

# INFRASTRUCTURE AT UPPER HARBOR TERMINAL - Memo to UHT CPC

February 2020

## Concept Plan: Scope of Infrastructure Improvements

In June 2018 the State of Minnesota awarded a \$15 million General Obligation (G.O.) bond-funded grant to the City and Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) for public infrastructure on the UHT site. The Concept Plan stated that these funds will be allocated as \$9 million to the City and \$6 million to the MPRB. Each entity will be responsible for providing local funding to the project at least equal to their share of the State bond funds to assure that the project is fully funded. Infrastructure improvements to be completed by the City (pending availability of funding to match the 2018 State bond-funded grant) were to include:

- Reconstruction of Dowling Avenue from I-94 into the UHT site
- Construction of the northern half of the north-south street that also will function as a parkway for multimodal access to the park and adjacent developments
- Construct and rehabilitate public utility infrastructure, including water, storm sewer, and sanitary sewer, to serve the Phase 1 development
- Stormwater management infrastructure related to public right-of-way

The City also committed to work with the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT), Hennepin County, Metro Transit, and the Mississippi River Watershed Management Organization (MWMO) to coordinate necessary improvements to support the UHT development. Further, the City is working with MnDOT to pursue additional improvements to improve bicycle and pedestrian access to the UHT site across I-94.

## Progress Towards the Coordinated Plan

### a. *Transportation Network*

Public Works has worked closely with MPRB and the development team to design a network of sidewalks, trails, and streets to support greater connectivity and access between nearby communities and the UHT site. As a part of this work, the project team is also working closely with MWMO to explore innovative stormwater solutions to treat and reduce the volume of water entering the Mississippi River. The *conceptual* plans for Dowling Avenue and the proposed Parkway align with the project goals and are ready to be reviewed by community stakeholders. To meet the state bonding timelines to start construction work Public Works has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) for public infrastructure design services. By May 2020 Public Works will have a design team ready to start for the full design of Dowling Avenue, the Parkway, and public utilities to have completed designs by the end of 2021 that are ready for construction in 2022. Below is a summary of the conceptual plans:

- i. “Upper” Dowling Avenue (Lyndale to I-94): Public Works has expanded the project limits to improve connectivity to the greater community and address a major barrier to the UHT site. The conceptual plan for the reconstruction of Dowling Avenue prioritizes a wider public realm with sidewalks, an off-street trail, boulevards, trees, pedestrian street lighting, and new traffic signals.
- ii. “Lower” Dowling Avenue (I-94 to Parkway) & Bridge: The conceptual plan for the reconstruction of Dowling Avenue prioritizes a wider public realm with sidewalks, an off-street trail, boulevards, trees, pedestrian street lighting, and new traffic signals. These designs have explored access to I-94, improvements to the intersection at Washington Avenue, and designing a safe and accessible crossing of Canadian Pacific Railroad (CP Rail) into the park. The City is working with MnDOT to pursue additional improvements to improve bicycle and pedestrian access to the UHT site across I-94 and has also identified interim solutions the City can implement to address safety and access concerns across I-94.
- iii. North-South Parkway: The conceptual plan for the construction of the parkway has progressed in close coordination with MPRB. This design provides space for separated bicycle trails and walking paths adjacent to park land, while maintaining the Grand Rounds aesthetic. Further, the design maintains a sufficient slope and distance to the river. The City and MPRB are exploring the ability to construct the entirety of the north-south parkway, which is subject to funding availability.
- iv. 33rd Avenue (2nd Street to Parkway): Subject to the availability of funding, the conceptual plan for the reconstruction of 33rd Avenue prioritizes a wider public realm with sidewalks, an off-street trail, boulevards, trees, and pedestrian street lighting. A decision to reconstruct 33rd Avenue is based upon the ability to construct the entirety of the north-south parkway. The City has identified the need to explore improvements on 33rd Avenue, to further improve UHT site access near Lowry Avenue and efficiently coordinate the two CP Rail crossing improvements into the UHT site.

*b. Utility Infrastructure*

- i. Water: The conceptual plan for the upgrading for the water system has been prepared and estimated to support the street design and planned development. This work has been developed in close coordination with the development team and MPRB. The plans assumed much of the existing infrastructure will utilize existing service easements to the west parcels 3 – 5.
- ii. Sanitary: The conceptual plan for the upgrading for the sanitary sewer system has been prepared and estimated to support the street design and planned development. This work has been developed in close coordination with the development team and MPRB. The plans assumed much of the existing infrastructure will utilize existing service easements to the west parcels 3 – 5.
- iii. Stormwater: The conceptual plan for the upgrading for the storm sewer system has been prepared and estimated to support the street design and

planned development. This work has been developed in close coordination with the development team, MWMO and MPRB. The City is exploring several options to implement innovative stormwater solutions to treat and reduce the volume of water entering the Mississippi River. The City has been focusing on improvements to the public realm, while MWMO has been evaluating shared district and regional systems.

c. *Xcel Transmission Line Realignment*

After the working closely with the MPRB, the development team, Canadian Pacific Railroad, and other partner agencies, the project team recommended an Xcel transmission line realignment that minimized impact through the park and routed the powerlines as far west as possible to maximize development area. The alignment is currently being studied with Xcel to better understand design, cost, and coordination with existing utility easements. The study and preliminary design will be completed in several months.

d. *Public Transit*

The project team is working with Metro Transit to coordinate improvements that support existing and future transit service upgrades. As the plans for the development are finalized, Metro Transit will evaluate the phasing and intensity of uses to determine if modifying routes are supported.

e. *Restorative/Closed Loop System*: An integrated public utility hub is being studied more broadly at a citywide level. The City is not pursuing a public utility hub at the UHT site because the City does not have the authority to redirect regional sanitary systems to a local integrated utility hub.

The CPC is being asked to answer the following questions:

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*Does the proposed design of the streetscape including stormwater management, bike and pedestrian facilities meet the goals of the project?*

*Do the proposed strategies for improved community access across I-94 and broader street/trail network achieve the goal of improved connectivity to the site?*

*Should the City prioritize additional public improvements to be completed by the City on southern half of the site (parkway and a second access point at 33<sup>rd</sup> Ave N)?*

*What elements of the transportation and utility system should be revised to offer a better riverfront-oriented experience and integration with adjacent land uses (park, jobs, housing, venue, etc.)?*

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