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## **METHODOLOGY**

This public art planning team sought to identify the role of public art in the Greenway and to illustrate, through several methods, how to go about collecting the background necessary to begin that process. Through the commissioning of two teams, each with a photographer and writer, we sought to illustrate how to work with artists and why the information they uncover is useful to the development of future public art projects in the Greenway. In these projects, unknown histories have been revealed and the current state of the Greenway, and some of its adjacent neighborhoods, has been documented for future reference. But this is only the beginning of what can occur if public art is used to define and remember.

Freeman/Whitehurst Group used as its foundation for this report the infrastructure, vision, and specifics identified in the Lake Street Midtown Greenway Corridor Framework Plan. Like the framework plan, the public art master plan inaugurated a process and resulted in a product. The strength of the public art master planning process was its use of community resources to identify what was already known, and, when necessary, to use local experts to create necessary background information. A variety of groups were called upon. A complete list of those consulted and interviewed are in Appendix 4. This section outlines what these groups were asked to do. A combination of historians, artists, writers, and others produced detailed documentation, which will be summarized in the background section and credited in Appendix 8 and available in its entirety on the Midtown Community Works Partnership web site and in archival form in a location to be determined.

The need for five distinct yet interrelated processes developed over the life of the master planning process from May 2000 through March 2001: 1) meetings with stakeholders, 2) a project resource team, 3) a seminar by urban geography students at Macalester College, 4) public artists projects, and 5) character mapping, through the Midtown Greenway Coalition, with the neighborhoods along the Greenway (this process will be ongoing). Each played a role in the planning process dictated by the unique circumstances surrounding the Greenway.

## *Meetings with Stakeholders*

The main foundation for constructing this public art planning document came from interviews conducted by the Freeman/Whitehurst Group with more than 30 individual stake holders in the Greenway, including members of the Midtown Community Works Partnership, the MCWP's Public Art Advisory Committee, Midtown Greenway Coalition, and community arts organizations such as Intermedia Arts and the Heart of the Beast. In addition, Freeman and Whitehurst made presentations to other individuals and groups about successful formulas for public art planning and applications in other cities and states and solicited the input of people that could have an impact on design and programming.

### QUESTIONS ASKED IN INTERVIEWS

Who “owns” the aesthetics of the Greenway?

What is your vision for the Greenway? Your organization's vision for the Greenway?

What is your (or your organization's) vision for art on the Greenway?

What are barriers to art on the Greenway? What do you NOT want to see there?

Who is responsible for implementation of projects on the Greenway?

(Where appropriate) Is Percent for Art (public and private) feasible for Greenway public art funding?

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### *The Project Resource Team*

The Freeman/Whitehurst Group employed Nancy Dallett, a public historian of Projects in the Public Interest, to assess the availability of background information and to corral needed information on the Greenway. Dallett found that most of the work to date was looking forward to future use and that little systematic work had been done to place the Greenway in a historic context. A project resource team was needed to guide the interpretation of the industrial history of the Greenway and the changing demographics of communities that have lived alongside the Greenway. Dallett solicited the participation of people from the local community to represent the disciplines of local history; industrial archaeology; geography; social, immigration, and railroad history; historic preservation, and the interpretation of history for the public.

When the project resource team met for the first time in August 2000 they were in agreement on two major factors: a tremendous number of scattered resources were available about the Greenway (photographs, archival material, etc.) but there was no synthesis or centralized source of information. This disconnect between the original purpose and meaning of the trench and planning for its future needed to be rectified. Too often it falls to artists to sift through and develop their own interpretation of the social history and meaning of particular places. A goal of this project was to assemble that information for future artists. Fortunately, one member of the project resource team, David Lanegran, offered the services of five of his students to devote a semester compiling information and to present their findings.

In the future, the project resource team can be called upon to work with individual artists as the plan begins to be implemented. They are an invaluable group of people with information, dedication, expertise, and connections. A list of project resource team members is included on page 2.

### *Urban Geography Seminar at Macalester*

The purpose of soliciting the skills and interests of David Lanegran's urban geography students was not only "academic," it was also to provide a well-researched basis for public artist projects. David Lanegran, the Dean of Social Sciences at Macalester College, offered five of his students

the opportunity to research the Greenway as a part of the public art planning process. They were eager to research the past in order to contribute to the future of the Greenway. During the winter semester 2000 they researched the history of the Greenway, the changing demographics of Lake Street businesses, and the changing demographics of nearby neighborhoods. They formally presented their findings in December 2000 at Intermedia Arts. A synopsis of their findings is in section V, Background. A list of students and titles of their research papers are in Appendix 5. Full copies of these reports will be available in archival form, at a location to be determined, and on the MCWP web site.

### *Public Art Demonstration Project: Writer/Photographer Teams*

The purpose of engaging teams of photographers and writers was threefold: 1) to record the Greenway as it is today; 2) to demonstrate the process used in working with artists; 3) to make the materials generated available as valuable contextual information for artists and designers of future public art and public improvement projects in the Greenway. Forecast Public Artworks assisted Freeman/Whitehurst by handling the advertisement of the request for proposals, screening the applications, and scheduling the interviews. Panelists included Jack Becker, Jeff Millikan, Theresa Nelson, Gretchen Freeman, and Nancy Dallett. Five photographer/writer documentation teams were interviewed on October 5, 2000. The interviewers asked questions about how the teams would interact with the community and how their past work prepared them for this challenge.

Two teams were selected: Tim Francisco (photographer) and Roy McBride (writer) and Chris Faust (photographer) and Wendy Fernstrum (writer). Francisco was contracted to produce a series of 50 photographic images pertaining to the Greenway and three focus neighborhoods: Whittier, Powderhorn, and Phillips. He was to work with writer Roy McBride to capture the diverse aspects of the area, immigrant populations, the artistic community, pageantry, and portraiture. Chris Faust was contracted to produce a series of 50 photographic images of the Greenway, with special focus on the bridges. He was to work with Fernstrum to offer observations and commentary on the "bridging communities" and connections aspects of the Greenway. The work of both the photographers and the writers will be available on the MCWP web site.

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## Writers on the Rails

“It’s new, but it’s also old. It’s called a greenway, and yet the landscape is mostly monochromatic. As a railroad corridor parallel to Lake Street transforms into a recreational path, belief systems are being turned inside out. People are beginning to look at the corridor in a new way. But the most significance change is that they’re no longer pretending it doesn’t exist. Now viewed as an amenity rather than an embarrassment, the greenway is a pathway to revitalization in areas of Minneapolis that have watched economic booms pass by like limousines on their way to a distant party.”

—Wendy Fernstrum, *Bridging Communities, Creating Connections*

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One’s beginning.  
Another’s ending.  
Who first discovered this place?  
How many times has this place been discovered?  
How many names for this place?  
About ten years ago,  
At the Science Museum of Minnesota,  
I met a young, Native-American historian.  
She told me that she was convinced  
From the research she’s been doing  
That at the time of Columbus’ “discovery,”  
There were 8 to 10,000 tribes in what we call  
“The United States of America.”  
How many tribes in “America?”  
How many tribes in “Europe?”  
How many tribes in “Africa?”  
How many tribes in “Asia?”  
How many tribes in us?  
How many tribes in you and me?  
Our history  
Our mystery

—Roy McBride

## Questions Posed to Writer/Photographer Teams

How will you approach the project, as a team and individually?  
How do you envision working together?  
Describe your relevant experience.  
Discuss a project you’ve worked on that presents similar challenges and issues.  
What is your knowledge of and experience with the communities that are a part of this project?  
How will you address this project as a public art/documentary project that will inform future public artists about these communities and opportunities?  
What is your availability over the next four months?  
Question for Historical Team – what kinds of sources will inform your work on this project?  
Describe work you have done using archival materials.  
How much will you rely upon oral histories and personal stories in this project?  
QUESTION FOR CONTEMPORARY/ FUTURE TEAM —What role can public art play in making the Framework happen?

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## Archiving the Greenway

The illustrations throughout this document are from the public art demonstration project photographers, Chris Faust and Tim Francisco. The intention is to create an archival collection that will be stored in a convenient location in a accessible repository. The full work of the photographers, writers, and students involved in researching, interpreting, and documenting the Greenway for this public art master plan will be included in the archive and will serve future public artists who work on Greenway projects. In addition, each photographer will create five enlarged images of the Greenway, which can be put on loan to City or County offices, or used as display images for Greenway interpretation.