

1. INTRODUCTION

Key Terminology:

Penn Avenue Corridor: For the purposes of this report, this term is used to refer to the area roughly two blocks on either side of Penn Avenue and Osseo Road from Interstate 394 to 49th Avenue.

The Penn Avenue Community Works Corridor Vision and Implementation Framework will develop an integrated community-based vision and a coordinated, long-term implementation framework for the **Penn Avenue corridor**. The Penn Avenue corridor is shown in Figure 1-1. The outcomes of this community development planning and design effort will guide future inter-agency efforts and investments in multimodal transportation, land use, economic development, housing, and placemaking as part of Penn Avenue Community Works (PACW). Community engagement is a driving force of this effort. A comprehensive Community Engagement Plan was assembled as part of Phase 1 of the project. It will continue to guide the engagement process through the remaining four phases of the project.

In 2012, Hennepin County designated Penn Avenue as a Community Works project. The Hennepin Community Works program is based upon the premise that carefully designed and integrated public works projects sustain and enhance the long-term tax base and viability of neighborhoods and businesses, while enhancing the quality of life. Hennepin Community Works projects are guided by the following principles:

- Stimulate economic development
- Promote effective planning and implementation
- Maintain and improve natural systems
- Strengthen community connections
- Enhance the tax base

County, City, and Metropolitan Council officials have identified that a long-term vision and coordinated approach to planning for future private and public investments is needed for the Penn Avenue corridor in North Minneapolis. The purpose of the Penn Avenue Community Works Corridor Vision and Implementation Framework is to:

- Establish and pursue a shared vision for the corridor that reflects the diverse voices along the corridor and recognizes different character areas of Penn Avenue neighborhoods that each contribute to the corridor's identity
- Create a strategic framework for public investments that not only leverages private investment, but delivers community and economic benefits
- Align jurisdictional authorities, policies, and technical and financial resources to maximize benefits
- Garner broad-based community input, collaborate with corridor communities, and build a coalition of support to collectively advocate for corridor-wide funding needs
- Work in tandem with Metro Transit during bus rapid transit (BRT) project development to ensure that the community-based corridor vision becomes the basis for future transit

investments in the project area through early community input, coordination with project decision points, timely infrastructure investments, and the full benefits associated with the transitway

The goals, objectives, and priorities of Penn Avenue Community Works will be refined through ongoing community engagement and subsequent phases of this project. Working objectives established for the Penn Avenue Community Works project include:

- Re-envision Penn Avenue as a complete street with enhanced transit service, pedestrian amenities, bicycle connections, and environmentally sustainable streetscaping
- Stimulate private investment and promote economic opportunity in the corridor by improving public infrastructure and through targeted housing, redevelopment and economic development strategies
- Enhance livability in the corridor by improving public spaces, connections to key destinations, and through other placemaking strategies.

The Penn Avenue Community Works Corridor Vision and Implementation Framework will establish a comprehensive vision that integrates connectivity/mobility, economic development and livability. It will develop companion strategies that recognize the interrelatedness and complexity of a **multi-modal transportation network**, the built environment, economic opportunity, environmental sustainability, and quality of life.

The initial stages of the planning process recognize the importance of reinforcing existing community-based plans, projects, and initiatives in the project area and the desire to advance a corridor-wide approach that builds on the success of prior work. Accordingly, Phase 2 of the project involves a detailed inventory and assessment. The inventory and assessment phase provides the factual and analytical basis for the remainder of the community development, planning, and design effort. Sources for the inventory include GIS, existing maps, property records, plans and studies; input from the broader community in prior engagement efforts; additional community input consistent with the initiatives outlined in the Community Engagement Plan; and input from the Project Implementation Committee.



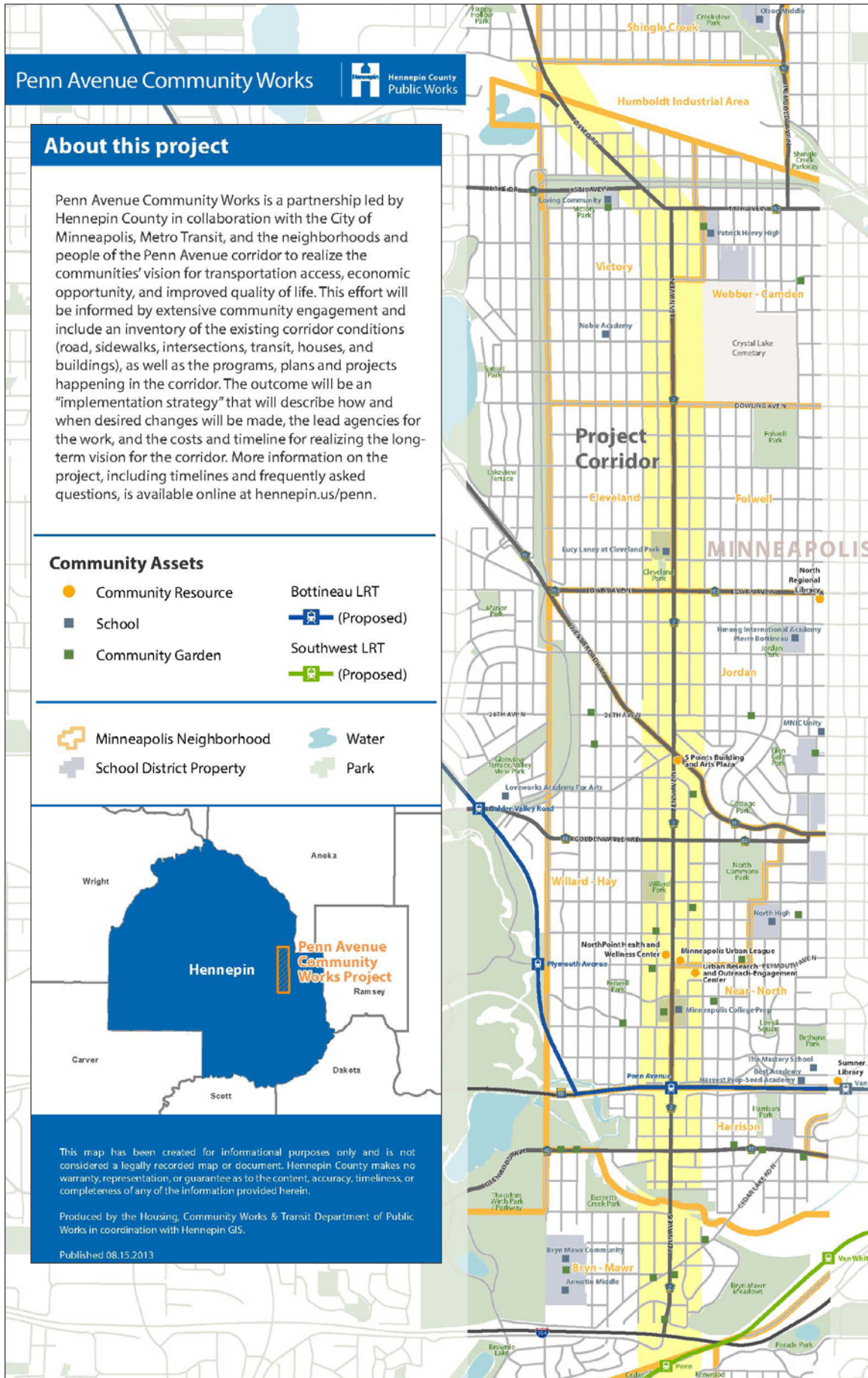
Members of the project implementation committee and consultant team

Key Terminology:

Multi-Modal Transportation Network: A system that allows people to move around using several forms of transportation such as automobiles, walking, trucks, bicycles, buses, and rail transit.

GIS - Geographic Information Systems: A computer program designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyze, manage, and present various types of geographical data.

FIGURE 1-1: PENN AVENUE CORRIDOR



This document presents a broad range of background information and includes preliminary directions based on analysis of the collected information. It presents a series of “layers” of information that will be used to inform subsequent phases of the project. Layers include:

- Demographic Data
- Transportation Connections
- Property Conditions and Development
- Housing Development
- Economic Development
- Corridor Character
- Public Utilities
- Precedents and Best Practices
- Adopted City Plans and Policies

As part of Phase 3 of the project, these layers of information in concert with information from extensive community engagement efforts, will be combined in an integrated effort to set priorities and develop alternative strategies. Tasks to be addressed as a part of Phase 3 include:

- Building consensus regarding corridor connectivity/mobility issues
- Preparing concept layout alternatives for the Penn Avenue roadway including arterial BRT platform locations
- Evaluating and proposing preliminary design improvements for five key intersections
- Assessing streetscaping options
- Developing and assessing strategies to improve private property along the corridor
- Assessing options and strategies to improve pedestrian and bike connections
- Building consensus regarding corridor economic development and livability
- Forecasting market conditions
- Determining suggested mixes and locations for residential, retail, commercial, and other uses
- Reviewing and assessing potential economic development strategies
- Attracting desired businesses
- Promoting access to jobs
- Assessing future redevelopment opportunities
- Assessing strategies for reuse and redevelopment of publicly-held land
- Assessing options for innovative stormwater management techniques