

ADVENTURES IN WAYFINDING



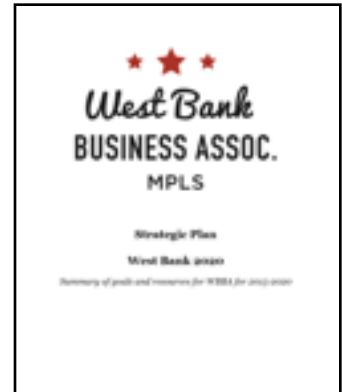
"Filled With
Fun And Laughter."

COMING SOON TO NEIGHBORHOODS NEAR YOU!

This is the story of a business association’s quest to put up some signs.

WHY DID WE WANT SIGNS?

- In addition to general assistance with direction, way-finding signs can promote a sense of safety and a sense of place. They also help with establishing a stronger district brand.
- Our strategic plan, which had input from 100+ businesses and stakeholders in the neighborhood, identified way-finding and signage as a priority.
- Our parking committee identified signage as a helpful tool to direct guests to available parking in the neighborhood, and from parking to businesses.



HOW DID WE MAKE THE SIGNS?

- First, we made sure the business database we had was updated and current. We shared this list with the parking committee, board, and also solicited resident review to make sure we had an inclusive, complete list of local businesses. This is the list we use for the district website and our outreach materials, and we update it quarterly. This information was the foundation upon which everything was built!
- After we had our database, we worked with a Minneapolis designer / cartographer Kevin Cannon to put together a map with this information. This map proved to be multi-purpose; we also used it in our area directories and on our website.
- After we had our map, we ran it through another round of reviews to catch errors, add new businesses, and check it for consistency in naming. It went once more through committee, staff, and board review, and we invited public participation at these meetings.

The image is a screenshot of a spreadsheet containing a list of businesses. The spreadsheet has several columns, including business names, addresses, phone numbers, and websites. The data is organized into sections, with some rows highlighted in yellow. The text is small and difficult to read, but it appears to be a comprehensive list of local businesses.



HOW DID WE PAY FOR THEM?

- Signs are expensive! Often areas will utilize a Special Services District or Business District that, through property assessments, can create a pool of funds for things like signage, snow removal, and other amenities. We didn't have that, so we worked to secure grant funding and donations for this project.
- Final funding for our project came from a variety of resources: The University of Minnesota's Good Neighbor Fund, which helped cover the capital expense; the City of Minneapolis' Great Streets Business District Support program, which helped pay for updates to our map in the business directory; and the West Bank Business Association's paid members helped cover the remainder. We also receive general operating support from the McKnight Foundation and Twin Cities LISC, which helped fund the program management needed to get this job done.

And then....?

- Within two weeks of installation, one of our brand new signs was hit by a car and knocked down! How disappointing. Fortunately, the parking lot owners assisted us in fixing this sign and putting it right back up. Moving forward, we are also budgeting for regular maintenance and upkeep.
- We plan to clean any graffiti / snipe graffiti during regular neighborhood clean-ups, which we help organize throughout the spring and summer months.
- Additional signage up and down our commercial corridor will hopefully be installed as we continue to receive funds for this program. We're working with artists to do some additional creative way-finding along the avenue - not just maps but art as well!
- Signage will be updated on a regular basis as additional funds are secured and business information becomes dated.





Welcome text reads:

The West Bank / Cedar-Riverside Neighborhood is a diverse community on the edge of downtown Minneapolis.

In the late 19th century, Scandinavian immigrants drawn to work in the milling and lumber industries made their homes here. The immigrant tradition continues today as Cedar-Riverside serves as a home for thousands of new Americans making their start in the Twin Cities. Musicians, artists, students and families have also long called the West Bank home and continue to come together to share their knowledge, talents and inspiration.



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WBBA exists to engage the business community in the responsible economic development of the West Bank district while preserving the unique character and heritage of the Cedar-Riverside area.