

Appendix I:

CEPRO Site

Site Location and History

The Cepro Site is located in the Midtown Phillips neighborhood of south Minneapolis. The 1.65-acre green space is bounded by 10th and 11th Avenues South on the west and east, the Midtown Greenway on the south, and residential properties on the north. It lies in very close proximity to the Midtown Global Market and the Allina Health Campus. Hennepin County purchased the site in 2000 to support implementation of Phase 2 of the Midtown Greenway. It was the former home of the Stewart Cepro Grain Elevator, which was demolished in 2004. The elevator was the last rail customer in the Greenway and the County needed to buy it out in order to acquire rights to the railway. In all, the County spent \$7.5 million on acquisition, demolition, and phase 1 construction of the Cepro Site.

In 2004 Hennepin County initiated a community input process to determine how to use the site. The community overwhelmingly felt the site should be entirely used for open space, because the surrounding neighborhoods are highly dense and have lower percentages of green space than other neighborhoods. The

community vision for the site at that time included universal design and accessibility, bike and pedestrian safety, healthy foods, physical activity, and community and family programming. To begin implementing this vision, in 2007 the County constructed paved pathways and stairs to establish an accessible route from neighborhood streets down to the Greenway. From 2011 through 2016, it continued improving the site with seating, sidewalks, plantings, and trees.

In 2017, with the Midtown Greenway nearing 20 years old, Hennepin County decided to closeout the original Midtown Community Works program, which had provided management and funding to greenway-associated initiatives. Along with this closure came the need to divest from properties being maintained by the program. It is this closure that initiated conversations between MPRB and the County about possible land transfer.

Existing Conditions

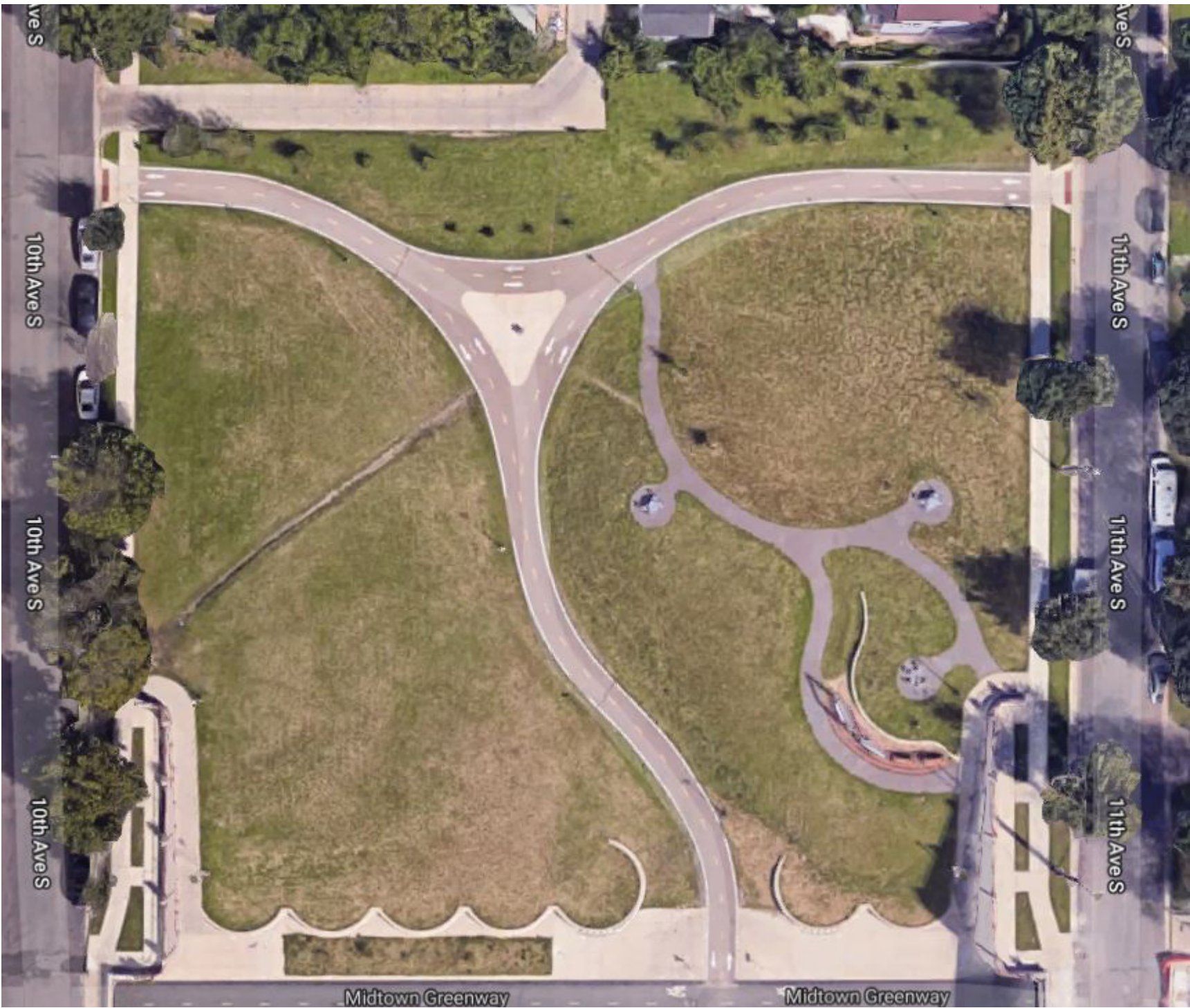
Today the Cepro site is a mostly open green space with relatively steep grades descending from surrounding streets to the Midtown Greenway. Hennepin County's improvements (all of which are considered the "phase 1" improvement of the site) allow for both pass-through and stay-a-while use. A Y-shaped trail occupies the center of the site and provides the only fully accessible ramp into the sunken

portion of the Greenway. On the eastern edge of the site are a variety of seating options—picnic tables, benches, and swing benches—located on several different terraced elevations. Native landscaping and trees cover the eastern slopes, while a small grouping of fruit trees offer fresh snacks at the northern edge of the site. Adjacent to the Greenway at the lowest edge of the site, a portion of the old elevator has been preserved as a seating wall. Stairways descend into the site adjacent to both 10th and 11th Avenues.

The Cepro site comes with an environmental covenant (Attachment B). Hennepin County, upon purchasing the site, did some environmental investigation and mitigation on the site. The covenant places restrictions on the property and requires careful consideration during site improvements. Because MPRB would intend to operate the park as an open space and expects to perform limited grading and earthwork, the covenant is not a concern for staff.

Proposed Design

In 2016 Hennepin County and the neighborhood organization approached MPRB about the potential divestment of the Cepro Site. The three entities worked together to finalize the ultimate complete design of the site and a cost estimate for improvements (Attachment C). Building on years of engagement organized by Hennepin



Cepro Green Space Concept Plan



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| <p>FACILITIES ALREADY EXISTING
(phase one implementation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Y-shaped multi-use trail connection to Greenway - pathways and seating east of multi-use trail - fruit trees within urban agriculture zone | <p>PROPOSED FACILITIES
(future implementation):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - connecting pathway from 10th Avenue - site grading for amphitheater and play hill - stage and seating - enhanced picnic area with shelter and grills - additional urban agriculture opportunities - adventure-style play elements on the hill - water and electrical |
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County (in which the neighborhood organization and local community had been involved), the three entities convened a design charrette to create a concept level master plan for the site. The charrette involved representatives of Hennepin County, MPRB, the Midtown Phillips neighborhood, and other area stakeholders. After the charrette, MPRB assisted the process by finalizing drawings and preparing a cost estimate for the property.

The proposed design retains the phase 1 improvements implemented by the County but adds several desired amenities and further improves accessibility. The picnicking and seating area is enhanced with the addition of a small open air picnic shelter. The small orchard forms the foundation for a larger designated urban agriculture zone occupying the northern edge of the property—an area that could see additional fruit trees or garden plots. The stairways and Greenway trail access are unchanged, but a new accessible path connects a clear desire line between 10th Avenue and the northeastern corner of the site.

The western half of the site is home to a new stage for performances, fitness classes, and /or group gatherings. The stage utilizes the elevator footprint and is connected to the main trail by an accessible path. Seating for the stage is on a slightly re-graded south-facing slope, with accessible seating at its base. Atop the slope (and utilizing the

significant grade change on the site) is a small adventure playground, which could feature bouldering, big slides, net climbers, and other play options focused on physical activity and challenge. Water and electrical services provide additional functionality to the picnic shelter, urban agriculture area, and stage.

Due to the environmental covenant referenced under existing conditions, careful design and consultation will be necessary for any re-grading for the amphitheater and play area.

This concept builds on good community-engaged implementation work performed by Hennepin County over the years, but adds amenities not found nearby. All additions respect the initial community desires for the site: accessibility, healthy foods, physical activity, and community and family programming.