



**City of North St. Paul
City Council
Workshop Meeting Agenda**

**June 21, 2022
5:00 PM**

The City Council Meeting will be conducted on **June 21, 2022** at 5:00 p.m. The meeting location is the City Council Chambers of City Hall, located at 2400 Margaret St., North St. Paul.

The City Council will also be meeting by interactive TV under Minn. Stat. 13D.02. Members of the public are permitted to attend the meeting in person. However, it is encouraged to participate in the meeting remotely. Instructions can be found below.

The **June 21, 2022** Zoom meeting can be accessed via:

<https://tinyurl.com/NSPCityCouncil>

(from a PC, Mac, tablet, iPhone or Android device)

or by phone at 1-929-205-6099.

Participants accessing the meeting by phone please use the following meeting ID:
84409094358

You can also watch the meeting on our YouTube channel here tinyurl.com/NSPYouTube

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

Council Member Thorsen
Council Member Petersen
Council Member Wong
Council Member Cole
Mayor Furlong

III. Adopt Agenda

IV. Topic(s)

- A. Redevelopment Master Plan Review Presentation
- B. Community Center Discussion

V. Other Business

VI. Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled City Council Workshop meeting is July 5, 2022.



To

Honorable Mayor Furlong and City Council

Date

June 21, 2022

Agenda Placement # IV.A

Topic(s)

Subject

Redevelopment Master Plan Review Presentation

Background/Facts

Recommended Action

Attachments

1. 19288-000 NSP Redevelopment Master Plan DRAFT 7

Respectfully submitted,
Brandy Howe, Planner



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Downtown Redevelopment Master Plan

2022 Update

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

ROBERT DEW, CHAIR
TERRY FURLONG, MAYOR
DONALD JENSEN
TOM SCHIFSKY
ARCHIE VICKERMAN
KEVIN FULLER
BRETT GARRY

CITY COUNCIL

TERRY FURLONG, MAYOR & COUNCIL LIASON
CANDY PETERSEN
SCOTT THORSEN
LISA WONG
TIM COLE

PLANNING COMMISSION

ELAINE BARTON, CHAIR
LISA WONG, COUNCIL LIAISON
PATRICK BLEES
ERIK BRENNAN
JOHN MONGE
ANDREW WISE
RICK GELBMANN
JOHN MONGE

TASK FORCE

JOHN MONGE – PLANNING COMMISSION
RICK GELBMANN – PLANNING COMMISSION
ROBERT DEW – EDA
DON JENSEN – EDA
LISA WONG – CITY COUNCIL
SCOTT THORSEN – CITY COUNCIL
MORGAN DAWLEY – CITY ENGINEER (WSB)
BRANDY HOWE – CITY PLANNER (WSB)
LISA RITCHIE - STAFF



PUBLIC OUTREACH

paragraph about public outreach: placeholder

CHAPTER 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND



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CHAPTER 1: PROJECT BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

Originally drafted in 2012, the initial Redevelopment Master Plan was prepared as a joint effort by the City of North St. Paul and the Economic Development Authority (EDA). The project was funded through the Metropolitan Council’s Livable Communities program to identify barriers to redevelopment and position projects within the downtown area for implementation. The 2012 plan focused on the downtown area, which is the traditional commercial hub of North St. Paul. It identified key redevelopment sites and focused on improving connectivity between those sites, the Gateway Trail, and regional transit systems and community facilities. Many projects and initiatives have been completed under the guidance of the 2012 plan; however, many more revitalization opportunities exist. Thus, in summer 2021, the EDA and Planning Commission determined that an update to the Redevelopment Master Plan would be prudent to ensure that previously expressed goals and objectives are still applicable ten years later and to identify areas for continued investment.



Project Approach

This plan is about revitalizing the traditional commercial hub of North St. Paul. As a fully built out city, the focus of this document is on redevelopment and reuse of land in the city’s core. This plan encourages density, which will require creativity to fit new pieces into the existing fabric of the community. This plan will explore priority areas for reinvestment, both public and private. The planning process for the 10-year update was led by a task force with representatives from City Council, Planning Commission, and the Economic Development Authority. This group evaluated the successes that have occurred since 2012 and noted differences between the 2012 plan and activities that have taken place. The task force took a fresh look at the downtown area and identified potential priority areas for reinvestment, both public and private, considered which land uses are appropriate within the study area, and identified opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian connections. The task force engaged residents, businesses, and property owners to ensure the plan update is in alignment with the local mindset. This plan is intended to demonstrate the vision for the area to residents, businesses, and developers and can assist in catalyzing reinvestment.

Downtown Redevelopment Study Area

Downtown is the heart of the North St. Paul community. It is a unique resource that other inner-ring Twin Cities suburbs do not have and is a key contributor to the City’s identity. It has also been the subject of much discussion and planning over the past decade, including the initial Redevelopment Master Plan, the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, Living Streets Plan, Downtown Design Manual, and the Strategic Plan, each of which are described on page 10.

The downtown redevelopment study area is bounded by Highway 36 on the north, property adjacent to 7th Avenue E. on the south, Division Street on the east, and generally the Urban Ecology and Environmental Learning Center on the west. The Gateway State Trail passes through the study area which connects downtown to St. Paul and Stillwater. The primary gateways into the community include interchanges at Highway 36 and McKnight Road and Division Street. Additionally, Margaret Street is a prime entrance to the downtown from westbound Highway 36.



Historical Context

According to the North St. Paul Historical Society, the city was planned by Civil War veteran Henry Castle as a “workingman’s community with industries and housing in a resort atmosphere.” The city was connected to St. Paul and Stillwater by the Twin City Lines streetcar that is now Seppala Boulevard. The Wisconsin Central Railroad also connected the city to the region, and it became a burgeoning manufacturing hub. Some of the city’s first industries included furniture manufacturers, farm implement fabricators, and brick makers. Berwald Roofing was founded in 1936, at which time the company primarily installed shingles and siding. In 1958, T. A. Schifsky and Sons built an asphalt plant along the former rail corridor which spurred investment to the downtown commercial area. Both companies remain in operation today and are among the largest landholders in the study area. Neumann’s Bar is another historic link unique to the city; it was built in 1887 and it claims to be the oldest bar in continuous operation in Minnesota.

One of the benefits and challenges facing the study area is its historical context in the Twin Cities metro. North St. Paul originally developed as a distinct and separate community from Minneapolis/ St. Paul. Dissimilar to other Twin Cities neighbors, when the metropolitan area grew, communities like Maplewood and Oakdale developed as suburbs with auto-oriented character. Retail centers developed around high traffic corridors in high visibility areas, which competed with North St. Paul’s historic downtown. However, development trends and desires have shifted away from cookie-cutter and toward authenticity; the historic character, diagonal streets, and greenway connection with the Gateway State Trail make this downtown a unique destination for those seeking a non-suburban environment.

In 1972, Lloyd Koesling built the iconic snowman that sits along Margaret Street. The sculpture recalls the Snow Frolics celebrations where the North St. Paul Jaycees would build a large snowman downtown. The snowman was adopted as the city logo and the sculpture serves as a welcome to North St. Paul.

A SAMPLING OF LONGTIME NORTH ST. PAUL BUSINESSES



T. A. SCHIFSKY AND SONS



BERWALD ROOFING



NEUMANN’S BAR



Recent Progress

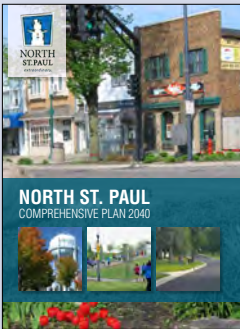
Significant investment has occurred in the downtown since the 2012 plan was adopted. **Polar Ridge** senior living facility was completed in 2015. The facility has 39 units of senior independent living, 54 units of senior assisted living and 21 units of memory care. The site formerly known as Anchor Block has redeveloped into **Anchor Commons** with Kwik Trip, Extra Space Storage, and Anchor View Apartments. The combined taxable value of these improvements is \$33.5 million. In 2021, M&I Homes completed construction of **Gateway at McKnight**, a 100-unit townhome neighborhood with direct access to the Gateway Trail and walking distance to downtown amenities. Most recently, the three-story **Sentinel Building** has been constructed on the former City Hall site and adjoining parcels. This 89-unit, market-rate apartment building includes a 3,000 square foot mixed-use space at the corner of 7th Avenue and Margaret Street. **Suite Living** senior facility opened in 2020 with 18-units of senior assisted living and 14-units of memory care. The facility is located on the site formally occupied by the ISD 622 bus garage. This project was made possible by a \$700,000 environmental remediation grant through Ramsey County.

In addition, **Reflex Medical** expanded their facility and countless new tenants have opened on main street (7th Avenue). Streetscape improvements have occurred along 7th Avenue to the southwest of the study area; similar improvements are anticipated to continue to the northeast within the study area. Additionally, the city updated its comprehensive plan in 2019 and overhauled the zoning ordinance in 2014.



Planning Framework

In addition to being a stand-alone document, this plan builds on the foundation of other local planning efforts and must recognize regulatory constraints. The following are a brief summaries of planning documents that relate to the study area. Goals, priorities, and implementation actions identified later in this document advance each of these earlier plans.



[NORTH ST. PAUL 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN](#)

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan sets city-wide goals and policies and was developed with community feedback in mind.

During the comprehensive planning process, several community cafés were held to gather feedback on the future of downtown North St. Paul. This is what we heard:

- The downtown area needs a variety of business types, including family-friendly restaurants and activities.
- The car show is a beloved staple of the community and should be continued.
- The downtown should be connected by sidewalks and trails to key destinations within the city, like schools, churches, parks, and especially the Gateway Trail.
- A park or activity space is needed downtown.
- Improve and revitalize the downtown with mixed use development.
- More housing is needed downtown within walking distance of businesses.



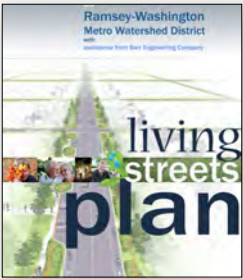
[NORTH ST. PAUL STRATEGIC PLAN](#)

In 2013, the city engaged in a strategic planning effort that developed organizational goals and a clear and strategic direction for the community.



[DESIGN MANUAL – DOWNTOWN NORTH ST. PAUL](#)

The downtown design manual was developed to illustrate portions of the North St. Paul city code to depict the desired built environment within the downtown district. The Manual is used by the Design Review Commission to review projects within the Downtown Mixed-Use district.



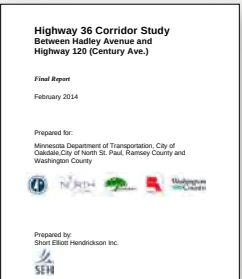
[LIVING STREETS PLAN](#)

The 2011 Living Streets Plan was a partnership between the City of North St. Paul and the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD). This plan details the water-quality issues facing North St. Paul and how they can be alleviated with implementation of stormwater best management practices that are an integral component of living streets.



[7TH AVENUE NORTH ST. PAUL URBAN DESIGN: DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION PLAN](#)

This plan establishes the visual quality and design preferences for the reconstruction of 7th Avenue, from McKnight Road to Division Street. It also includes a segment of Margret Street, extending from the 7th Avenue intersection to the south edge of the bridge going over Highway 36.



[MNDOT HIGHWAY 36 CORRIDOR STUDY](#)

This 2014 study was developed to address safety and mobility issues along Highway 36, with a focus on the segment between Highway 120/Century Avenue and Hadley Avenue, which contains the only remaining at-grade intersections west of I-694.

OTHER PLANS

The 2012 planning effort reviewed the following additional plans, studies, and design guidelines and incorporated into the original redevelopment plan.

- Draft Bicycle and Sidewalk Plan (2011)
- Downtown North Saint Paul Housing Study (2011)
- Commerce Park Redevelopment Plans (2010, 2011, 2011)
- Metropolitan Council 2030 Transportation Policy Plan
- MNDOT Metro District and Statewide 20 Year Highway Investment Plans

CHAPTER 2: EXISTING CONDITIONS



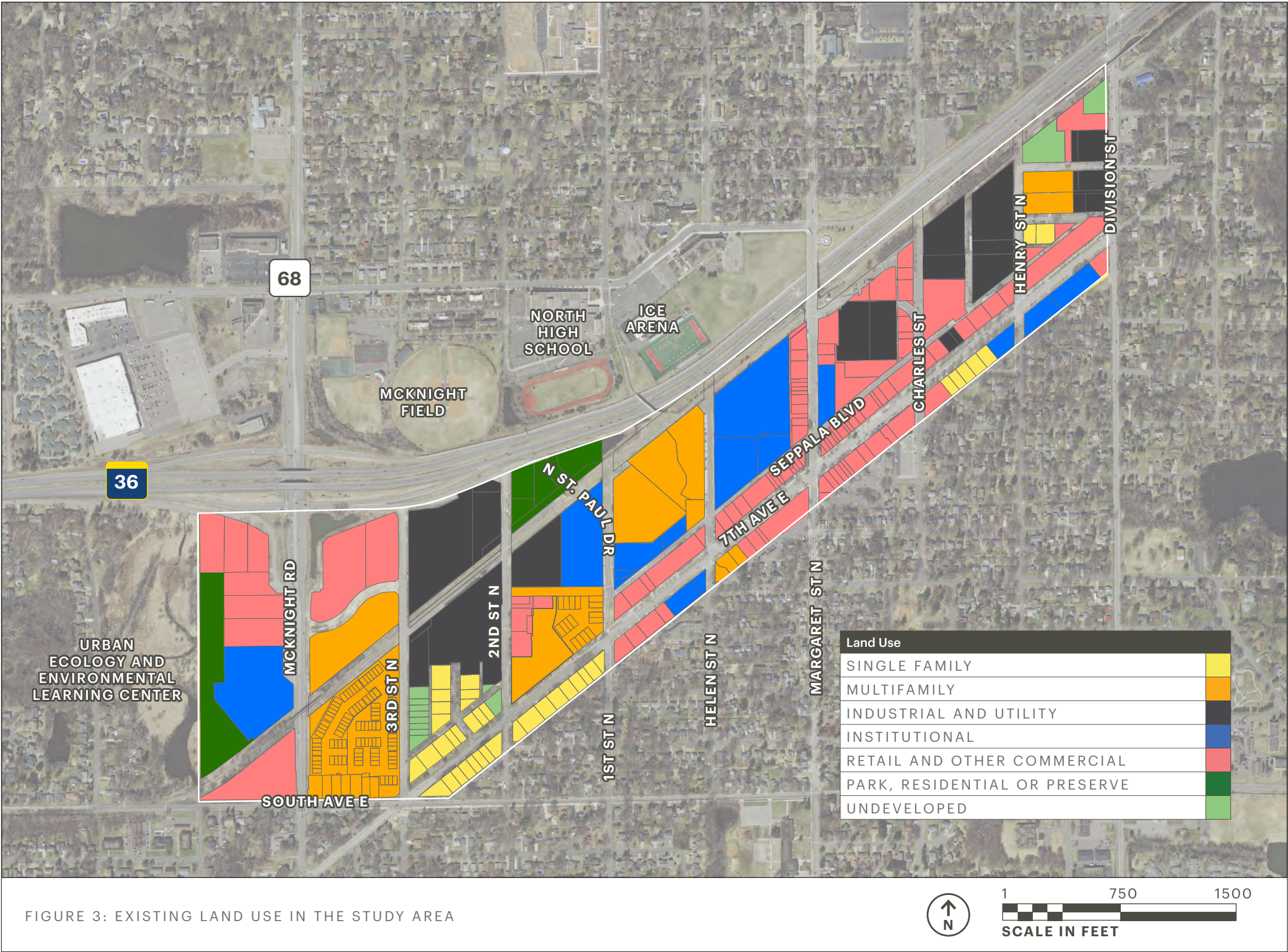
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Land Use

The study area contains a mix of very different land uses, ranging from low to high density residential to a heavy industry asphalt and recycling plant. Some of the mixes work well together, such as offices, retail, and residential, while the combinations of others create significant conflict.

The North St. Paul Urban Ecology Center anchors the west end of the study area. Institutional uses in the area include the school district bus garage, churches, City Hall, the Public Works building, North St. Paul Historical Society, North Star Museum of Boy and Girl Scouting, and the American Legion. Much of the residential is on the south and west end of the study area. Single family home line the east and west ends of 7th Avenue and extends into the neighborhoods to the south. The mix of retail and services in the downtown are a draw for residents in these neighborhoods, particularly.





CIVIC/INSTITUTIONAL



The downtown is the civic center for the City of North St. Paul. Over the past 20+ years, many significant public investments have occurred within the downtown, including a new City Hall and fire and police station along Margaret Street. Other civic uses include a community center at Seppala and North St. Paul Drive, the U.S. Post Office, the North Star Museum of Boy Scouting and Girl Scouting, American Legion, and the North St. Paul Historical Society Museum. North High School lies just north of the study area across Highway 36 and the school district operates bussing from a new facility next to the North St. Paul Urban Ecology Center.

COMMERCIAL



The majority of commercial uses in the study area are situated downtown on 7th Avenue between 1st Street and Division Street as well as Margaret Street between 7th Avenue and Highway 36. Most of the stores are independent retailers, providing a mix of services ranging from restaurant and bars to auto parts and services to antiques. The district has also built up a base of health care providers including medical doctors, physical therapy, dentistry, psychology, and chiropractic professionals. Other professional offices exist throughout the neighborhood, including the newer three-story Gervais Court Building on the south side of 7th Ave at Charles Street. It is also worth noting that Target anchors a retail area northwest of Highway 36 and McKnight interchange.

INDUSTRIAL



Light and heavy industrial uses are situated between Highway 36 and Seppala Boulevard. This area still retains some of the industrial character established by the railroad focused businesses in the late 19th century. The uses vary greatly and include high tech light industrial such as Aetrium semiconductor manufacturing, T.A. Schifsky & Sons’ asphalt and recycling plant, Sheltertech Corporation, Anderson Cabinet, Inc., to Berwald Roofing & Sheet Metal.

RESIDENTIAL

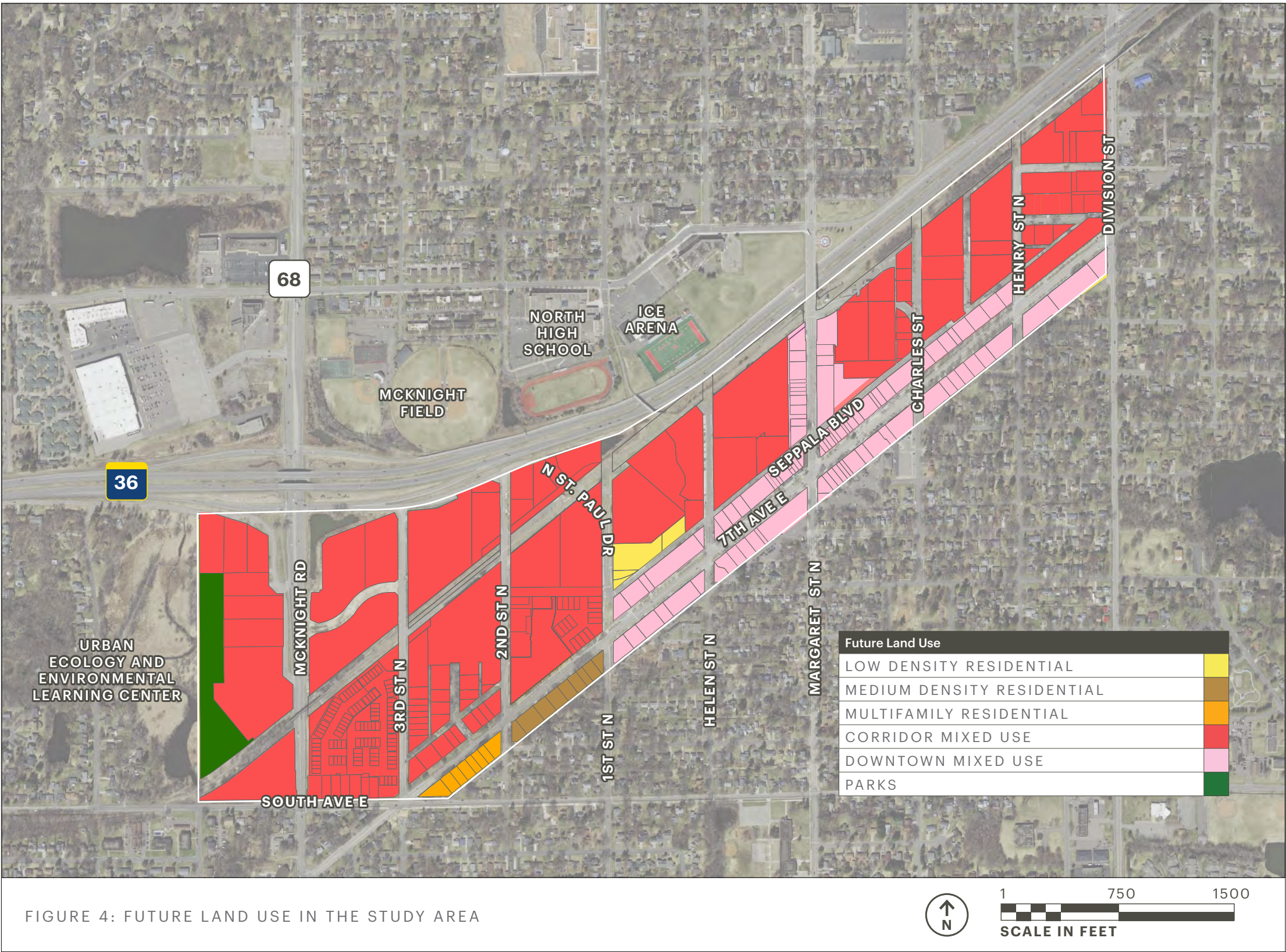


Residential uses are located throughout the study area at a mix of densities and conditions. Older single-family homes exist along South Avenue, portions of 7th Avenue, and in the Commerce Park area. This is also the land use that defines the area immediately south of the study area. As mentioned previously, many new higher density housing developments have been built in the past ten years including Polar Ridge Senior Housing, Anchor View apartments, Gateway at McKnight townhomes, Suite Living senior and memory care, and Sentinel Apartments.

Future Land Use

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan future land use designations in the study area are depicted, right. The intent of each is described as follows.

- Low Density Residential:** Detached single-family, duplexes, and townhomes with a density range of 3 to 5.5 dwelling units per acre.
- Medium Density Residential:** Small-scale attached dwellings with a density range of 6-12 dwelling units per acre.
- Multifamily Residential:** Apartment buildings, condominiums, and other multistory structures with densities ranging from 13-20 dwelling units per acre.
- Corridor Mixed Use:** A combination of retail, housing, offices, live-work spaces, employment activities, and other complementary uses. This district will develop with a minimum of 30 percent residential component throughout the district.
- Downtown Mixed Use:** Development that reflects a small-town, pedestrian-friendly atmosphere. Redevelopment should be consistent with the historic character. Vertical and horizontal mixed use is encouraged and high density residential is appropriate.
- Park:** North St. Paul Urban Ecology Center



Zoning

Zoning in the study area is depicted in Figure 5.

R-1 Single Family Residential is intended for lower-density residential development.

R-2 Mixed Residential is intended for a variety of residential housing types and development.

R-3 Multiple Family Residential is intended for higher density residential development.

MU-1 Downtown Mixed Use is the traditional downtown area. Development in this district shall give due regard to the standards in the Downtown Design Manual. The primary differentiator between the MU-1 and the MU-3 districts is that the MU-3 requires a minimum front yard setback of 25 feet, which creates a more suburban environment than the downtown area where buildings are not required to be setback from the property line.

MU-3 Corridor Mixed Use is intended for retail, housing, offices, studios, live-work space, civic, employment, research, limited industrial and other complementary uses which combine to create a lively environment.

The Downtown Overlay District was established to preserve cultural aspects of the historic commercial area, encourage the harmonious development and appearance of structures and property within the district, and maintain and improve property values of the district and throughout the city.

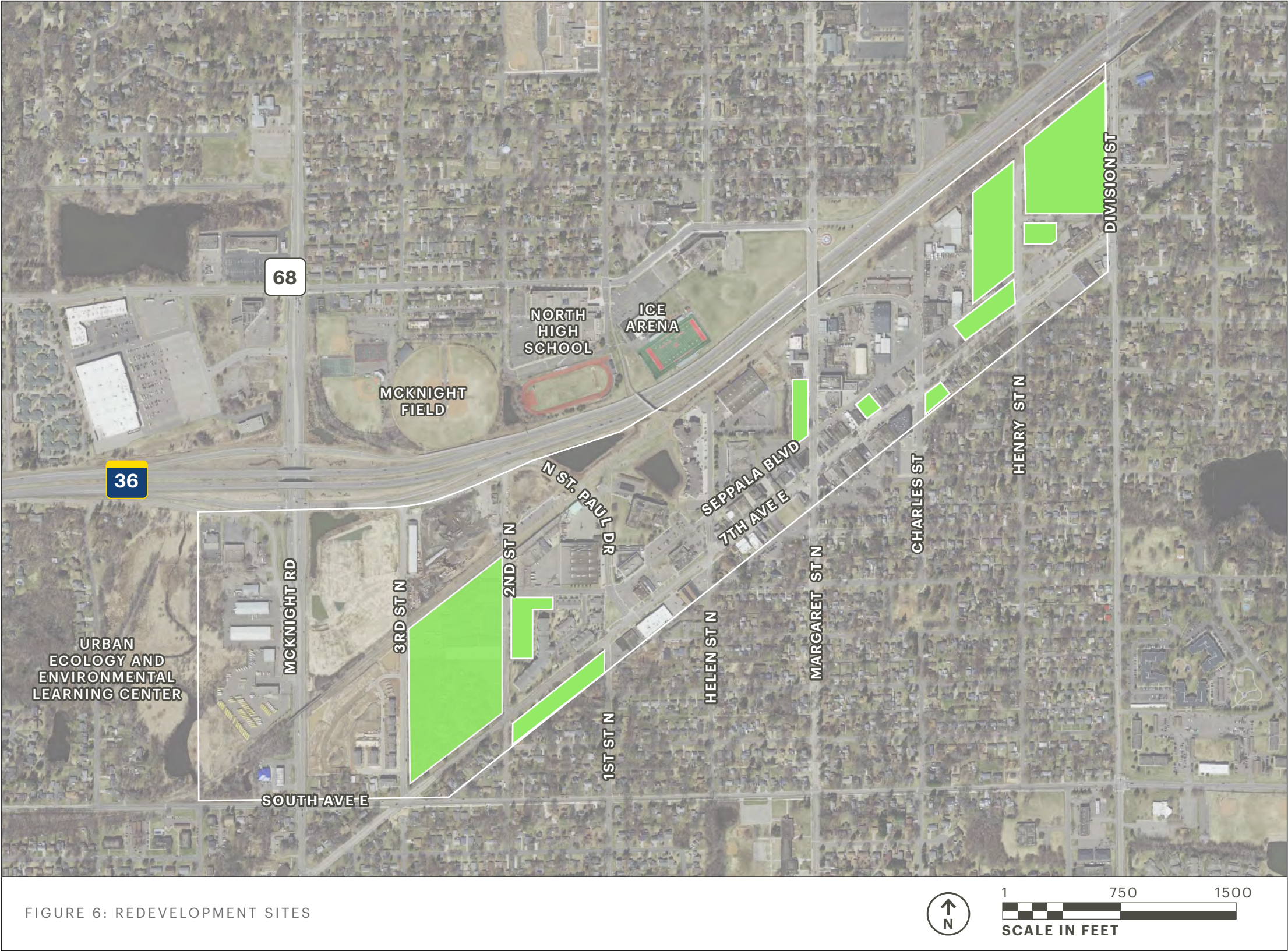


Redevelopment Sites

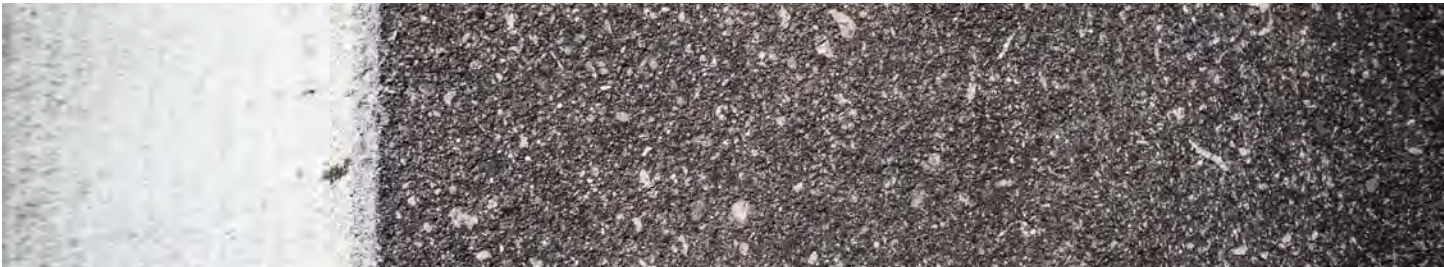
The 2040 Comprehensive Plan identified numerous sites in the study area as “likely to redevelop” based on the following three criteria:

- **Vacant land:** These areas were highlighted by participants in public engagement efforts as needing attention, revitalization, change, or intensification of uses.
- **Underutilized sites:** Some sites were identified as “under-utilized”, meaning that they have an excessive amount of parking that could be used for other uses, or there are vacant portions of a site that could be built out.
- **Areas with redevelopment potential:** These areas were highlighted by participants in public engagement efforts as needing attention, revitalization, change, or intensification of uses.

The redevelopment sites are depicted in **Figure 6**.



Transportation



STREETS AND HIGHWAYS

Highway 36, the northern boundary of the study area, is a regional transportation facility that connects North St. Paul to the northeast metro as well as other suburbs such as Mahtomedi and Stillwater. Most of Highway 36 has been converted to a freeway; however, the eastern portion an expressway where there is an at-grade signalized intersection at Century Avenue.

McKnight Road and Century Avenue are north-south roads that connect the city to Maplewood and Oakdale. Century Avenue is a 2-lane road and McKnight is a minor arterial that transitions from a 4-lane divided roadway in the vicinity of its overpass at Highway 36 down to a 4-lane undivided roadway.

The secondary east-west artery of North St. Paul is 7th Avenue E., which functions as a traditional “Main Street.” Rather than follow the traditional grid along the cardinal directions, 7th Avenue mirrors the old railroad line that used to run through town at a diagonal, which creates some access and connectivity challenges for the area, such as a 3-legged intersection at 7th Avenue/South Avenue E/3rd Street. Seppala Boulevard also runs on a diagonal and is a unique street in that it provides loading and access to many of the buildings that front on 7th Avenue like an alley, but it also functions as a street. Streets continue to follow the north/south grid that defines much of the city, while many of the east/west avenues are halted before reaching 7th Avenue.

In 2020, 7th Avenue underwent reconstruction from 3rd Street N to 1st Street N. Improvements included street reconstruction, concrete curb and gutter, sidewalks, medians, sanitary sewer rehabilitation, water main replacement, storm sewer improvements, street lighting, and street trees and landscaping. Improvements to the Margaret Street and 7th Avenue area were completed in 2021 that included installation of new utilities (sanitary sewer, water main and storm sewer), concrete street surfacing, sidewalks, and a new traffic signal. Landscaping and streetscape amenities (i.e., street lighting, benches, street trees and a variety of plantings) will be installed in 2022.



PUBLIC TRANSIT

Metro Transit serves as the main form of public transit in North St. Paul. Route 64 is an east-west route that connects the study area to downtown St. Paul and the Maplewood Transit Center. Route 219 runs north-south along Division Street. While no direct express options exist from the area, the Metropolitan Council 2030 Transportation Policy Plan anticipates Highway 36 will be a transitway with potential BRT/LRT/Commuter Rail service.



BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN NETWORK

The pedestrian network within the study area is incomplete. Sidewalks are located along both sides of the street on 7th Avenue from 1st Street N. to Henry Street and along Margaret Street. Sidewalk in is recommended in the Living Streets plan to improve pedestrian connectivity in the downtown as well as communitywide.

Limited multiuse trail is located near and connecting to the Gateway State Trail, an 18-mile multiuse trail that begins in St. Paul, connecting Maplewood, North St. Paul, Oakdale, Washington County, and Stillwater. The Gateway Trail follows a former Soo Railroad, as such, it has a generally level grade which makes it an excellent recreational trail as well commuter route for cyclists. The North St. Paul trailhead located on 2nd Street and provides interpretive signage, temporary restrooms, and parking.

Stormwater System

There are issues and opportunities for stormwater management in the study area. There are some areas of historic flooding in the study area. Some of these problems have been partially alleviated through the construction of the Helen Street Pond; however, some localized flood issues remain within the study area.

As the study area redevelops, projects will be required to adhere to Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD) rules. Any site that is one acre or larger shall implement stormwater infiltration, or filtration where infiltration is infeasible, best management practices (BMPs) with treatment volumes equivalent to 1.1” of runoff from new or reconstructed impervious surfaces. This requirement is not unique to the study area and is like other watershed district rules throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Soil conditions and high groundwater tables in the study area make infiltration generally infeasible. For this reason, both surface and subsurface filtration BMPs have typically been favored. In fact, there are several successful installations of both on redeveloped parcels throughout the study area.

To put this in a numeric perspective, redevelopment sites can expect to dedicate at most 15% of the site to a surface filtration BMP, which can cost \$5 to \$7 per cubic foot of BMP volume required. If subsurface filtration BMPs are selected, total construction costs can be expected to range from \$10 to \$15 per cubic foot of BMP volume required and require an underground footprint of 5 to 10%. In industrial, commercial, or multifamily residential projects, there is typically sufficient footprint beneath the parking lot and green space to accommodate subsurface systems.

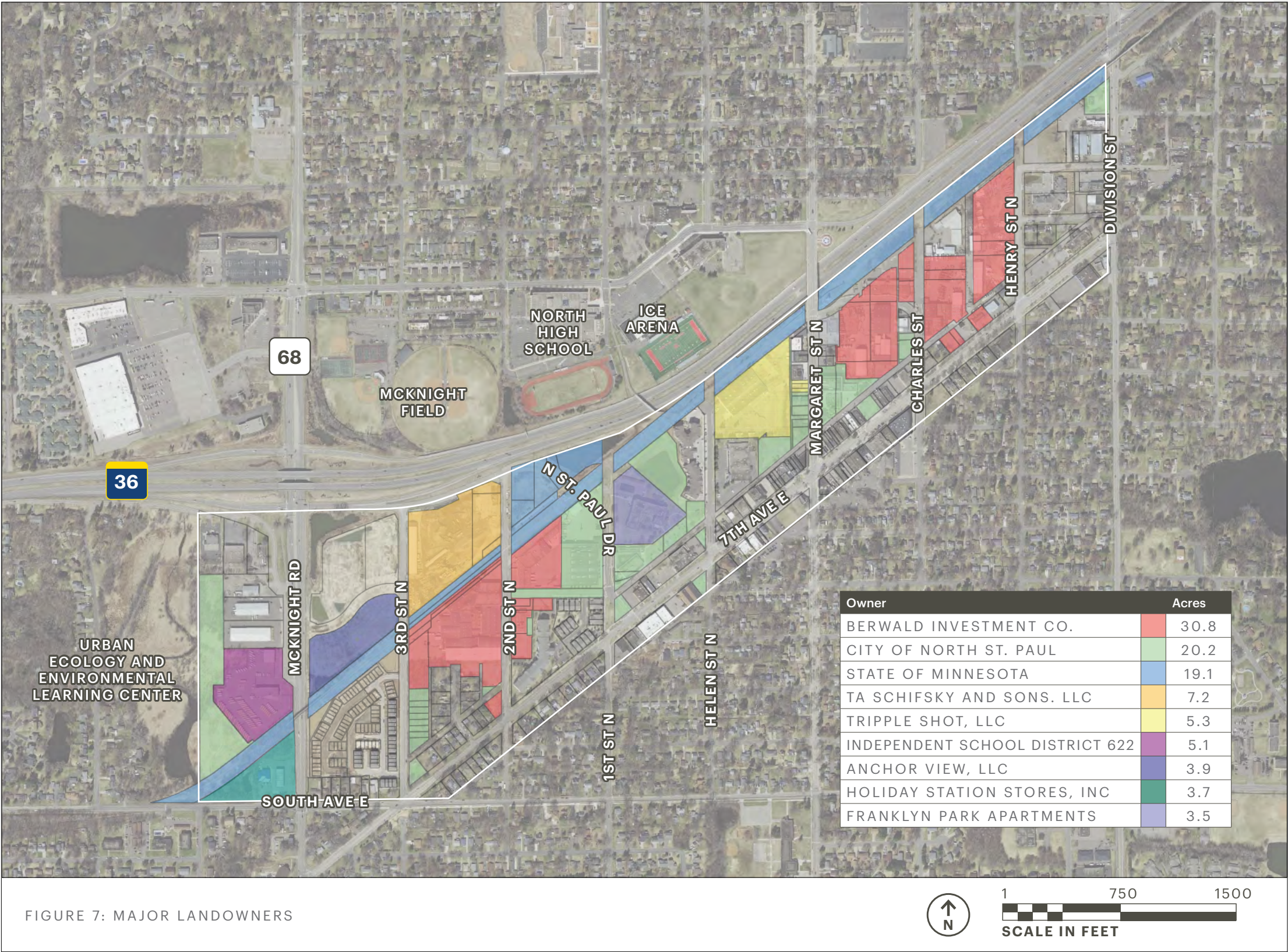
In the decision to select either a surface or subsurface BMP, maintenance costs must also be considered as, like other watershed districts, RWMWD requires operations and maintenance agreements. Surface filtration BMPs are generally more expensive to maintain but require much less frequent maintenance than do subsurface BMPs.

Where storm sewer tie-in grades and the other limiting factors listed previously do not allow for either surface or subsurface infiltration or filtration BMPs, RWMWD provides for an alternative means of compliance through payment into its Stormwater Impact Fund. The current cost is \$75,000 per acre of impervious acre.



Study Area Landowners

Major landowners are depicted in **Figure 7**, to the right. Berwald Investment Company owns the largest share of property within the study area at 30.83 acres. The City of North St. Paul presently holds 20.26 acres, and the State of Minnesota holds 19 acres primarily related to the Gateway State Trail. Most of the larger vacant parcels have been redeveloped since the 2012 plan; those that remain are of a smaller scale (1.5 to less than 1-acre) and scattered throughout the study area.



Market Summary

Demographic Profile

As of 2021, the city’s population was reported to be 11,779 with a median age of 40. The median household income in North St. Paul is \$70,687 and the median home value is \$240,543.

ESRI’s Tapestry market segmentation is a geodemographic system that identifies distinctive markets in the U.S. based on socioeconomic and demographic characteristics. Reflecting the diversity among American neighborhoods, Tapestry includes 67 distinct market segments that are further summarized by 14 life mode groups that share similar demographic characteristics and consumer behavior patterns.

According to ESRI’s Tapestry data, nearly 83 percent of the city’s residents fall within the GenXurban life mode, which is the second-largest tapestry group composed of Gen X married couples and a growing population of retirees. Individuals in this group tend to own their own homes, own 1-2 vehicles, and live and work in the same county.

However, nearly 9 percent of the city’s population falls within the Senior Styles life mode. This group tends to be married empty nesters or singles living alone in single family homes, retirement communities, or apartments. The more affluent of this group travel or relocate to warmer climates while the less affluent are settled and may still be working toward retirement. This group can provide a significant workforce opportunity for the community’s service-based industries that have traditionally been filled by a younger demographic.

The remaining 8 percent of the population are in the Middle Ground life mode. These are the millennials in the middle; they are both married and unmarried, renters and homeowners, and middle/working class. The majority of this group, as with the community, has attended college or attained a college degree.





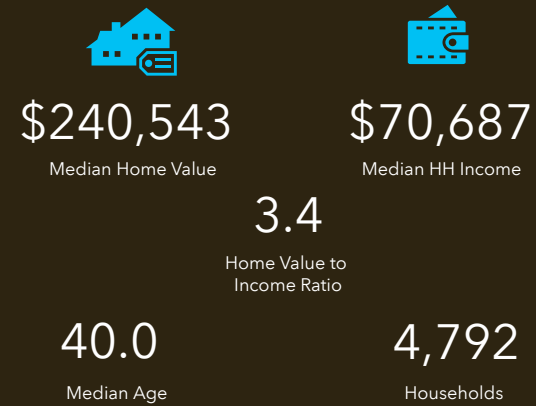
TAPESTRY SEGMENTATION

The Fabric of America's Neighborhoods

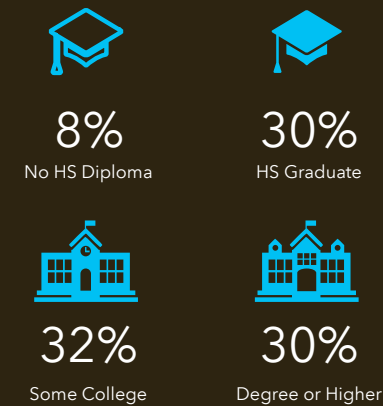
Tapestry LifeMode

	Households	HHs %	% US HHs	Index
learn more...				
Affluent Estates (L1)	0	0.00%	10.00%	0
Upscale Avenues (L2)	0	0.00%	5.55%	0
Uptown Individuals (L3)	0	0.00%	3.58%	0
Family Landscapes (L4)	0	0.00%	7.63%	0
GenXurban (L5)	3,955	82.53%	11.26%	733
Cozy Country Living (L6)	0	0.00%	12.06%	0
Sprouting Explorers (L7)	0	0.00%	7.20%	0
Middle Ground (L8)	404	8.43%	10.79%	78
Senior Styles (L9)	433	9.04%	5.80%	156
Rustic Outposts (L10)	0	0.00%	8.30%	0
Midtown Singles (L11)	0	0.00%	6.16%	0
Hometown (L12)	0	0.00%	6.01%	0
Next Wave (L13)	0	0.00%	3.78%	0
Scholars and Patriots (L14)	0	0.00%	1.61%	0

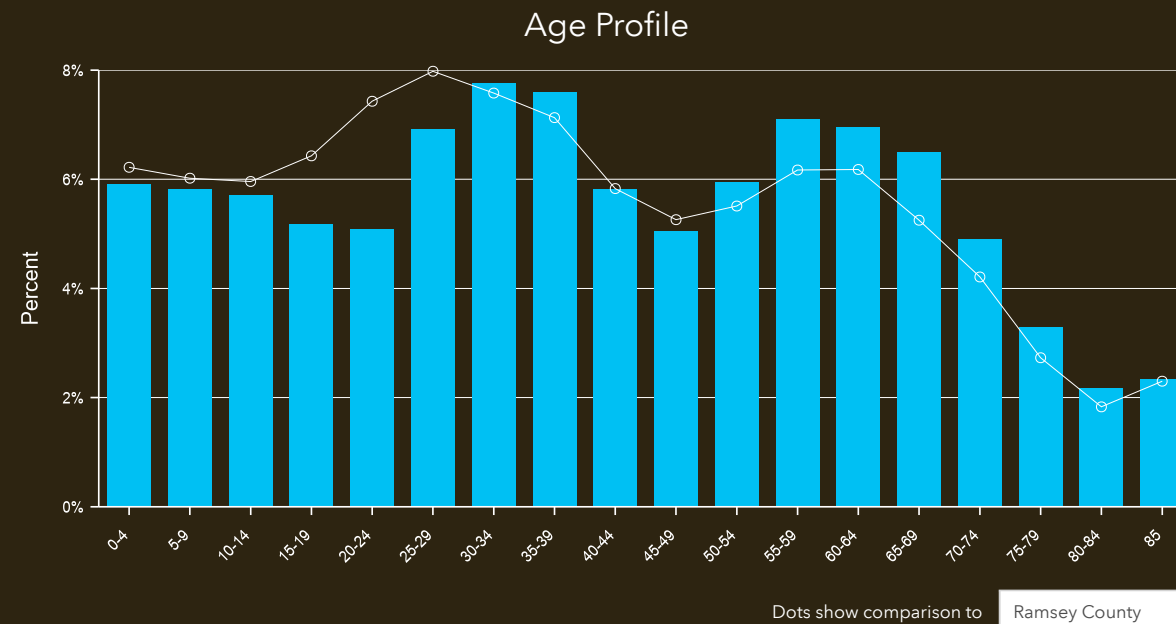
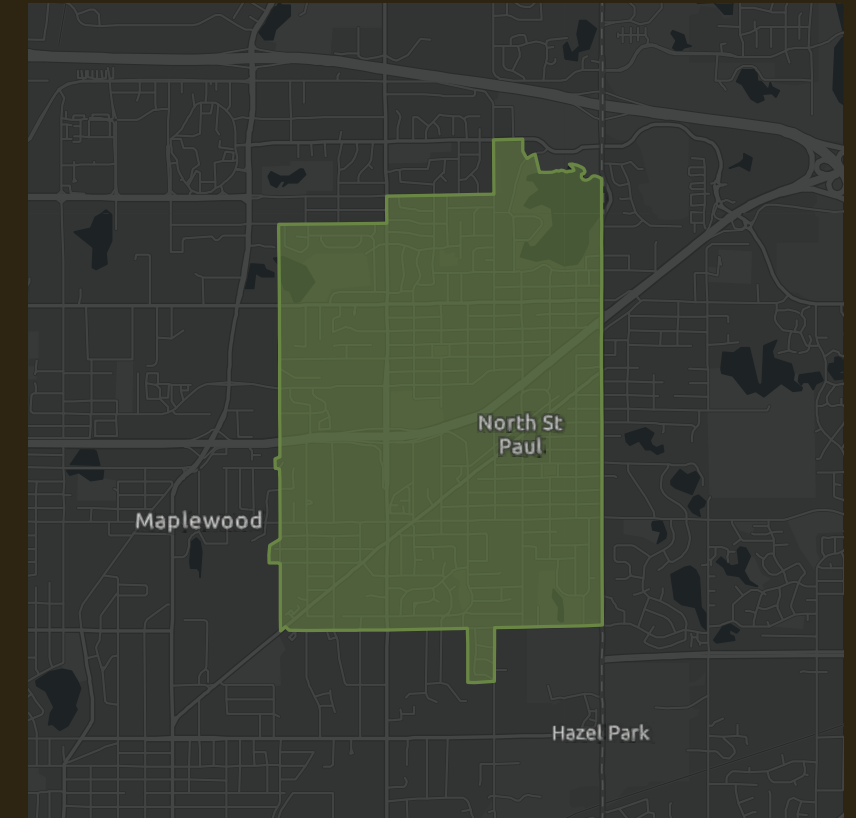
Key Facts



Education



North St. Paul City, MN 3

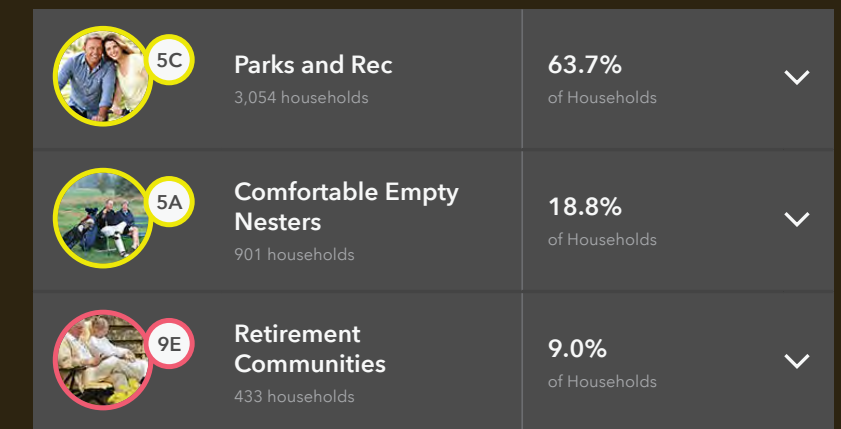


Households By Income

The largest group: \$100,000 - \$149,999 (22.2%)
The smallest group: \$200,000+ (4.8%)

Indicator ▲	Value	Diff
<\$15,000	7.0%	-1.9%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	6.2%	-0.7%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	6.9%	-0.6%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	13.4%	+1.0%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18.9%	+1.4%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	15.1%	+1.1%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	22.2%	+3.5%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	5.5%	-1.9%
\$200,000+	4.8%	-2.0%

Tapestry Segments



This infographic contains data provided by Esri.
The vintage of the data is 2021.

© 2021 Esri



Economic Conditions

In 2021, there were a total of 305 businesses employing 4,423 individuals identified in North St. Paul. These businesses are spread across the following industries with service and retail representing a majority of the businesses in the city.

- Services 43.6%
- Retail 15.1%
- Finance, insurance, real estate 9.8%
- Construction 8.9%
- Unclassified 8.2%
- Government 3.3%
- Agriculture and mining 2.3%
- Manufacturing 3.9%
- Transportation 2.0%
- Communication 0.7%
- Utility 0.7%
- Wholesale trade 1.6%

When considering the economic strength of a community, one tool that is often used is “pull factors.” Pull factors are used to measure the demand of a particular industry within a given area. This demand is determined by dividing gross sales data by population to derive the per-capita sales in the area. This ratio is then divided by the per-capita sales in a broader area, such as the county or state. A pull factor of 1.00 is a perfect balance of trade. Pull factor values greater than 1.00 indicate that local businesses are pulling in trade from beyond the border. A pull factor value less than 1.00 indicates that more trade is being lost than pulled in.

The industry pull factors for North St. Paul are depicted in Table 1. As indicated, North St. Paul is pulling in sales from outside of the city is miscellaneous retail, gas stations, and construction–special trades. These industries coincide with the primary retail businesses in the city being specialty boutique, antique, and booksellers, and key industries in the city have historically been construction-related (i.e., roofing, windows, cabinetry, asphalt, etc.).

North St. Paul Market Pull Factors	2018 Gross Sales			NSP Pull Factor	
	MN	Ramsey Co	North St. Paul	State	County
SIC Industry					
Retail (Misc. Store Retailer)	\$4,824,688,069	\$849,215,980	\$61,999,881	0.44	3.21
Retail (Gas Stations)	\$10,379,984,701	\$673,458,524	\$25,736,754	0.08	1.68
Construction (Special Trades)	\$10,684,742,702	\$1,459,023,642	\$40,795,471	0.13	1.23
Manufacturing (Misc.)	\$8,934,658,086	\$284,872,741	\$5,685,744	0.02	0.88
Repair, Maintenance	\$3,943,432,089	\$302,929,754	\$4,876,378	0.04	0.71
Food Service, Drinking Places	\$10,342,987,720	\$1,184,432,494	\$8,550,507	0.03	0.32
Wholesale (Durable)	\$33,312,971,872	\$1,804,533,423	\$11,276,357	0.01	0.27
Construction (Buildings)	\$6,284,874,959	\$787,622,114	\$4,236,042	0.02	0.24
Religious, Civic, Prof. Organ.	\$905,473,343	\$153,467,422	\$700,288	0.03	0.20
Admin, Support Services	\$7,515,012,415	\$710,439,357	\$3,018,645	0.01	0.19
Professional, Scient, Tech Ser.	\$17,827,032,789	\$1,437,461,140	\$4,250,534	0.01	0.13
Performance Art, Sports	\$668,247,257	\$172,255,740	\$501,800	0.03	0.13
Real Estate	\$1,440,626,878	\$140,443,845	\$279,635	0.01	0.09
Retail (Leisure Goods)	\$2,246,996,581	\$175,370,092	\$316,117	0.00	0.08
Health (Ambulatory Care)	\$9,481,578,709	\$1,262,957,963	\$2,002,249	0.01	0.07
Retail (Nonstore Retailers)	\$7,738,311,175	\$95,066,131	\$143,618	0.00	0.07
Info (Other Services)	\$3,448,922,934	\$608,969,681	\$714,434	0.01	0.05
Personal, Laundry Service	\$2,199,486,190	\$284,522,366	\$133,536	0.00	0.02
Amusement, Gambling	\$2,256,753,940	\$754,315,840	\$210,436	0.00	0.01

Source: MN Department of Revenue

TABLE 1: INDUSTRY PULL FACTORS



Retail Market Potential

Another tool in understanding an area’s economy is the market potential index (MPI). An MPI compares the demand for a specific product or service in an area with the national demand for that product or service. An MPI of 100 represents the US average. An MPI value greater than 100 represents higher demand, and a value of less than 100 represents lower demand.

Table 2 presents a compilation of North St. Paul’s retail market potential. It measures the relative likelihood of the adults or households within 1-mile of downtown to exhibit certain consumer behavior or purchasing patterns compared to the general population in the country. As indicated by MPI, adults within 1-mile of the study area spend more than the average American on the following:

- Apparel
- Books and newspapers
- New and leased vehicles
- Gasoline
- Digital cameras/photos
- Home computers
- Convenience store shopping
- Dining out
- Bars/clubs
- Insurance

The analyzing of the data further indicates that while the residents of North St. Paul are cost conscious, they are also keenly aware of place of manufacture and how it affects purchasing decisions. Presently, eating and drinking establishments make up 5.6 percent of the businesses in North St. Paul. As with retail, there is some market potential for sit-down restaurants in North St. Paul, as indicated in Table 2.

Product/Consumer Behavior	Expected # of Adults	Percentage	MPI
Went to fast food/drive-in restaurant in last 6 months	8,362	89.3	99
Went to family restaurant/steak house in last 6 months	6,879	73.5%	101
Spent \$1-30	663	7.1%	95
Spent \$31-50	895	9.6%	108
Spent \$51-100	1,396	14.9%	103
Spent \$101-200	813	8.7%	97
Spent \$201+	335	3.6%	84
Went to fine dining restaurant last month	1,030	11.0%	115
Spent \$1-100 at fine dining	431	4.6%	118
Spent \$101+ at fine dining	401	4.3%	101

Source: These data are based upon national propensities to use various products and services, applied to local demographic composition. Usage data were collected by MRI-Simmons in a nationally representative survey of U.S. households. Esri forecasts for 2021 and 2026.

TABLE 2: PRODUCT/CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated changes to the retail environment and continues to evolve to meet customer purchasing habits. These changing habits, including greater on-line purchasing, will continue as the demand for easy, flexible online shopping is unlikely to weaken. To ensure growth and stability into the future, the city will need to create a downtown that is appealing for businesses and shoppers alike. This may require regulatory changes or infrastructure improvements to attract people.



OFFICE



As with retail, the COVID-19 has altered the landscape for the market for office space as many workers have shifted to working from home. After growing optimism surrounding the introduction of the COVID vaccine in the spring of 2021, the third quarter was marked with uncertainty as the Delta variant sprouted up in the United States. July 2021 began with fewer than 15,000 new daily cases, but the new surge peaked at over 160,000 cases in September 2021, causing some businesses to delay their return-to-office plans until early 2022. The introduction of the Omicron variant further put these plans in disarray for the return to a more normal environment. However, the percentage of U.S. employees in the office did increase post-Labor Day from 31 to 35 percent by the end of September

The office market is still adjusting to the effects of the pandemic and will see significant changes as companies evaluate their space needs. Some companies have adjusted their work culture to allow or even encourage fulltime work from home schedules, which is decreasing demand for office spaces. This trend is occurring nationwide but can also be observed in North St. Paul.

Some companies are seeking combination manufacturing/warehouse space that includes limited office space. It is anticipated that this type of commercial real estate will see strong growth in the coming years, which may provide a significant opportunity for future tax base growth.

INDUSTRIAL



The U.S. industrial market ended the third quarter of 2021 with record-setting statistics and demand outpacing supply for the third quarter in a row. The third quarter industrial report shows strong performance of the Minneapolis/St. Paul metropolitan statistical area (MSA). The current market for industrial property is very active with a vacancy rate under 6 percent for the MSA. The northeast region, which includes North St. Paul, has a lower vacancy rate of 4.7 percent. These low vacancy rates for space across the metro area, and specifically in the northeast region, will provide significant opportunities for North St. Paul with the development or redevelopment of new industrial space.

While the northeast region is experiencing a low vacancy rate, it is lagging in the construction of new space which has been led by the northwest quadrant of the MSA. The demand and market focus has been predominately on large sites; however, there will still be the opportunity for smaller projects located on redevelopment sites in North St. Paul.

HOUSING TRENDS



According to recent housing data from ESRI, the median home value in North St. Paul is \$240,543 and the home value to income ratio is 3.4. The annual average spent on mortgages in North St. Paul is \$10,453 and the annual average income spent on a mortgage is 14.3 percent. The Housing Affordability Index (HAI) in North St. Paul is presently 155. An HAI above 100 signifies that families earning the median income have enough income to qualify for a mortgage loan on a median-priced home without being cost burdened. These figures signify that the City is in a strong position in terms of housing affordability compared to some of its neighboring communities. Additionally, it would suggest that North St. Paul is a great community for first time homebuyers.

In addition to single-family housing, the city seen the construction of several new multifamily developments in the study area resulting in 335 new units of both senior and standard units. As housing affordability continues to impact the larger metropolitan area, North St. Paul may be able to fill some of that need as the downtown continues to densify, which supports downtown businesses.



CHAPTER 3: VISION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES



NORTH
ST. PAUL

extraordinary

CHAPTER 3: VISION AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Master Plan is dynamic. It is not a set of strict “rules” but instead, a flexible framework that guides decisions about redevelopment. The plan addresses both “public” infrastructure and “private” redevelopment initiatives. It supports and shapes regulations; it accommodates dreams and aspirations; it recognizes reality; it prioritizes projects and ideas; it holds the community accountable; it tells the North St. Paul story; and it communicates what is desired. The plan is a valuable tool that is intended to be embraced and actively used by the community.

The vision for this project is drawn from past comprehensive planning and master planning efforts. It defines what the community seeks to become. It provides a basis and a framework from which the plan and supporting strategic actions can be identified. The vision suggests a way of thinking about possible directions for the community while a set of guiding principles helps establish a path that results in a plan that “fits” North St. Paul.

Guiding principles can be used on an ongoing basis as a yardstick - a primary filter for determining what is appropriate. Together with the vision statement, the guiding principles become the critical tools for ongoing measurement and assessment of initiatives and results.

Vision and Guiding Principles for North St. Paul

WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

- They orient the community to the future, even to a future that is twenty years distant.
- They require imagination, recognizing that the direction it sets will be the reality of the future.
- They look to current conditions and community traditions for clues to the appropriate future.
- They are based on a shared understanding of what the community desires for itself.
- They will be used as tools for evaluation of proposals, projects, ideas, and future directions.
- They will be an anchor during conflict, a way of finding common ground and shared values.
- They become a basis for coordination and cooperation.
- They are a source of energy and enthusiasm for maintaining a commitment to the future of North St. Paul.





Vision

We say North St. Paul is “An extraordinary small town in the cities!”



IDENTITY

We are a town of 3.1 square miles with a six block long Main Street. A small industrial village turned first-ring suburb; we embrace our small-town feel but also recognize we are part of a larger region. With 125 years of history, we are a tight-knit community with bonds to our town, our neighbors, and our shared past. But we are also a town that looks to the future, embracing technology and seeking new ways to capture the next wave of innovation and ingenuity to propel our community forward.



IMAGE

Our community has the appearance and feel of a small town as evident in the architectural character of our main street, our safe and peaceful neighborhoods, our appreciation for parks and open space, and our thriving community events. Although we seek to become more “urban” by investing in progressive infrastructure improvements and more compact development, we will strive to preserve our small-town atmosphere by ensuring that future projects adhere to our design standards and aesthetic character.



ENDURING

We are a town in which quality development contributes to a lasting quality environment. The proper density and mix of development helps build and, more importantly, sustain our public infrastructure system, community facilities, and public spaces. Development projects are planned and constructed in a manner that lasts over time, using quality building materials and innovative site design. Our development is not overly dependent on any single economic sector or type of energy resource so that we endure both physical and economic challenges.



QUALITY OF LIFE

With an abundance of city parks, schools, churches, a quaint downtown district, and peaceful neighborhoods, North St. Paul is a town with a great quality of life. We are connected to a thriving metropolitan region, and we appreciate how this enhances our residents’ access to a diversity of jobs, cultural and recreational opportunities, quality health care, and higher education opportunities. However, looking to the future, it is important for North Saint Paul to offer this same diversity closer to home. We must be forward-thinking about our land use and continue to explore new ways to transform uses that have moved on or that could better contribute to realizing our vision.



Guiding Principles

- Create coordinated and harmonious development of functionally related uses including high density residential, office, commercial, entertainment / recreation, quality industrial and public facilities.
- Redevelopment should endeavor to be cohesive with quality design and minimize adverse effects to neighboring uses.
- Encourage density and provide adequate provisions for open space.
- Develop a diverse transportation network that supports transit, creates strong pedestrian and bicycle connections.
- Enhance and improve the image of the City in Downtown, along the Highway 36 Corridor and within the residential neighborhoods.
- Possess a progressive image for redevelopment while maintaining a sense of the community heritage.
- Consider new forms of housing such as condominiums, senior housing, townhomes, villas and live / work.
- Grow the community's tax base.
- Integrate public art as appropriate throughout the downtown study area.

CHAPTER 4: REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN



NORTH
ST. PAUL

extraordinary

CHAPTER 4: REDEVELOPMENT MASTER PLAN

To create this 2022 Redevelopment Master Plan, the 2009 plan was evaluated and certain policies and directions reaffirmed. This document aims to build on the momentum and success of the earlier plan by articulating a long-term vision and action strategy for areas where redevelopment has not yet occurred. This 2022 plan also builds in flexibility to allow the city to be nimble and responsive in redevelopment projects.

Redevelopment Districts

This 2022 plan is focused on seven redevelopment districts within the study area: McKnight, Schifsky's, Downtown Core, West End Mixed Use, Core Employment, and Commerce Park. These districts are established based on the existing and proposed character of the area, land uses, urban design relationships, and redevelopment objectives. Broad goals and specific implementation projects and activities for each district are described in the pages that follow. They are intended to build on the momentum garnered from recent redevelopment activities in the downtown and to implement the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and other adopted plans. The following is a summary of each district and the goals, strategies, and projects proposed to achieve the vision and guiding principles over the next 10+ years.



McKnight District

The McKnight District is located just south of and highly visible from Highway 36. The east side of the district includes the successful Anchor Block redevelopment projects that includes a new Kwik Trip, Extra Space Storage, Anchor View Apartments, and a new connector road, Anchor Drive.

The west side of this district remains ripe for redevelopment. It is presently characterized by aging commercial buildings that are accessed from Castle Avenue, a frontage road that parallels McKnight Road and curves to follow Highway 36 to the west. The North St. Paul-Maplewood-Oakdale school district bus garage was relocated to this area in 2010 and to the north of that is a mix of commercial and construction uses. The existing urban form is heavily paved with limited landscaping; however, a multiuse trail runs north-south along the west side of McKnight Road that connects to the Gateway State Trail.

The Urban Ecology Center (UEC) lies to the immediate west of this district, which is a former sod farm that has been reclaimed as a 24-acre wetland restoration project. It contains walking trails, test plots for native vegetation, an observation mound for bird watching, and a series of butterfly gardens. It serves as an educational resource for area schools and natural and recreational amenity for residents.



SAMPLE CHARACTER IMAGES



MCKNIGHT DISTRICT GOAL:

Continue the momentum of the Anchor Block redevelopment by leveraging the visibility from Highway 36 and adjacency to the UEC and Gateway Trail.

PROPOSED USES:

Office, mixed-use, live-work, or educational uses.

PLANNED CHARACTER AND DESIGN:

- Buildings 2-5 stories.
- Design sites to be oriented to the street.
- Parking and loading areas located in the rear.
- Underbuilding parking should be encouraged.
- Given visibility and “gateway to the city,” utilize high quality building materials on sites along the perimeter of the district.
- Develop landscaped areas, integrate onsite stormwater, promote depaving where appropriate.

STRATEGIES AND PROJECTS:

Leverage access and visibility of Highway 36 and McKnight Road as well as the adjacency and amenities provided by the Urban Ecology Center and Gateway State Trail.



IMAGE SOURCE: WSB, CASCADE MEADOWS ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER



IMAGE SOURCE: ADOBESTOCK - CHARLESTON, SC

Leverage McKnight’s Locational Advantage:

Redevelopment options for this area can be fairly flexible and may include a combination of office, flex, commercial employment uses, though live-work or upper-level residential may be supported if the market demands it. As redevelopment is proposed, sites should be designed to orient the building to the street with parking and loading facilities in the rear and provide underbuilding parking where possible or necessitated. Buildings should be at least two stories in height, though five stories may be permitted under existing regulations. Promote depaving, develop landscaped areas, and integrate onsite stormwater facilities where possible.

Redevelopment in this area can leverage the adjacency of Urban Ecology Center’s wetland complex and the nearby Gateway State Trail. Partnerships with the UEC, school district, and other agencies may yield the potential for a trade, vocational, or satellite campus specializing in urban development issues or sustainable technologies.

Schifsky's District

The Schifsky's District includes the 7-acre Schifsky site as well as Rotary Park and the main trailhead to the Gateway State Trail to the east. As noted earlier in this report, T.A. Schifsky & Sons is a business with a long history that is deeply rooted in North St. Paul. This business continues to operate at its original location as an industrial use.

Notably, this area is one of the prime redevelopment parcels in the City of North St. Paul given its size and visible location along Highway 36 and adjacency to the downtown. While this plan does not direct this business, or any others in the downtown, to transition or redevelop, this plan considers the potential future for this site.



SAMPLE CHARACTER IMAGES



IMAGE SOURCE: ODELL BREWING CO. - FORT COLLINS, CO.

SCHIFSKY’S DISTRICT GOAL:

Long-term redevelopment of the Schifsky’s site that captures visibility from Highway 36 and adjacency to the Gateway State Trail and proximity to downtown.

PROPOSED USES:

Light industrial, office, or mixed-uses.

CHARACTER AND DESIGN:

- Buildings 2-5 stories.
- Design sites oriented to the street.
- Parking and loaded in the rear.
- Underbuilding parking should be encouraged.
- Connect to Gateway State Trail.
- Develop landscaped areas, integrate onsite stormwater, promote depaving where appropriate.

STRATEGIES AND PROJECTS:

- Work with the property owner on timing of and type of redevelopment activities at the Schifsky’s site.
- Install wayfinding and interpretive maps at Rotary Park.



Long-term Redevelopment

Plan for long-term redevelopment of the Schifsky site but recognize and mitigate any negative impacts on adjacent land uses in the meantime and as surrounding areas redevelop. Depending on the timing and market demand, a variety of reuse opportunities could occur on this site ranging from new light industrial, office, or mixed-use. Any of the “lighter” or “people-focused” uses, such restaurants, retail, or residential would benefit from the adjacent Gateway State Trail. Ultimately, the City will work with the property owner on the timing and type of redevelopment proposals for the Schifsky site.



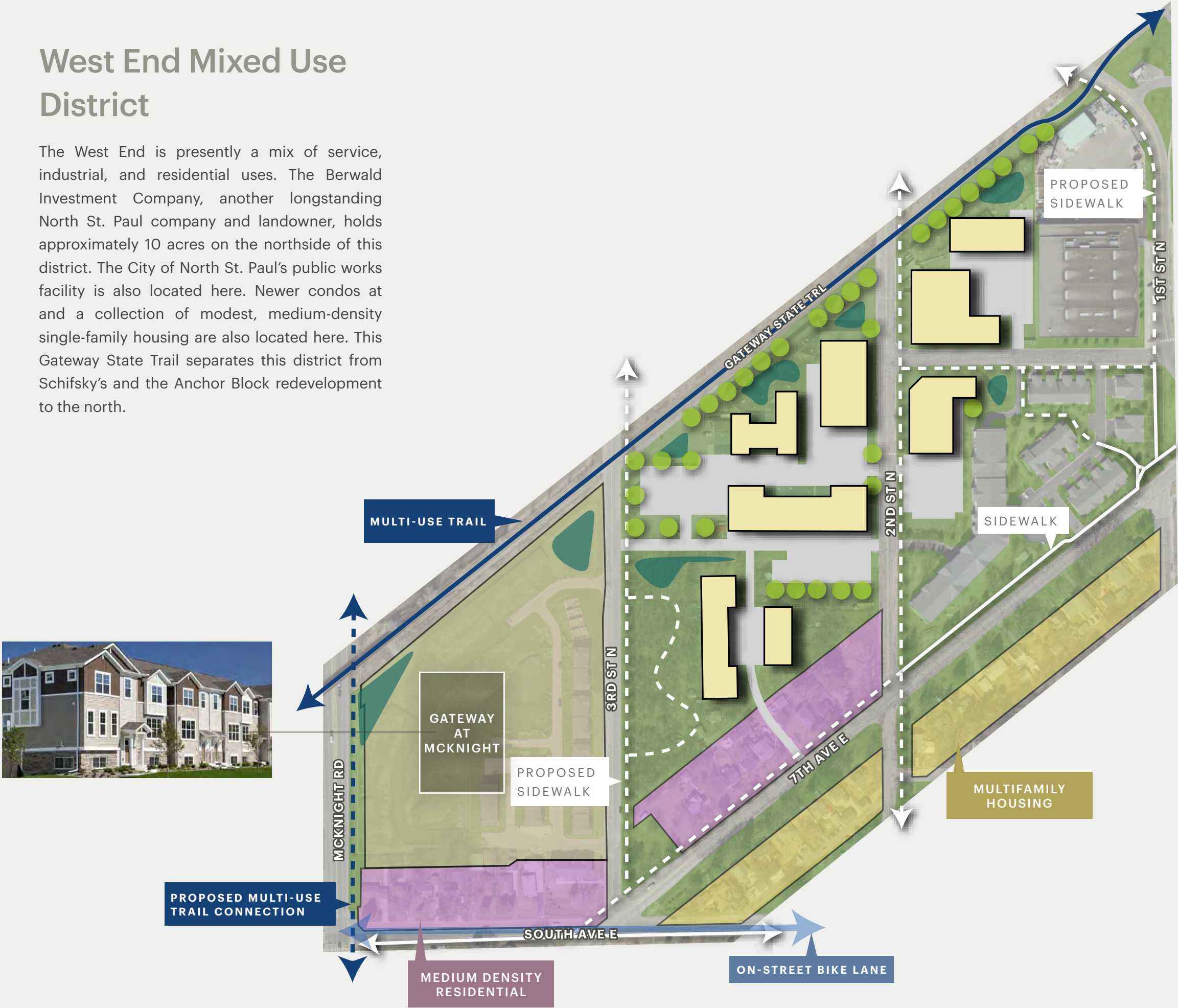
EXISTING ROTARY PARK PAVILIONS

Wayfinding at Rotary Park

This location is a prime portal to the community where increased wayfinding and signage from this facility can direct visitors to the downtown. Recent improvements to Rotary Park have created a more inviting atmosphere, such as construction of open-air shelters, restroom, and bicycle fix-it stations. The addition of art/interpretive signs should be added in the near term as well as wayfinding to direct visitors to the downtown and destination points. (See also wayfinding discussion on page 46).

West End Mixed Use District

The West End is presently a mix of service, industrial, and residential uses. The Berwald Investment Company, another longstanding North St. Paul company and landowner, holds approximately 10 acres on the northside of this district. The City of North St. Paul’s public works facility is also located here. Newer condos at and a collection of modest, medium-density single-family housing are also located here. This Gateway State Trail separates this district from Schifsky’s and the Anchor Block redevelopment to the north.



SAMPLE CHARACTER IMAGES



IMAGE SOURCE: ADOBESTOCK - SUNNYVALE,CA



IMAGE SOURCE: ADOBESTOCK



IMAGE SOURCE: WSB - ROCHESTER, MN

**WEST END MIXED USE DISTRICT
GOAL:**

Promote the West End as a thriving, mixed-use district with housing focused on the south side (i.e., along 7th Avenue) and mixed-use and/or employment uses on the north side of the district.

PROPOSED USES:

Mixed-uses, employment, townhomes, live-work units, and existing single family.

CHARACTER AND SITE DESIGN:

- Buildings 2-5 stories.
- Mixed-use housing should have a strong street presence with parking underbuilding or in the rear.
- Connect to Gateway State Trail.
- Develop landscaped areas, integrate onsite stormwater, promote depaving where feasible.

STRATEGIES AND PROJECTS:

- Focus redevelopment in two “zones” – one mixed-use or employment focused on the north side, and housing/live-work opportunities on the south end.
- Establish a West End passive open space for area residents.



Employment Zone

The Berwald holdings in this district are proposed for employment-focused and/or mixed-use. Presently, impervious surfaces cover nearly 100 percent of the non-residential areas of this District. As this area redevelops, de-paving should be promoted where feasible to support a healthy stormwater system and increase landscaped areas. In the interim, screening incompatible but adjacent uses should be a prime focus if necessary.



Urban Townhomes and Mixed Housing

Per the Comprehensive Plan, the existing single family along 7th Avenue and up Oak Hill Place is pegged for future mixed-use redevelopment. This could occur fully as residential or as a combination of at least 30 percent residential with a commercial uses mixed in.

While the character of existing housing near downtown is in keeping with North St. Paul’s historic, small-town charm, there are opportunities additional townhouses and upscale apartments that may cater to younger demographics and/or those looking for a more “urban” feel. New townhomes could be rental in the early stages of development but could transition to owner occupied units over time; these types of units work well for either rental or owner-occupied units.



Live/Work Housing

Another residential type is the live/work unit, where individual owner-occupied units also function as independent storefronts or shop spaces for start-up businesses. These uses were envisioned in the 2009 plan but have yet to be developed. The zoning within the downtown area is flexible enough for this type of housing unit to occur where the market drives it.

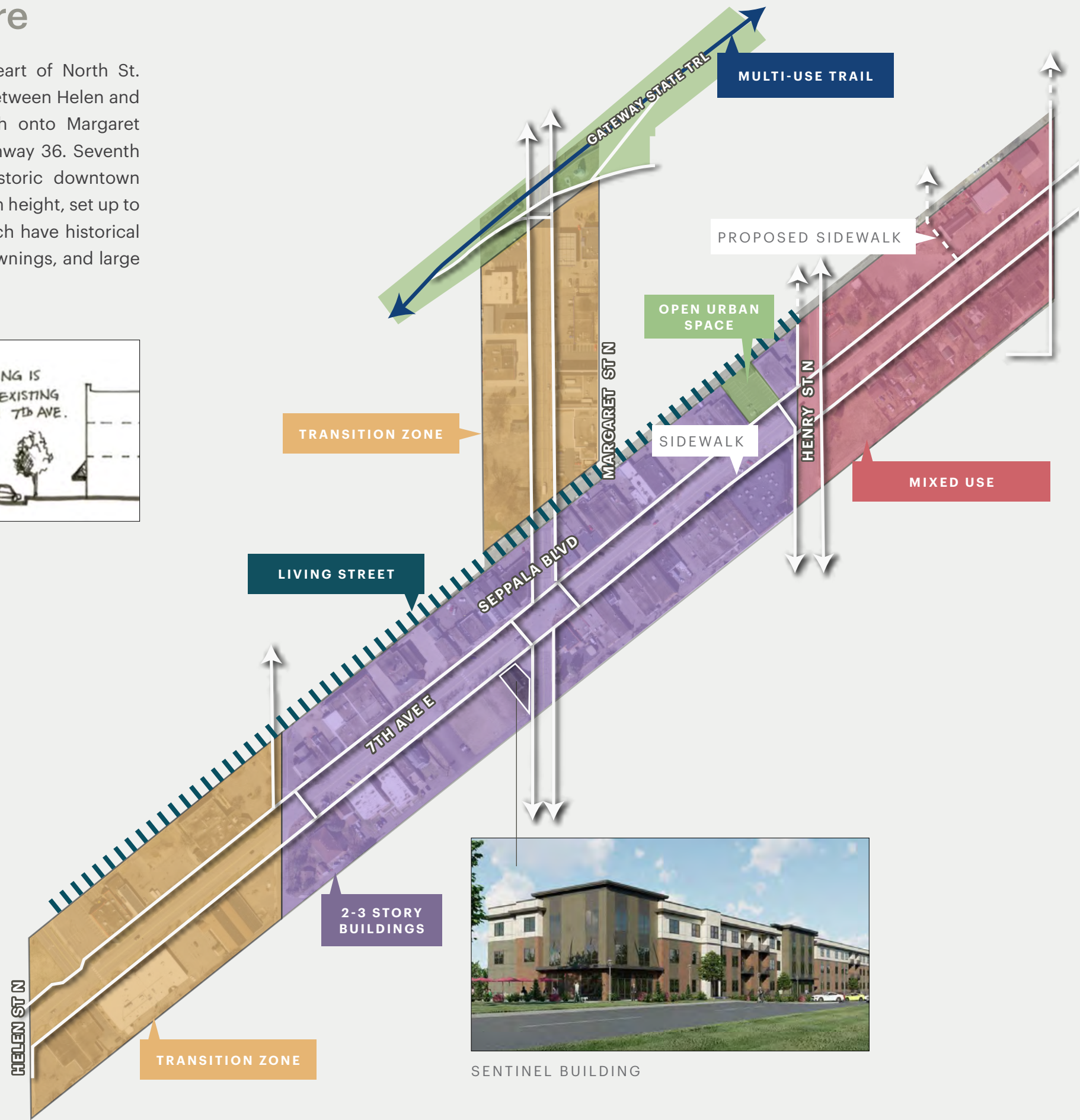
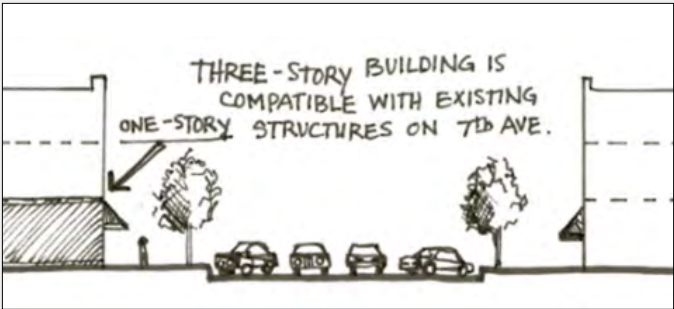


Passive Open Space for Area Residents

Lastly, an approximately 2-acre strip of land abuts 3rd Street on the west side of this district. The site is narrow, sloped, and wooded, which make redevelopment less feasible. A small, minimally developed natural area is proposed that could include walking path connectivity to the townhome residences to the west and the neighborhood to the east. A small, nature-focused playground might be included to provide safe and convenient play place for nearby residents.

Downtown Core

The Downtown Core is the heart of North St. Paul. It lies along 7th Avenue between Helen and Henry Streets and turns north onto Margaret Street from 7th Avenue to Highway 36. Seventh Avenue is North St. Paul's historic downtown where buildings are 1-2 stories in height, set up to the property line, many of which have historical character with brick facades, awnings, and large display windows.



SAMPLE CHARACTER IMAGES



IMAGE SOURCE: YUZHU ZHENG PHOTOGRAPHY



IMAGE SOURCE: OHM ADVISORS, WOOSTER DOWNTOWN PLAN



DOWNTOWN CORE DISTRICT GOAL:

Enhance the historic character and create an inviting, pedestrian-friendly environment where visitors and residents feel encouraged and welcome to linger on the sidewalk, in gathering spaces, or wander in and out of shops.

PROPOSED USES:

- Vertically mixed-use development.
- Residential, commercial, service, civic, community gathering spaces, and potential future parking garage.

CHARACTER AND SITE DESIGN:

- Apply the Downtown Design Manual to facades and streetscape improvements.
- Buildings 2-3 stories.
- Design sites oriented to the street.
- Underbuilding parking is strongly encouraged and may be required based on site specifications.
- Connect to Gateway State Trail.
- Develop landscaped areas, integrate onsite stormwater, promote depaving where appropriate.
- Integrate public art, open spaces, and gathering areas.



EXISTING
CONDITITIONS

Downtown Infill and Built Form

Downtown businesses maintain a competitive advantage by having workers and residents in the immediate surroundings. North St. Paul’s residential population has increased in the past ten years, which will soon reach a critical mass to generate new demand for services, such as restaurants, retail, and personal services. Recent additions to the downtown indicate such demand is already occurring, such as Brother’s Bistro and Mac’s Diner. As the downtown continues to see public and private investment, the city can anticipate developers will jockey for opportunities to create more housing followed by more retail and services.

To capture this growth, the incremental upward expansion of buildings along 7th Avenue is encouraged. New construction should, where feasible, provide housing and offices in upper floors and retail and service spaces reserved for street level. The vertical and horizontal mix of uses in downtown buildings provides for vibrancy that attracts visitors day and night.

To maintain the character and historic image of the downtown, new development should adhere to design standards in the Downtown Design Manual, which may be reviewed and amended. Presently, up to four stories is permitted for new mixed-use buildings per zoning; however, the Downtown Design Manual suggests that three story structures are optimal for downtown North St. Paul when considering the height of existing structures and street and sidewalk widths.

Several vacant sites within the downtown present opportunities for infill development on 7th Avenue and Margaret Street. The City and Economic Development Authority should work with property owners to actively market these sites for redevelopment in addition to vacant buildings and underutilized sites. New construction, infill, and façade renovations should be designed to support a small-town and pedestrian-friendly character while facilitating retail and service business functions. Development of a façade improvement incentive program could be established.

SAMPLE CHARACTER IMAGES



IIMAGE SOURCE: ADOBESTOCK - CASTRO ST.,
MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA



IMAGE SOURCE: GOOGLE STREETVIEW - S. DUBQUE ST.,
IOWA CITY



STRATEGIES AND PROJECTS:

- Redevelopment activities should focus on creating and retaining retail, restaurants, and services that will serve the growing downtown population.
- Encourage incrementally taller buildings to increase residential density and maintain businesses at street level.
- Support infill development that enhances the historic character to ensure it remains the symbolic heart of Downtown North St. Paul.
- Convert Seppala Boulevard to a pedestrian-friendly, multi-functional corridor while maintaining alley and service functions for 7th Avenue businesses.
- Strengthen the connection from the Gateway State Trail to the Downtown Core by improving trailheads.
- Residential developments must have adequate parking to support residents; under building parking is strongly encouraged and may be required based on site specifications.
- Evaluate public parking options and plan for the future development of a public parking garage.



Convert Seppala Boulevard to a Living Street

Buildings on the north side of 7th Avenue back up to Seppala Boulevard, the former Twin City Lines streetcar. The streetscape of Seppala is narrow with a 28-foot right-of-way, as such, it presently has the function and feel of an alleyway. Some businesses have taken advantage of the dual frontage and have opened store fronts on both streets Seppala and 7th Avenue. Additional public and private improvements could be implemented to further activate the street and transform Seppala Boulevard to a pedestrian-friendly, multi-functional and aesthetically pleasing street.

For example:

- Install features that make people feel welcome such as streetlights, special paving, furnishings, bike racks, planters, and murals.
- Encourage businesses to activate outdoor space with patio seating and sidewalk sales.
- Consolidate trash pick-up so businesses do not have individual dumpsters.
- Encourage other building owners to create rear entrances with façade enhancements such as awnings, display windows.
- Incorporate green infrastructure to handle stormwater.
- Create a picnic park on the ¼-acre city-owned property at the northwest corner of Seppala Boulevard and Margaret Street.



IMAGE SOURCE: RJM DESIGN GROUP, FOXFIELD PARK

Downtown Plaza / Urban Open Space

The City owns a vacant property on 7th Avenue (2577-2579 7th Avenue) that is conveniently situated for conversion as a downtown plaza or urban open space. The site is presently utilized as a parking lot, but the area has the potential for greater use, such as a focal point for gatherings. Local art and urban landscaping would create a more welcoming presence to the downtown area. The existing hardscape could be removed to create the feel of a greenway bridging 7th Avenue and Seppala Boulevard.

Three on-street parking spaces presently exist on 7th Avenue facing side of the south side of the property. The vision for the future design of this site would remove the on-street parking and extend the wider sidewalk onto the south side of the street for a pedestrian-friendly and walkable streetscape. The space would further integrate 7th Avenue and Seppala Boulevard by providing another way for pedestrians to move through the downtown.



Gateway Trail Enhancements

Margaret Street provides the most direct connection from the Gateway State Trail to the downtown; however, the existing access to the trail from Margaret Street is lackluster visually and difficult to navigate due to lack of pedestrian connections. Recognizing the significance of the trail as an amenity and connector for the community, functional and aesthetic improvements to the trail access are suggested. A thematic gateway should welcome trail users to North St. Paul and direct them to the restaurants and shops along 7th Avenue and Margaret Street. Entry monimentation or artwork combined with an enhanced streetscape along Margaret Street with broad sidewalks and pedestrian features could lead people directly to the downtown.



Future Garage Parking

As residential density increases and intensification of the Downtown Core occurs, additional parking will be needed. Today, multiple, small surface lots and on-street angled parking on 7th Avenue provide adequate visitor parking for downtown businesses. New residential development is required to provide off-street parking for its residents at a rate of two spaces per dwelling. Adhering to this requirement will be necessary to ensure adequate public parking for those who work and visit the downtown. As a future, long-term solution, a public parking structure with ground floor mixed uses could provide a centralized location for public parking at the core of downtown.

In the short term, existing city-owned surface parking should be reconfigured to improve pedestrian access and safety and to accommodate electric vehicles.

Core Employment Reinvestment District

The core employment reinvestment district is divided into an east and west side that sandwich the Margaret Street. The west side has an office park or campus-feel with the two large structures that are used for academic purposes: Lionsgate Academy and North Metro Flex Academy. At present, the building uses are mismatched to the amount of surface parking on the site. Reevaluation of the building and parking capacities may yield redevelopment or reuse opportunities, or potential shared parking with neighboring uses. The east side of the core employment reinvestment area is presently characterized by industrial buildings and uses, some of which have been expanded over time to create structures that may be challenging for reuse should existing businesses ever decide to relocate. Berwald’s historic brick manufacturing building is also located on the site and has been converted to a multi-tenant office building. Additionally, Berwald’s large outdoor storage area occupies about half of a city block, which presents a prime opportunity for reinvestment.



SAMPLE CHARACTER IMAGES



**CORE EMPLOYMENT
REINVESTMENT GOAL:**

Leverage North St. Paul’s increasingly rare ability to offer light industrial land that is relatively central to the regional work force and highly visible and accessible to Highway 36.

PROPOSED USES:

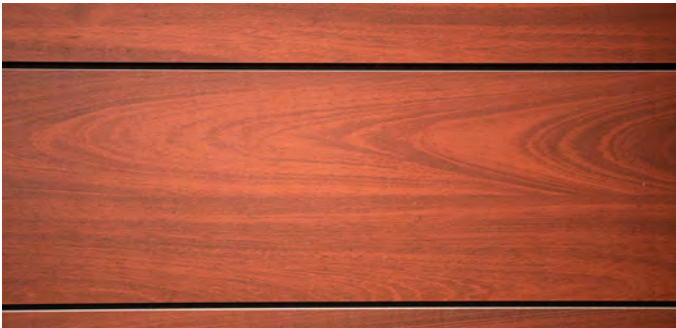
- Light assembly, medical office, professional office, or live-work uses.

CHARACTER AND SITE DESIGN:

- Buildings 2-5 stories.
- Parking and loaded in the rear; underground or building parking should be encouraged.
- Connect to Gateway State Trail.
- Develop landscaped areas, integrate onsite stormwater, promote depaving.

STRATEGIES:

- Reinvigorate this district as Nort St. Paul’s premiere employment district.
- Reinvest and adaptively reuse Berwald Roofing land holdings while working with the property owner on timing and type of redevelopment activities.

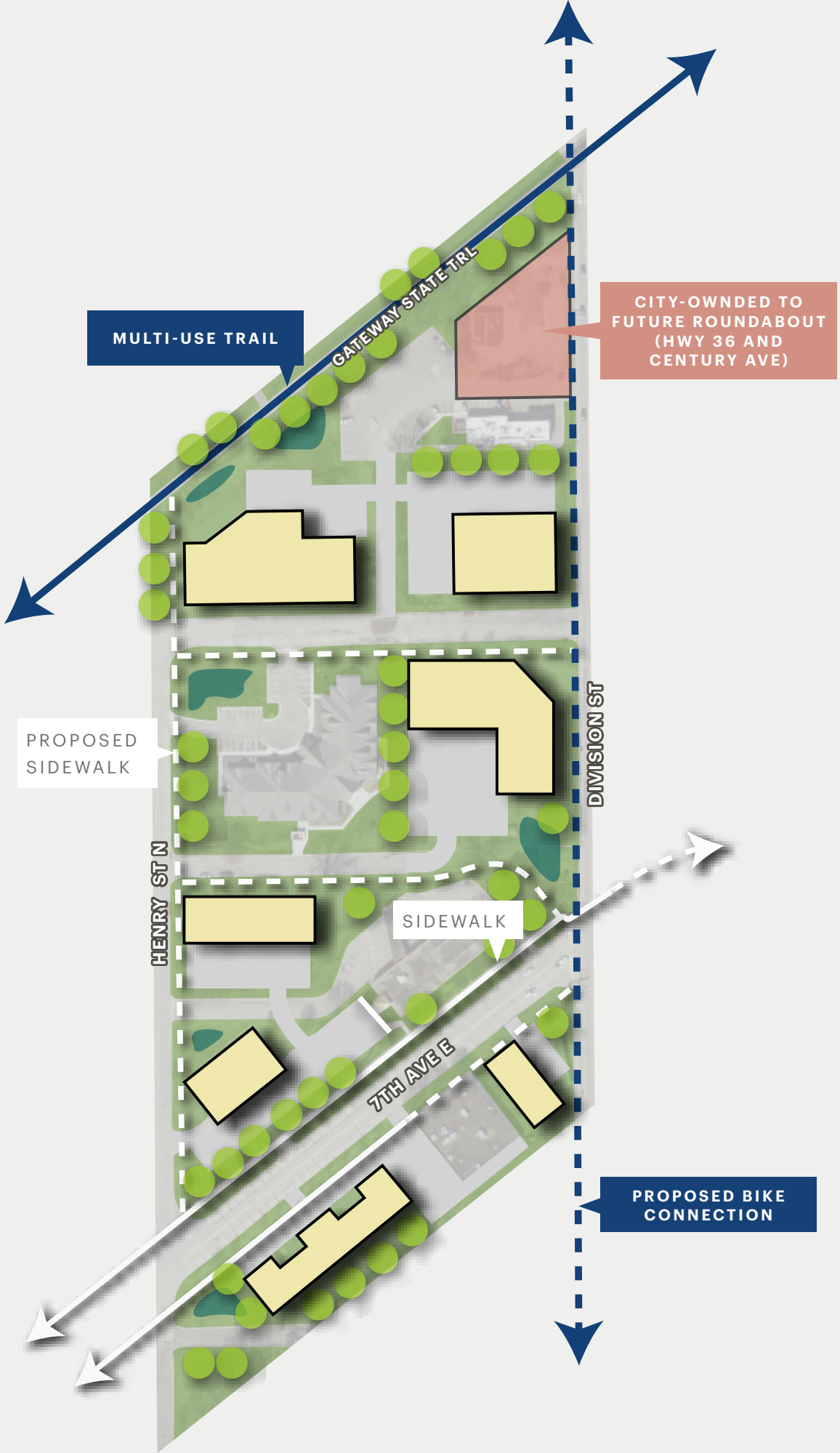


Employment-Focused Reinvestment and Adaptive Reuse

Office, manufacturing spaces, and household-serving businesses are anticipated for the Core Employment District. Office showroom buildings offer relatively small spaces (e.g., 2,000-5,000 sq. ft.) for tenants seeking inexpensive office space. These spaces represent a “higher-end” industrial property with higher levels of finish than other types and would face ample competition from locations in communities such as Oakdale, Shoreview, and Woodbury. Nonetheless, this type of development could be feasible in North St. Paul. Household-serving business that engage in a broad range of industries encompassing legal services, financial services, insurance, real estate, design, and physical and mental health providers, but serve individual consumers rather than corporate clientele. Medical office could also be a focus developed in concert with existing medical offices/clinics in the vicinity.

Commerce Park District

Commerce Park represents both the terminus of the downtown as well as an entry to the City of North St. Paul. As a major gateway for visitors entering from Highway 36, it is essential that this area impart a welcoming entry to the downtown business district. This area is currently characterized by a mix of suburban development, auto-oriented businesses, new multifamily residential, vacant parcels, and two single family homes. This is an area in transition. In addition to the recent construction of senior housing, investments have been made in several businesses, and two sites have been cleared to make way for redevelopment opportunities. Some of the parcels in this district are presently vacant or underutilized.



SAMPLE CHARACTER IMAGES



IMAGE SOURCE: MIOPPORTUNITYZONES.COM



IMAGE SOURCE:



IMAGE SOURCE: FINANCE & COMMERCE

COMMERCE PARK DISTRICT GOAL:

Reposition this district as a contemporary retail and service node.

PROPOSED USES:

- A mix of restaurants, service, office, civic, and multifamily uses.

CHARACTER AND SITE DESIGN:

- Buildings 2-5 stories.
- Design sites oriented to the street.
- Parking and loaded in the rear; underbuilding parking should be encouraged.
- Connect to Gateway State Trail.
- Develop landscaped areas, integrate onsite stormwater, promote depaving.

STRATEGIES AND PROJECTS:

- Redevelop the Commerce Park area with a mix of community-serving commercial, office, multifamily uses.
- Given visibility and “gateway to the city,” utilize high quality building materials on sites along the perimeter of the district.
- Position buildings and sites to take advantage of cycling and pedestrian traffic from the Gateway Trail.
- Work with overlapping and neighboring jurisdictions on projects of shared interest.



Century Avenue as Community Gateway

The functional and aesthetic design Century Avenue are important aspects for redevelopment planning and directing patrons to downtown North St. Paul. Combining multi-modal transportation and transit facilities such as park and rides, bus shelters, and trails should be integral to the future planning for this important corridor.

Aesthetically, these corridors should provide appropriately scaled lighting and pedestrian amenities, balanced with the heavy traffic volumes on the roadway. Intersection crossings must be designed safely with controlled, signalized intersections or round-a-bouts.



Gateway State Trail Connections

The existing owners of the Burger King have expressed interest in repositioning their building to better take advantage of cycling trac along the Gateway Trail, and it should be a priority to integrate all stakeholders in this area as redevelopment occurs. Increased connectivity with the trail at the terminus of Henry Street is also suggested where a potential “lunch-time” park or plaza space could be integrated with redevelopment projects near the trail.

Area-Wide Recommendations

The foundation of this Redevelopment Master Plan lies with creating a downtown and economic environment that realizes the vision: **Identity, Image, Enduring,** and **Quality of Life.**



IMAGE SOURCES: (LEFT) WASHINGTON CLASS STUDIO, RIGHT: WSB, SHAKOPEE MN

Encourage Public Art

One of the many recommendations from the 2009 redevelopment master plan was to create new landmarks and gateways to better signal the arrival into downtown. This plan supports this general idea but expands on it to encourage the creation of public art in North St. Paul. Presently, the City is known for its iconic snowman that sits in the study area next to the Gateway State Trail at Margaret Street. This plan suggests that the City support the newly formed Arts Commission and encourage the creation of public art, especially at key gateway locations within the study area.

With the goal of establishing public art in the downtown, a program could be developed that encourage art projects in publicly accessible spaces, sponsored by the public and private sectors. Such a program could require a financial contribution from public and private developments (e.g., 1% of the construction budget) to be used for onsite for a public art project or pooled to fund a downtown public art grant program.

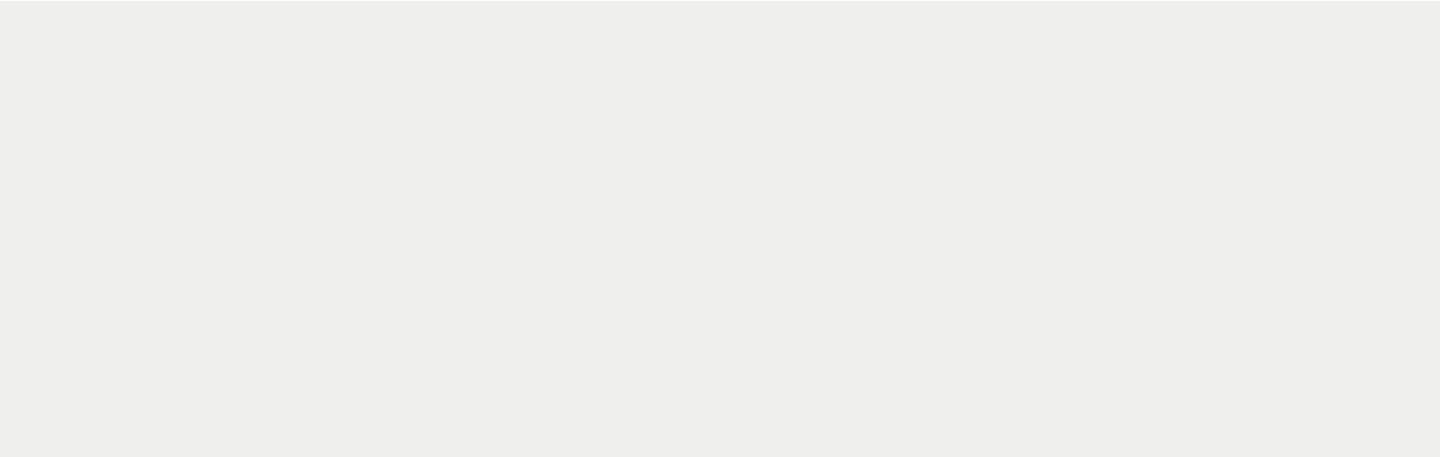


IMAGE SOURCE: WSB, MINNEAPOLIS, MN

Invest in Outdoor Public Realm Enhancements

The 2040 Comprehensive Plan recommends that the City establish and implement a Downtown Improvement Plan that enhances the character of the downtown as a distinctive place that embodies the heritage of the community. This plan suggests several categories of improvements that could feed into or be completed in lieu of a larger planning document.

- Enhance the appearance of streets through boulevard landscaping, careful placement of necessary signs, underground utilities when improvements are made and by providing decorative streetlights.
- Bury utilities when street reconstruction occurs.
- Create public gathering spaces into new development opportunities as they arise.
- Establish an outdoor seating program or regulations for sidewalk cafes.



Continue to Implement the City’s Wayfinding Program

A well-designed and executed wayfinding system will not only eliminate directional guesswork, but it can also encourage those walking or on bikes to explore new areas they were not aware of previously. A professionally planned and designed wayfinding system improves navigation for pedestrians, trail users, and vehicles traveling in and through the downtown. In 2016, North St. Paul developed a city-wide wayfinding plan. Implementation of Phase 1 signage has been installed, however, downtown directional signs, kiosks, monument, and gateway signs have yet to be funded and completed.



Vacate Right-of-Way to Facilitate Parcel Consolidation

Much of the property in the study area was platted before 1900. Property boundaries no longer accurately reflect ownership as land development has occurred over the years which resulted in misalignments of buildings and parcel boundaries. In addition, street patterns have changed which has created dead ends and instances where development encroaches onto former street or alley right-of-way. To assist in land consolidation efforts, the city should consider vacating unused alley and street right-of-way to assist in property consolidation and enhance redevelopment opportunities. Such actions should consider cost and benefits to all parties involved.

Land Acquisition

Land assembly places control of the property in the hands of the City, which can remove red tape and enhance the potential for redevelopment. The City will consider land acquisition at key locations as opportunities arise, such as through direct purchase or through tax auction.

Transportation Plan

A key transportation goal for this Redevelopment Master Plan is to increase opportunities for bicycling and walking to and through the downtown and reduce vehicular demand on city streets for local trips. This plan also integrates planned transportation improvements as detailed in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan, the 7th Avenue Urban Design Plan, Living Streets Plan, MnDOT’s Highway 36 and Highway 120 Corridor Studies.

MAP OF VEHICULAR NETWORK



Highway 36 and Century Avenue Interchange

MnDOT is studying the transition to an at-grade intersection at Highway 36 and Century Avenue in North St. Paul. The configuration and timing of the future interchange is yet to be determined; however, the City has acquired a 0.6-acre parcel at the southwest corner of the intersection in anticipation of future right-of-way needs.

This City should partner with MnDOT, neighboring City of Oakdale, and the Ramsey and Washington County Transportation Departments on the timing, funding, and preferred configuration of this interchange.

In addition to improvements to Century Avenue/ Highway 120, MnDOT is partnering with Metro Transit on options to establish arterial bus rapid transit (aBRT) on this corridor in the future.

7th Avenue and Margaret Reconstruction

North St. Paul has been implementing the 7th Avenue Urban Design Plan in recent years to improve the streetscape and extend the life of the pavement of 7th Avenue. The new construction and design have enhanced the functional and aesthetic character of the road or facility. As part of this project, the City will construct a roundabout at the 7th Avenue, South Avenue, and 3rd Street intersection. Two options have been proposed for the design of which require varying levels of right-of-way acquisition. The City should work to acquire property within the footprint of the proposed roundabouts, where possible.

In addition to improving traffic flow and safety, roundabouts provide an additional opportunity for art and gateway features to announce the arrival to North St. Paul or the downtown.

Sidewalks and Trails

Establishing a walkable downtown with bike-friendly amenities is a high priority for the City. This plan proposes multimodal trails on the east side of McKnight Road and west side of Century Avenue to connect to regional trails and implement the Living Streets and Comprehensive Plans. This plan also promotes that all sidewalks are continuous in the downtown. Sidewalk gaps should be filled where possible when reconstruction occurs. Sidewalk infill is planned as 7th Avenue and Margaret Street is reconstructed through the downtown, sidewalks.



IMAGE SOURCE: WSB, MONTICELLO, MN



IMAGE SOURCE: PINTEREST, LIFFORD, SCOTLAND

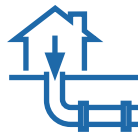
STRATEGIES AND PROJECTS:

- Improve bike and pedestrian connections to and through the study area.
- Continue 7th Avenue and Margaret Street reconstruction.
- Construct a five-point roundabout at 7th Avenue, South Avenue, and 3rd Street.
- Interchange, streetscape improvements, and trail connections at Highway 36 and Century Avenue.

Infrastructure

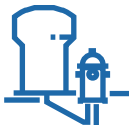
Infrastructure goals for this Redevelopment Master Plan consider recent system plans and studies completed for the city and build on recommendations of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan.

SANITARY SEWER



The sanitary sewer system was evaluated during the 2040 Comprehensive Plan process. The downstream 18-inch, 21-inch, and 24-inch trunk sewer mains have sufficient residual capacity to convey wastewater within this Redevelopment Master Plan study area; however, wastewater flows vary annually and seasonally depending on climate conditions and customer water use. To account for such fluctuations, an evaluation of the residual capacity of the sewer trunks should be completed to prior to any new development or redevelopment activities. Such evaluations should include flow monitoring or infiltration and inflow (I/I) assessments to verify sewer age and condition.

WATER SYSTEM



A Water Storage Siting Study was completed in 2020 found that the City has inadequate water storage capacity compared to industry-standard recommended storage volumes. Storage capacity was calculated using the City’s water consumption data and available fire flow of 3,500 gallon per minute for 3 hours (540,000 gallons). Under normal operating conditions, the City’s ample well supply capacity can compensate the minimal storage capacity. However, the existing wells may be unable to meet water demands and maintain adequate storage if an emergency were to occur (large fire, severe drought, large watermain break, etc.). Therefore, it is recommended to increase the City’s water storage capacity as soon as possible to meet industry-standard recommended storage volumes.

Some areas near along 7th Avenue E. have inadequate available fire flow capacity. Fire flow requirements were based on the International Building Code (IBC), upon which the Minnesota State Plumbing Code is based. Water demands can vary significantly depending upon climate conditions and customer water usage patterns. For that reason, a detailed evaluation of the water demands, and condition of existing water mains should be completed prior to any new development or redevelopment activities.

STORMWATER SYSTEM



There are areas of historic flooding in the study area. Some of these problems have partially been alleviated through the construction of a pond at Helen Street; however, some localized flood issues remain within the study area. As the study area redevelops, projects will be required to adhere to Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD) rules. Any site that is one acre or larger is required to implement stormwater infiltration, or filtration where infiltration is infeasible, best management practices (BMPs) with treatment volumes equivalent to 1.1” of runoff from new or reconstructed impervious surfaces. This requirement is not unique to the study area and is like other watershed district rules throughout the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Soil conditions and high groundwater tables in the study area make infiltration generally infeasible. For this reason, both surface and subsurface filtration BMPs have typically been favored. In fact, there are several successful installations of both on redeveloped parcels throughout the study area. To put this in a numeric perspective, redevelopment sites can expect to dedicate at most 15% of the site to a surface filtration BMP,

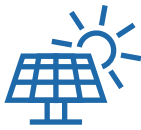
which can cost \$5 to \$7 per cubic foot of BMP volume required. If subsurface filtration BMPs are selected, total construction costs can be expected to range from \$10 to \$15 per cubic foot of BMP volume required and require an underground footprint of 5 to 10%. In industrial, commercial, or multifamily residential projects, there is typically sufficient footprint beneath the parking lot and green space to accommodate subsurface systems.

In the decision to select either a surface or subsurface BMP, maintenance costs must also be considered as, like other watershed districts, RWMWD requires operations and maintenance agreements. Surface filtration BMPs are generally more expensive to maintain but require much less frequent maintenance than do subsurface BMPs. Where storm sewer tie-in grades and the other limiting factors listed previously do not allow for either surface or subsurface infiltration or filtration BMPs, RWMWD provides for an alternative means of compliance through payment into its Stormwater Impact Fund. The current cost is \$75,000 per acre of impervious acre.

Energy

This Redevelopment Master Plan considers how redevelopment actions can minimize energy consumption and maximize efficiency. The following are some options for energy conservation.

SOLAR POWER



Where possible, new development should orient buildings to take advantage of solar heat gain and look to incorporate solar hot water heating and photovoltaic (PV) panels for additional energy generation. Existing buildings with nearly flat roofs should evaluate installing a rooftop solar array with any roof replacement. If bi-facial PV solar panels are used, roofing material with a high albedo value should be considered. Low heating water accounts for roughly 10 percent of the energy needs for a typical home, and solar energy can satisfy a significant portion of the energy demand in the district. If on-site PV solar is not feasible, off-site solar subscriptions or credits can be considered.



GEOTHERMAL



An additional opportunity to integrate sustainable energy production in the district comes from the use of geothermal heating and cooling technologies. Geothermal heating and cooling coils could be installed below surface parking lots in a horizontal application and where space is limited, vertical wells could be drilled to achieve the same effects.

COLD CLIMATE AIR-SOURCE HEAT PUMPS



Cold-climate heat pumps (CCHPs) are the latest evolution in efficient air-source heat pump design. Thanks to an inverter—or variable speed drive—compressor design, these heat pumps achieve high levels of efficiency even during the winter season. And just like other heat pumps, a CCHP doubles as a cooling system during the summer season.

ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EV)



Demand for electric vehicles (EV) is increasing as fuel costs rise and the impacts of carbon dioxide emissions on climate change continue to be a grave concern. More and more electric vehicles are on the roads now than ever and the demand is only projected to rise in the coming years. The City has demonstrated leadership and a strong desire to provide public electric vehicle options in the City. For example, in addition to resurfacing, updates to the municipal lot south of 7th Avenue include plans to install EV charging stations. In addition to public options, the City should consider policy or regulatory requirements for the installation of EV charging stations for private development projects.

The City should evaluate three factors to provide effective EV charging opportunities throughout the redevelopment area:

- Funding sources and grant opportunities for the purchase of EV charging stations.
- Determine appropriate standards for EV charging station location and consider regulations that would require the instillation of EV charging stations with redevelopment.
- Consider third-party payment systems to allow for EV charging stations to function likely may urban semi-automated parking meter systems.



CHAPTER 5: IMPLEMENTATION



NORTH
ST. PAUL

extraordinary

CHAPTER 5: IMPLEMENTATION

This Redevelopment Master Plan is not intended to be static, but rather a living document that can evolve as priorities shift based opportunities, private redevelopment projects, and on funding availabilities. The plan should be monitored and updated from time to time to respond to changing conditions.

Roles and Responsibilities

No one entity has the sole authority or resources to carry out this plan. Implementation will require partnership and action by multiple agencies, each with shared or individual interests in enhancing downtown North St. Paul. The following is a list and brief description of the known actors in North St. Paul. In addition to these groups, other agencies will also have a role in fulfilling the vision of this document.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (EDA)

The EDA will take a prominent role in business recruitment and retention and promoting the downtown to developers. It will work hand in hand with the City on private redevelopment projects.

- Work to ensure that economic development initiatives within North St. Paul are a recognized priority for City Council members.
- Actively pursue critical properties for redevelopment or educating business owners on improvement or reinvestment programs with low interest loans should be continued and expanded roles for the EDA.
- Create an annual redevelopment “action plan” to monitor progress toward implementation. This action plan would outline key steps to occur during the year, including descriptions of actions, responsible parties, and funding resources. It forces the parties to not only

consider what needs to be done in the coming year, but also why identified steps were not taken in the prior year.

- Work with business owners and landlords to promote and help finance the maintenance and revitalization of downtown businesses and buildings in the downtown core.
- Host annual developer roundtables or site tours showcasing the potential of North St. Paul sites to perspective developers.
- Provide guidance to the City to ensure that proposed development projects and public improvements are consistent with the plan.
- Continue to find the appropriate funding options for various redevelopment projects.
- Collaborate with private brokers marketing North St. Paul sites and leverage marketing efforts.





CITY OF NORTH ST. PAUL

The City Council will be a key decision-maker in programs and projects within the study area. The Council is the authority that sets city budgets, prioritizes projects, and approves development projects. In addition, the City of North St. Paul hosts several commissions that shape the community. Each of the following will likely have a role in implementing this Redevelopment Master Plan based on their role and functions: Planning Commission, Environmental Advisory Commission, Parks & Recreation Commission, Arts & Culture Commission, and Housing & Redevelopment Authority.

In addition to the City’s elected and appointed officials, City staff will play an integral role in advancing projects. Community development, public works, finance, and engineering staff will be responsible for:

- Assist with application of land use controls and redevelopment guidelines to shepherd private development.
- Review of development plans and proposals.
- Coordination of planning for capital improvements needed to facilitate redevelopment.
- Creation of financial plans for public redevelopment investments and continued monitoring.
- Lead the design of public infrastructure improvements needed to support redevelopment including necessary utility and roadway improvements.
- Coordinate with state, county, and other agencies on project coordination and permitting.



OTHER PARTNERS

Other partners within or involved with the study area can be tapped to finance projects or move them through regulatory processes. For example, state of Minnesota and Ramsey and Washington Counties will be key partners in transportation and other multijurisdictional efforts. Other key partners include businesses and property owners as many of the revitalization priorities described in this plan will occur on private property, thus collaboration with these entities will be paramount to reinvestment in the study area.



Policy and Regulatory Framework

The City of North St. Paul recently adopted its 2040 Comprehensive Plan and updated its zoning ordinance shortly thereafter. As of early 2022, the sign ordinance was in the process of being updated by the City and is anticipated to be completed later in the year. Thus, the planning and regulatory framework are fairly current and do not require significant modifications to implement this plan. Rather, this plan assists in realizing the policy goals of the Comprehensive Plan and the zoning ordinance offers an appropriate level of regulation and flexibility to implement this Redevelopment Master Plan.

As described previously, the Downtown Design Manual was developed to communicate design ideals for the downtown. While much of the document is still relevant, the zoning and sign ordinance updates do not conform to some provisions of the design manual. To ensure consistency between policy, guidelines, and regulation, an update to the Downtown Design Manual is recommended.

Programming

SOLICITATION OF PROPOSALS

The city may establish a request for proposal (RFP) process to identify private development partners for a redevelopment project or site. The RFP allows the city to explain its objectives and to find the developer best suited to bring the segments of the design framework to fruition in this area. The steps in the RFP process include:

- Prepare and distribute RFP
- Select preferred development partner
- Negotiate preliminary development agreement.
- Approve final development agreement by EDA.
- Planning review and approval process



Funding

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (CIP)

The capital improvements plan is a fiscal planning tool for public infrastructure projects. North St. Paul’s CIP is a prioritized list of public improvements to be constructed over a seven-year period. Projects such as 7th Avenue reconstruction and Seppala conversion are candidates for the CIP.

SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICTS

[Chapter 428A, Minn. Stats.](#), authorizes cities to establish Special Service Districts (SSD), which are special taxing districts where revenue may be used to support services and improvements in commercial areas. The general statutory authority contains few limits on the potential uses of SSDs; however, funds cannot be used to finance services that the City provides through the general fund unless the services are provided at a higher level.

PARKLAND DEDICATION FEE

As authorized by [462.358, Minn. Stats.](#), the City of North St. Paul collects parkland dedication fees for residential and nonresidential developments. The 2022 rate is \$900 per residential lot and \$2,795 per acre for nonresidential development.

SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT UTILITY FEE

As authorized by [444.075, Minn. Stats.](#), the City of North St. Paul collects a surface water management utility fee for all properties in the city that contribute surface water to the storm sewer system. The 2022 rate is \$10.88 per residential unit and \$10.88 multiplied by the percent of impervious site coverage for multifamily, commercial, and public properties.

CLEAN WATER, LAND AND LEGACY AMENDMENT

The Legacy Amendment was approved in 2008 by the Minnesota voters. The amendment to the Minnesota Constitution, dedicates funds to help maintain clean water, wildlife habitat, arts and cultural heritage, and parks and trails. Money comes from the state sales tax and is distributed into four funds: 33% to clean water, 33% to outdoor heritage, 19.75% to arts and cultural heritage, and 14.25% to parks and trails.

GRANTS AND TAX INCENTIVES

The [Metropolitan Council](#) administers grant funding through the Livable Communities Act to help communities achieve development goals that create more housing choice, support living wage job creation, and connect jobs, housing, and regional amenities to create a more equitable region. There are currently seven categories of Livable Communities grants:

- Housing, jobs, efficient growth
- Transit-oriented development
- Pre-development
- Policy development
- Clean-up/investigation
- Affordable housing
- Affordable homeownership

The [Minnesota State Arts Board](#) offers and connects artists and agencies to numerous state and federal grant programs.

[Minnesota Department of Natural Resources](#) provides grants through the [Outdoor Recreation Grant Program](#), provides matching grants for acquisition, development outdoor recreation and natural areas. Eligible projects include park acquisition and development, internal park trails, picnic shelters, playgrounds. All park projects must be maintained for outdoor recreation into perpetuity. The DNR also administers the [Local Trails Connections Program](#) which is intended to complete connections between where people live (e.g., residential areas within cities, entire communities) and significant public resources (e.g., historical areas, open space, parks and/or other trails).

[Minnesota Department of Transportation](#) (MnDOT) distributes funding to cities through its state aid for local transportation (SALT) program. The program funds street and bridge construction and maintenance, active transportation projects, safe routes to school, and flood and disaster relief.

The [Minnesota Employment and Economic Development](#) (DEED) provides financial assistance to communities for infrastructure projects to assist with economic growth to help attract businesses, jobs, and people. DEED's 2021 [Economic Development Resource Guide](#) offers a synopsis of each assistance program currently provided. Specific DEED grant programs that have potential use for the study area include:

- [Redevelopment Grant Program](#) which helps communities with the costs of redeveloping blighted industrial, residential, or commercial sites and putting land back into productive use. Grants pay up to half of the redevelopment costs for a qualifying site, with a 50-percent local match. Grants can assist with the cost of public land acquisition (if public ownership is necessary to facilitate redevelopment), building and site demolition, infrastructure improvements, soil stabilization, ponding or other environmental infrastructure, and costs necessary for the adaptive reuse of buildings, such as asbestos abatement and lead paint mitigation.
- [Small Cities Development Program](#) helps cities with funding for housing, public infrastructure, and commercial rehabilitation projects. Eligible projects fall within three general categories: housing grants, public facility grants, and comprehensive grants, which can include economic development activities.

- [Contamination Cleanup and Investigation Grant](#) for assessing and cleaning up contaminated sites for redevelopment. Grants pay up to 75 percent of the costs to investigate and clean up polluted sites. Both publicly and privately owned sites with known or suspected soil or groundwater contamination qualify. Applications are accepted May 1 and November 1 each year.

Certain sites within North St. Paul may be historically significant and eligible for tax credits through the [Minnesota Historic Preservation Office](#). For example, a 20% state tax credit is available for qualified historic rehabilitations and parallels the existing federal rehabilitation tax credit.

The [Minnesota Pollution Control Agency](#) (MPCA) offers a variety of grants for brownfields, sustainability, and water, wastewater, and stormwater projects, to name a few. Additionally, funding from Minnesota's [Volkswagen settlement plan](#) will provide \$47 million in cleaner transportation infrastructure; of which \$3.5 million will be available for electric vehicle charging stations.

[Minnesota Public Facilities Authority](#) helps municipalities construct projects to meet their water infrastructure needs through several loan and grant programs. The Water Infrastructure Funding (WIF) program is established in Minnesota Statutes, Section 446A.072. The WIF program provides supplemental grants to municipalities based on affordability criteria established by statute.





Implementation Matrix

UN-IMPLEMENTED PROJECTS

Non-Infrastructure Projects (i.e., Program Development or Studies)	Cost Estimate	Priority	Timeframe	Potential Funding	Responsible Parties
Market vacant sites and buildings	\$	High	Ongoing	EDA	EDA, City, PO
Outdoor dining ordinance	\$	High	Short	TBD	City (PC, CC)
Update Downtown Design Guidelines	\$	High	Short	TBD	City (PC, CC)
Development story map	\$	High	Short	TBD	City, EDA
Seppala Boulevard conversion design plan	\$	High	Short	SSA	City, EDA
Off-street parking study	\$	High	Short	TBD	City (PC, CC)
Create a façade improvement program	\$	Low	Mid	SSA	City, EDA
Assist property owners and developers with grant writing	\$	Medium	As needed	Property owners, developers	City, EDA
Replat and ROW vacation where appropriate	\$	Low	As needed	TBD	City, PO
Establish a sidewalk maintenance district	\$	Low	Short	n/a	

IMPLEMENTED PROJECTS

Infrastructure Projects	Cost Estimate	Priority	Timing	Potential Funding	Responsible Parties
Seppala Boulevard conversion to Living Street	\$\$\$	*	Mid	TBD	City
Central picnic park on Seppala (combined with Seppala conversion project)	\$	As needed	Mid	Park dedication fees, ORGP	City
Wayfinding kiosk and gateway features at Rotary Park	\$	High	Short	CIP	City (PR, CC), DNR
Highway 36 interchange / Century Avenue improvements	\$\$\$	High	ASAP	TBD	City, Counties, Oakdale, DOT
Multiuse paths along McKnight and Century Avenue	\$\$	High	Mid	DNR LTCP	City, Ramsey, DOT
Trail access improvements at Helen, Margaret, Henry, and Century Avenue	\$	High	Short	CIP, DNR LTCP	City (PR, CC)
5-point roundabout at 3rd Street/South Avenue/7th Avene	\$\$\$	High	Short-Mid	TBD	City
Roundabout art / gateway feature (combined with 5-point roundabout)	\$\$	High	Short-Mid	CIP, % for art	City
Establish a passive open space area	\$	Low	Short	Park dedication fees, ORGP	City (PR, CC)
District-wide wayfinding and gateway signs	\$\$	High	Short-Mid	CIP	City
Establish a downtown plaza/urban open space	\$\$\$	High	Short-Mid	CIP, SSA	City
Water tower at Tower Park (benefits study area)	\$\$\$	High	Mid	CIP, DEED PFG	City
Bury utilities (combined with street reconstruction)	\$\$	High*	Ongoing	CIP	City
Sidewalk infill when opportunities arise	\$	Medium	Short	CIP	City
Public EV charging stations, install power infrastucture as needed	\$ - \$\$	High	Short	MPCA grants	City
Parking ramp	\$\$\$	Low	Long	TBD	TBD
Stormwater management	\$	High	Ongoing	MPCA grants	City
Public art	\$	High	Ongoing	State Legacy grant, % sales tax	City (ACC)

* When opportunities occur

Cost Estimate:

- \$ - \$0 - \$100,000
- \$\$ - \$100,000 - \$500,000
- \$\$\$ - \$500,000+

Priority:

Low, Medium, High
(Prioritization is based on Task Force decisions)

Timeframe:

- Short Term: 1-5 years
- Mid Term: 6-10 years
- Long Tern: 10+ years

Acronyms:

- ACC - Arts & Culture Commission
- CC - City Council
- CIP - Capital Improvement Plan
- DEED - Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
- DNR - Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
- DOT - Minnesota Department of Transportation
- EDA - Economic Development Authority
- LTCP - Local Trail Connections Program
- MPCA - Minnesota Pollution Control Agency
- ORGP - Outdoor Recreation Grant Program
- PC - Planning Commission
- PFG - Public Facility Grant
- PO - Property owners
- PR - Parks & Recreation Commission
- ROW - Right-of-way
- SSA - Special Service Area
- TBD - To be determined



To

Honorable Mayor Furlong and City Council

Date

June 21, 2022

Agenda Placement # IV.B

Topic(s)

Subject

Community Center Discussion

Background/Facts

Recommended Action

Attachments

None

Respectfully submitted,