

Martin Luther King Boulevard and 54th Street Commercial Corridors Market Study



The Martin Luther King (MLK) Boulevard (62nd Street) and 54th Street Commercial Corridors Market Study served as an economic primer for subsequent corridor and gateway master planning. The data and findings from the analysis provided an understanding of the local market and served as the economic underpinnings for planning and policy considerations.

The market study began with an assessment of the physical conditions and existing land uses along MLK Boulevard and 54th Street. Field surveys determined that both commercial corridors lacked the physical and aesthetic qualities necessary to attract a heightened level of business investment and customer growth. While a working public infrastructure existed along both corridors, much of the infrastructure was found to be insufficient or poorly designed. Public infrastructure conditions were exacerbated by private property conditions along the two corridors and a patchwork land use pattern. Numerous vacant lots at key locations further diminished the streetscapes and contributed to a general sense of instability. A public infrastructure strategy was proposed to connect dissimilar elements and provided a structure or framework that could be supported and enhanced by incremental development.

A demographic analysis of the MLK Boulevard and 54th Street trade area found the neighborhoods that served the commercial corridors were among the poorest in the city. The demand and competition analysis determined that a significant negative gap existed between the trade areas consumer demand and the areas annual sales from convenience goods and personal services. While this critical finding suggests limited potential for new retail development within these categories, the study recognizes a potential unmet demand for entertainment and shoppers goods and

