

# Hennepin Community Works

*An Employment, Public Works and  
Tax Base Development Program*

**Final Report  
of the  
Parks and Public Works Commission**

**June 1994**

T.P.

June 15, 1994

Dear Commissioner Mark Andrew, Chair - Hennepin County Board of Commissioners  
Mayor Sharon Sayles Belton - City of Minneapolis  
City Council President, Jackie Cherryhomes - City of Minneapolis  
Commissioner Thomas W. Baker, Chair - Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board  
Commissioner David Dombrowski, Chair - Suburban Hennepin Regional Parks District

As charged, the Parks and Public Works Commission has undertaken and completed a study "to examine the feasibility of joint development of parks and public works activities with the goals of job creation, tax base enhancement, development of public works in high need areas and removal of impediments to redevelopment, repair of ecological damage, revitalization of cities and maintenance of municipal infrastructure.

Following establishment in December of 1993, the Commission organized into three subcommittees: Program, Project and Organization, with specific work plans to define the Parks and Public Works Program, to study what types of projects would accomplish the goals presented in the charge to the Commission, and to develop an organizational model that would facilitate the implementation of the Parks and Public Works Program.

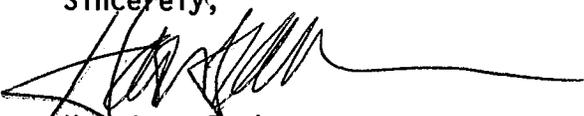
Throughout this process the Commission has received ongoing staff assistance from Hennepin County, the City of Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the Suburban Hennepin Regional Parks District and the University of Minnesota's Design Center for American Urban Landscape.

The Commission's most important discovery is that carefully designed and integrated parks and public works projects sustain and enhance the long-term tax base and financial viability of neighborhoods while enhancing their quality of life. For projects to be most successful they must be part of a larger vision-- an integrated system which crosses jurisdictional boundaries connecting each neighborhood to its ecological roots, to job opportunities which are sustainable, and to the community as a whole.

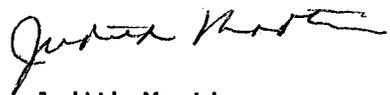
It is with pride that the Parks and Public Works Commission submits the accompanying feasibility study and recommendations for implementation of Hennepin Community Works, a program focused on joint-jurisdictional capital improvement activities to create employment opportunities, to enhance the economic viability of communities and to preserve and reestablish natural systems.

The Commission looks forward to the public discussion of the feasibility study and offers its continuing assistance to work toward implementation of Hennepin Community Works.

Sincerely,



Harrison Fraker  
Co-Chair



Judith Martin  
Co-Chair

# Parks and Public Works Commission Membership

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## Commission Member

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College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture,  
University of Minnesota

Judith Martin, co-chair

Minneapolis Planning Commission

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Hennepin County Board

Mr. Brian Nelson

Hennepin County Board

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Hennepin County Private Industry Council

Ms. Caren Dewar Saxton

Minneapolis Private Industry Council

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Mr. Bruce Tetzman

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Ms. Marcia Taubr

Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District

Mr. George Garnett

Minneapolis Consortium of Non-Profit Developers

Mr. Morris Knopf

Greater Minneapolis Area Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Todd Pufahl

Minneapolis Building and Construction Trades Council

Mr. John Herman

Joint/Citizen Appointment: Hennepin County Board,  
City of Minneapolis and Minneapolis Park and  
Recreation Board

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# Executive Summary

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In the process of executing its charge, the Parks and Public Works Commission confirmed, through careful analysis of geographic information and data about Hennepin County, overwhelming historical evidence that: *well designed and carefully integrated parks and public works projects maintain and enhance the long-term tax base of neighborhoods while improving their quality of life.*

This basic finding led the Commission to the hypothesis that locating projects (coordinated parks, public works and infrastructure improvements) in urban neighborhoods and suburban communities which do not have such amenities, or which are experiencing a decline in property values, or both, is a way of shoring up the tax base as well as creating amenities which encourage long-term investment. An important corollary is that: *the implementation of these projects will provide immediate employment and job training while laying the groundwork for long-term employment opportunities.*

By exploring a variety of project types and employment opportunities in potential neighborhoods and communities, the Commission developed a set of interactive guiding principles to implement Hennepin Community Works' mission:

## *Mission Statement*

*Hennepin Community Works seeks to enhance how the communities of Hennepin County work together to create good jobs, provide access to employment and build the long term value of communities by investing in infrastructure, public works, parks and the natural environment, and by improving the existing implementation systems.*

The principles, discussed in greater detail in the body of the report, are summarized as follows:

## *Principles*

**Stimulate Employment Development** - The parks and public works projects create jobs by themselves but, more importantly, the physical improvements in neighborhoods create the groundwork and the reason for other long-term investments and for existing businesses to stay. Physical improvements have the potential for developing their own internal capital (currency) and thus new jobs for the neighborhood if coordinated with the appropriate jobs training programs.

**Build Bridges for Effective Planning and Implementation** - For the projects and programs to be effective, the financial and human resources must be coordinated at all levels of government into a comprehensive program with multiple goals.

**Maintain and Improve Natural Systems** - Developing the natural systems as the underlying structure of a place can provide significant amenities which add value to a community while also reducing the long-term cost of infrastructure.

*Strengthen Communities through Connections* - The Commission discovered that those parks and public works projects which strengthen linkages to other communities; to urban resources, networks and systems; and to the natural environment create the highest long-term value and sustain the highest property values.

*Enhance the Tax Base* - Compelling historical data indicate that parks and public works projects which are integrated with the natural and man-made infrastructure of the community and are coordinated across jurisdictional boundaries should enhance the common tax base of the county.

These guiding principles were developed by the work of a Project Subcommittee which explored the feasibility of the physical project types, a Program Subcommittee which developed eleven principles for job programs related to the project types and an Organization Subcommittee which examined alternative models for implementation.

*Recommendation*

As a result of its work, the Commission encourages the participant agencies to commit the resources needed to develop the implementation structure for Hennepin Community Works, based on the lead agency model, and to select at least three possible projects for implementation evaluation based on the endorsed mission statement, program goals and project principles.

# Findings

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The Parks and Public Works Commission has studied the feasibility of implementing joint-jurisdictional parks and public works activities to stimulate new job opportunities, to revitalize communities, to restore sensitive ecological areas and to maintain infrastructure investments as charged by the joint session.

The Commission further finds that Hennepin Community Works as a joint-jurisdictional program provides the framework to ensure that the **immediate work opportunities** resulting from public infrastructure investments benefit the construction industry and provide work and **job skill training opportunities** for the economically disadvantaged.

The Commission further finds that the implementation of Hennepin Community Works will stimulate new, **long-term employment growth** within the communities of Hennepin County through the attraction of private investment into residential, commercial and industrial areas served by the new and/or improved public facilities.

The Commission finds that the implementation of Hennepin Community Works will provide a **framework for collaboration** by diverse groups on the investment of public resources to address public needs, for new employment opportunities, to connect neighborhoods and communities to the larger Hennepin County community and to maintain the viability of all Hennepin County communities.

The Commission further finds that the success of Hennepin Community Works is dependent upon the willingness of affected governmental units to use the framework of Hennepin Community Works to **jointly plan for the investment of public resources** to accomplish activities which connect and enhance communities and protect sensitive areas.

The Commission further finds that effective planning for Hennepin Community Works relies upon the **collection, synthesis and use of diverse types of information** about natural resources, infrastructure and the built environment, and social and economic conditions.

In summary, the Parks and Public Works Commission finds that implementation of Hennepin Community Works provides an opportunity for diverse groups in Hennepin County to achieve, by cooperation, greater success in meeting the goals of stimulation of employment growth, enhancement of communities and growth of the common tax base than can be accomplished by independent actions.

# Recommendations

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The Parks and Public Works Commission recommends that Hennepin County, the City of Minneapolis, the Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board implement Hennepin Community Works as an employment, public works and tax-base development program through approval of the following recommendations:

That Hennepin County be the lead coordination agency for the development of the Hennepin Community Works planning process.

That a public information document explaining the goal and purpose of Hennepin Community Works be prepared to introduce the program to the public and local governments.

That Hennepin County, the City of Minneapolis, the Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board continue to provide financial and staff resources to complete the implementation plan and process for Hennepin Community Works.

That, based upon project recommendations from the principal agencies, the advisory committee evaluate the implementation opportunity for at least three selected projects by March 31, 1995. The evaluation process should include a research methodology and short-term and long-term goals for job generation and tax-base impact.

That a Hennepin Community Works advisory committee be established with members appointed by Hennepin County, the Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District, the City of Minneapolis, and the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, by October 1, 1994.

## Next Steps

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The Parks and Public Works Commission has identified the following as steps to be followed by the supporting agencies to continue the planning and development of process for the Hennepin Community Works Program:

**Assemble a joint agency planning group** to sustain the Hennepin Community Works planning and development process by coordinating access and analysis of information that supports the Hennepin Community Works Advisory Committee and detailed feasibility studies.

**Secure funding to develop an information collection and analysis system** that integrates capital budgeting, comprehensive planning and natural systems data in cooperation with the University of Minnesota Design Center for American Urban Landscape.

**Develop a detailed employment training and job stimulation program** based on the principles and goals presented in this study and on findings from project-specific feasibility studies.

**Develop a project evaluation matrix** based on the principles and goals presented in this study to assist in project selection and measurement of effectiveness.

**Research and recommend public and private financial grant opportunities** to participant jurisdictions to support the planning and implementation of Hennepin Community Works projects.

**Identify and evaluate existing state legislation** that facilitates or impedes implementation of Hennepin Community Works and develop a demonstration project proposal that provides incentives for community participation.

# Background

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## *Problem Statement*

Hennepin County is experiencing economic deterioration in urban neighborhoods and suburban municipalities. This deterioration is manifested in depressed employment and earning levels; increasing reliance on public assistance and social services; expanding crime rate; substandard residential, commercial and public-use property and a general disenfranchisement of residents from the economic and social activities of the community at large.

The public cost of this deterioration can be measured by the decline in tax revenues realized and the corresponding increase of public expenditures on income maintenance, public services, health care and social services.

The human cost can be seen in the apathy, anger, fear and inertia of residents. Residents of economically distressed communities experience more chronic health problems, higher crime victimization, lower educational attainment and a desperate sense of hopelessness. A broadly-based sense of mounting frustration exists in seeking solutions to a steadily worsening situation.

## *Proposal*

The Parks and Public Works Commission proposes to address this problem by developing and implementing a joint-jurisdictional program to stimulate employment opportunities, to enhance the social and economic viability of communities and to preserve and reestablish natural systems.

The proposal is ambitious in scope because the Commission recognizes that the problem is complex and cannot be solved by single-issue, short-term programs. Thus, the Commission envisions multi-agency participation in Hennepin Community Works for the purposes of coordinating programs and physical projects so they reach their full potential and ensuring the development of long-term employment generation and retention in the private sector. Although Hennepin Community Works cannot solve the problem alone, it can make a significant difference by providing the physical "ground works" to encourage the revitalization of troubled neighborhoods and communities and by developing the potential of the workforce.

To the best of the Commission's knowledge, Hennepin Community Works is a ground-breaking program nationally. There are examples of well-managed parks and public works projects that have had positive economic and social impacts on distressed core-city neighborhoods. This information along with the study's findings leads the Commission to assert that a program implemented at a broader scale, over a longer time period and in a larger geographic area will generate multiple benefits for all the communities in Hennepin County.

The remainder of this section includes: a discussion of Hennepin Community Works principles and goals, descriptions of project types and a strategy for implementation.

# Framework

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## *Mission Statement*

Hennepin Community Works seeks to enhance how the communities of Hennepin County work together to create good jobs, provide access to employment and build the long term value of communities by investing in infrastructure, public works, parks and the natural environment, and by improving the existing implementation systems.

## *General Goals*

**Design a comprehensive employment development/stimulation program** to address short-term job training needs and long-term employment opportunities to:

- Increase the Hennepin County tax base
- Enhance the sustainability and physical quality of communities
- Contribute to the improvement of the natural environment
- Develop and implement innovative organizational and financial strategies with measurable outcomes

## *Guiding Principles*

### **Stimulate Employment Development**

An employment development program has a long-term impact when it is comprehensive in addressing the needs of all members of the workforce and stimulates private enterprise to generate long term employment opportunities.

### **Enhance the Tax Base**

Integrated park and public works infrastructure projects will enhance the property tax base.

### **Strengthen Communities through Connections**

Communities are enhanced and strengthened by connections and linkages to other communities; to urban resources, networks and systems and to natural systems.

### **Maintain and Improve Natural Systems**

Natural systems underpin local identity, generate social and economic value, and should guide the planning of parks and public works.

### **Build Bridges for Effective Planning and Implementation**

Combined financial and human resources from all levels of government produce implementation strategies that support a comprehensive program with multiple goals.

The Commission developed the mission statement, goals and principles from their analysis and discussions. The following five pages contain a summary of this work. On each page a principle is restated and followed by a synopsis of its bases and a corresponding goal which can be translated into measurable objectives.

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*Principle*

**Stimulate Employment Development**

An employment development program has a long-term impact when it is comprehensive in addressing the needs of all members of the workforce and stimulates private enterprise to generate long term employment opportunities.

*Bases*

- A strategic jobs and infrastructure investment program can stimulate private investment to create new long-term jobs.
- There are employment, development and infrastructure needs which can be addressed best through a long-term, coordinated public investment strategy to implement projects with significant scale.
- Opportunities for community participation in the identification and implementation of projects can foster local support and balance public and private employment opportunities.

*Goal*

**To implement a comprehensive employment development/stimulation program.**

This program should:

- provide the disadvantaged with job skills which are transferable and needed in the private sector
- maintain employment opportunities for the existing workforce
- stimulate the growth of new long-term job opportunities in the private sector
- offer a range of skill development and employment periods

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*Principle*

**Enhance the Tax Base**

Integrated park and public works infrastructure projects will enhance the property tax base.

*Bases*

- The market value of housing is a composite of many factors, including: the general appearance and condition of the surrounding neighborhood, the general sense of security, the availability and accessibility of parks, trails, and open spaces, the overall quality of the local environment and the level of public services. A property tax base enhancement program will have a greater positive impact if it treats these as complex factors and as an interactive system.
- Real estate markets in the Twin Cities metropolitan area place a strong value on parks, trails and open spaces. Extending and upgrading these amenities will help create new value in declining urban and suburban areas.
- Communication and transportation infrastructures connect individuals to the larger Hennepin County community, job training and long-term employment opportunities. Improvements in these infrastructures will increase the livability, economic value and stability of communities.
- Tax base growth from commercial and industrial sectors results from direct efforts to attract new development and from redeveloping under-utilized sites; and also from indirect efforts that focus on factors such as job skill training and improved environmental conditions. The Commission has found that emphasis on these secondary factors is equally important and requires multi-agency collaboration to be successfully implemented.

*Goal*

**To increase the Hennepin County tax base.**

This is possible through:

- investment in the enhancement, expansion, and new development of infrastructure, recreation amenities and park reserves
- reclamation of abandoned properties and vacant sites
- expansion and new development of commercial and industrial businesses/firms
- improvement, redevelopment and new development of residential property
- creation of new markets and revitalization of old ones

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*Principle*

## **Strengthen Communities through Connections**

Communities are enhanced and strengthened by connections and linkages to other communities; to urban resources, networks and systems and to natural systems.

*Bases*

- Homestead property value maps show that properties on or near the parkway system have higher market values and that they hold their value over time. They also indicate that house values gradually taper off with distance from the parkway system. This gradation creates "heterogeneous" neighborhoods with housing at all economic levels.
- Social and economic indicators show that these same neighborhoods tend to be stable, i.e., housing is kept in good condition, occupancy rates are high, median household income and labor participation rates are on par with the rest of the metropolitan area, commercial property is occupied, retail businesses do well, etc. It is this type of diversity and stability that Hennepin Community Works seeks to support in all areas of Hennepin County.
- Urban areas that are experiencing decline tend to have "isolated parks," that is, parks that are not linked to the parkway corridors or a network of trails. The Commission suggests that one way to create new value in declining areas is to bring residents and parks into a larger system by building on- and off-street trails and expanding or establishing new parkway corridors.
- Suburban areas of the Hennepin County are comprised of independent municipalities that have grown together during intense periods of expansion. Each community approached parks, open space and natural systems differently and little effort was made to coordinate planning across municipal boundaries or to link local parks to the regional park system. The Commission suggests that park and trail connections between communities and regional corridors will create an open space network that will serve multiple communities and improves the quality of Hennepin County's environment.
- As transportation corridors and industrial sites are abandoned, new opportunities arise for redevelopment. These parcels are often found near parkways or regional corridors and form "fingers" into communities, offering opportunities for new activities. The Commission perceives these sites as prime locations for Hennepin Community Works projects because they form links between local and regional systems and can serve as sites for future workplaces.

*Goal*

**To enhance the sustainability and physical quality of communities.**

Actions to achieve this include:

- building connections between communities and to regional corridors
- developing the skills, knowledge and resources of local communities
- upgrading the physical infrastructure and building stock
- adopting sound planning and urban design strategies
- engaging local jurisdictions in projects, planning and implementation

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*Principle*

## **Maintain and Improve Natural Systems**

Natural systems underpin local identity, generate social and economic value, and should guide the planning of parks and public works.

*Bases*

- Topography, hydrology, soil, vegetation and wildlife are natural systems that contribute to the character of a place. When highlighted and sensitively developed, these systems can create economic and social opportunities. When ignored, they can lead to wasted investment, declining values, stress on social systems and cycles of disinvestment. The Commission suggests that public reinvestment in the physical assets of distressed communities, especially the natural resources, will stimulate private economic and social reinvestment.
- New environmental protection regulations will soon require that cleaner water be returned to our river systems after it passes through human environments. This could be achieved through construction of expensive monolithic stormwater treatment facilities at the outlets of sewer networks. However, the same amount of money invested in smaller, decentralized "soft" cleaning systems located in community open-space, could be leveraged into a multiple-use infrastructure serving as recreation, flood control and environmental education as well as water cleaning.
- The development of Minnehaha Creek and the chain of lakes as an open space system has proven to be a strong factor of sustained property values. It also offers significant social opportunities as a public gathering and recreation place. Other creek corridors in Hennepin County, such as Nine Mile Creek, Bassett's Creek, Purgatory Creek and Shingle Creek, could offer similar settings, while protecting water quality and providing wildlife habitat.

*Goal*

**To contribute to the improvement of the natural environment.**

Actions to accomplish this include:

- incorporating natural systems into the project planning framework
- selecting, planning, and implementing projects that have a direct and positive impact on the environment and that integrate public works into the natural system
- remediating polluted sites, restoring wetlands and uplands and creating diverse habitats
- restoring natural systems

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*Principle*

**Build Bridges for Effective Planning and Implementation**

Combined financial and human resources from all levels of government produce implementation strategies that support a comprehensive program with multiple goals.

*Bases*

- Common barriers to planning and implementation include: jurisdictional boundaries, legislation that restricts actions and geographic area of programs, traditional departmental lines of responsibilities, outmoded assumptions about urban planning and development and compartmentalized flows of information. Removing these and other barriers encourages creative thinking among participating jurisdictions about joint-community and multiple projects. It also encourages organizations to seek ways in which respective budgetary expenditures might be combined or coordinated to complete projects.
- Program planning can align a diverse set of goals and tools when it: a) is a cooperative effort that brings together specialists from many organizations, b) crosses jurisdictional and departmental lines, c) synthesizes multiple and diverse goals and d) combines categories of information.

*Goal*

**To develop and implement innovative organizational and financial strategies with measurable outcomes.**

These strategies should:

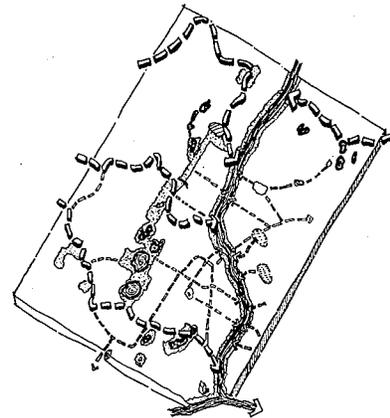
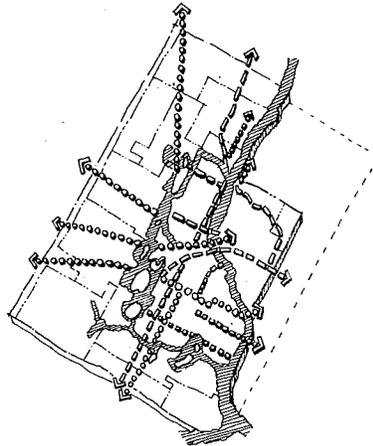
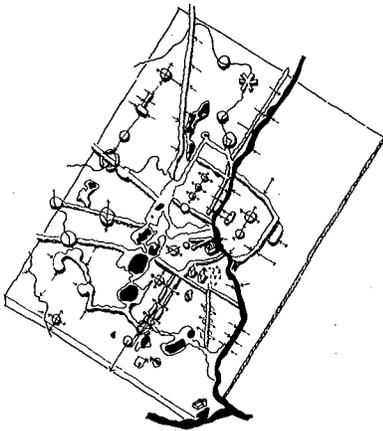
- advance the planning and operation of Hennepin Community Works
- build cross-jurisdictional projects and working agreements which integrate and leverage resources to stimulate job creation
- integrate capital project planning with available employment and training resources
- collect, interpret and facilitate access to publicly financed data bases, specifically computer-based geographic information systems
- leverage, promote and protect resources, i.e., human, financial, cultural and natural
- seek a variety of funding sources
- identify opportunities to align budgets, goals and objectives to leverage resources

# Description of Project Types

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Rather than selecting specific projects to be initiated under Hennepin Community Works, the Commission developed types of projects appropriate for program support. The identification of project types is a starting point for developing project selection criteria, for soliciting project proposals from community organizations and municipalities and for measuring the progress of the program.

There are project types that: 1) improve the physical quality of communities; 2) emphasize community linkages and 3) promote, protect and reclaim natural resources. These classifications are not meant to be exclusive; it is hoped that projects will have attributes of all three types. For instance, a trail corridor which links communities can enhance the quality of the places it serves and provide wildlife corridors and water quality protection.



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## Place Enhancement

Projects that upgrade deteriorating building stock, prepare and/or reuse vacant sites and construct new public or private facilities.

## Community Linkages

Projects that connect individuals and communities with each other and with natural systems, cultural resources, and social and economic opportunities.

## Natural Systems

Projects that reclaim and restore water, soil and natural habitats, educate the public about the environment and enhance ecological functions.

# Examples of Projects Discussed by the Commission

## Projects that Improve the Physical Quality of Neighborhoods

<u>Site Reclamation</u>	<u>Economic Generators</u>	<u>Housing</u>	<u>Parcel Specific Amenities</u>	<u>Public Facilities</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freeway parks</li> <li>• Community gardens</li> <li>• Linear Parks-- Bottineau Neighborhood</li> <li>• Settlement pond overlooks on Mississippi</li> <li>• Reclaim abandoned sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change industrial areas</li> <li>• Develop small industries compatible with residential</li> <li>• Support commercial redevelopment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rearrange residential blocks (house moving)</li> <li>• Housing maintenance programs</li> <li>• Construct replacement housing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reclaim and prepare abandoned sites</li> <li>• Neighborhood cleanup of polluted sites</li> <li>• Interim use of LRT Station Sites</li> <li>• Reclaim odd shaped parcels in rights-of-way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restore buildings e.g., Armory</li> <li>• Ball fields, etc.</li> </ul>

## Projects that Emphasize Community Linkage

<u>Linkages that Serve as Corridors</u>	<u>Streets within Neighborhoods</u>	<u>Recreational Trails on Pathways that Create Small and Grand Rounds</u>	<u>Recreational Trails on Pathways along Natural Systems</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plymouth Avenue N</li> <li>• Humboldt Avenue N</li> <li>• Franklin Avenue E &amp; W</li> <li>• Hennepin Avenue</li> <li>• Central Avenue NE</li> <li>• Lyndale Avenue N</li> <li>• Penn Avenue N</li> <li>• France Avenue S</li> <li>• Park Avenue S</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 42nd Avenue N</li> <li>• Dowling Avenue N</li> <li>• Powderhorn Valley Rd</li> <li>• Bryant Avenue Link N &amp; S</li> <li>• Upgrade parade routes</li> <li>• 53rd Avenue North</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On-street trails and pathways</li> <li>• Luce Line via Wirth Pkwy</li> <li>• 29th Street Corridor</li> <li>• Richfield Soo Line conversion to pathway</li> <li>• Hopkins - Chaska Trail</li> <li>• California Street</li> <li>• 57th Avenue N Trail</li> <li>• 49th Avenue N Trail</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shingle Creek Parkway</li> <li>• Cedar Lake Parkway</li> <li>• Mississippi River Rounds</li> <li>• Ryan Creek Trail</li> <li>• U of M Steam Plant</li> </ul>

## Projects that Promote, Protect and Reclaim Natural Resources

<u>Water Quality</u>	<u>Soils Reclamation</u>	<u>Vegetation and Habitat</u>	<u>Public Education</u>	<u>Large Open Areas</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wetland restoration: Lake Calhoun, Bassett's Creek</li> <li>• Non-point source pollution clean-up</li> <li>• Daylight systems: Lake Sandy, Bassett's Creek, Bridal Veil Falls, Brownie Lake to Bassett's Creek</li> <li>• Settlement ponds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community gardens</li> <li>• Polluted site clean-up</li> <li>• Microbe technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reforestation</li> <li>• Parks prairie and upland restoration efforts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Settlement pond overlooks</li> <li>• Education programs about natural landscaping, etc.</li> <li>• Living/Learning Centers Polo Grounds and/or Hennepin Regional Park</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reserve projects</li> </ul>

# Strategy for Implementation

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Implementation of Hennepin Community Works will require an innovative organizational strategy that draws on talents and expertise from many organizations and units of government. It also will require intensive coordination to facilitate project planning and implementation, across-the-board organizational participation and effective financial management. Hennepin Community Works provides a framework for the integration of resources and the effective expenditure of tax dollars on projects that support a larger vision for Hennepin County.

## *Lead Agency*

To carry this strategy forward, the Commission proposes that one governmental organization assume a leadership role and focus on fostering cooperative relationships. Hennepin County is in the best position to assume this responsibility because it has the resources and its jurisdictional authority and legal powers encompass the entire county and the types of projects proposed for Hennepin Community Works.

## *Advisory Committee*

An advisory committee with representatives from participating organizations would recommend general policy and project selection and evaluation criteria.

## *Project-based Implementation Agreements*

Implementation agreements between cooperating jurisdictions will be developed for each project involving these organizations. These agreements will specify planning and implementation details, financial arrangements and schedule.

## *Next Phase*

The recommendation to select at least three projects for in-depth implementation feasibility is based upon the Commission's recognition that Hennepin Community Works needs extensive testing before it can be implemented. It is expected that this next phase will generate new insights that will lead to refinement and revisions in all aspects of the program as presently laid out. It is the Commission's hope that the interactive work process established in the feasibility study and described in the next part will be carried forward and integrated into the ongoing operation of Hennepin Community Works.

# Work Strategy

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As proposed in the initial charge, the Commission worked as a full group and in three subcommittees. Commissioners devoted full sessions to general education presentations, subcommittee reports and general discussions. Subcommittees explored topics in greater depth and developed concepts for the full commission to revise and adopt. On occasion the full Commission would request subcommittees to rework ideas, to study issues in greater detail and to report back to the larger group. This cycle occurred throughout the feasibility study, allowing simultaneous lateral exploration and coordination. Midway in the study, commissioners participated in an intensive workshop to explore potential projects and discuss program and organization implications. The Commission brought closure to the study by developing consensus about the program, recommendations and next steps.

## *Technical Assistance Team*

Staff members from Hennepin County, the City of Minneapolis, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District and the University of Minnesota Design Center for American Urban Landscape, College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture provided technical assistance and information to the Commission and subcommittees.

At the outset of the study, the Commission held general education meetings. At these meetings commissioners learned about similar projects in other cities and received an orientation to general economic, social, physical and environmental conditions in Hennepin County. During one of the earlier education meetings, the Commission was presented with different approaches for feasibility studies. The key concepts that the Commission followed are outlined in the remainder of this section.

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Map: Minneapolis Residential Property Values, 1993  
Category: Social and Economic Conditions  
Source: City of Minneapolis

*Map Description*

This map shows residential property divided into two parts: over \$66,000 market value, and under \$66,000. It reflects circumstances such as initial construction quality, change over time, market desirability of different communities and owner willingness to invest in repairs.

*Observations*

A strong correlation between the connected park system (chain of lakes, Mississippi River, Victory Memorial and Wirth Park) and higher home value is clear - the farther one gets from the park system, the fewer higher value homes there are. The consistent gradation of value toward amenities indicates their positive effect on home value over time.

This relationship seems to support the premise that connections, an open space system and shared natural amenities strengthen communities.

There also appears to be a negative influence on values along I-35W. This perhaps reflects the influence over time as well as potential upcoming expansion of the freeway.

*Opportunities*

Given the Hennepin Community Works goal of increasing the tax base, it appears that extending the park and open space system to reach underserved areas could have a positive effect on home values, particularly over time. This is not to say that parks alone will solve problems in communities - appropriate responses to social and economic stresses need to be developed in a comprehensive way. But since parks do contribute substantially to the physical aspect of communities, they should be part of the comprehensive approach.

The proposed changes to I-35W are an opportunity to leverage the investment to benefit the communities around the freeway more than the previous incarnation. Defining the edge, increasing the green quality and connecting across the freeway are all opportunities possible with major change.

# Appendix 1

## Subcommittee Reports

# Projects Subcommittee

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The Project Subcommittee examined what types of physical development/capital improvement projects with an emphasis on parks and public works activities would enhance the tax base of communities and generate both immediate and long-term employment opportunities.

To establish an understanding of the current situation, the subcommittee examined the following questions:

Which neighborhoods are most in need of tax base enhancement related to:

- declining land values and tax base;
- abandonment of structures, blight, etc.;
- vacant land; and
- declining populations?

What are the physical/natural resources to build upon?

What are the cultural resources to build upon?

What are the current, planned capital improvement projects of all relevant agencies: federal, state, county and city?

What are the types of project possible?

What are the opportunities for specific projects in Minneapolis/Hennepin County?

## *Work Tasks*

- Prepare evaluations of project ideas relative to proposed program goals and selection/investment criteria.
- Identify cost, benefits, risk and uncertainties of each project idea.
- Identify staffing requirement and total project costs for each project idea (without other task forces).

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# Descriptions of Project Types

## Place Enhancement

### Place-Based Projects that Improve the Physical Quality of Communities

- A. **Site Reclamation** – projects that utilize odd, vacant or underdeveloped parcels for public uses. *Examples: community gardens, pocket parks, infrastructure highlighting, buffers*
- B. **Economic Generators** - projects which contribute to a desirable level of economic activity in communities. *Examples: commercial redevelopment, industrial development, changeovers in land use*
- C. **Housing** – projects which improve and maintain the quality and affordability of housing stock. *Examples: maintenance, moving, replacement*
- D. **Parcel – Specific Amenities:** projects which address specific site opportunities in preparation for future public uses. *Examples: interim uses for future public sites, site preparation/cleanup, pollution cleanup*
- E. **Public Facilities** – facilities important to many communities. *Examples: building restoration, recreational opportunities, use conversion*

## Community Linkage

### Projects that Emphasize Community Linkage

- A. **Corridors** – multiple-use roadways of importance to multiple communities often connecting significant natural or cultural features. *Examples: parkways, multiple land uses, commercial streets*
- B. **Streets within Neighborhoods** – multiple-use roadways of local significance, often connecting local features. *Examples: community facility spine, links to regional features, parade routes*
- C. **Trails and Pathways that Create Small and Grand Rounds** – non-automobile travel ways which extend or complete continuous loop paths. *Examples: railway conversion, utility corridors, on-street bikeways*
- D. **Trails and Pathways along Natural Systems** – non-automobile travel ways which follow and highlight water, vegetation, topography or other natural systems. *Examples: river/creek, forest/prairie, prospect views*

## Natural Resources

### Projects that Promote, Protect and Reclaim Natural Resources

- A. **Water Quality** – initiatives which preserve or improve water quality. *Examples: point source, non-point source, restoration*
- B. **Soils** – projects which make soil resources available for productive use. *Examples: cleaning pollution, clearing previous uses*
- C. **Vegetation and Habitat** – projects which improve the health and diversity of plant and animal communities. *Examples: reforestation, park reserves, species introduction*
- D. **Public Education** – projects which increase public awareness of the structure, function and applications of natural systems. *Examples: education centers, interpretive facilities, landscaping programs*

# Program Subcommittee

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The Program Subcommittee focused on developing the underlying mission and program principles for the development of parks and public works activities that create jobs, enhance the tax base, remove impediments to redevelopment and repair ecological damage through inter-jurisdictional cooperation.

The Program Subcommittee also dealt with the question of defining and measuring outcomes.

## *Work Tasks*

Identify similar initiatives undertaken by other jurisdictions.

What were the program goals?

What supporting data is available regarding:

- project types
- investment levels
- tax base impacts
- employment effects
- payback analysis/return on investment
- statutory authority
- funding sources for capital and operations

What have been critical factors for success of projects undertaken in other areas?

What have been the principal causes of failure of other projects?

What do the experiences of others suggest for:

- planning/development process
- multi-jurisdictional organization
- neighborhood/community involvement?

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# Draft Principles and Goals

The program subcommittee presented the following to the Commission for discussion.

## *Mission*

Hennepin Community Works seeks to improve the implementation systems, to enhance how the communities of Hennepin County cooperate to create good jobs, provide access to employment and build long-term value of neighborhoods by investing in infrastructure, public works, parks and the natural environment.

## *Principles*

Program activities will:

1. foster local ownership by involving affected communities in development and ensuring that they will benefit from implementation;
2. create new community connections and strengthen and encourage existing ones;
3. leverage cultural and natural resources;
4. promote public and private enterprise;
5. merge into the customary operations of local governments, maximize the talents, expertise, and education of public employees and enhance how things get done;
6. combine financial and human resources for maximum impact and eliminate duplication of expenditures and efforts; and
7. have a measurable impact.

## *Goals*

Areas in which to develop goals:

1. Job creation:
  - how many
  - what kinds (skill levels, transferability)
  - wage rate, for whom (unemployed, low-income, residency)
2. Tax-base enhancement:
  - commercial development
  - residential development
3. Goods/Services:
  - social/employment training
  - system changes and development
  - new products/ services/markets
4. Environmental concerns
  - converting problems to opportunities
  - improvement, enhancement, expansion of parks, open spaces and environmental systems

# Organization Subcommittee

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The Organization Subcommittee examined the organizational needs and options of a multi-jurisdictional program of job creation linking tax base and community enhancement.

The subcommittee worked to define an organizational structure and process that will implement and maintain the proposed multi-jurisdictional program.

## *Work Tasks*

Determine statutory authority of the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin County, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District for the joint development, finance and/or operation of parks and public works activities.

Identify statutory requirements for joint projects development including public hearings, environmental reviews, joint power or other agreements, planning commission reviews, etc.

Identify all sources of capital and operations support potentially available to support joint parks, public works activities and the limitations of each (uses and amounts).

Identify jurisdictional organizational roles and responsibilities for implementation of each project including cost sharing, construction, hiring, maintenance and other provisions as spelled out in the organizational administrative recommendations.

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## Organization Options

The organization subcommittee prepared the following three organizational options.

### *Joint Powers*

Through the joint powers statutes, establish a new intergovernmental entity comprised of elected officials from the founding and funding public bodies. The composition of the governing body would be equitable to reflect the powers of the agencies and the resources available to support project implementation. This organization would be responsible for promotion of the Parks and Public Works Program and the selection of projects to be implemented consistent with the mission and development principles of the program. It is through the joint powers board that participant jurisdictions will commit to the contribution and coordination of fiscal and staff projects, whether in one or multiple communities such projects could be accomplished through project specific implementation organizations comprised of those jurisdictions involved in funding and owning the project.

### *County*

Based on the empowerment statutes it appears that through general or special legislation Hennepin County has been given adequate operation authority to plan and implement the Parks and Public Works Program countywide.

This approach would place the Parks and Public Works Program within the Hennepin County administrative structure, with governance by the County Board. Based on the resources needed/available for a specific project, implementation partnerships would be developed with local communities and neighborhoods respecting funding and ownership of the project.

### *Nonprofit*

A new public non-profit organization could be established by the participant organizations to deliver employment programs and project development services to projects which, based upon an application process, are found to be consistent with the mission and project development principles of the Parks and Public Works Program. Initial financial support for the corporation would come from the founding organizations and through philanthropic grants. The new agency would be a contract or subcontractor for project implementation, with the expectation that over time it would become at least partially self-supporting. The organization would be governed by a board of directors appointed by the founding and funding organizations.

# **Appendix 2**

## **Presentations to the Commission**

# Presentations to the Commission

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Experts provided the commission with Commission with information on various subjects. Following is a list of presenters and their organization by categories.

## Capital Budgets

Jerry Weiszhaar	Hennepin County
Jack Qualy	City of Minneapolis
Al Wittman	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Douglas Bryant	Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District

## Comparative Programs

Chris Aiken	Trust for Public Land
William Morrish	Design Center for American Urban Landscape, University of Minnesota

## Training and Employment Programs

John McLaughlin	Hennepin County
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## GIS Mapping Presentation

James Ford	Hennepin County
Dan Marckel	Design Center for American Urban Landscape, University of Minnesota
Carol Swenson	Design Center for American Urban Landscape, University of Minnesota

## Hennepin County Diversity Study

Mel Harris	Hennepin County
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## Organizational Authority and Legal Jurisdictions

Mark Chapin	Hennepin County Attorney's Office
Brian Rice	Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
Robert Wicklund	Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District

# Appendix 3

## Selected Source Materials

## Selected Source Materials

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- The Aesthetic Development of the United Cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul.* H.W.S. Cleveland. Minneapolis: Minneapolis Society of Fine Arts. 1888.
- 1990 Census Report* (5 parts). Minneapolis: Hennepin County Census Analysis Center, A Division of the Office of Planning & Development. August 1992.
- Changes in the Minneapolis Labor Force and the Growing Living Wage Employment Gap.* Minneapolis: City of Minneapolis Planning Department. October 1993.
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- Concept for the Future -- Loring/Parade Use Re-definition.* Hodne Associates, Inc, ed. Minneapolis: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. March 1968.
- Concept Master Plan Study for Central Regional Park/Chain of Lakes Corridor.* Wirth Design Associates. Minneapolis: City of Minneapolis Planning Department. December 1989.
- Geologic Atlas: Hennepin County Minnesota.* N.H. Balaban, ed. St. Paul: Minnesota Geological Survey. 1989.
- Hennepin County's Neighborhoods: It's not "Minneapolis and the Suburbs" anymore.* Minneapolis: Hennepin County Office of Planning and Development. February 1993.
- The Hydrographical Basin of the Mississippi River.* Joseph Nicollet. 1843. Reproduced in 1976 by the Minnesota Historical Society printed from original copy.
- Landscapes of Hennepin County: A Guide to Use of Land.* Patrick N. Kennedy and Robert A. Lueth. Hennepin Conservation District. 1976.
- Legacy of Minneapolis: Preservation Amid Change.* John Borchert, David Gebhard, David Lanegran, Judith Martin. Bloomington: Voyageur. 1983.
- Map of Hennepin County.* Geo. B. Wright. 1874.
- Master Plan for a System of Parks.* Plymouth: Suburban Hennepin Regional Park District. April 1990.
- Minneapolis Park System 1883-1944.* Theodore Wirth. Minneapolis: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. July 1945.
- Minneapolis Parkway System, Preliminary Report.* Eckbo Dean Austin & Williams, Inc. Minneapolis: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. 1970.
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- Minneapolis St. Paul: People Place and Public Life.* John S. Adams and Barbara J. VanDrasek. Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press. 1993.

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- Neighborhood Environmental Profile.* Minneapolis: Community Assistance Program of the Minnesota Office of Waste Management. December 1993.
- Original Government Land Survey of Hennepin County.* St. Paul: Office of the Secretary of the State of Minnesota. 1853 - 1855.
- Survey of Hennepin County.* N.H. Winchell, et al. St. Paul: Minnesota Geological Society. 1877.
- Report of the Long Range Regional River Development and Acquisition Committee to the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.* Minneapolis: Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board. March 1977.
- Social Saga of Two Cities: An Ecological and Statistical Study of Social Trends in Minneapolis and Saint Paul.* Calvin Fisher Schmid. Minneapolis: Bureau of Social Research, Minneapolis Council of Social Agencies. 1937.
- State of the City 1993.* Minneapolis: City of Minneapolis Planning Department. January, 1993.
- Survey of Hennepin County in The Geological and Natural History Survey of Minnesota.* N. H. Winchell, et al. St. Paul: Pioneer Press Company. 1877.
- A System of Parks for Hennepin County.* Chas. E. Doell and Felix K. Dhainin, consultants. Minneapolis: Hennepin County Park Reserve District. September 1958.
- The Upper River in Minneapolis: A Concept Plan for Discussion.* Minneapolis: City of Minneapolis Planning Department. August 1985.
- Vacant Land in Minneapolis and St. Paul: An Examination of the Urban Land Market in the Central City.* Barbara Lukermann, Judith Martin, Sandra de Montille. Minneapolis: Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. 1991
- Where We Live: The Residential Districts of Minneapolis and St. Paul.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press in association with the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. 1983

# Geographic Information Systems

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In the early stages of research design planning, the technical assistance team decided to utilize geographic information systems (GIS) as a method for accessing and analyzing data. The advantage of GIS is the capacity to handle large data bases quickly and efficiently and the ability to present spatial relationships among diverse data in computer-generated maps. GIS is commonly used by all levels of government to manage property and public works information and is being used with more frequency to analyze information about the local population and economy, social activity, the environment, natural resources, recreation amenities, etc.

Hennepin County and the City of Minneapolis were among the first local governments to explore using GIS, and the State of Minnesota is among the national leaders in developing and using GIS. It seemed logical to pursue the use of GIS in the feasibility study because of the multi-faceted character of Hennepin Community Works. After a few weeks of research, we realized that GIS has advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand we were able to generate specialized maps that were influential in understanding and defining opportunities for Hennepin Community Works. On the other hand, we were limited in its use because of technological and governmental constraints.

In the final assessment of the potential for using GIS in Hennepin Community Works planning and evaluation, we concluded that it is too valuable a tool to abandon and that a concerted effort should be made to develop ways to integrate data from multiple sources and to collect all types of data in such a way that it can be accessed for multiple purposes.

The remainder of this appendix contains a list of maps generated from the City of Minneapolis, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and Hennepin County geographic information systems and notations from Hennepin County about the data used to generate key maps from their system.

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# Notations on Hennepin County GIS Maps

prepared by James Ford, Hennepin County Office of Planning and Development

## 1. 1993 Market Value of Homestead Property Study Series

This map series contains 1993 market value data from the Hennepin County Property Information System (PINS). The algorithm is simply "if the homestead code equals yes, then which value range." The value ranges were those which had been used earlier for another client and which seemed to show some meaningful patterns in various locations throughout Hennepin County. Municipalities included in the following study series areas: North Suburban: Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Crystal, Maple Grove, New Hope, Osseo, Robbinsdale; South Suburban: Bloomington, Chanhassen, Eden Prairie, Edina, Richfield and the Airport; and West Central: Golden Valley, Hopkins, Medicine Lake, Minnetonka, Plymouth, St. Louis Park

## 2. 1993 Market Value of Non-Homestead Residential Property

By looking at "property type" and "homestead code," the algorithm selects the non-homestead residential properties and then sorts by value. Here too, the value ranges were those which had been used earlier for another client and which seemed to show some meaningful patterns in various locations throughout the County.

It should be noted here that the values represented are for the parcel (land and buildings), not individual buildings. Specifically, when it comes to apartments, we have situations where four buildings may be located on separate quarter acre parcels. In the former case, the one acre would receive the color of the combined value of the four buildings and in the latter, the one acre would receive the color of the individual building values, i.e., suggesting that the latter one acre area was worth one quarter of its actual value. Because of this phenomenon, Hennepin County has not used this map series very much in this office.

## 3. Absolute Decrease in Market Value of Homestead Properties (1987 - 1992)

As suggested, this shows the value of those homes which experienced an absolute decline in value over the period 1987 - 1992. While this map may have revealed cases where owners challenged their assessed value (particularly where these were isolated, higher value homes), it in fact also identified whole neighborhoods in decline.

## 4. Age of Homestead Property, Hennepin County

This was a copy of a map prepared earlier to examine the potential use of the "This Old House" legislation outside Minneapolis. It shows numerous wealthy suburbs which contain a large number of older structures and makes the argument that the age of a house is not always a good indicator of condition or the financial need for public assistance to renovate and/or maintain a house.

## 5. Age of Structures Study Series

Our interpretation includes sic ranges which reflect logical breaks in housing construction "periods." This can, of course, be argued, but it seemed to provide a workable series of maps. As noted, the data were missing for many parcels, Crystal data being particularly bad. We are currently trying to secure better data, but some of this data are apparently available only from the municipalities and it may be months before we can access it. I would also note that in Minneapolis it appears that data on publicly owned properties are not updated after they are taken off the tax rolls.

**6. Commercial Property, Hennepin County**

While it technically did what it was supposed to, this map is most successful at showing the importance of transportation facilities to commercial property siting decisions (and perhaps related zoning restrictions). I have seen maps similar to this in which values were assigned to/aggregated for large commercial areas (as opposed to parcels) and this was more successful.

**7. Industrial Property, Hennepin County**

Basically, similar to the commercial property map.

**8. Market Value of Homestead Property, Hennepin County**

This map parallels the market value of homestead property study series, but uses the "SHOWCASE" technique to map all of Hennepin County. Due to plotting limitations of this technique, only three value ranges were used. These ranges were the same that this office had used for an earlier series in which we were analyzing the impact of state property tax law changes. This map is useful in showing that certain patterns we have been seeing in Minneapolis also extend into some of the suburbs.

**9. Market Value of Homestead Properties Experiencing a 30% or Greater Increase in Value (1987 - 1992)**

This map complements the maps showing absolute decrease in market value for the period 1987-199 and shows patterns of highest value increase. As expected, these areas were around the Chain of Lakes, Minnehaha Creek and along the Mississippi River - all areas with higher value homes. (One exception to this pattern was in the Lake Nokomis area, which includes "very nice homes adversely affected by airplane noise.") There were some interesting exceptions to this pattern however in areas closer to the central business district and up near St Anthony.

**10. Percent Change in Market Value of Homestead Property, Hennepin County**

This parallels the study series on the same theme. above, but uses the "SHOWCASE" technique to map all of Hennepin County. This map is useful in showing that certain pattern we have been seeing in Minneapolis also extend into some of the suburbs.

**11. Percent Change in Market Value of Commercial/Industrial Property (1987 - 1992)**

As with the residential maps, this shows the change in market value for commercial and industrial properties. A possible limitation of this map is that it does not reveal the comparative dollar impact of change for various areas. That is, a large number of small parcels may appear to represent a serious problem when the actual aggregate decline is minimal, while a single parcel downtown may in fact be a major value loss and not appear to be because of the small size of the single parcel. Given the larger values involved in commercial/industrial properties, this is a more significant problem than it might be for residential properties.

**12. Percent Change in Market Value of Homestead Property 1987-1992 Study Series**

This series reflects percent change from 1987 to 1992. These years were selected because, at the time of our request to our Information Services Department, 1992 was the most recent year for which we could get complete adjusted data, and because going back five years would ensure that every property had been reassessed at least once. (State statute requires reassessment once every four years at a minimum.) Furthermore, we could not get data from much before 1987 without great difficulty and expense because those files are being stored in Kansas or some place similar.

The percent ranges selected were discussed at some length, but seem to work quite well. The average percent increase for residential property in the County for this period is supposedly "around 20%" so this allows comparison of individual study areas to that County

average. The algorithm only includes properties which were homesteaded in both 1987 and 1992, incidentally.

**13. Property Classification**

This map is based on "property type" data within the PINS file. It is, with few exceptions, a good representation of land use.

**14. Vacant Property**

The algorithm reflected several "vacant" categories within the PINS file, but in doing so misses some vacant properties which may carry another code, e.g., park land will often be classified as "residential." Until data files are reviewed and entered uniformly, the maps has limited use.