill **empty storefronts** along the Avenue on a temporary basis with community activities? Market style? Perhaps this could be at the Fifth Street empty lot?

RUSH TICKETS! A ticket cart / kiosk that could sell last minute tickets to shows or sporting events.

The **FREE Hennepin Avenue Shuttle**. A circulator bus would run up and down the Avenue to help parking and citizen movement. A smaller, frequent bus would encourage visitors to park at the perimeter and take the bus to their desired destination.

Close the street to cars and buses on regular basis, temporarily. **Open the street only to people**. Similar to an event that takes place in Buenos Aires where on Sunday mornings, they close to street to vehicles and open it for biking. Other examples of this practice occur in Lima, Peru and Tadal, Argentina. This could occur on the entire stretch of Hennepin Avenue or just certain parts of it.

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The Hennepin-Harmon District



10th St. to The Basilica of St Mary through Loring Park Neighborhood

Summary by Beth Koepfel
of PETER MUSTY LLC



Engage The Street

The first challenge with this end of Hennepin Avenue is getting people there. The massive scale of buildings with austere street fronts and “prison-like” parking structures are not inviting to people wandering down the Avenue. Increasing the visibility of amenities and public space at this end could encourage more circulation. Additionally, improved lighting would increase safety.



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Hennepin-Harmon District (continued...)

The group discussed improving transit by providing multiple modes including better biking lanes and bus stops that are physically accessible and financially viable for a larger demographic. It was suggested that parking could be moved to the city's periphery and free buses could circulate between the parking and city center as a means to reduce vehicle traffic.



Make People Feel Welcome & Comfortable

Once people are there, what will make them stay? The group asked *What is a public space?* People need to feel welcome and as if they can take over and make it their own. This extends beyond the physical environment to encompass public policy. There must be a common understanding that certain places are “loiter here!” zones, with clear terms. This understanding must be reached between law enforcement, land/business owners and those who use the space. With this comes a certain responsibility for care and accountability, which must be clearly defined. Programming could activate the public spaces and strengthen the sense of community in this diverse neighborhood. Creating programming to utilize the space during unconventional times of day and seasons, particularly winter, would ensure that this new life on the Avenue thrives year round.

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Hennepin-Harmon District (continued...)



Provide for Basic Human Needs

Underlying the aforementioned ideas is the *need* for the most basic human necessities. Clean bathrooms, safe drinking water, healthy food and a warm place to stay are the foundation of the great changes that could take place on the Avenue. One large transformation the group discussed was at the intersection of 10th and 11th Streets. The surface lots here were imagined to be transformed into a homeless shelter, designed based on feedback of homeless individuals in the Twin Cities. Youth would be involved so they could feel a sense of ownership. A community garden could be a place for people to work together to grow inexpensive, healthy food. The rooftops could be engaged with patios and gardens to revitalize a dense urban core.

The parking garage across from Minneapolis Community Technical College was identified as the second big transformation. While some effort was taken to make it attractive, the result was a hostile

street front could be transformed through both physical changes and embracing the community outreach efforts that MCTC.

A diverse demographic occupies this area. How can this culture be celebrated and shared? *What is a cultural experience?* As Hennepin Avenue is transformed we want to move towards cultural experiences that are had, rather than consumed. To begin this means respecting the diversity that exist, by preserving public space for community and gatherings. A broader range of retail food price options so that would expand who occupies the area.



Getting at the Real Issues?

The discussion about this portion of Hennepin Avenue focused on three questions:

How can cultural experiences be had - rather than consumed?

What is a public space?

How can the avenue meet the most basic of human needs?

Solutions seek to redefine how a community engages with each other to celebrate the individual and respect the diversity of the whole.

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The Hennepin-Lyndale



Civic Corridor

The Basilica of St Mary to the Walker Art Center

*Summary by Jeff Schommer
of PETER MUSTY LLC*

A small group assembled around the table to discuss the western portion of the study area, where Hennepin Avenue curves under Interstate 94 and joins Lyndale for just under a half mile. The area stretches roughly from Laurel Avenue in the north to Groveland Avenue in the south. This stretch of Hennepin Avenue includes important institutions and public spaces of The Basilica of St. Mary, Dunwoody Institute, the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, Loring Park, the Walker Art Museum and St. Mark's Episcopal Cathedral. It is also one of the busiest transportation corridors in the state of Minnesota. It is this co-mingling of transport and destination; of machine and human; of pedestrian, art, nature and vehicle that present this area's most difficult challenges, as well as its most exciting energy and provocative opportunities.

This stretch of Hennepin Avenue has also been part of the discussions in a separate Neighborhood Master Plan study process. The Citizens for a Loring Park Community (CLPC) have been working for years on a master plan that includes this section of Hennepin. John Van Heel from



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Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor (continued...)

CLPC joined the table to share some of these ideas. Van Heel stated that the CLPC process had devoted more attention on Harmon Avenue to the east of Minneapolis Community and Technical College, but at a charrette at the Walker Art Center a few years ago this convergence of arterials had been named the Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor.



A few key ideas emerged that melded with the ideas of the *Plan-It Hennepin* planning workshops. These ideas are based on “Creating Places” and “Connecting Places”:

1. Create a welcoming place at the Underpass (I-94 bridge over Hennepin Avenue)
2. Better connect the Underpass (I-94 bridge) to the Mississippi River
3. Connect Loring Park and the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden
4. Create a place at ‘The Lid’ (Oak Grove/Vineland intersection with Hennepin-Lyndale)



Create ‘Place’ at the Underpass

Van Heel stated that during the earlier CLPC charrette, discussion focused on creating a clear visual wall with the freeway on the north end of the study area as it rises out of the tunnel and becomes a bridge. The bridge, as Hennepin Avenue passes under it, would have to be visually defined more strongly as a gateway. That gateway idea resonated, but it was identified as more than simply a gate to pass through; this is a place in and of itself. It is currently just one of the numerous disjointed spots along Hennepin Avenue that make the walk from the Walker Art Center to the Mississippi River “discombobulating.” From a pedestrian perspective, the Underpass is unwelcoming, at best. It is likely that in the near future, pedestrian, bicycle and transit traffic will increase when the Southwest Corridor transit line is constructed. A station would likely be built behind Dunwoody Institute. As Peter Musty, facilitation team member stated, “You know the cars are going to be there, you know the people are going to walk there. You have to make a place that says to the cars and the pedestrian, hey, its safe for both.”

The group recognized that the Underpass “is gonna be there for a while,” meaning that suggesting a huge undertaking such as moving the freeway or burying it (right away) is unrealistic. The driving question then became,

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Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor (continued...)

“How does it become “something” for people?” Solutions discussed centered around a few major themes/concepts: Lighting, Ads for Arts, and Connecting to the River.

Lighting

The first was **lighting**. Josh Bergeron talked about using a similar skylight design to that used on ships, where a prism of glass set between the freeway lanes above would reflect and refract natural daylight, maximizing light under the bridge deck. Others recognized that electric lights would be needed at night. These could be powered in creative ways, such as solar panels hung from the sides of the freeway deck. It was repeatedly stated that any lighting needed to be more than simple illumination and had to reflect the artistic energy that flows down Hennepin Avenue.

Ads for Arts (or Arts & Ads)

Another theme that arose for the Underpass was Arts and Ads, or Ads for Arts. Art was often mentioned in tandem with lighting, but carried a weight of its own in the conversation. An idea was brought up to **design a theme for the Underpass**, such as “underwater”, where the lighting and art installations, both visual and aural, could create a sensory experience to make the place welcoming and interesting as well as mask the loud and chaotic transportation noises above. Mankwe Ndosi, the table facilitator remembered the informal use of the pillars under the bridge as a de facto communications board made up of concert posters and graffiti arts. The idea of **reclaiming the Underpass as some type of artistic communications** area was warmly received by those at the table. This could also be a revenue generator, possibly through the selling of ad space directed at the mass amounts of traffic that travel under the bridge.

Issues of long range maintenance and upkeep were discussed. All agreed that once a place is constructed, it must be kept up, or it will soon enough return to its original unwelcoming state. People must care for it for it to be sustainable. The members of the discussion table brainstormed a list of possible stakeholders who may be willing to contribute to the design and continued maintenance of a place at the Underpass. The list of stakeholders who would benefit from increased pedestrian safety and comfort at this location was long, including the businesses between Hennepin Avenue and Harmon Place, the area’s large educational and religious institutions, the Federal Government, City, Metro Transit and Park Board, neighborhood groups, sports organizations using the Parade Grounds and arts organizations. The idea of **advertising space for (these and other) cultural organizations** was discussed as one way to sponsor maintenance of the place.



Connecting to the River

Coupled with the discussion of creating a place at the Underpass through art installations was the idea of making a stronger connection to the Mississippi River. Obviously, Hennepin Avenue physically connects I-94 to the river and the Avenue is the path to the river. It was suggested that this be highlighted. The asphalt of today's Hennepin Avenue is not the first path to the river. There is an historic connection, a Dakota footpath,

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Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor (continued...)

between the Chain of Lakes and the river. The suspension bridge at the east end of downtown which carries Hennepin Avenue travelers across the Mississippi is a landmark and a visual gateway. It was suggested that the I-94 bridge at the west end of Downtown should act similarly. As well as creating a place at this site, a connection to the river should be made here.



Better Connect Downtown & Loring Park to the Sculpture Garden

The Irene Hixon Whitney Bridge (pictured below) is a landmark and safe pedestrian crossing from Loring Park to the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. But as Josh Bergeson explained, “you can't expect everyone to go over the pedestrian bridge”.



The two best locations identified for reintroducing the historic connection between Loring Park and

the land on which the Sculpture Garden now sits are the busy auto-dominated intersections of Hennepin, Dunwoody and Lyndale Avenues (the Underpass) to the north and Hennepin-Lyndale with Oak Grove Street and Vineland Place (“The Lid”) to the south. Neither intersection is welcoming to pedestrians.



Create a Place at “The Lid”

A redesign of the main intersection between the Walker Art Center and the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden, where I-94 emerges from the Lowry Tunnel, was the focus of lively discussion at the table. All agreed that the intersection was currently designed for cars at the expense of pedestrians. All agreed that this had to change. One idea was the expansion of The Lid (tunnel) to the north. This would require extending the deck of the Lowry Tunnel over I-94 to the north. Extending the deck would increase public space, creating a more comfortable island between the northbound and southbound lanes of Hennepin-Lyndale. It would also allow the opportunity to create an interesting place at this intersection.

The Hennepin-Lyndale split has historically been a place for people to stop and linger. Prior to the freeway's construction in the 1960's, the triangle

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piece of land between the two avenues was the site of a hotel. The suggestion to increase the size of the deck would return to public prominence the place where these avenues split. Times Square in New York was brought up as a precedent, where mass volumes of vehicular traffic pass, yet it is still a place where people gather and linger.

The mass of vehicular traffic that passes under the Lid creates energy and unique engineering and design dilemmas. Because I-94 begins bridging over Hennepin to the north, the increase in the size of the deck is limited. An idea was proposed to follow that ramping up of the freeway below and create a **tiered seating bowl**, possibly topped by a land bridge connecting Loring Park to the Sculpture Garden. The seating tier could be a place of crossing and viewing for arts programming. Another idea was to harness the energy of the traffic below by constructing a **moving platform** whose motion is fed by the speeding cars and trucks on I-94. It was suggested that traffic itself could be the reason to come to this place and that seating should be

directed at viewing the constant theater of transportation.

More simply, it was agreed that the intersection needs to be redesigned with flexibility for the future. I-94 at the Lowry Tunnel is the most congested section of interstate in Minnesota, and though a redesign of the freeway is probable, it was suggested that any major construction would be at least 20 to 25 years away. What can occur now needs to be holistically multi-modal. For example, the place developed at The Lid will likely slow down traffic, but the goal is to also create an upward trade for drivers, where they get to look at something beautiful and interesting when they are idling at that traffic light.

One thread was woven through the discussion of the Hennepin-Lyndale Civic Corridor was to **get input from the users of the corridor to guide design.** Billboards with contact phone numbers asking pointed questions, to **interactive kiosks** at The Lid and The Underpass would continuously engage the users in defining and driving placemaking.



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The Saturday Talk-It Hennepin workshop was held in the New Century Theatre in the City Center in Downtown Minneapolis which offers "...a rich mix of live performances and inspiring arts education experiences that will advance a thriving Hennepin Avenue and a lively, healthy downtown...."



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This project is supported in part by an award from the National Endowment for the Arts.

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