

CITY OF VANCOUVER  
WASHINGTON

# West Minnehaha Neighborhood



## NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION PLAN

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City of  
VANCOUVER  
WASHINGTON

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*Final Draft May, 1998  
Amended September, 2011*

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# Introduction

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The purpose of a neighborhood action plan is to identify issues that are of concern to the residents of the neighborhood, and to devise strategies for addressing these concerns. In conjunction with broader policies and implementation measures contained within the City's comprehensive plan, the neighborhood action planning process is intended to protect and enhance the livability within specific neighborhoods, as well as to help fulfill the overall community vision and to create a more livable city. More specifically, neighborhood action plans are intended to:

- ◆ Educate both city government and neighborhood residents about each others' concerns and visions for the future.
- ◆ Promote collaboration between the city and the neighborhood in order to achieve mutual goals and a shared sense of responsibility.
- ◆ Create a "sense of place" within the community by identifying and developing the assets within each neighborhood.
- ◆ Initiate change, rather than simply reacting to it, by addressing specific issues and opportunities.
- ◆ Achieve sensible and coordinated project and program planning within each neighborhood and between all the city's neighborhoods.
- ◆ Strengthen neighborhoods.



## Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan

In general, a comprehensive plan is intended to provide broad policy direction which is implemented through more specific development regulations and capital expenditure programs. Comprehensive plans do not, however, typically address the more immediate needs and concerns of individual neighborhoods. This is the purpose of a sub-area or neighborhood plan.

The City's new comprehensive plan, entitled *Visions for the Vancouver Urban Area*, was adopted in December of 1994. The Plan specifically states that the City should: "*create neighborhood plans by assisting neighborhood organizations in identifying issues, policies and implementation measures specific to their areas.*"

The purpose of the West Minnehaha Neighborhood Action Plan is to integrate neighborhood needs into the City's budget process, Six-Year Street Improvement Program, Neighborhood Traffic Control Program, Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan, and other planning and funding programs. The general policy statements included in the Action Plan may also be used by the City Council to guide future decisions involving development proposals and plan amendments affecting the neighborhood.



## **The Neighborhood Action Planning Process**

The West Minnehaha Neighborhood Association with assistance from the City of Vancouver Department of Community Preservation and Development has developed this plan. The actual preparation of this plan is being coordinated by the Neighborhood Action Planning Committee, whose members were appointed by the Neighborhood Association to represent the interests of the neighborhood as a whole.

A draft version of this Action Plan has been advertised and made available for review and comment by all residents of the neighborhood. After considering and reconciling comments from the residents, the plan has been endorsed by the Neighborhood Association according to their specific by-laws, and then forwarded to the Planning Commission for their consideration. The City Council has endorsed the Plan by resolution.

It is intended that city agencies will utilize the action plans as input in developing more specific work programs and helping to establish city-wide funding priorities. It is recognized that many of the recommendations contained in the action plans are conceptual only and may need to be analyzed in greater detail, both individually and in relationship to other recommendations. It should also be emphasized that funding sources may not exist for implementing all of the recommendations identified in the plan. All of the actions identified in the plan are to be initiated and implemented by residents of the neighborhood and the appropriate city departments.



## **Overview of the Plan**

This Plan contains four components. The NEIGHBORHOOD PROFILE contains a general description of the current conditions within the neighborhood. The VISION STATEMENT describes the neighborhood's sense of identity and vision for its future. The NEIGHBORHOOD OBJECTIVES identifies issues that are of concern to the residents of the neighborhood. The NEIGHBORHOOD ACTION STEPS includes specific potential strategies for accomplishing the identified objectives. Each Action Step is prioritized and identifies the responsible parties for implementing those strategies.

# Neighborhood Profile

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The unique location of the West Minnehaha Neighborhood and its diverse yet cohesive blend of urban, commercial, and semi-rural attributes have a long tradition of attracting residents from a broad range of social, cultural, political, and economic backgrounds. Residents proudly recognize and wish to maintain a sense of community unity, while acknowledging and respecting each neighbor's right to an autonomous lifestyle.

The West Minnehaha neighborhood is located north of the downtown Vancouver area. The neighborhood, which consists of 1023 households within 62 blocks, is bounded by four major arterials. The Neighborhood is delineated on the north by Minnehaha Avenue; to the west by Highway 99; to the east by St. Johns Road; and to the south by SR-500. Residents have easy access to all nearby and distant regions of the community.

The neighborhood is characterized by the preponderance of single-family dwellings. Approximately 80 percent of the housing units are owner-occupied. The prevailing zoning in the neighborhood is single-family residential. Increased housing development in the neighborhood over the past ten years has placed stress on traffic flow throughout the streets that feed into the main arterials. Many streets are not pedestrian-friendly and need maintenance and improvements such as sidewalks, adequate lighting, bicycle and disabled access.

The homes throughout the neighborhood represent pleasantly diversified architectural styles. The majority of the housing stock was built primarily between 1950 and 1984. However, some dwellings date back to the turn of the century. Multifamily housing is primarily located in the St. Johns/St. James Corridor, thereby being conveniently accessible to public transportation. The neighborhood benefits from a blend of commercial and urban parcels along the exterior portions of the neighborhood. Stores and commercial services are conveniently located along the St. Johns/St. James Corridor to the east of the neighborhood. A variety of churches and schools are located throughout the neighborhood.

(Paragraph deleted September, 2011)

The neighborhood contains two large open-spaces and two extensive trails that interconnect the parks. Discovery Trail traces the southern boundary of the neighborhood, following Burnt Bridge Creek through both Arnold Park and Leverich Park. The Ellen Davis Trail traces the north boundary, continuing southwest where it meets the Discovery Trail at the west edge of Leverich Park. Leverich Park is located in the southwest corner of the neighborhood and offers complete park facilities; a large shelter, ball field, BBQ stoves, bathroom facilities. There are no small neighborhood parks located within the predominantly single-family area of the neighborhood.

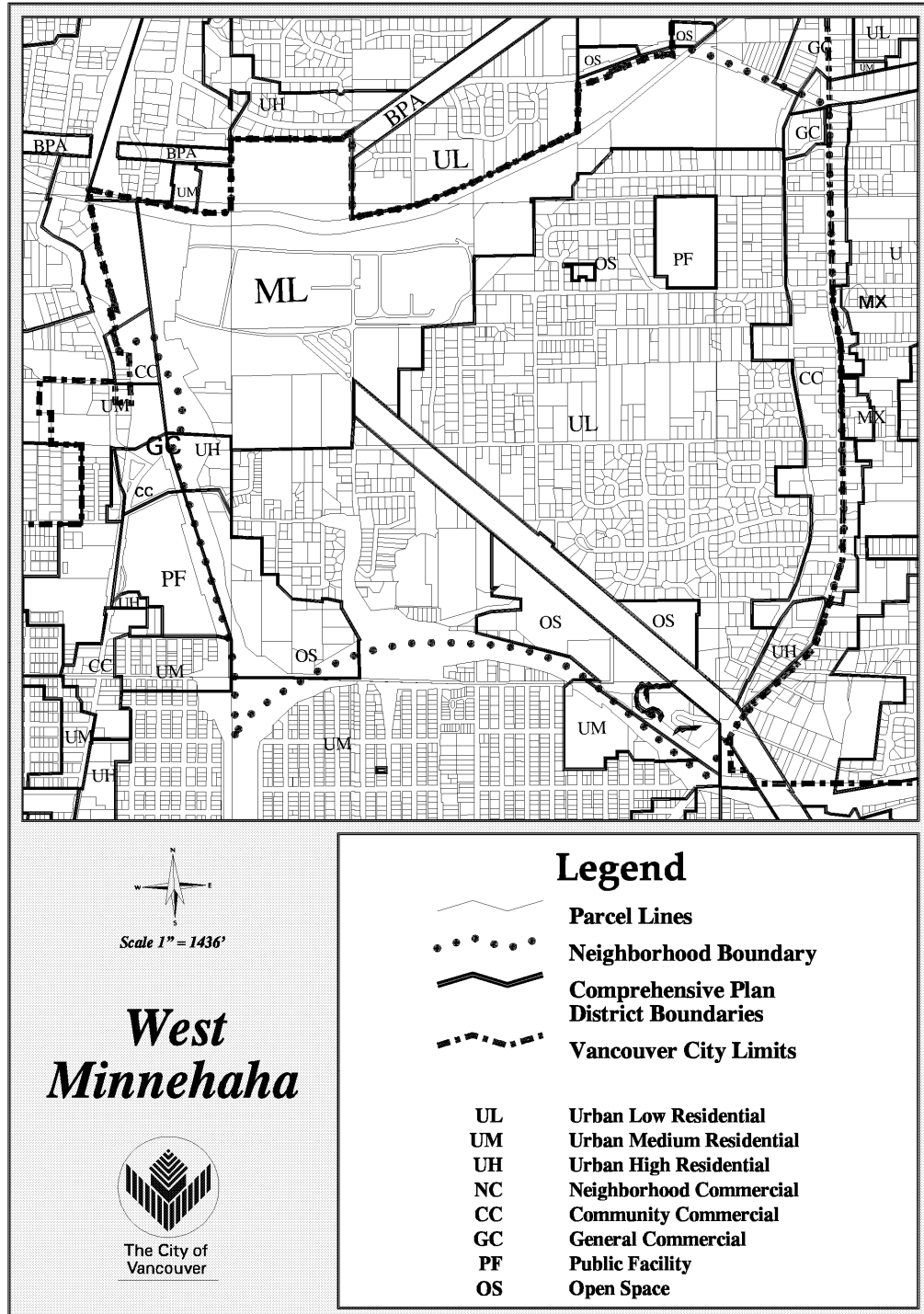


# **Neighborhood Map**

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## **West Minnehaha Neighborhood**

# Neighborhood Zoning/Comp Map



April 28, 1998

ua5066: e:/gislib/neighborhoods/minnehahacomp.aml

# Vision Statement

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*While we wish to maintain the positive attributes in our neighborhood, the residents envision enhanced livability and safety as a sincere concern for our neighbors. Our neighborhood is a place where people proudly recognize a sense of community cohesion and value the single-family ambiance apparent throughout our community.*

*(Sentence deleted September, 2011) We advocate pedestrian-friendly street improvements and traffic flow that allows residents to safely access local community resources and one another. The establishment of easily accessible community “pocket” parks throughout our residential area enables our younger generation to safely congregate in the community. We value pride of ownership evident in our neighborhood. Finally, to help guide the future development of our neighborhood, we encourage harmonious partnerships with both the local businesses as well as the City government.*

# Objectives and Action Steps

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The following recommended action items identified as having a "high" priority are considered by the Neighborhood Association to be most important. "Medium" priority action steps are somewhat less important. "Low" priority action steps are considered least important.

Priority has been assigned by the Neighborhood Association for each action step without regard for the time frame within which the

recommendation can realistically be accomplished (short-range, long-range) and without concern for whether funding sources can be practically identified. Accordingly, it is possible that a "High" priority item may not be realized for many years. In contrast, some "Low" priority items could be potentially accomplished in a relatively short amount of time without significant capital expense.

Listed below are abbreviations for the various responsible parties used throughout the document:

## Abbreviations:

<b>BAC</b>	<b>Clark County Bicycle Advisory Committee</b>
<b>BPA</b>	<b>Bonneville Power Administration</b>
<b>BUS</b>	<b>Neighborhood Businesses</b>
<b>CC</b>	<b>Clark County</b>
<b>CITY</b>	<b>Mayor's Office</b>
<b>CMS</b>	<b>Community Mediation Services</b>
<b>CTRAN</b>	<b>CTRAN</b>
<b>NA</b>	<b>Vancouver Neighborhood Alliance</b>
<b>OTH</b>	<b>Other organizations</b>
<b>OWN</b>	<b>Neighborhood Property Owners</b>
<b>PDX</b>	<b>Portland International Airport</b>
<b>PUD</b>	<b>Clark Public Utilities</b>
<b>RTC</b>	<b>Regional Transportation Council</b>
<b>VCC</b>	<b>Vancouver Chamber of Commerce</b>
<b>VCDD</b>	<b>City of Vancouver Community Development Department</b>
<b>VCMO</b>	<b>City Manager's Office</b>
<b>VHA</b>	<b>Vancouver Housing Authority</b>
<b>VON</b>	<b>City of Vancouver Office of Neighborhoods</b>
<b>VPD</b>	<b>City of Vancouver Police Department</b>
<b>VPR</b>	<b>City of Vancouver Parks and Recreation Department</b>
<b>VPWF</b>	<b>City of Vancouver Public Works Functions</b>
<b>VSD</b>	<b>Vancouver School District</b>
<b>VTD</b>	<b>City of Vancouver Transportation Division</b>
<b>WSDOT</b>	<b>State of Washington Department of Transportation</b>

# I. OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

## Objective #1

Maintain and improve the existing open space within the neighborhood.

Arnold Park is a natural open space area that creates a buffer for the neighborhood. The Ellen B. Davis Trail is becoming overgrown with invading vegetation.

### Action Steps:

- Maintain the Ellen B. Davis Trail.
- Maintain “Arnold Park” as a natural open space.

### Priority

High  
Medium

### Responsible Parties

VPR  
VPR

## Objective #2

Develop open space within the residential areas of the neighborhood.

It is desirable to have easily accessible areas in which area residents can relax and neighborhood children can play.

### Action Steps:

- Determine location and appropriate funding mechanisms for a neighborhood park.
- Work with the Parks and Recreation Department to develop a vacant lot as neighborhood “pocket” park in the residential area of the neighborhood.
- Create an open space between 49<sup>th</sup> Street and 53<sup>rd</sup> Street.
- Install a children’s play area within the “new” neighborhood park.

### Priority

High  
High  
Medium  
Medium

### Responsible Parties

VPR, VON, VCDD, WMNA  
VPR, WMNA  
VPR, WMNA  
VPR, WMNA

## II. MOBILITY MANAGEMENT

### Objective #1

Slow excessive speeding through the neighborhood.

Many of the streets in our neighborhood are used as short cuts by speeding commuters, thereby creating a safety hazard.

<u>Action Steps:</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Responsible Parties</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement traffic slowing devices on the following streets.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 54<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• 49<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• 45<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	High	VTD, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the street barrier on 28<sup>th</sup> Avenue near 49<sup>th</sup> Street.</li> </ul>	Medium	VTD, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase speeding enforcement within the neighborhood.</li> </ul>	High	VPD, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investigate a traffic revision on 49<sup>th</sup> Street.</li> </ul>	Medium	VTD, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the Transportation Division to develop a neighborhood traffic plan.</li> </ul>	High	VTD, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the traffic light timing along St. Johns and St. James.</li> </ul>	Low	VTD, WMNA

# MOBILITY MANAGEMENT

## Objective #2

Improve neighborhood pedestrian safety and accessibility.

We lack the ability to walk throughout our neighborhood safely and easily, which is one of the most important considerations for livability of our neighborhood.

<u>Action Steps:</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Responsible Parties</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pursue funding mechanisms for sidewalk/curb improvements.</li> </ul>	Low	WMNA, VCDD, VPWF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install pedestrian connections within the neighborhood and the Discovery Trail.</li> </ul>	Low	WMNA, VPWF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install sidewalks/safewalks on the following thoroughfares to encourage safe pedestrian traffic.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• St. James (full length)</li> <li>• St. Johns (full length)</li> <li>• 49<sup>th</sup> Street</li> <li>• 54<sup>th</sup> Street</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	High	VPWF, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install adequate street lighting in all areas.</li> </ul>	High	VPWF, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with C-Tran to improve pedestrian accessibility to bus stops.</li> </ul>	Medium	C-Tran, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trim excess foliage that hangs over the sidewalks.</li> </ul>	Medium	VPWF
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install flashing yellow lights in front of Minnehaha Elementary School.</li> </ul>	High	VTD, VSD, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paint pedestrian lanes on connector streets.</li> </ul>	Medium	VPWF, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve the disabled accessibility to existing sidewalks.</li> </ul>	Medium	VPWF, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with C-Tran to identify additional bus stops within the neighborhood.</li> </ul>	Medium	C-TRAN, WMNA

# MOBILITY MANAGEMENT

## Objective #3

Install bike lanes throughout the neighborhood.

Currently, our residents are unable to commute safely by bicycle through our neighborhood due to the lack of bike lanes and narrow side streets.

<u>Action Steps:</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Responsible Parties</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install bike lane connections within the neighborhood and the Discovery Trail.</li> </ul>	High	VPWF, WMNA



## Objective #4

Improve the signage for the St. James/St. Johns corridor.

In an effort to improve the safety, accessibility, and mobility through our neighborhood, the signage along the St. James/St. Johns corridor needs improvement. Currently, we consider signage to be inadequate.

<u>Action Steps:</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Responsible Parties</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Place pavement arrows in each lane near all intersections of St. James and St. Johns to indicate one-way traffic direction.</li> <li>• Paint speed limits on pavement on all streets.</li> </ul>	High	VTD
	Medium	VTD



### III. PUBLIC SAFETY

#### Objective #1

Insure the safety and security of our neighborhood.

Our neighborhood presently enjoys a relatively low crime rate, but that can only be maintained with continual vigilance.

<u>Action Steps:</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Responsible Parties</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establish a Crime Watch network.</li></ul>	High	WMNA, VPD
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increase police patrol throughout our neighborhood.</li></ul>	High	VPD, WMNA

## IV. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

### Objective #1

Promote and encourage communication with our neighbors.

Neighborhood communication helps to prevent neighbor-to-neighbor conflict. Getting to know one another will eliminate fear, distrust, and discrimination by extending a hand of friendship.

<u>Action Steps:</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Responsible Parties</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a neighborhood “diversity” statement.</li> </ul>	High	WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage neighbors to utilize the Vancouver Mediation Program to solve conflicts.</li> </ul>	High	WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold a monthly “International Night” where neighbors prepare and host suppers indicative of their cultures.</li> </ul>	Medium	WMNA and Residents
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold monthly “Welcome to our Neighborhood” social gatherings.</li> </ul>	High	WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer small classes of interest, thereby developing common bonds between us.</li> </ul>	Medium	WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an enthusiastic teen group to engage in our existing Good Neighbor Policy, compensation being a free dinner and movie night.</li> </ul>	High	WMNA

## V. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Objective #1

Promote an open relationship with the businesses along the St. James/St. Johns corridor.

When people work together with the businesses in their neighborhood, everyone benefits.

<u>Action Steps:</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Responsible Parties</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feature neighborhood businesses in the neighborhood association's monthly newsletter.</li> </ul>	High	WMNA, BUS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage business owners to attend monthly meetings.</li> </ul>	High	BUS, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Utilize business promotions to encourage citizen attendance at monthly neighborhood meetings.</li> </ul>	Medium	BUS, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish graffiti cleanup groups.</li> </ul>	Medium	BUS, WMNA

## VI. COMMUNITY APPEARANCE

### Objective #1

Maintain and improve the appearance of the neighborhood.

We desire a neighborhood whose over-all appearance is aesthetically pleasing.

<u>Action Steps:</u>	<u>Priority</u>	<u>Responsible Parties</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Petition the City to adequately maintain and trim the overgrown foliage and uneven sidewalks throughout our neighborhood.</li> </ul>	High	VPWF, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to install more trees within the neighborhood.</li> </ul>	Medium	VPWF, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the City to review and comment on future development in our neighborhood.</li> </ul>	Medium	VCDD, WMNA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain the large residential building lots in our neighborhood.</li> </ul>	Medium	VCDD, WMNA