

98TH STREET

STATION AREA PLAN



January 7, 2019

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The 98th Street Station Area Plan provides guidance on public improvements and zoning in order to support the planned METRO Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit service. The City maintains an up-to-date version on its website: BloomingtonMN.gov/98SAP. For further information contact the Planning Division, Bloomington Civic Plaza, 1800 West Old Shakopee Road, Bloomington MN 55431-3027, PH 952-563-8920.



Contacts and Credits

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Planning Commission

January 2019

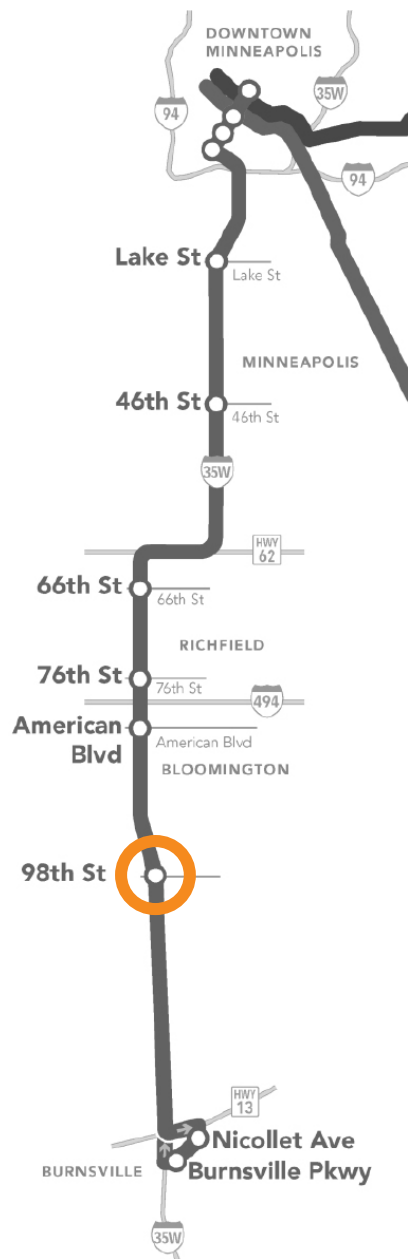
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 98th Street Station Area Plan (SAP) was developed to support Metro Transit's Small Starts grant application to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). In the final phase of this Plan's development, the FTA announced that the METRO Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) would be awarded \$74 million. With the remainder of the \$150 million budget already secured by regional and state funding sources, this award puts the METRO Orange Line on track to be operating by 2021.

BRT service to the 98th Street Station will make it easier for people to travel between the Oxboro area and downtown Minneapolis. With an enhanced level of service akin to light rail, more people might be expected to want to work, live, and navigate throughout the station area.

This Plan lays out a framework in anticipation of greater activity levels in and around the station area. Greater transit ridership means more people in the area will be walking and biking. There may also be increased traffic, including transit, personal vehicles, and ride sharing services. A variety of public infrastructure improvements are proposed to help people move through the area. Some of the recommendations can be implemented relatively quickly at low cost, whereas others require greater funding and are proposed once certain thresholds are met.

Many recommendations regarding traffic patterns call for additional studies. Instead of multiple, intersection-specific studies, a larger corridor and interchange study is proposed that will analyze redevelopment scenarios for the I-35W interchange. Interchange redevelopment and the feasibility of design scenarios will greatly influence the future shape of the station area.

To fully support transit oriented development, private properties need to redevelop in a manner that incorporates density, enhances the public and pedestrian realm, and mitigates circulation issues. This plan proposes a series of rezonings of commercial properties in order to guide future redevelopment. Specifically, proposed rezonings will permit mixed use, residential and commercial buildings at key locations.

The Oxboro area has historically been the core of Bloomington, and continues to be a focal point for residents and travelers today. Many Bloomington residents travel daily through this area. Likewise, the look and feel of the station area shapes the perceptions of those entering Bloomington from I-35W. The METRO Orange Line will bring more people leaving and entering the transit station. For many riders, the station area will shape their primary perception of Bloomington. The recommendations of this Plan should enhance a sense of place while improving functionality of the station and the surrounding area.



INTRODUCTION

This Station Area Plan recommends physical improvements to implement the Bloomington Comprehensive Plan and to facilitate and improve transit use at the Bloomington South Transit Center, commonly referred to as the 98th Street Station. Metro Transit is in the process of developing the METRO Orange Line Highway Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) that is expected to serve this transit station by 2021. The City of Bloomington, in coordination with its partners, wants to improve access to the station, foster redevelopment, and invest in the station area in a way that will ensure success of the new, enhanced transit line.

1

1.1 Station Area Vision

Guiding the Station Area Plan are three vision statements. These statements were developed with the assistance of community members and stakeholders to support transit and encourage reinvestment in the station area. The vision is to:

- **Enhance the public realm to create a sense of place**
- **Improve access to the station for all users**
- **Promote development patterns that support transit**

The public realm is space that the general public may occupy or travel through. It includes streets, sidewalks, streetscaping, plazas, parks, and other spaces available for public use. The design of the public realm greatly influences the identity and character of an area. Creating safe, inviting, and attractive public spaces, encourages users to visit and use the

In August 2017, the City of Bloomington and Metro Transit kicked off Station Area Planning with a visioning session hosted at Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People (VEAP). During that vision session three topics were discussed: Sustainability, Land Use, and Transportation that resulted in the three vision statements that act as the foundation of this plan.

area. Designing the public realm in a manner that connects visitors and residents to the transit station is a key objective.

It is important to design the public realm to improve access for all users. This means improving access for different modes of transportation (private vehicles, buses, pedestrians, bicycles, etc.) and ensuring safe, barrier-free access for people of all ages and abilities. Removing barriers that prevent access to or use of the transit station is critical to supporting transit.

Improving pedestrian movement within the station area can encourage transit use, reduce parking demand, and improve access to local businesses.

Transit services are enhanced through an accessible, inviting public realm as well as by development patterns that support transit. Transit supportive development compliments transit by increasing the number of jobs and residents within walking distance of the station. This type of development contains a mix of uses arranged in a compact manner that integrates the public realm and enhances accessibility. It places buildings near the street and/or sidewalk to provide improved pedestrian access. It enhances the public realm by providing ground level windows, entrances, and incorporating spaces that are inviting to residents and visitors.

1.2 What is a Station Area Plan?

The purpose of this Station Area Plan (“Plan”) is to guide development and infrastructure investments in the area in a manner that supports the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and promotes the use of transit. The City has many tools at its disposal to support transit including policies, development standards, and investment in infrastructure and programs. The Plan reviews current conditions and identifies challenges and opportunities to enhance the station area to best support future transit operations. These are described in recommended implementation goals and strategies.

The plan is organized into 4 main sections:

Section 2: Transit – This Section reviews the planned METRO Orange Line BRT improvements and how they fit into the greater transit system.

Section 3: History and Context – This Section provides a brief history of the station and area, and explains the importance of the Station Area to the City.

Section 4: Recommendations – This Section explains existing issues in the Station Area and provides recommendations to ensure success of transit in the area.

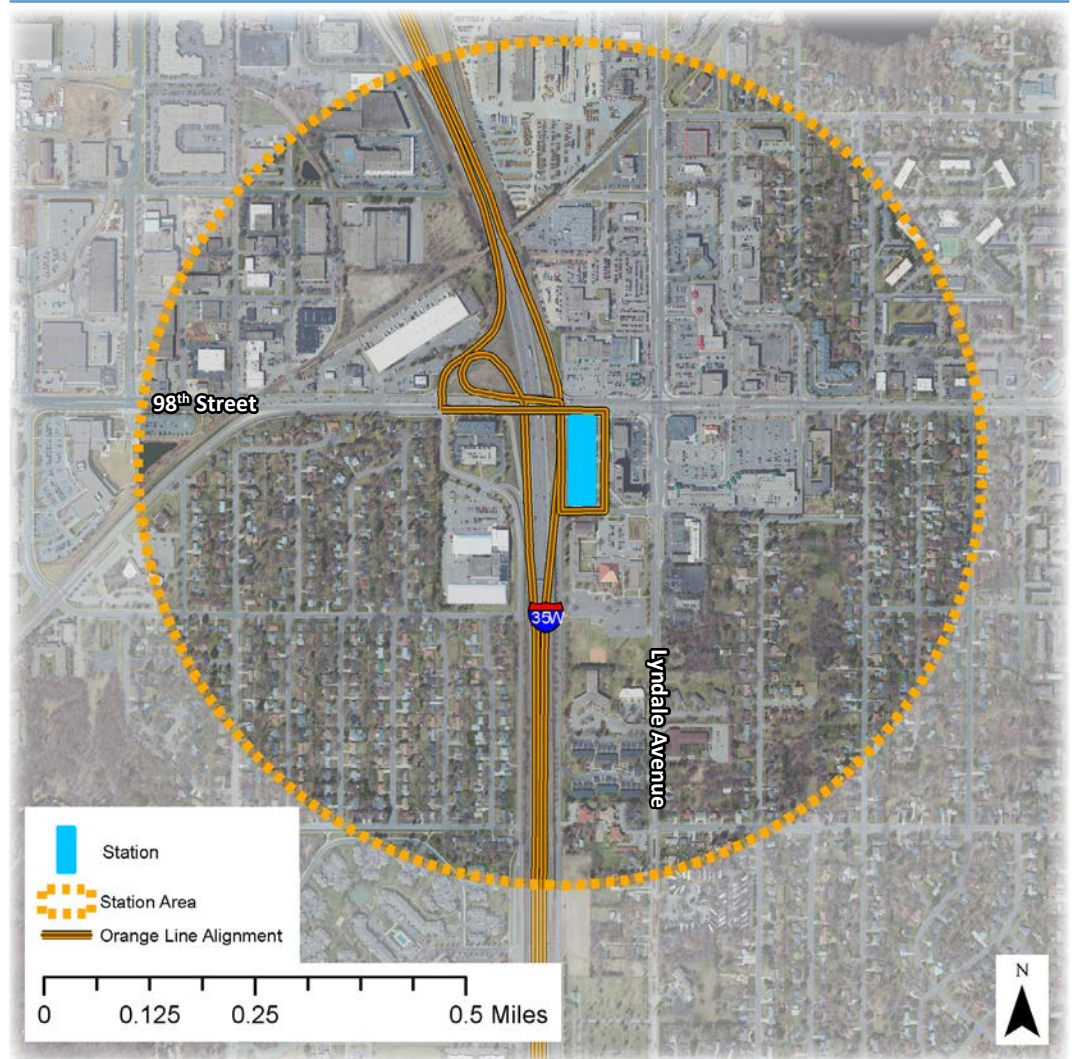
Glossary of Plan Terminology

- *Station Area* - the area surrounding the transit station roughly stretching a half mile.
- *Transit Station* - the property directly serviced by transit. For the purposes of this plan the around bounded by 98th Street to the north, Aldrich Avenue to the east, East Bloomington Freeway to the west, and 99th Street to the south.
- *Park & Ride* - the parking facility serving the transit station.
- *Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)* - rapid bus service that operates all day, at frequent intervals, with enhances stations.
- *Free-Right Turn* - turning lanes at signalized intersections that allow vehicles to bypass the signal.
- *Leading Pedestrian Indicator (LPI)* - a signal that permits pedestrians to enter the crossing before allowing vehicles traveling in the same direction.
- *Accessible Pedestrian Signal (APS)* - a pedestrian signal that provides information in non-visual formats such as audible tones, speech messages, and/or vibrating surfaces.

Section 5: Implementation – This Section determines next steps to implement recommendations.

The Station Area encompasses the area within a half mile radius from the 98th Street Station METRO Orange Line BRT stop (Figure 1.1). This distance equates to roughly a 10 minute walk time, which is the maximum amount of time the average user is willing to walk to a transit station. Reducing barriers to transit use and fostering transit supportive development is most important in this area as it will yield the greatest benefit to station use and ridership.

Figure 1.1 98th Street Half Mile Station Area



1.3 Significance of the Station Area

The Station Area is a nexus of single and multi-family neighborhoods, commercial and industrial jobs, local services, regional points of interest, and regional transit service for commuters throughout the Twin Cities. In the station area I-35W sees over 100,000 trips per day and is a major point of entry to the City. The interchange provides access to the whole region, but also divides the Station Area east and west. To the west is the Civic Plaza, neighborhoods, and industrial jobs. To the east is the Station, commercial offices, retail centers, and social services. As described in Section 4 Recommendations, planning efforts and public improvements should seek to connect these uses and improve access across the interstate, leveraging transit improvements for the whole Station Area.

98th Street Station

The Station, is an existing transit center located at 98th Street between I-35W and Aldrich Avenue. The transit center opened in 2004 and has 195 parking spaces. The transit center is heavily used by customers traveling by foot, bike, and bus. Around half of the 730 people that arrive and depart each day use one of these modes. Paratransit providers, Metro Mobility and Transit Link, also serve the facility. Currently, buses utilize a looped drive area to load and unload passengers in the station. Route schedules, real-time information, and bike parking is provided.

The number of residents, employees, and students in the station area is approaching a high level. According to the Metropolitan Council, the population located in the study area is estimated to be almost 2,400 residents. Employees and students are estimated at over 3,000 total. These numbers provide a basis to compare with other station areas, and are a starting point to

Table 1.1 Met Council Estimate of Station Area Activity

Met Council Estimate of Existing 98 th Street Station Area Activity	
Population Estimate	2,398
Employment Estimate	2,878
Students Estimate	129
Total Activity	5,405

☞ Currently, there are around 1,100 dwelling units in this area, with an average of 9 units per acre. (Section 3.2)

identify existing baseline conditions and set future goals.

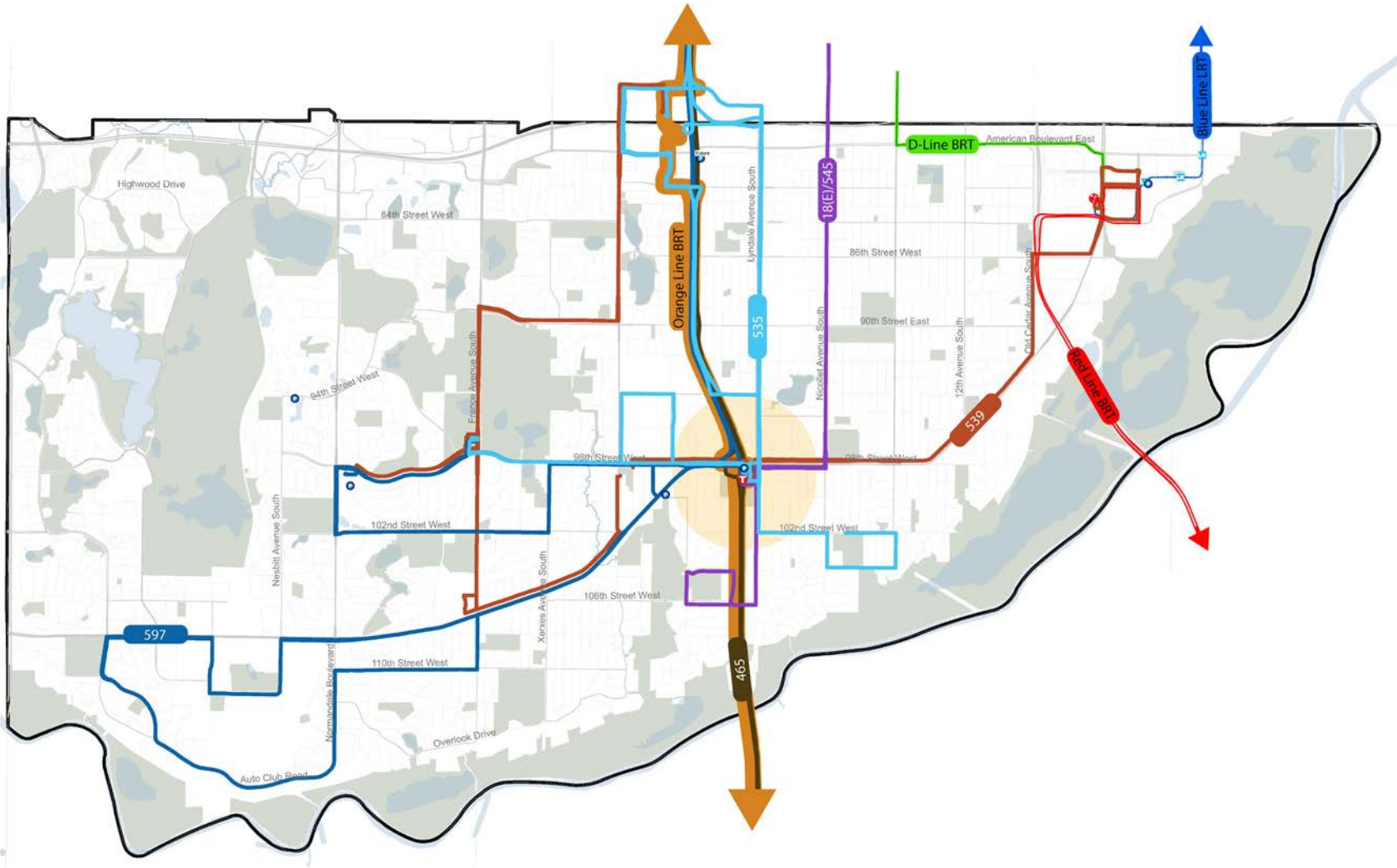
The Metropolitan Council's 2040 Transportation Policy Plan (2040 TPP) set a goal of accommodating 7,000 total residents, jobs, or students within a 10 minute walk or ½ mile distance from the station. While the station area's existing activity level of 5,400 is short of this goal, there is great opportunity to increase population and employment through redevelopment. For bus rapid transit station areas in urban communities such as Bloomington, the 2040 TPP sets a minimum residential density requirement of 12 units per acre with a target of 25-50+ units per acre. Within a quarter mile of a BRT station, the minimum density requirement is 15 units per acre with a target of 20-60 units per acre.

Section 4.4: Land Use describes approaches the City can take to encourage new development to meet these goals to improve the area's activity level.

Transfer Hub

The Station is a major connection point for the direct station area as well as greater Bloomington. There are six transit lines (routes 18, 465, 535, 539, 554, 597) that connect to the station. Riders are able to travel to Minneapolis, Burnsville, and Richfield from the station. Each connecting route utilizes a specific boarding gate at the transit center that provides real time travel information for transfers. Normandale College, located about two-miles west, is a major end destination for many riders. To the east, the Mall of America and the connection to the Blue Line LRT are major draws for riders. The station offers a convenient transfer point to multiple routes heading both east and west.

Figure 1.2 Transfer Routes

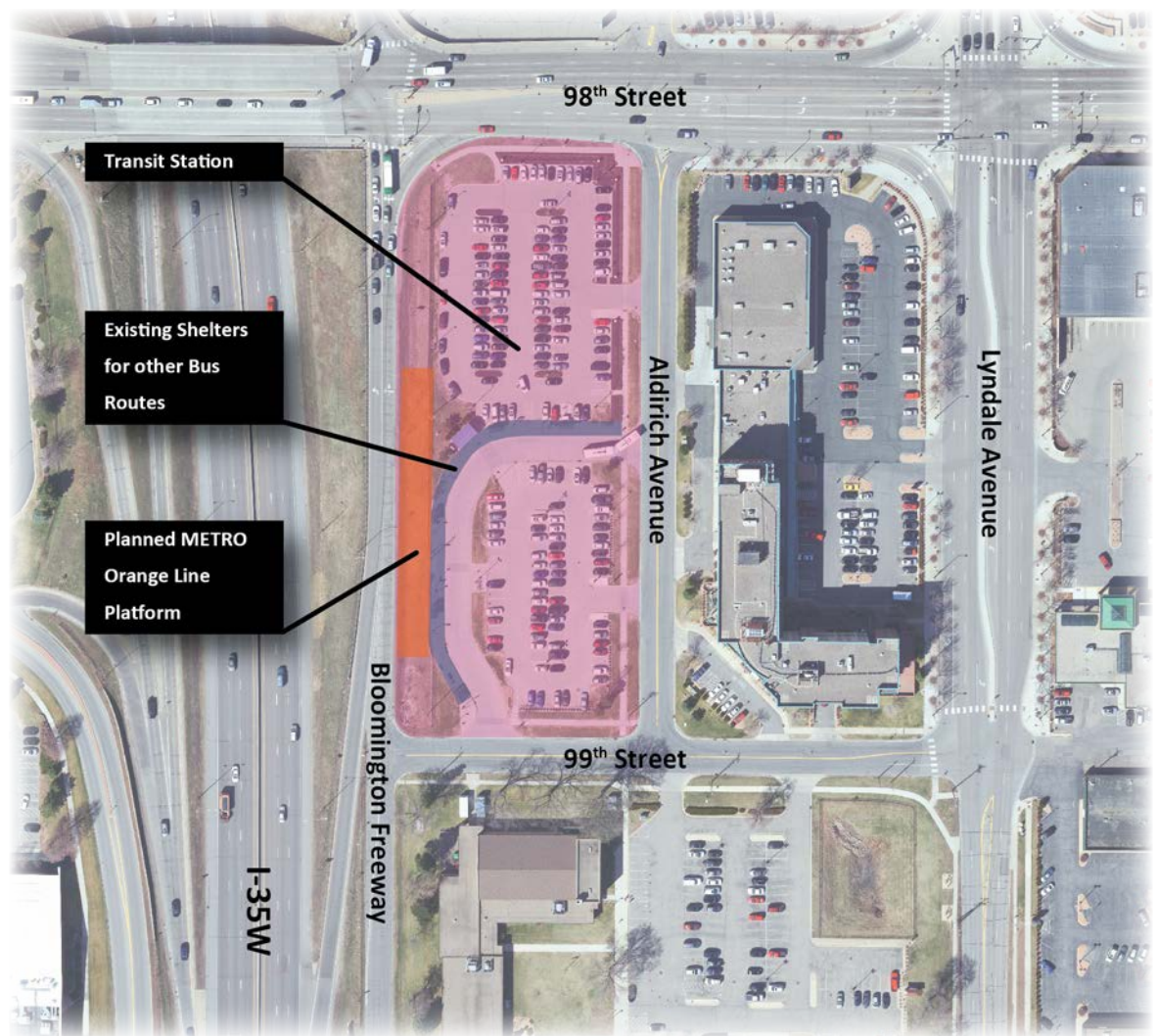


Transit Station vs Station Area

The “Transit Center” or “Station,” as used in this plan, refers to the South Bloomington Transit Center commonly referred to as the 98th Street Station. The Transit Station (Figure 1.3) is the property occupied by the future METRO Orange Line Platforms, the existing bus terminal, and parking facility.

The “Station Area,” as used in this plan, is the area within a half mile radius of the South Bloomington Transit Center (Figure 1.1). This distance roughly equates to a 10 minute walk which is the maximum time the average transit user is willing to walk. Reducing barriers to transit use and fostering transit supportive development is most important in this area as it will yield the greatest benefit to station use and ridership.

Figure 1.3 Transit Station Diagram





Shelter with heat,
light, and seating

Vertical bike parking

Trash and
recycling bins

98TH
STREET

TRANSIT IMPROVEMENTS

2

The METRO Orange Line BRT is part of the regional transit system, connecting residential centers with places of employment and key destinations. To support this new BRT service, Metro Transit Plans to install a BRT platform as well as Transit Station improvements such as sidewalks, curb ramps, striping across nearby streets, signage, seating, and landscaping.

2.1 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is enhanced bus service that is similar to light rail service. Buses run at frequent intervals, 24 hours a day, at enhanced station facilities. Like light rail service, users pay in advance, board at platforms, and can enter buses at any door. These features speed up loading and unloading, and ensure a more reliable service that can be up to 25% faster than traditional bus service. Key features of BRT service include:

- Enhanced stations – real time departure signs, enhanced maps
- Minimum distances between stations (reduced number of stops)
- Pay before boarding
- Frequent service – frequent enough you do not need a time table
- Enhanced security – cameras, emergency phones, improved lighting

Metro Transit operates two kinds of BRT, Arterial and Highway. Arterial BRT or “Rapid Bus” operates on arterial roadways and mostly replaces existing highly utilized routes. These are designated on route maps with a letter. Metro Transit has been operating the A-line (Snelling Avenue/Ford Parkway) since 2016 with success. Other arterial BRT lines in various planning stages are C-Line (Penn Avenue) and D-Line (Chicago Avenue/Fremont Avenue).

The METRO Orange Line is Highway BRT and is part of the METRO system of transitways. Highway BRT lines are given a color similar to the light rail transit (LRT) lines. These lines operate mostly on highways and operate regionally. They often utilize dedicated bus lanes or MnPass lanes and longer spacing between stops to improve efficiency. They connect to major transit hubs that facilitate transfer to other routes.

2.2 METRO System

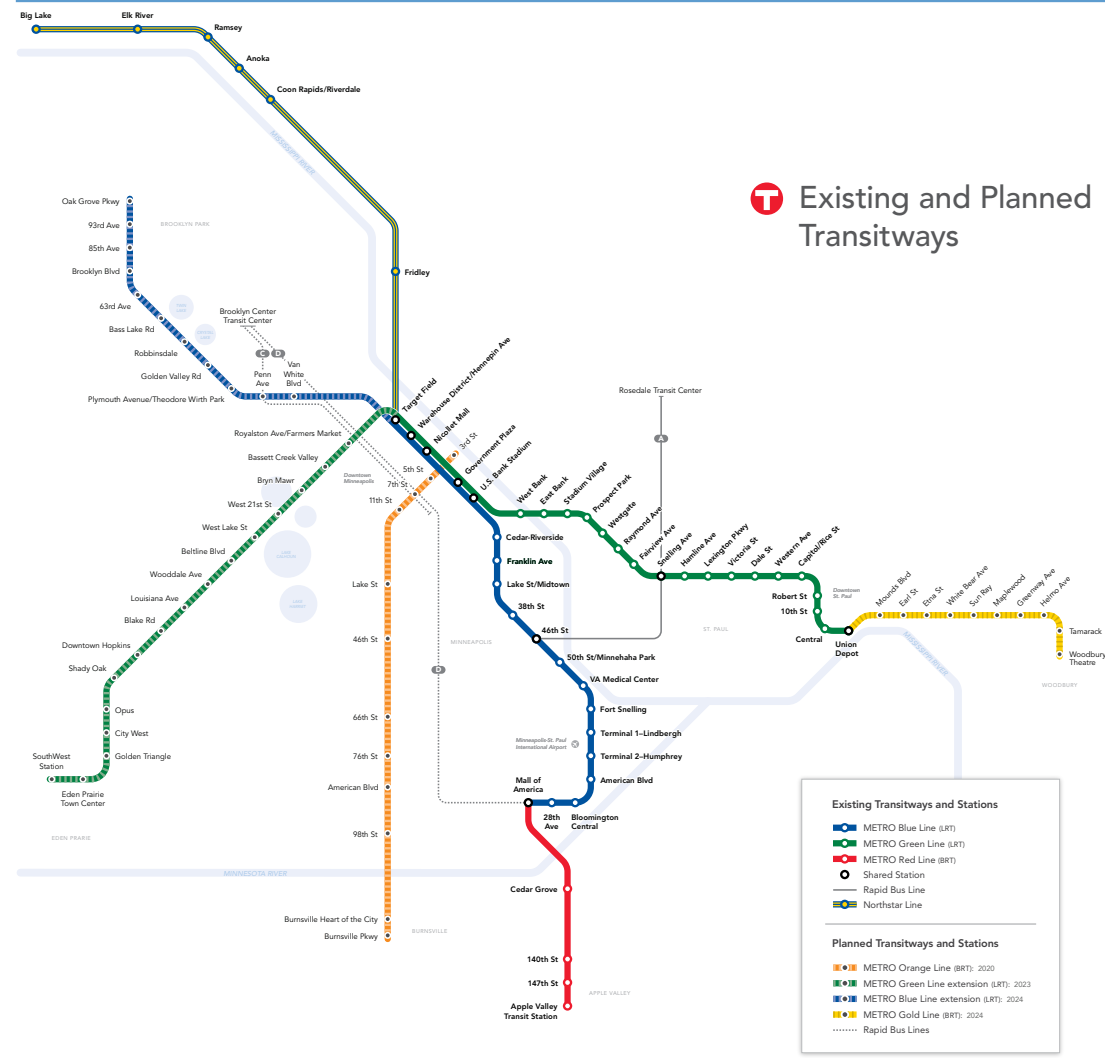
The METRO system of transitways offer frequent, all day service with enhanced station amenities. Three METRO lines exist today:

- **METRO Blue Line LRT** currently connects the Mall of America and Target Field Station.
- **Metro Green Line LRT** connects downtown Minneapolis to downtown Saint Paul.
- **Metro Red BRT** connects the Mall of America and Apple Valley Transit Station.

Besides the METRO Orange Line there are several proposed extensions and expansions of the METRO system. These include:

- **METRO Gold Line**, a new BRT line connecting Woodbury to Union Depot in downtown Saint Paul that will offer an easy transfer point to the METRO Green Line.
- **METRO Green Line** extension will continue beyond Target Field Station and connect to Eden Prairie Southwest Station.
- **METRO Blue Line** is proposed to be extended from Target Field Station to Oak Grove Parkway in Brooklyn Park.

Figure 2.1 METRO Transit System, Existing & Planned



2.3 The METRO Orange Line

The METRO Orange Line is a 17 mile BRT line with 12 accessible transit stations running mostly along I-35W. In 2005, a study was completed that highlighted BRT's viability for the I-35W corridor. Since that study, Metro Transit has been actively working with its partners including MnDOT to open a bus rapid transit line that serves the corridor. The result is the METRO Orange Line whose route and stations are depicted in Figure 2.2.

The METRO Orange Line will serve the region's busiest express bus corridor. I-35W is a heavily-used transportation corridor, having carried approximately 210,000 daily vehicles and 14,000 daily transit riders in 2017. The METRO Orange Line will improve access to 162,000 jobs and 64,000

residents, including 30,000 jobs and 40,000 residents outside of downtown Minneapolis.

Bloomington will have stations at Knox Avenue & American Boulevard and the 98th Street Station. The two station areas (half mile from the proposed stations) have around 7,300 jobs and 4,000 residents total. These are both expected to increase in the near future.

All-day, frequent BRT service will complement local and express bus routes along I-35W, providing competitive running times for station-to-station trips and a new option for reverse-commute markets. Both BRT and express riders will benefit from stations, runningway technology, and service improvements. The METRO Orange Line will provide 10-minute peak frequency and 15-minute off-peak frequency, at least 16 hours per day, seven days a week.

Figure 2.2 METRO Orange Line



Table 2.1 Existing METRO Orange Line Corridor and Station Area Development

Criteria	METRO Orange Line	FTA Rating Indication
Employees Served by the System	166,136	Medium-High
Average Population Density	7,856	Medium
Parking Cost Per Day (CBD)	\$12.55	Medium-High
Parking Spaces Per Employee (CBD)	0.34	Medium
Affordable Housing Measurement	4.14 (18.2% of total housing units legally binding affordable)	High

Source: METRO Orange Line Small Starts Project Information

2.4 Station Design and Operations

To support the METRO Orange Line, Metro Transit will construct a new station with new sidewalk connections and improved street crossings. The new BRT platforms will be constructed at the existing transit center fronting East Bloomington Freeway. The planned platform and shelters will only serve the METRO Orange Line with

the north platform serving northbound buses and the south platform serving southbound buses. Station amenities such as LED lighting, heaters, benches, landscaping and real-time arrival information signs will be installed. The improvements will greatly enhance the comfort of transit users. Existing bus shelters will continue to serve the other bus routes using the transit station.

BRT platform placement will facilitate loading and unloading from the I-35W

northbound exit ramp. The platform will be located immediately adjacent to the interstate exit ramp to allow easy access for northbound buses. Southbound buses will access the platform by exiting I-35W at 98th Street and heading east, turning south on Aldrich Avenue, turning west on 99th Street, and finally turning north to access the platform on Bloomington Freeway. After boarding, southbound buses will head west on 98th Street to the southbound I-35W entry ramp. Although the southbound operation is more time consuming, it facilitates ease of use for transfers.

BRT station construction will also include reconfiguring the I-35W northbound exit-ramp to add a right turn lane in addition to the two existing lanes to alleviate congestion. The Bloomington Freeway and 98th Street intersection will also be upgraded by retrofitting the median in 98th Street to create an accessible refuge island with Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS). This will allow

Figure 2.3 Photo Rendering of Planned BRT Platform

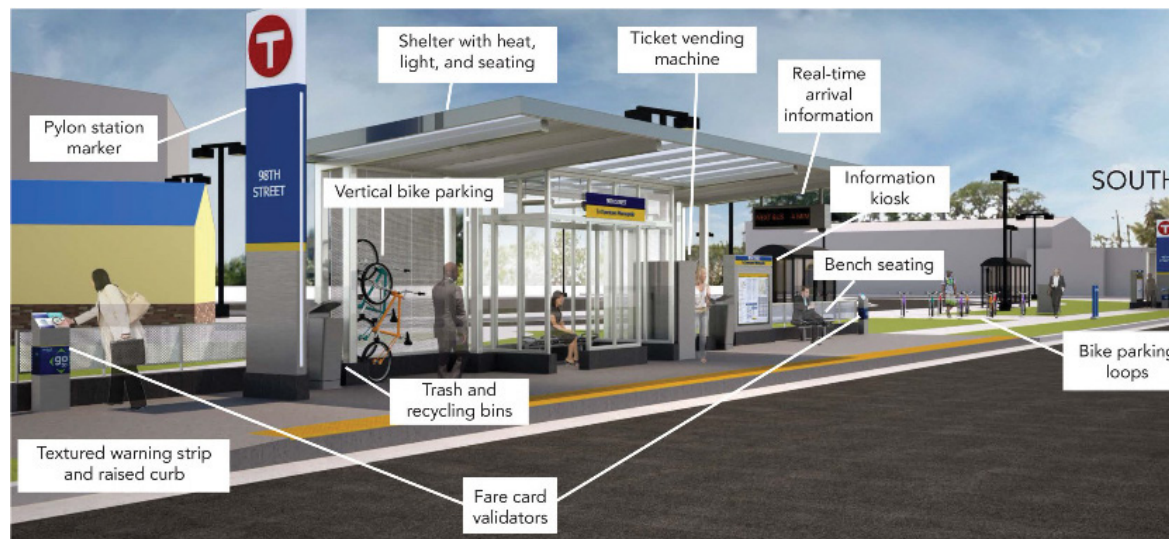
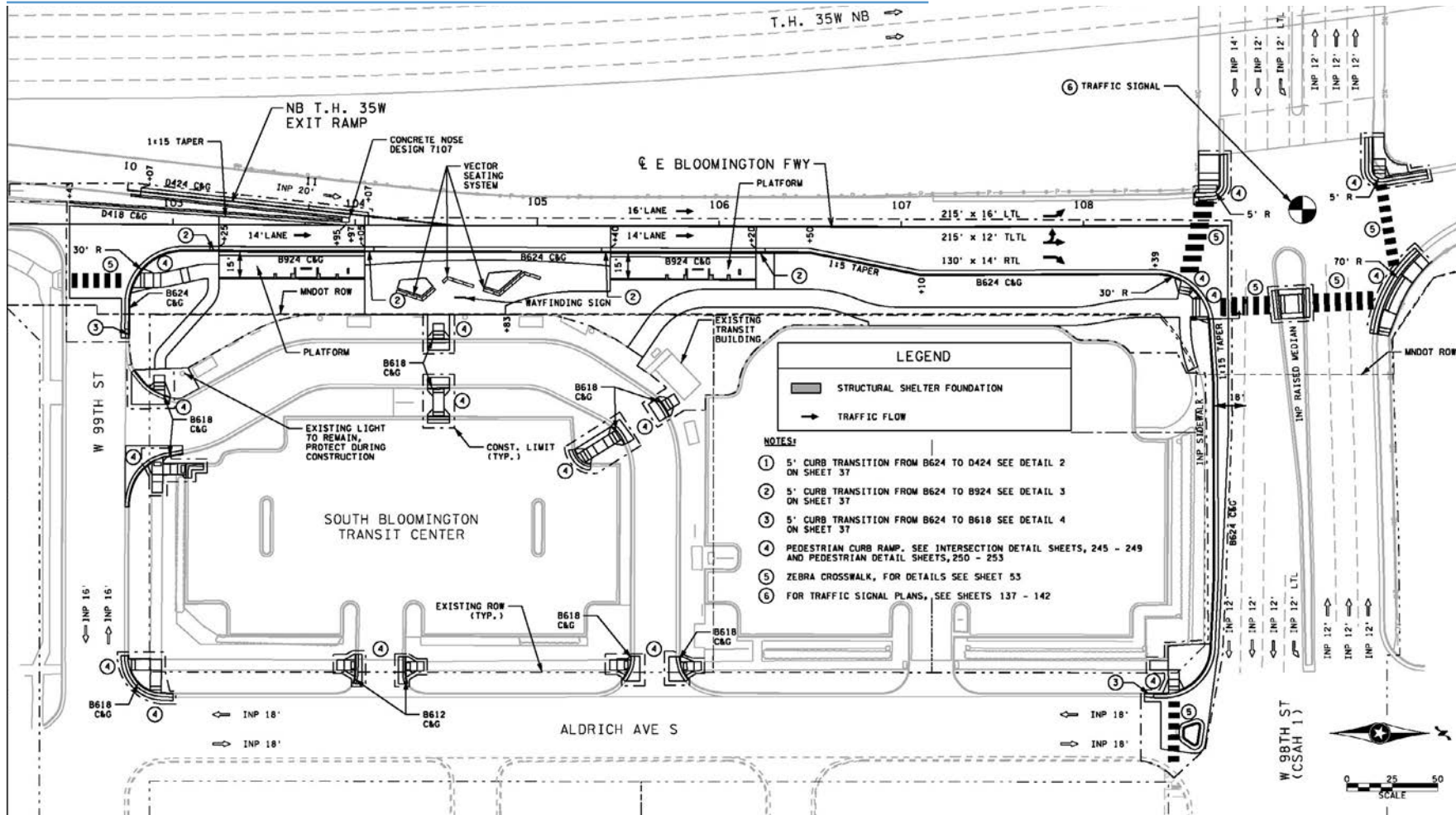


Figure 2.4 98th Street Station Construction Plan



DESIGNED: NAK				CHECKED: PMG				HNTB MetroTransit I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PLAN, SPECIFICATION OR REPORT WAS PREPARED BY ME OR UNDER MY DIRECT SUPERVISION AND THAT I AM A DULY LICENSED PROFESSIONAL ENGINEER UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF WISCONSIN. CERTIFIED BY: <i>PAUL GLASER</i> LIC. NO. 51808 DATE 03/30/2018	I-35W & 98TH ST CONSTRUCTION PLAN STATE PROJ. NO. 2782-346 (T.H. 35W) SHEET NO. 239 OF 534 SHEETS	
DRAWN: CNF				APPROVED: PMG						
NO.	REVISIONS	BY	APP	DATE						

transit users to safely and efficiently cross 98th Street in this location.

BRT station improvements will also include reconstructing curb ramps and upgrading the crossings at 98th Street, 99th Street, East Bloomington Freeway, and Aldrich Avenue. The existing right-in right-out median at Aldrich Avenue and 98th Street poses a barrier to pedestrians. The median will be shortened to allow pedestrians to cross without any impediments. Curb ramps will also be improved throughout the station area.

Figure 2.5 98th Street Station Urban Design Plan

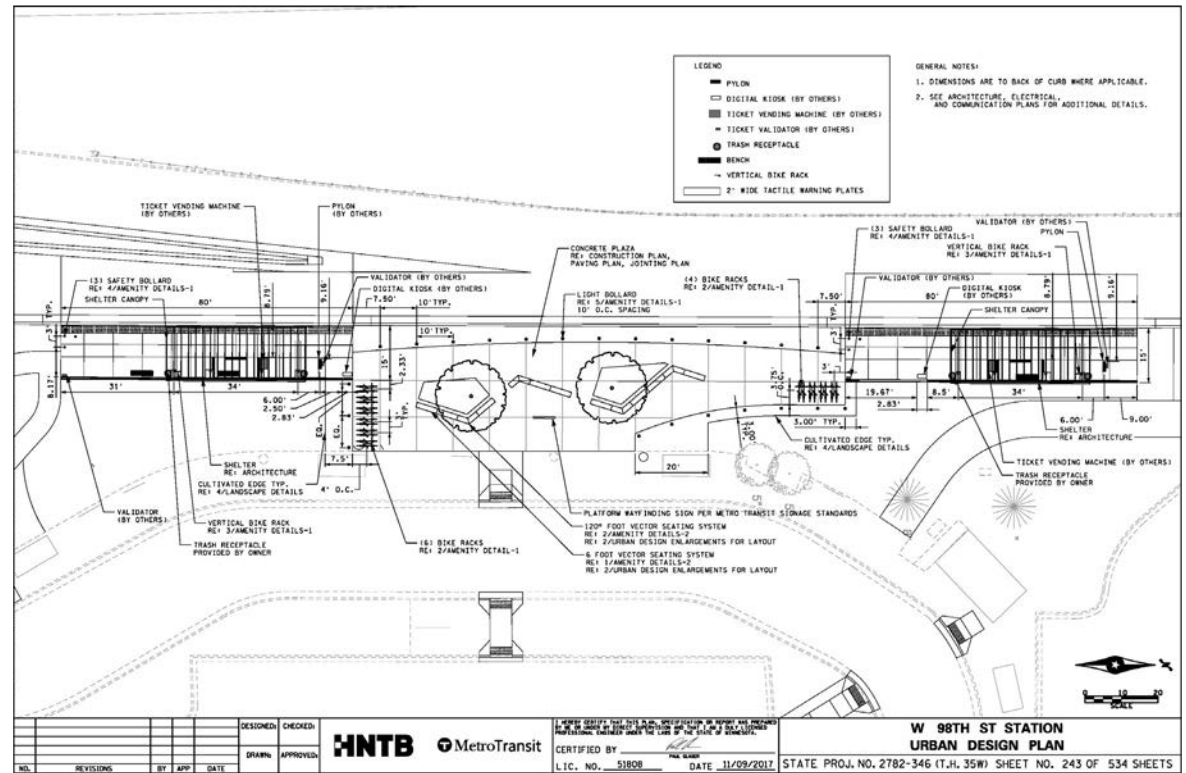
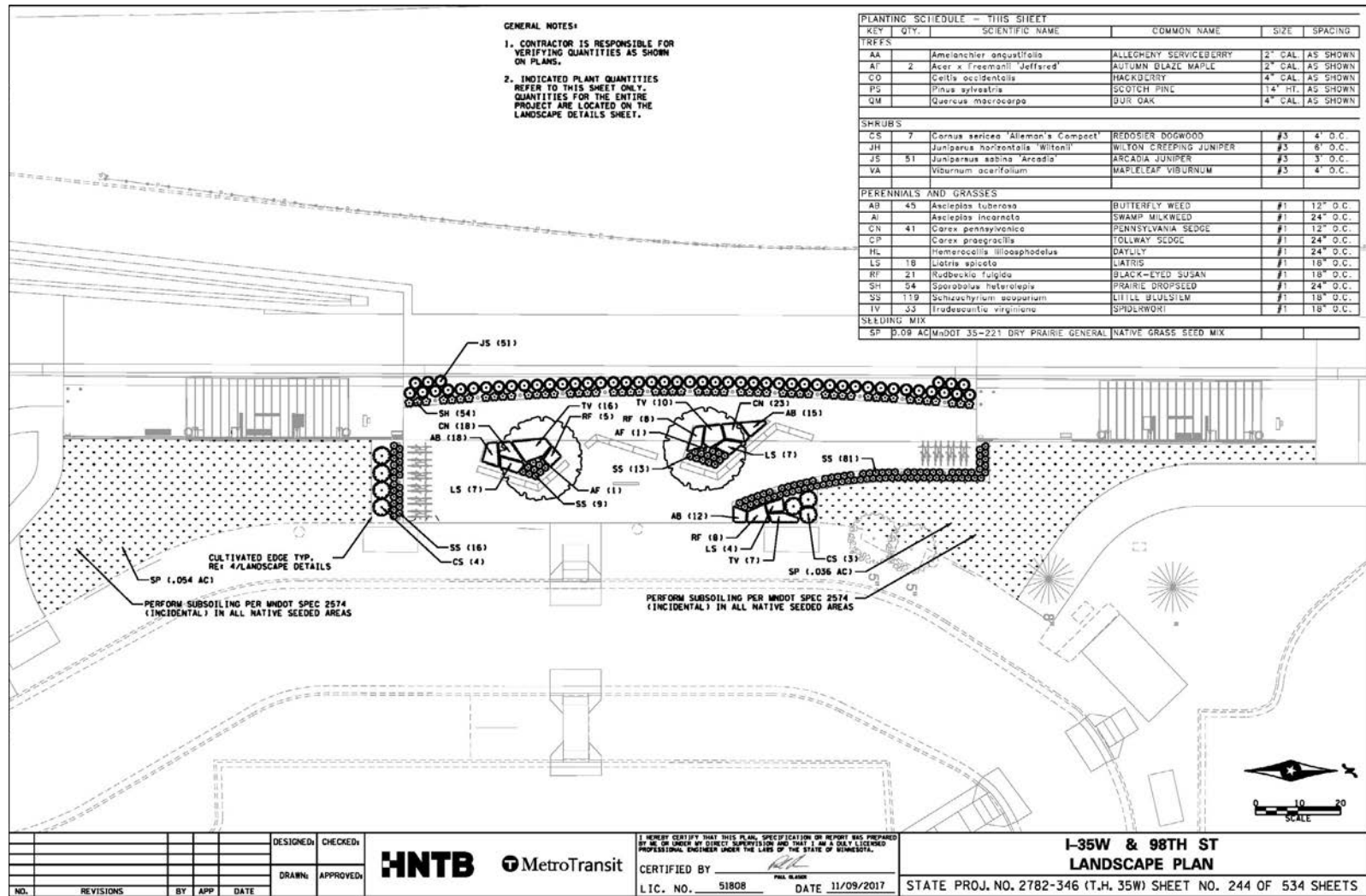


Figure 2.6 98th Street Station Landscape Plan





CONTEXT & EXISTING CONDITIONS

3

This Section focuses on the Station Area, its history, context, and existing conditions. It reveals the findings from the planning process, including information about existing and planned land use. This Section lays the foundation for the Recommendations Section, some of which was guided by feedback received during public outreach.

3.1 History

The 98th Street Station area is one of the earliest developed areas in Bloomington. The crossroads of Old Shakopee Road and Lyndale Avenue is where travelers connected to and from Minneapolis, Fort Snelling, the Minnesota River, and west along the river. During the last 100 years, the area has undergone three major transitions. With the arrival of the METRO Orange Line, the area is on the verge of a 4th development period.

Pre-1950's

Old Shakopee Road is one of Bloomington's oldest landmarks. Starting as a Native American trail, it was developed into a road when white settlers moved into Bloomington. The Oxborough family moved to Bloomington and established a trading post on what is today Lyndale Avenue. The area around Old Shakopee Road and Lyndale Avenue became known as the Oxboro area and today the name

still applies to businesses such as the Oxboro Clinic operated by Fairview Medical as well as the nearby Oxboro Lake. The City grew around this area with the Old City Hall nearby to the west and the Cemetery to the south. The Intersection of Lyndale Avenue and 98th Street (Old Shakopee Road) became the commercial center for the small but growing village.



Lyndale Avenue & Old Shakopee Road
Circa 1910

Source: MN Historical Society

50's-60's Freeway development

The 1950's and 60's was a period of extreme growth for the City. The station area in particular experienced a great amount of development in the 1950's. Most of today's single family homes in and around the station were built in the 1950's. Nativity of Mary Church, Clover Shopping Center, and Freeway Ford were also built during this period. Many of the businesses at this time were single uses located on small, separate lots.



Clover Shopping Center
1960s

Source: Bloomington Historical Society

70's-80's Suburbanism

By the 1970's interest in redeveloping the area grew, leading to development of the Oxboro District Plan in 1975.

This plan identified many of the design features and road configurations that are present today, such as closing off direct access from Harriet Avenue to 98th Street and reconfiguring Garfield Avenue to reduce cut-through traffic.

A market analysis was also conducted at this time, which identified redevelopment opportunities and recommended the following:

- Keep as many existing businesses as possible because they served a local purpose.
- Improve buildings and facades. The area was considered run down but still had a large customer base.
- Focus on bringing in niche retail. Proximity to Southdale and Burnsville Malls inhibited regional draws for general retail. Potential for outdoor sports retailers and furniture and home goods was

identified.

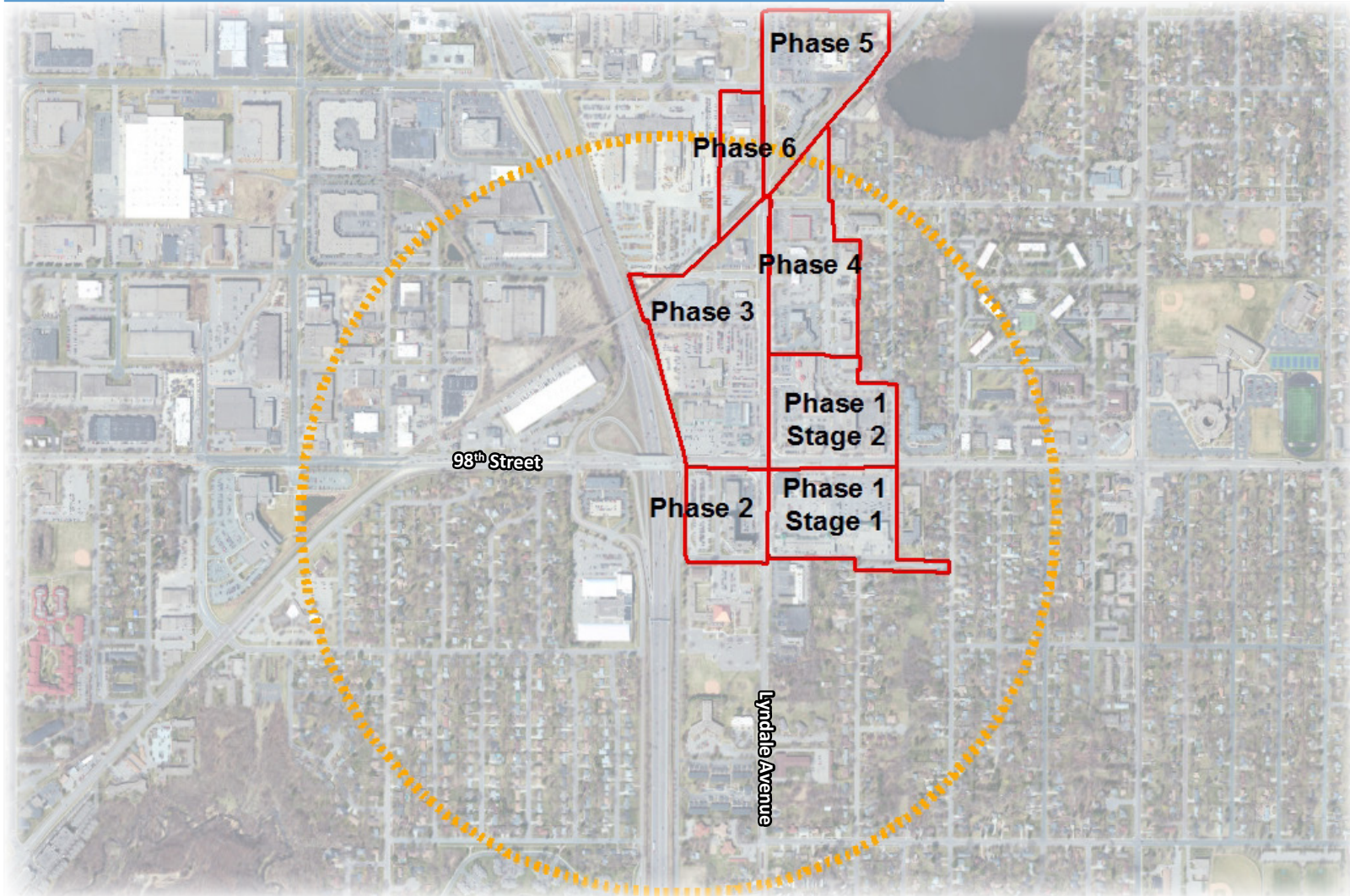
- Demand for Class B office space, entertainment uses, and additional restaurants was also identified.

The market study spurred interest from a private developer and the Oxboro Redevelopment Corporation was created in partnership with the City. The City's Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) funded public improvements throughout the district with a variety of funding mechanisms. The HRA met regularly with the Oxboro Redevelopment Corporation to help shape the Oxboro Redevelopment Plan, which focused on building form and embraced the Oxboro District Plan's traffic improvements. In total, six redevelopment phases were identified (see Figure 3.1). To date, redevelopment has occurred in four of the six phased areas. The impacts were substantial and are seen today.

The redevelopment plan touted the urban feel of the area. For instance, the building on the southeast corner

of Lyndale Avenue and 98th Street (presently Duluth Trading Company store) was deliberately located close to the corner of the intersection. However, other development during this phase followed a more conventional suburban model with buildings set away from the street and parking located along the primary street frontages.

Figure 3.1 Oxboro Redevelopment Plan



CONTEXT & EXISTING CONDITIONS



1947



1969



1985



2000

1990's to 2010 Incremental Infill

Over the past thirty years, some improvements have been made that make the area more transit supportive and pedestrian-friendly. However, the area still lacks overall guidance to foster mixed use and transit supportive development. A few high density apartment buildings were built in and around the station area, the clock tower was constructed to help create a sense of place, the transit center was constructed, and the Village at Oxboro mixed use development was constructed. Despite these improvements, the auto oriented character remains.

The first incremental advancement toward transit supportive development was development of several high density residential projects, including: The Gables apartments (1987), Devonshire (1987), SummerHouse (1998), Garfield Commons (2001), RealLife (2003), and Meadows of Oxboro (2006).

Together, these projects added 855 housing units to the area.

SummerHouse, located in the Village at Oxboro development, is one of the first mixed use developments in Bloomington. This mixed use project places five stories of high density residential apartments above multiple commercial spaces located on the ground floor. SummerHouse is a senior living facility that takes advantage of the station area's neighborhood amenities. With drug stores, banks, grocery, the transit center and the Fairview Clinic on adjacent properties, this early model of mixed use development lays the foundation for the vision laid out in this Station Area Plan.

Streetscaping and placemaking efforts also started during this time period. The City and property owners invested in street trees, street furniture such as benches and decorative trash receptacles, new planted medians, and additional landscaping. The most visible accomplishment was



Devonshire (1987)

the clock tower at 98th Street and Lyndale Avenue. This large structure incorporates a plaza with plaques depicting historically significant periods for the Station Area and Bloomington. These improvements were designed to create a more urban environment that invites visitors to explore the area by foot.

A significant improvement was the opening of the South Bloomington Transit center. Metro Transit began operating the Station in 2004. Metro



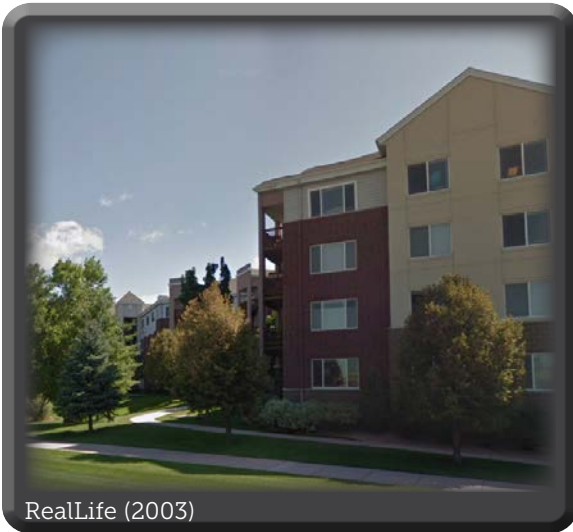
The Gables (1987)



SummerHouse (1998)



Garfield Commons (2001)



RealLife (2003)



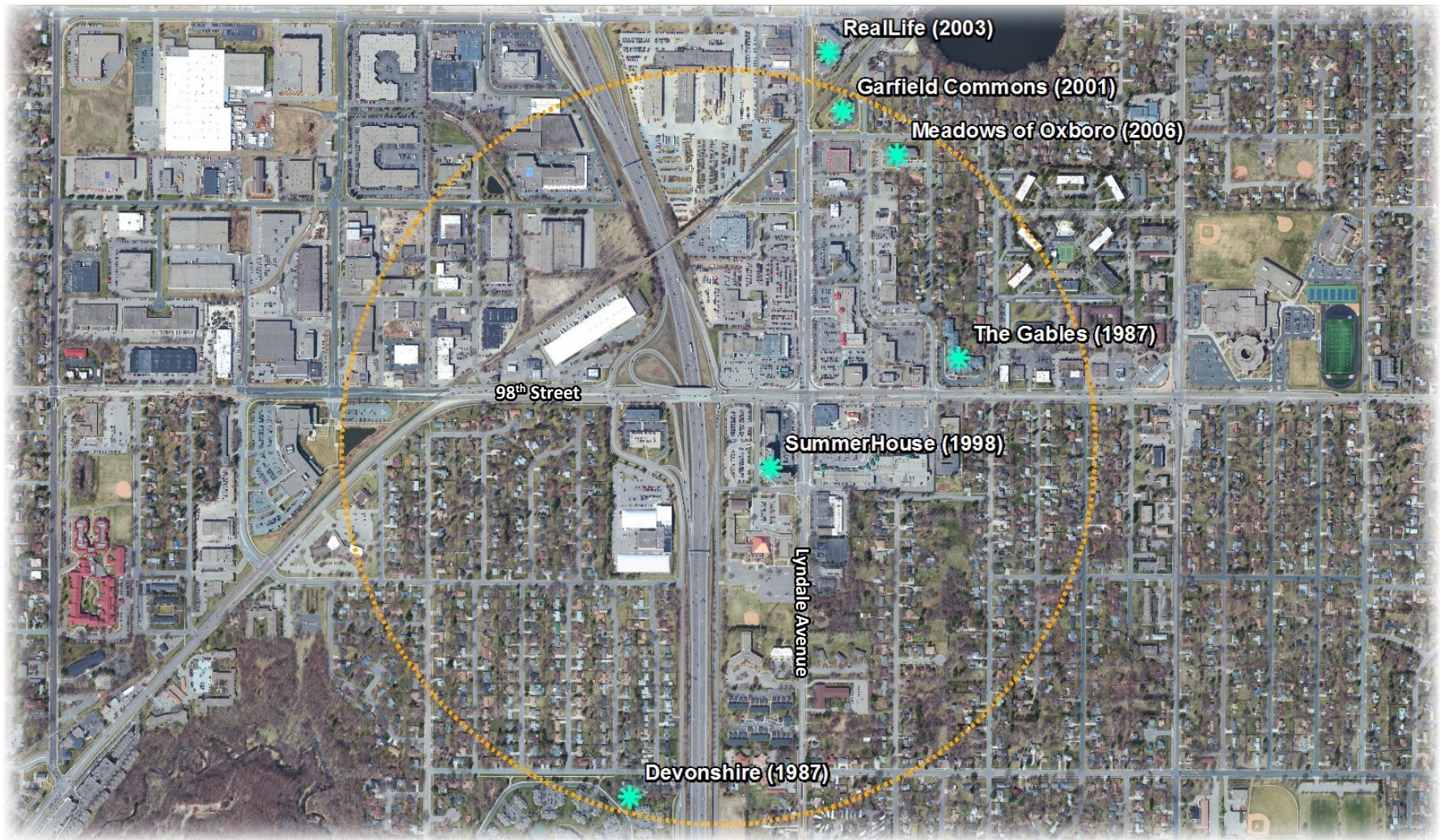
South Bloomington Transit Center (2004)



Meadows of Oxboro (2006)

CONTEXT & EXISTING CONDITIONS

Figure 3.2 1990s and 2000s Improvements (2015 aerial)



Transit later acquired the northern half of the site for development of a parking lot to support the Station in 2006.

The success of the Station and the future METRO Orange Line operations will help guide future interchange redesign, which is discussed further in the Recommendations Section.

This plan's vision builds on the improvements made in the last two decades, which provide proof that mixed use and high density residential uses contribute to the success and high ridership experienced at the Station. Likewise, first-hand accounts from area residents and users confirm that the streetscaping improvements (clock tower, walls, trees, landscaping) help create a sense of place and create a pleasant and attractive pedestrian environment. However, the continued dominance of roads and parking lots detracts from the mixed use "downtown" character that previous planning efforts envisioned.

3.2 The Station Area Today

The physical environment and land use in the station area has remained relatively unchanged over the past decade. The most recent development projects are from 2010, and most development is from the 60s, 70s, and 80s.

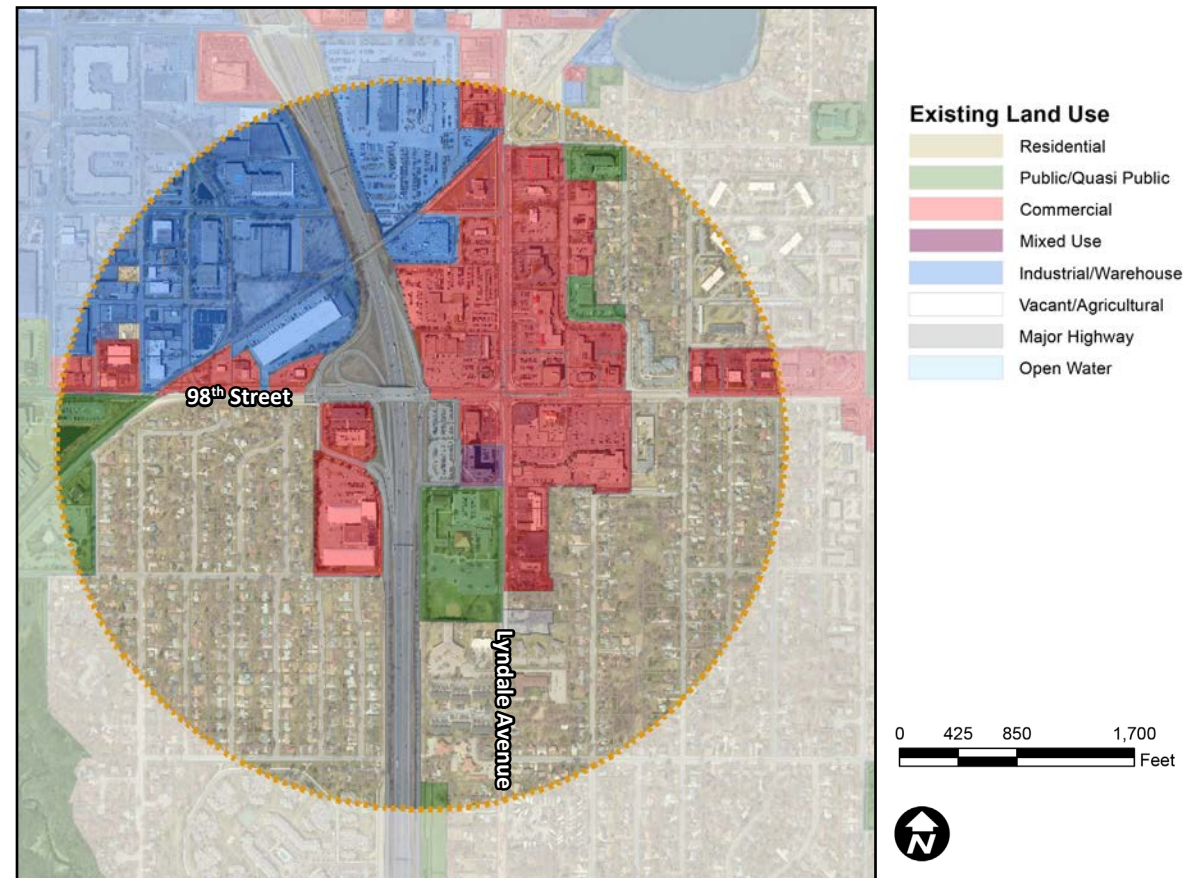
Existing Land Use

The Station Area contains an assortment of residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed commercial and residential uses. Nearest the station are shopping centers and offices. Industrial uses are located to the northwest of the station. Scattered are some public /quasi-public uses such as Civic Plaza, Hennepin County Social Services, and Nativity of Mary.

Much of the station area is comprised of single-family residential. Currently, there are around 1,100 dwelling units in this area, with an average of 9 units per acre. Multi-family buildings are mostly located east of I-35W along arterial

streets. Currently, the only mixed-use building is immediately east of the 98th Street Station.

Figure 3.3 Existing Land Use



Demographics

There has not been much change in the number of residents living in the area. However, consistently high ridership over the past 14 years and the demographic characteristics of the Station Area demonstrate the need for improved transit services. Enhanced, high frequency transit service and compatible development patterns can make the area more attractive to businesses and residents.

While population has remained relatively consistent in the census block groups that roughly align with the Station Area, there has been a slow but steady increase of about half a percent in population since 2000. Around 60 percent of households in the area are renters. Other demographic characteristics unique to the Station Area illustrate the importance of a high frequency transit line to area residents*:

- About 30% of the City's zero vehicle households live in the Station Area. This is disproportionately high as only 14% of the City's households live in the Station Area.
- Transit ridership among those that live in the Station Area and commute to work is up from 4.6% in 2000 to 6.6% in 2016
- The number of working age (20-64 years old) persons with a disability living in the area is 75% higher than the remainder of the City.
- Poverty in the Station Area is double that of the whole City.

Transit dependent populations will benefit from the all-day frequent service of the METRO Orange Line. The METRO Orange Line station enhancements will be designed to improve access, comfort, and safety for persons with a disability. It will be critical to remove physical barriers leading to the station in order to enhance physical access. The METRO Orange Line will also

provide consistent service throughout the day and on weekends, providing reliable transportation to employment opportunities along the 17 mile transitway. This expanded opportunity for employment also benefits low income households by widening the area of potential employment and providing a low cost alternative for transportation.

Employment

The Station Area in 2015 was home to about 3,000 jobs. This is 45 less than in 2002**, which is consistent with national downward trends in retail and manufacturing. Despite this decline, manufacturing and retail continue to be the major employers in the area with over 1,000 jobs. Those living along the METRO Orange Line will have reliable service to employment opportunities in the station area.

The area west of I-35W is occupied by a large industrial area and is home

* source: American Community Survey, 2016

** source: U.S. Census Bureau,
<https://onthemap.ces.census.gov/>

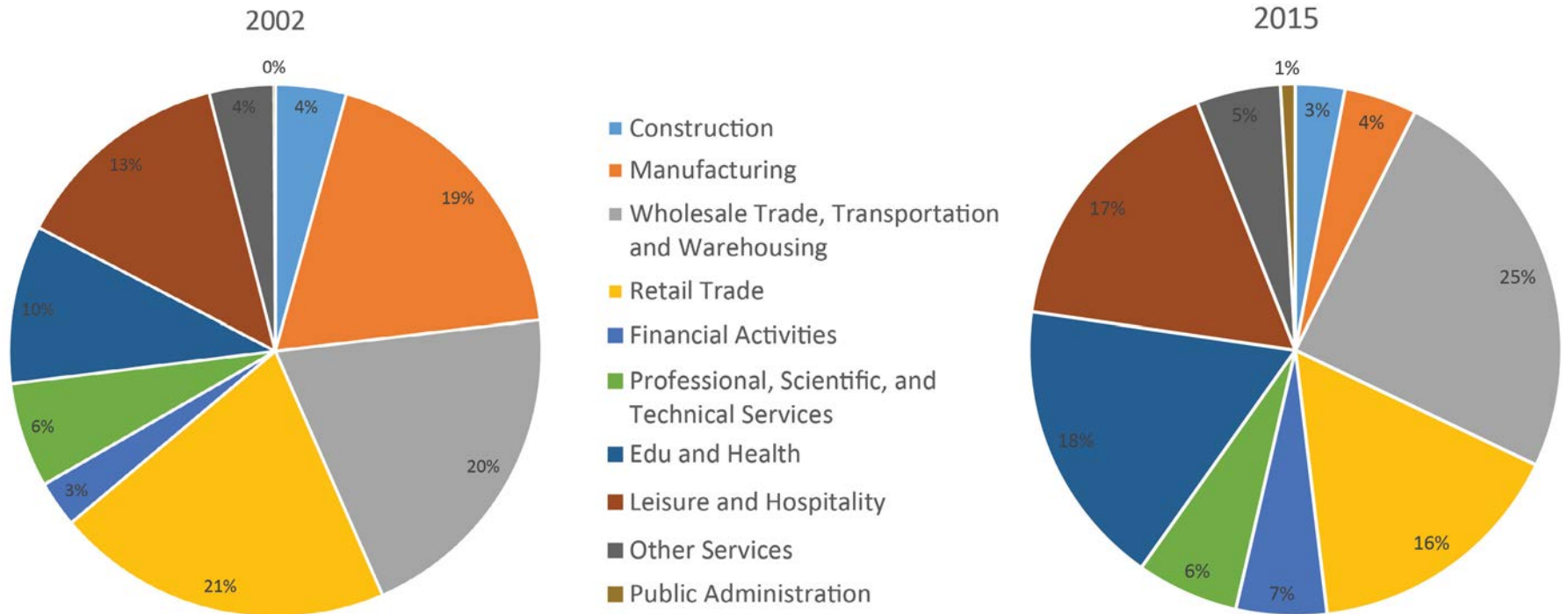
CONTEXT & EXISTING CONDITIONS

to a range of manufacturing and office jobs. Providing a safe and easy connection to these jobs will bolster ridership for the METRO Orange Line. Furthermore, improving this east/west connection encourages employees in

this area to visit the commercial areas to the east. East of the interstate, on the same side as the Station are the commercial office and retail jobs. Providing enhanced pedestrian access to the

station will encourage transit riders to patron and work at these businesses. Providing improved pedestrian and bicycle access to the station will encourage more people on the street and help create a more vibrant area.

Figure 3.4 Employment Comparision in the Station Area (2002 and 2015)



Points of Interest

Many area destinations will benefit from improved transit access and bicycle and pedestrian access (shown in Figure 3.6).

Commercial

Clover Center and **Oxboro Plaza** are major retail drivers in the area. Clover Center, with a range of service oriented businesses such as a bank, coffee shop, restaurants, and retail, was identified as the most visited in the User Survey (See Public Outreach Section 3.3). Second in the survey was Oxboro Center with a grocery store, drug store, restaurants, and retail. Most commercial uses serve a local market.

Fairview Oxboro Clinic is also an important provider of medical care for the surrounding community.

The transit center is a connecting point for those traveling to and from the **Mall of America**. The Mall of America is Bloomington's largest employer and a major driver of traffic. The transit

center will continue to be an important connection point for transit riders to the mall, especially when the METRO Orange Line becomes operational.

Public

Kennedy High School is located just over 1/2 mile from the 98th Street Station. The proposed improvements along 98th Street will help facilitate pedestrian access to and from the high school. It was reported during outreach events that students frequently walk in the median on 98th Street because they find it difficult to cross more than half of 98th Street at one time. Oak Grove Middle School is also located 1.4 miles to the south. The improved bicycle access will also improve access to local businesses.

Normandale Community College is a major driver of local and regional transit. The Station is highly used by those transferring to the College, which is a short 5 minute bus ride away. The METRO Orange Line will likely increase ridership to the College.

Providing adequate pedestrian facilities may encourage riders to stop at area businesses between transfers.

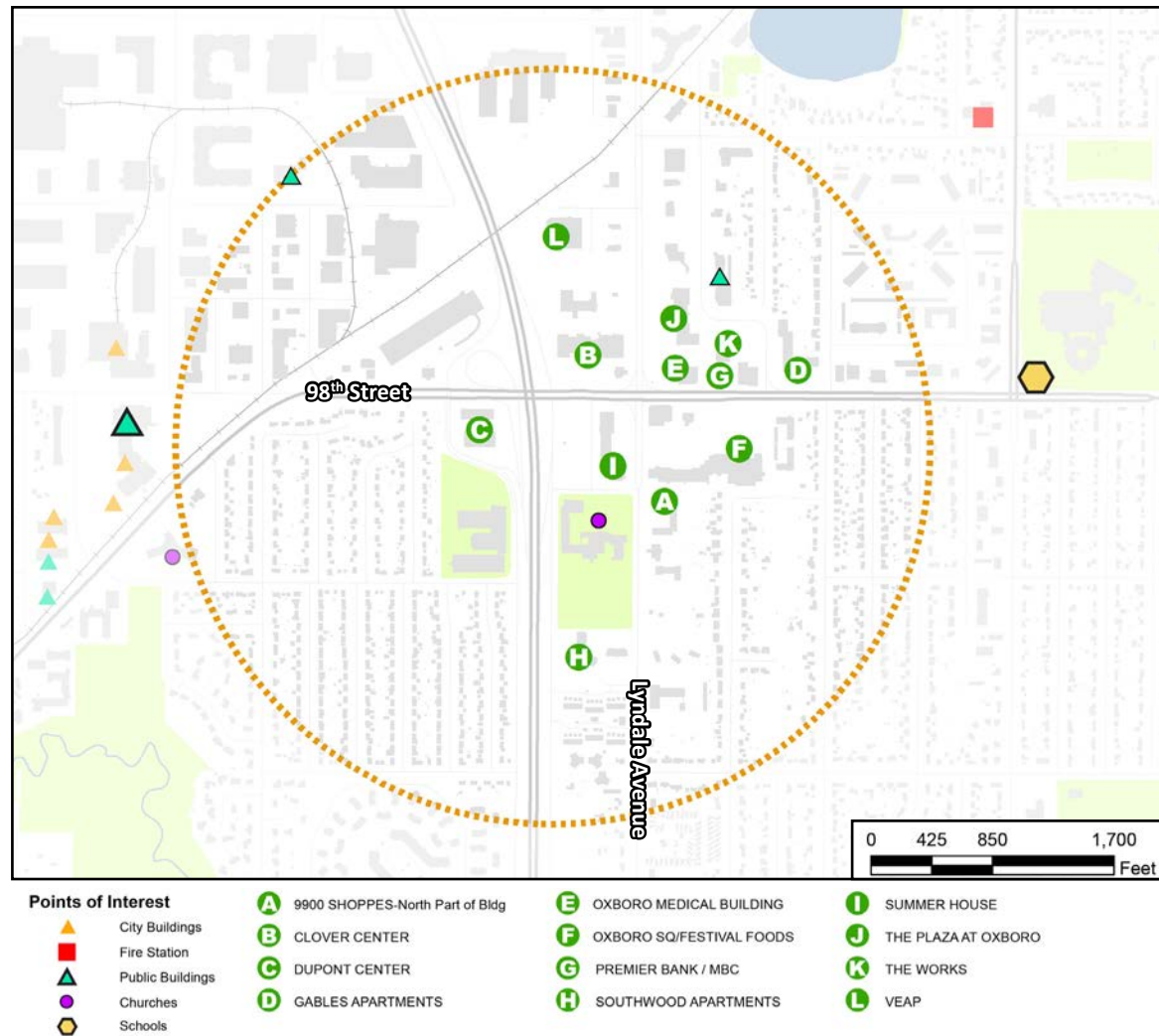
There are also a few public spaces including **Civic Plaza**, Bloomington Center for the Arts, the Bloomington Farmer's Market to the west, and a post office to the northeast. There are no public parks within the half mile radius, but Nine Mile Creek and Oxboro Lake are walkable and under one mile away. Bike lanes along Lyndale and a dedicated trail on Bloomington Freeway will provide quick access to the Minnesota River Valley, a 13 mile long wildlife refuge located along the Minnesota River.

Social Service

There are several social service agencies that provide valuable services to the community. At Civic Plaza there are many departments that interact and provide valuable services to the community. The Housing and Redevelopment Authority, Office of Community Outreach and

CONTEXT & EXISTING CONDITIONS

Figure 3.5 Points of Interest



Engagement, Public Health, Police, and more help residents connect with the resources they need. Ensuring that there are multiple methods to arrive at Civic Plaza is critical.

Creekside Community Center is located 2 blocks west of Civic Plaza on 98th Street, and provides programming for seniors as well as food assistance. Many visitors of Creekside arrive by walking. One frequently traveled path, identified during public outreach, is over I-35W and along 98th Street on the south side. Improving the pedestrian environment and ensuring ADA compliance will help ease access to these much needed services. The same improvements would also support access to Civic Plaza.

Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People (VEAP) is located in the northern part of the Station Area. VEAP provides a number of social service programs for south Hennepin County and is the largest food shelf in Minnesota. They also partner with Hennepin County Social Services, which leases office



Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People (VEAP)

space in the building. VEAP is also an important community member. They assisted in the development of this plan by hosting the initial visioning session, inviting the City to participate in its Block Party, promoting the user survey, and participating in focus group discussion.

Many people who visit VEAP are transit dependent. Through its services, VEAP provides rides home for those visiting the food shelf as it can be very difficult to carry a week's worth of food. This ride home service makes traveling home from the center a little easier.

While VEAP does not track who uses transit to visit the center, they provided rides home for 627 unique households resulting in 3,461 trips in 2017. These households presumably used transit or walked in order to arrive at the facility. To help visitors reach the facility, a rapid flashing beacon was installed at the crosswalk at 96th Street and Lyndale, which has been well received. Improving the walkway along the west side of Lyndale Avenue as well as the crossing at Lyndale Avenue and 98th Street will also help improve pedestrian access and connect transit riders to the facility.

Entertainment

Civic Plaza is home to the **Bloomington Center for the Arts** as well as the **Bloomington Farmers Market**. The Center for the Arts coordinates year round programming including theater productions, dance, art exhibits, and studio space. The Farmers' Market runs every Saturday from June through October and is a major draw to the area. Being able to

connect to the station area, especially over I-35W will encourage more people in the area to visit these attractions.

Additionally, the **Works Museum** provides children the opportunity to explore engineering and design hands on. While field trips are a major component of museum operations during the school year, many families visit the museum on weekends and during the summer. Ensuring families are able to safely move around the area will help encourage museum goers to visit area businesses.



The Works Museum

3.3 Public Outreach

The purpose for public outreach was two-fold. First, information was provided about the planned METRO Orange Line and the enhanced services of BRT. Second, feedback was sought regarding the plan's vision and recommendations.

Visioning Session

In August 2017, Metro Transit and the City of Bloomington hosted a community visioning session at Volunteers Enlisted to Assist People (VEAP). Participants included residents of Summer House, the Nativity of Mary School, VEAP volunteers and employees, and the Bloomington Chamber of Commerce. With the intent to define long-term hopes for the area, participants discussed the area's potential in relation to themes of transportation, land use and housing, and open space and water resources. The result from the discussion was the following vision for the 98th Street

Station Area Plan:

- Enhanced public realm that creates a sense of place
- Development patterns that support transit
- Improved access to the station for all users

This vision has served as a guide for the subsequent outreach efforts listed below, and the recommendations found in Sections 4 were developed to support this vision.

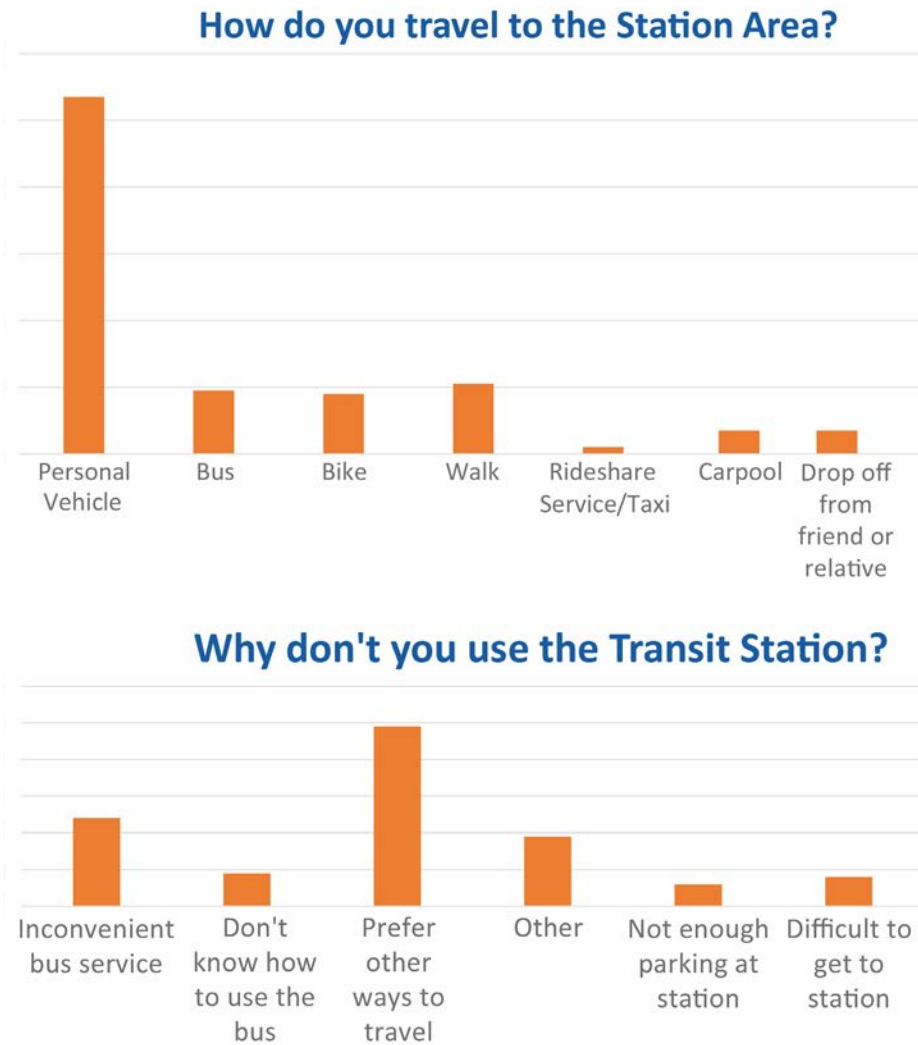
Online Survey

An online survey was conducted in June 2018. It was promoted through social media, newsletters, the project website, fliers at businesses, and at the transit station. A total of 167 responses were received. The survey addressed topics relating to use of transit services, circulation, accessibility, preferred modes of travel, and desired improvements.

Some of the takeaways included:

- Around 40 percent of respondents use the transit station.
- Those who use the transit station primarily use it to for commuting to work.
- About 70% of regular transit users (those that use the transit station more than one day a month) drive to and park at the transit station.
- A majority of respondents who drive found it difficult to find a parking space.
- Over 100 respondents use a personal vehicle when traveling in the station area, but busing, biking, and walking each had about 20 respondents.
- The most important improvements desired by respondents were sidewalks and pedestrian safety.

Figure 3.6 Survey Key Takeaways

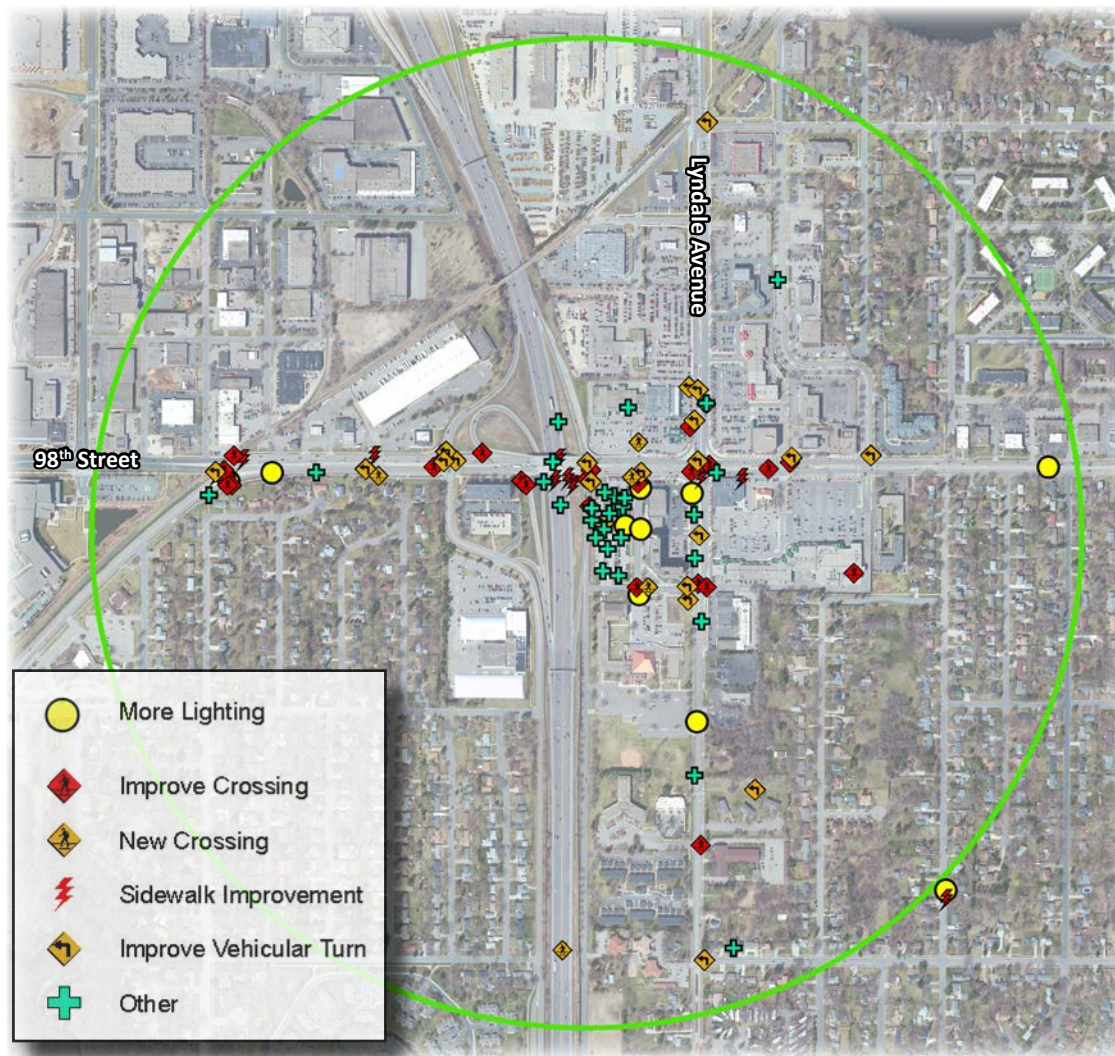


Importance of Amenities



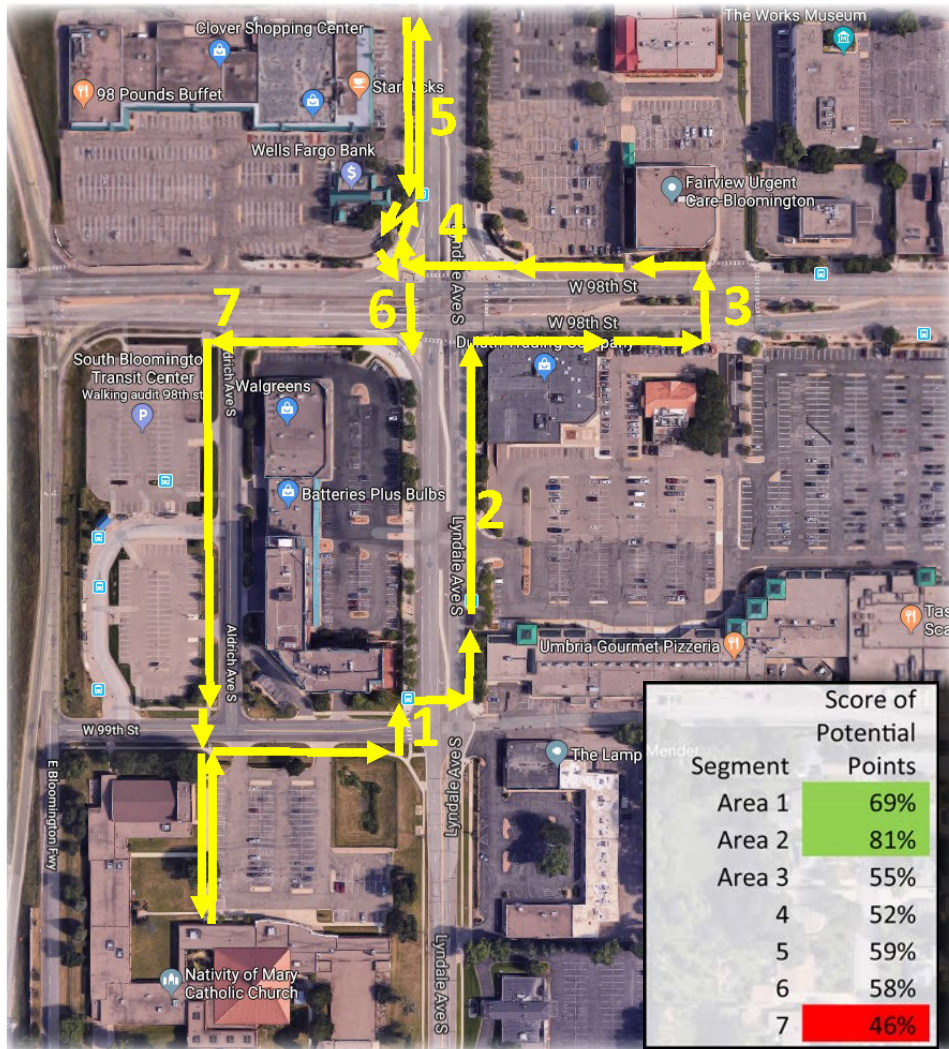
CONTEXT & EXISTING CONDITIONS

Figure 3.6 Online Interactive Survey Map



The survey included an interactive map feature that allowed respondents to place points and post comments in locations where issues exist. This map allowed staff to focus on issues in specific locations and informed the route used for the walking audit. A full summary of the survey is found in Appendix A.

Figure 3.7 Walking Audit Route



Walking Audit

Tracy Smith, the City’s ADA Coordinator, organized the walking audit of the station area. Participants included persons with disabilities and seniors. The route began and ended at Nativity of Mary Church and went up Lyndale Avenue and along 98th Street. Participants evaluated different segments for their accessibility and general comfort level. Important takeaways include:

- Lyndale Avenue south of 98th Street is inviting and fairly pedestrian friendly given existing streetscaping, including mature trees, and lower traffic levels.
- In some locations, tree grates encroach into walkways result in a very narrow clear walkway surface.
- Signal timing for pedestrian crossings were not long enough
- Accessible Pedestrian Signals are needed at Garfield Avenue/ 98th Street and Lyndale Avenue/98th Street

- Walking along northwest Lyndale Avenue (adjacent to Clover Center) is difficult and uncomfortable due to:
 - Multiple driveways
 - Lack of tree cover
 - Mismatched sidewalk transition (sidewalk width changes and uneven pavement)
- Aldrich Avenue at 98th Street is difficult to cross for those with disabilities because:
 - The western curb ramp faces north directing visually impaired and wheel chair users north into 98th Street rather than to the connecting sidewalk west
 - The median in 98th Street does not have ramps for those in wheelchairs so cannot be used as a crossing refuge.
 - Signs in the median create obstacles for pedestrians and those using wheelchairs.

Many of these issues were also identified in the online survey and later field verified. Participants also noted that the crossing with a rapid flashing beacon at 96th Street across Lyndale Avenue was well utilized. It was also noted that pedestrians travelling west along 98th Street almost always use the sidewalk on the south side of the I-35W bridge because it is wider and more accommodating. These observations are reflected in the preliminary recommendations. A full summary of the walking audit is found in Appendix B.

Outreach events

The Station Area Plan was promoted and discussed at several outreach events, oftentimes in coordination with the City's Forward 2040 Comprehensive Plan update. Staff provided information tables at Farmers Markets, the VEAP Block Party, and Heritage Days, giving residents the opportunity to learn about the future operations of the METRO Orange Line, identify issues, and weigh in on draft

recommendations. The primary issues discussed at these outreach events include:

- Parking at the transit station
 - Overflow parking on Aldrich
 - Limited available parking prompts some to drive down to Burnsville
- Poor condition of 98th and Lyndale crossing
- Short signal length for crossing at various signalized intersections



October 2018 Open House

The City held an open house at Nativity of Mary Church on October 1, 2018 to allow public review and comment on the draft recommendations. Staff from the City, Hennepin County, and Metro Transit were available to answer questions and discuss the draft recommendations. Overall, recommendations were well received. The main topic of discussion for most in attendance was parking at the transit station. Short term and long term recommendations regarding parking are discussed in the Recommendations Section.

Focus Groups

Area business and property owners were invited to participate in small group and one-on-one discussions. Discussions took place with:

- Kraus Anderson
- VEAP
- The Works Museum
- Shah Properties
- Walgreens

- Metro Transit
- Hennepin County
- Bloomington Chamber of Commerce

The meetings were tailored to each property and business. Generally, discussions focused on rezoning of key properties, altering the lane configuration and intersection of 98th Street and Lyndale Avenue, and identifying issues that the properties and businesses deal with on a day to day basis. These discussions were integral to ensuring that recommendations support the needs of area businesses.

3.4 Issues & Opportunities

This Plan addresses land use policy and public realm design enhancements to support the significant transit investments being made in this area with the new METRO Orange Line service. Existing issues related to land use and development, vehicular circulation, ease of operation for public transit, bicycle and pedestrian safety and accessibility, and the overall identity of the Station Area are summarized below.

Lack of Directionality & Accessibility

The design of several existing street intersections and sidewalks create confusion for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists about how to safely and efficiently navigate through the station area. Additionally, the high volume of vehicular traffic in the area creates safety concerns for bicyclists and forces them to share sidewalks with pedestrians. This plan



recommends improvements to the bike and pedestrian environment, while recognizing the need to accommodate high volumes of vehicular traffic in the area. Improvements strive to balance efficient vehicle flow with improved

pedestrian safety and accessibility. Recommended improvements will undergo full engineering study prior to implementation. Some examples of improvements to the pedestrian environment include:

- Removing free right turns for vehicles,
- Better aligning truncated domes/curb ramps,
- Creating pedestrian refuge islands,
- Adding crosswalk striping, and
- Improving accessible pedestrian signals.

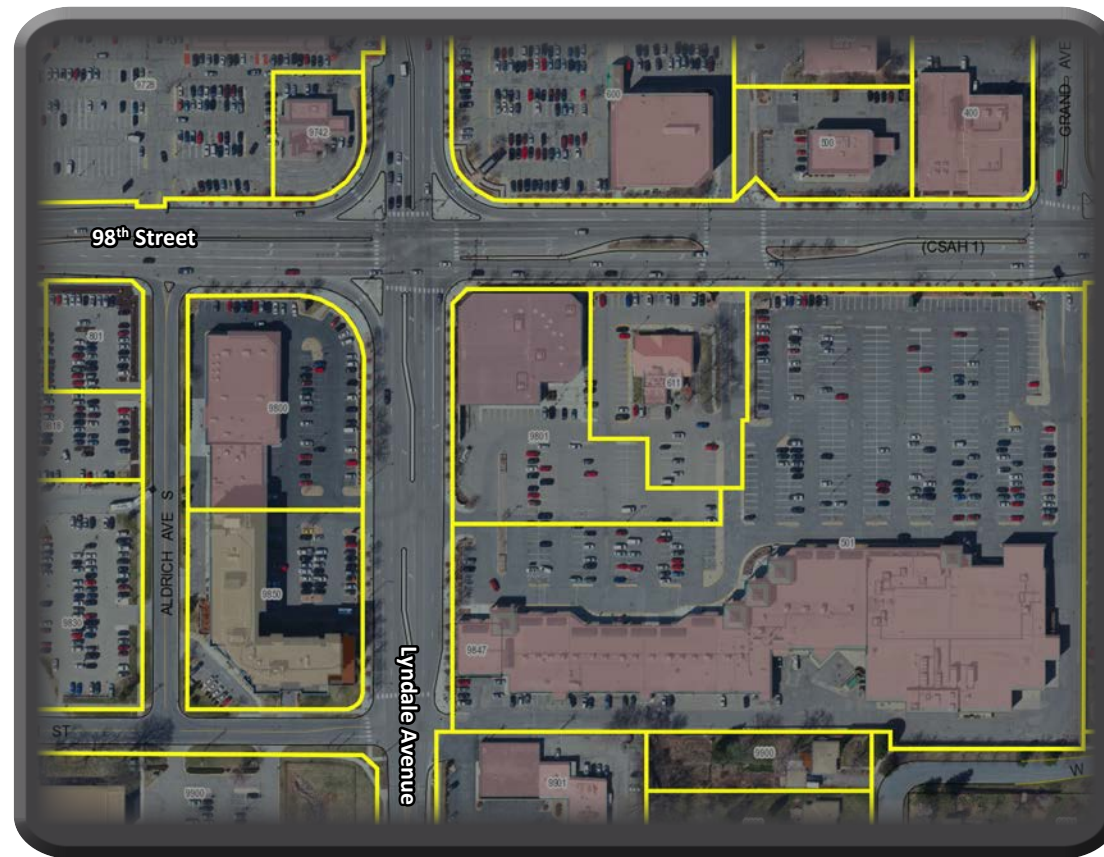
In some areas, extending existing lines of boulevard trees can help create a sense of place. Together, these improvements will improve access, safety, and clarify direction for residents, transit, businesses, and places of employment.

Piecemeal Development

Inconsistent coordination of redevelopment and mismatched property boundaries have contributed to a pedestrian environment that lacks clear and continuous connectivity. Pedestrians and vehicles must navigate parking lots with poor internal circulation, dead end roads, and sidewalks that abruptly end.

City coordination with property owners can help prevent some of these issues. This Plan recommends prioritizing pedestrian navigation on sites undergoing redevelopment. Improvements to public infrastructure

can also help connect station area properties and support future needs (see Section 4).





Outmoded Development Patterns

The existing development pattern in the station area reflects the vision of the 1980's Oxboro redevelopment. While some attempts were made to create a more “urban” character, overall development reflected an upgraded suburban strip mall model. With the planned METRO Orange Line BRT scheduled to begin



service by 2021, the time is right to consider a new vision for the area that can both leverage and support the significant enhancement in transit service the area will soon enjoy. Best practices for development around transit stations (Transit-Oriented Development) include incorporation of a mix of residential and commercial uses, increased density, and buildings located closer to streets.

Recommendations in the Station Area Plan are intended to support future transit-supportive redevelopment.

Lack of a Sense of Place

The current physical environment, characterized by large parking lots, wide roads, and fast moving vehicular traffic, does not entice people to stay and explore the area. While past streetscaping efforts improved the

appeal of some areas, the area overall lacks comprehensive and consistent streetscaping features such as unique lighting, signage, pavement markings, and continuous rows of street trees and vegetation. Some benches are located along 98th Street, but few seating options are available near building entrances, except where associated with private restaurant outdoor seating. The station area offers a variety of service oriented businesses and places to visit. Providing a more inviting pedestrian and bike-oriented environment could encourage people

to linger and explore the area.

Park and Ride Near Full Capacity

The 98th Street transit station is well used and the parking lot is often near capacity during the work week. Many transit users park their vehicles in the lot during the day while commuting to Minneapolis. The parking lot is surrounded by existing development with no land available for expansion of the surface lot. Development of a parking structure would be cost prohibitive given land values in the area and use restrictions. Furthermore,

devoting more land area to parking is somewhat contradictory to the goal of fostering transit-supportive development and making the area more pedestrian and bike-oriented.

The Transit Station is not intended to serve the region or function as a regional park and ride. As redevelopment occurs and the I-35W & 98th Street interchange is upgraded and potentially reconfigured, City staff will work with Metro Transit to explore future potential for alternative transit station configurations and redevelopment opportunities for the parking lot.





Photo rendering depicting a parklet as alternative use of space along Aldrich Avenue next to the transit station.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4

The recommendations are divided into three groups. First, improvements to public infrastructure, such as streetscaping and crosswalks, are proposed. Second, a corridor and interchange study is needed. This will enhance the area and provide direction about the timing of some of the recommended infrastructure improvements. Last, rezoning some of the lots around the 98th Street and Lyndale Avenue intersection is recommended in order to support a transit oriented development district.

4.1 Planned Public Infrastructure Improvements

The public infrastructure improvements identified in this Plan primarily apply to public rights-of-way in the Station Area, such as roadways and sidewalk. Some of the recommendations provided below are more general and apply to the entire station area, while others are very specific to an intersection or roadway. There are also a few projects that have already been identified and are scheduled for 2019.

Previously Identified Projects

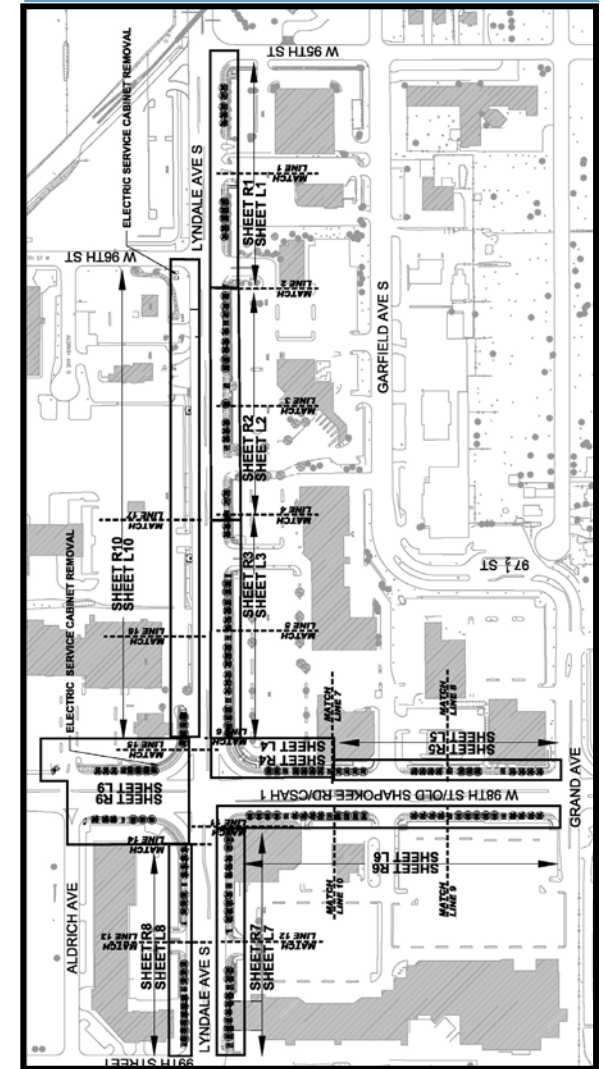
In addition to the improved Station that Metro Transit is planning, the City is also has existing plans to make improvements in the station area. The planned improvements listed below will address some of the issues identified in this Plan.

98th & Lyndale Streetscape Project

In early 2019, the City plans to install new street trees and lighting around the intersection of 98th Street and Lyndale Avenue. This project includes replacement of existing street trees and surrounding grates and pavement materials. Existing ash and honeylocust trees will be replaced with honeylocust, swamp white oak, and Patriot elm species. The existing metal tree grates will be removed and the planting beds redesigned into larger, rectangular mulch planting beds filled with structural soils to improve the health of tree roots. Perennial daylily and catmint species will be planted around the trees. The new planting beds will provide a clearer pedestrian walkway with 5 to 7 feet wide paths.

In partnership with Xcel Energy, the City will replace existing streetlights with LED fixtures to match the lighting installed further north along Lyndale Avenue.

Figure 4.1 Planned Streetscape Improvements



Bike Lanes

As part of the 2019 Pavement Management Program, the City will install on-road bike lanes along Lyndale Avenue from the Minnesota River Valley trailhead to 106th Street in accordance with the Bloomington Alternative Transportation Plan (ATP). Additionally, the City is proposing to build an off-road, multi-purpose trail along East Bloomington Freeway from 106th Street to 99th Street. Implementation of this trail is subject to timing of the interchange improvements at 106th street, but is scheduled to occur by late 2020. Both of these improvements will enhance transit services by providing safe and convenient connections to schools, residential neighborhoods, the Minnesota River Valley, and other existing and proposed trails.

Figure 4.2 Existing & Planned Bikeways



4.2 Proposed Public Infrastructure Improvements

The recommendations found in this Section are intended to increase access to the station for all users and create a sense of place. They aim to overcome the barriers found between various amenities in the Station Area. Economic activity can be improved by connecting employment opportunities in the western industrial area with the shopping and restaurant area to the east. Furthermore, livability can be enhanced by connecting these areas to residential neighborhoods and recreational opportunities, such as Nine Mile Creek, Oxboro Lake, and the Minnesota River Valley. Improvements to pedestrian access, parking, and wayfinding & branding are needed throughout the Station Area to address some of these barriers.

1. Pedestrian Improvements

Improving pedestrian access and comfort is critical to encourage transit users, residents, and visitors to walk in the Station Area. It can also greatly improve the quality of life for area residents who don't drive. Minor adjustments to signalized intersections can greatly enhance the pedestrian experience. Recommended improvements include installing Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS), lengthening crossing times, and implementing leading pedestrian indicators (LPI). These are low cost/high impact improvements that should be prioritized for implementation in the near future.

Accessible Pedestrian Signals are pushbuttons located at intersections specifically designed for pedestrians with disabilities. They are often equipped with brail, audio devices that call out the name of the street when safe to cross, and may allow crossing time to be lengthened when pushed a certain way.

During the walking audit it was noted that existing pushbuttons provide the absolute minimum time necessary to cross. A feature that allows users to adjust the walk speed can better accommodate users who don't walk at the quick pace the signals currently are designed for.

Leading pedestrian indicators (LPI) are signals that give pedestrians and cyclists time to move through an intersection 3 to 7 seconds before vehicles are given a green light, which indicates to turning vehicles that pedestrians have the right-of-way. Oftentimes, when the pedestrian signal is set to the vehicle signal drivers immediately turn, preventing pedestrians from entering the intersection and creating potential unsafe conditions. LPI will be especially effective if free right turns are removed as recommended for Area C later in this Section.

Additionally, pedestrian scale lighting and enhanced crosswalk striping can improve safety. Pedestrian lighting

helps create a sense of security and makes pedestrians more visible to vehicles. Well striped crosswalks clearly indicate where vehicles should exercise caution when entering an intersection.

2. Parking

Providing sufficient parking at the transit station and throughout the station area is important. The goal is to provide a balance of parking that adequately supports transit users and area businesses but does not detract from the enhanced transit service or long-term vision.

The transit center currently provides 195 parking spaces and operates at full capacity most weekdays. Some ways to address short term and long term parking demand include:

- Promoting shared parking,
- Enhancing transit access,
- Expanding the supply of parking through structured district parking, and



Photo rendering showing enhanced streetscaping along Lyndale Avenue

- Enhancing the public realm to make biking and walking more convenient, safe, and appealing.

There are underutilized parking lots throughout the station area. Underutilized parking on nearby properties could be used to address

parking overflow at the transit station in the short term. This would require Metro Transit to work with private property owners to execute shared parking agreements. Improving pedestrian crossings near the transit station could make use of shared

parking on nearby parcels a safe and viable option. Another short term solution involves improving coordination with connecting crosstown bus services to encourage transit riders to access the 98th Street Station by bus. Metro Transit is investing in these crosstown connections to encourage use of parking facilities and bus stops in the vicinity as an alternative to driving to the Transit Station.

Adding structured parking is a potential long-term solution that could play a role in establishing a district parking solution that would also support redevelopment in the area. This could help reduce the need for parking on adjacent sites and increase the walkability of the area. This would involve substantial investment and would take coordination between Metro Transit, the City, and other development partners. The potential to invest in structured parking is most viable if the entire transit center facility redevelops in the future. The

Metropolitan Council has indicated that the transit center site is a priority for exploring transit oriented redevelopment. Redevelopment could potentially incorporate district parking and reconfiguration of the transit station.

3. Wayfinding and Branding Signage

The station area is sometimes referred to as the Oxboro District because Oxboro Health Trading Post was opened by the Oxborough family that lived in the vicinity since the City was first settled. Past district plans have also used the Oxboro name. In the 80's, references were made about creating a "downtown" for Bloomington in the Oxboro redevelopment district. Efforts were taken to continue the Oxboro brand by naming shopping centers Oxboro Center and Oxboro Plaza, and Fairview continuing the name Oxboro Clinic. A clock tower was constructed in the 90's, and at the base are plaques that depict Bloomington's history. Despite these branding efforts most Bloomington residents commonly

refer to the area, as most areas in Bloomington, by the predominant intersection 98th and Lyndale.

In some areas existing streetscaping helps provide a sense of place, but in other areas the sidewalk facilities, trees, and benches are lacking and fail to create the feel of an inviting district. As discussed in the Planned Improvement Section, the existing trees and planters are being upgraded. Improvements such as these could be expanded to better serve the whole station area and connect key locations such as Civic Plaza and Kennedy High School. Recommendations to streetscaping are further discussed in the specific area recommendations below. These recommendations are intended to build from, extend, and piece together the positive aspects of today's streetscape.

Signage and wayfinding are tangible means to enhance district feel and improve branding. Building off the clock tower, new historical monuments/signage indicating



Photo rendering of solar signage with custom messaging & transit arrival times

important aspects about the history of the area could help define the area as the City's historic core. Additionally, wayfinding is mostly nonexistent today and will be increasingly important as more pedestrians are expected to be in the area. Wayfinding will help people locate businesses and attractions, enhance the pedestrian experience, and help build the area brand.

Gateway signage can also help create a sense of place and build off the proposed wayfinding signage. The exit off of I-35W is one of the most trafficked in the City of Bloomington. Most entering and exiting the freeway are coming from outside of Bloomington, making this a major gateway to the City. Gateway signage can promote peoples' perceptions of the City of Bloomington and enhance branding for the station area.

Specific Area Recommendations

In addition to recommendations for the whole station area, specific area recommendations regarding public infrastructure are provided for the 5 subareas shown in the Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3 Recommendation Subareas

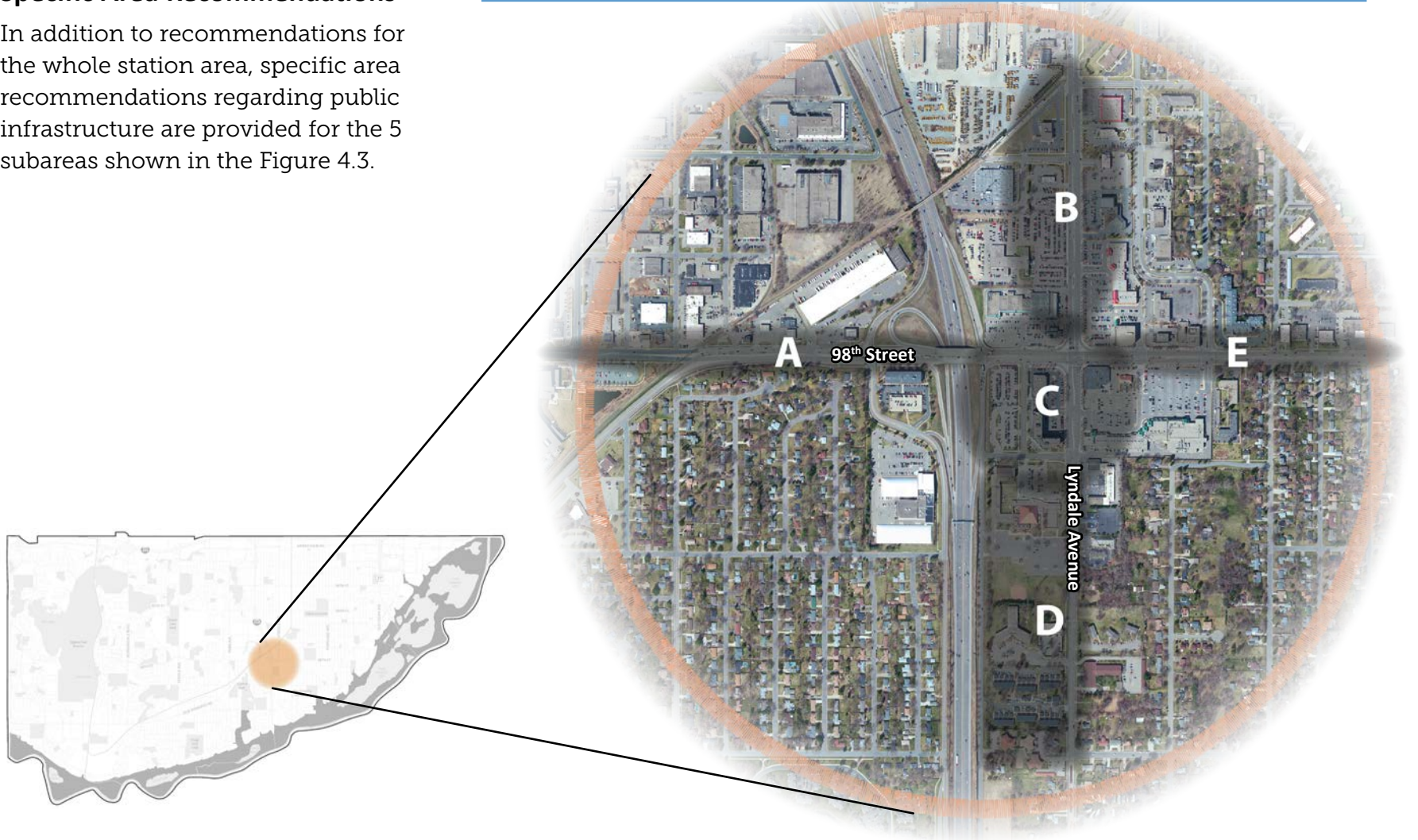


Figure 4.4 Area A Recommendations

**Area A**

This area is an important because it connects the station to Civic Plaza (City Hall, Bloomington Center for the Arts, Department of Motor Vehicles, and Public Health Center), residential neighborhood, and the industrial area to the north of 98th Street. Improving connection to the station improves access to social services, entertainment options, residents, and employment.

A1. Evaluate for installation of new signalized crosswalk over 98th

Crossing 98th street was continually identified as a pedestrian barrier during outreach events and with stakeholders. Persons running across or standing in the medians are continually observed in this area, especially at the location identified on the map. The proposed crosswalk over 98th Street would provide access for pedestrians between the Station and the industrial area to the north.

A2. Address 98th Street and Old Shakopee Road split

This crossing was frequently cited as a major barrier for employees and pedestrians. To the north is an industrial area with many of the City's jobs. (see A-1 addressing the north movement) Finding a way to slow vehicles around this corner and indicating that pedestrians are using this crossing is essential. Crosswalks, rapid flashing beacons, street trees, etc. are potential treatments. Close



examination and evaluation of potential options is recommended in coordination with any corridor study in the area.

A3. Upgrade Orphan Parcel

The parcel located at 98th and Girard Avenue is roughly a tenth of an acre. This is not large enough to develop. This parcel, owned by the City, is

currently occupied by a parking lot serving the adjacent bus stop. There is little to no activity at this parking lot. Potential installation of public art or creation of a pocket park to help beautify the area could add functionality to the parcel.

A4. Address wide driveway

The shared driveway for the gas station, self-storage facility, and restaurant to the north of 98th is exceptionally wide, which is confusing for cars entering the three sites, and is difficult for pedestrians to safely cross. Extending the median, adding striping, or narrowing the driveway will help reduce confusion as to which side to enter and exit for vehicles making it easier for pedestrians to cross.

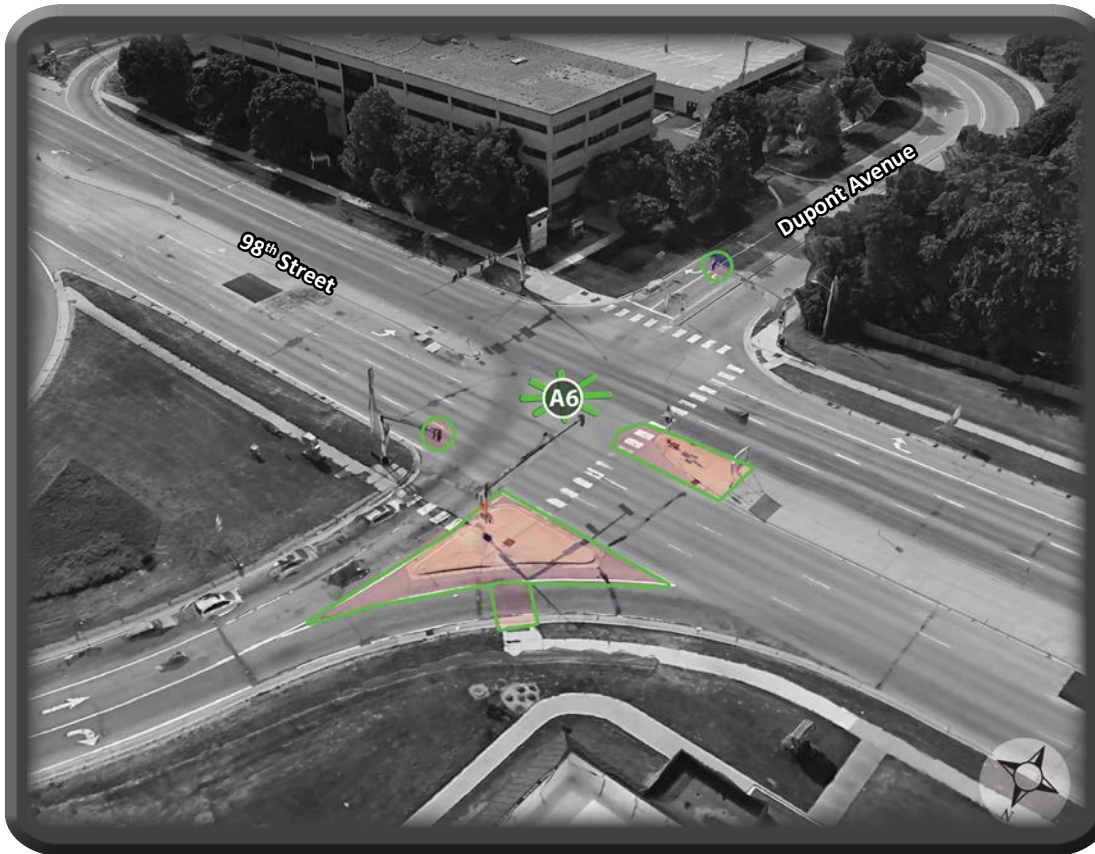
A5. Enhance sidewalks

The sidewalks on the west side of the station area are adequate but do little to encourage users to walk. The south side of 98th Street was designed to promote walking by limiting vehicle access but maintaining sidewalk

connections for pedestrians. However, the sidewalk is limited in width. Despite the wide boulevard, no street trees have been planted. Widening the sidewalk or installing a shared pedestrian/bicycle trail, as well as

installing street vegetation will improve the sense of protection and safety for pedestrians and cyclists.



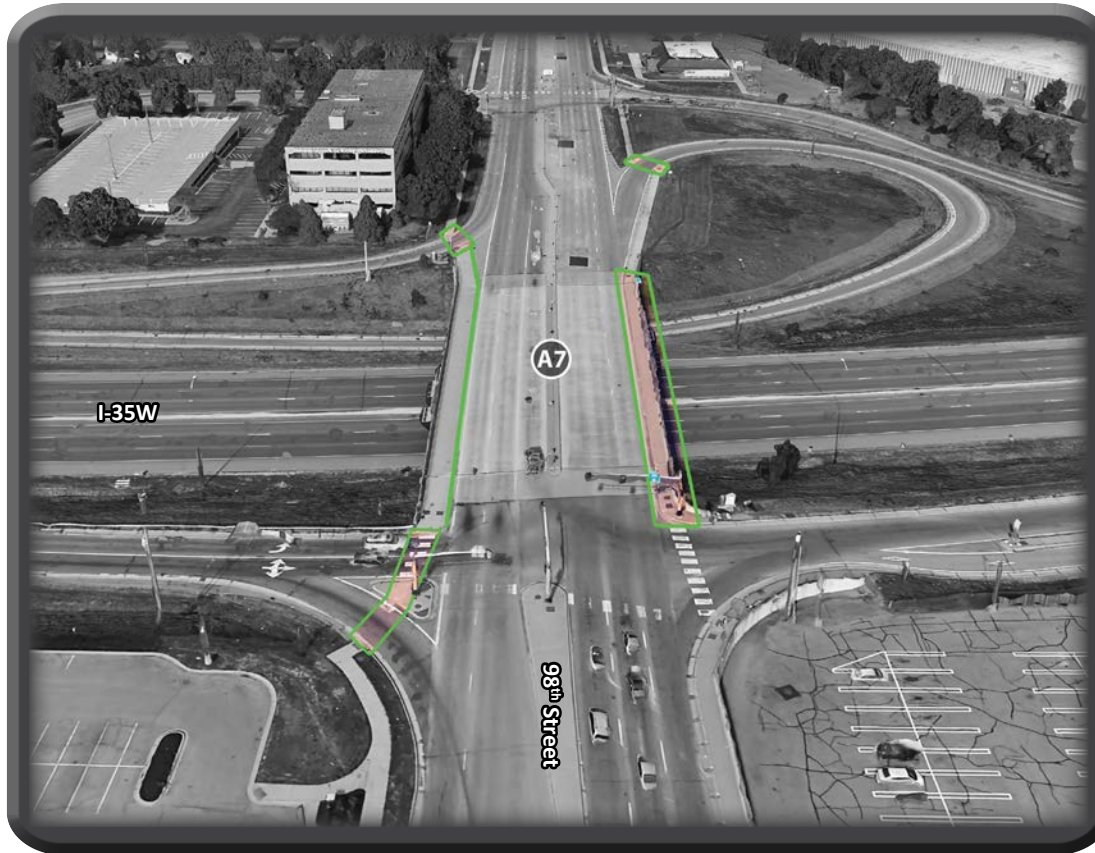


A6. Intersection of 98th Street, and DuPont Avenue/I-35W exit-ramp

The intersection at 98th Street and DuPont Avenue/I-35 W exit-ramp can benefit from multiple upgrades. The

intersection is difficult for pedestrians to cross due to short pedestrian signal times, a free right turn for vehicles, and a wide roadway with no refuge island. Redesigning the exit ramp and adding a refuge median on 98th Street

would address the physical barriers of the intersection. In the short term, it is recommended to add signage or a flashing beacon at the exit ramp signal to caution vehicles to slow down and look for pedestrians. It was also noted during outreach events that there is no dedicated left turn signal from northbound DuPont Avenue to westbound 98th Street. This makes it difficult for vehicles to turn. Addressing the signal timing and adding a left signal phase could improve flow at the intersection. Specific adjustments should be identified in a corridor and/or interchange study.



A7. I-35 W Bridge

The bridge over I-35W poses a major east and west barrier for pedestrians and bicyclists. For many, this is the only path from the transit center to

employment opportunities in the industrial area or social services found at Civic Plaza and Creekside Center. Currently, most pedestrians and bicyclists use the south side of the bridge because the sidewalk is much

wider (12 ft wide) than on the north (6 ft wide). On both sides, the sidewalk directly abuts the roadway without any protection. The weaving vehicles on the bridge, loud traffic of the freeway below, and minimally maintained fencing creates an inhospitable environment for pedestrians. In the short term, potential exists to install a barrier (such as two foot wide jersey barriers) between the roadway and sidewalk on the Southside. Snow storage should be considered before a treatment is applied.

Additionally, on the west side entrance ramps there is also no striping for crosswalks nor signage indicating to vehicles to exercise caution for pedestrians. Adding these features is recommended for the short term. In the long term, bridge reconstruction should be designed to facilitate and encourage bike and pedestrian movements.

Figure 4.5 Area B Recommendations



Area B

The area north of 98th Street along Lyndale Avenue starts one of Bloomington's main commercial corridors. This area is the southern anchor to this corridor. Improving access for pedestrians and bicyclists and creating a sense of identity is priority for this area.

B1. Streetscaping on North West Side

While some efforts have been made to make the west side of Lyndale Avenue more pedestrian friendly, the lack of vegetation has been a detriment to the area. During the walking audit and outreach events, participants acknowledged that other parts of the station area were enhanced by the

presence of trees and vegetation. However, given the visibility of north Lyndale Avenue, most people associated the station area as having few trees, bright lights, and little streetscaping. Matching the streetscape on the west side of Lyndale Avenue to that of the east side will greatly improve the area's identity, and should

include trees and pedestrian scale lighting.

B2. Bicycle Route

It is important to accommodate bicycle traffic through this area. In the next year, a multi-use trail and bike lanes are planned that would extend south and connect to the Minnesota River Valley State Trail. Finding a way to connect through the area and head north to other planned routes in the Alternative Transportation Plan is important. Two potential routes along Lyndale Avenue or Garfield Avenue have been identified as potential options. Providing bicycle access broadens the area from which the transit station can draw ridership.

B3. Right-of-Way and Access improvements

Currently, the property to the northwest of 98th Street and Lyndale Avenue has two access drives to Lyndale Avenue. The southern access is located directly where a right turn lane begins. While the right turn lane



is likely needed to accommodate the large amount of freeway traffic, the driveway is positioned poorly and creates a major point of conflict. As the property redevelops it will be important to address any right of way needs, including adequate room

for a sidewalk and streetscaping. Reconfiguring access should also be part of that discussion to ensure safety, adequate flow, and access to the site for all users.

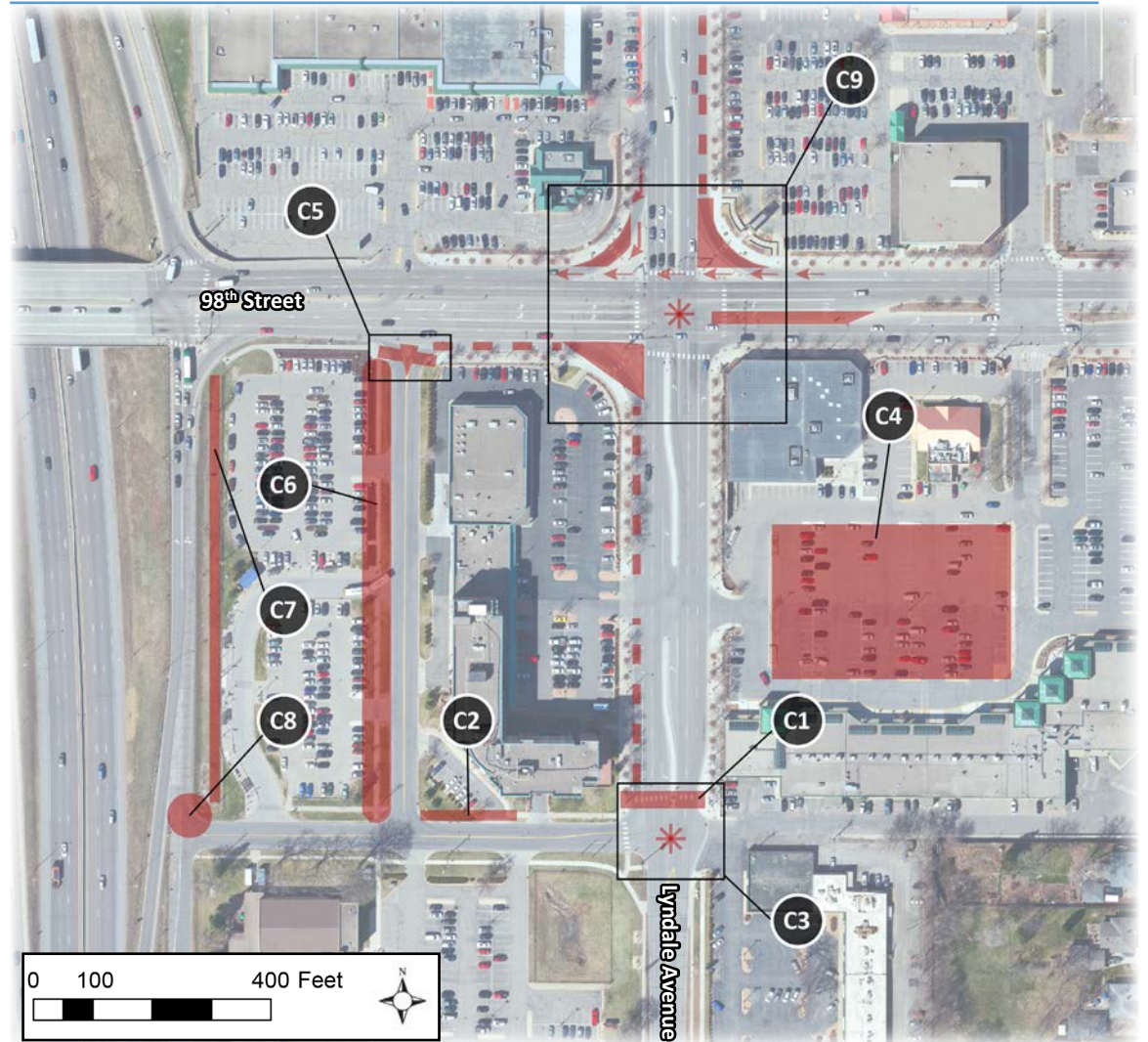
Area C

The area around the 98th Street and Lyndale Avenue intersection has the most impact on the station area. It is the commercial center of the area, and has the most potential for redevelopment. As a high traffic intersection with wide roads, it is also a major barrier for pedestrians. The current site design encourages vehicles over pedestrians. With the prospect of transit supportive development, the increasing numbers of pedestrians and bikes at this intersection, and the proximity to the transit station, this area is especially ready for improvements.

C1. Rapid Flashing Beacon at 99th Street Crossing

While traffic levels are manageable for pedestrians using the crosswalk across Lyndale Avenue at 99th Street, there is room for improvement. The installation of a rapid flashing beacon at 96th Street on Lyndale Avenue has been successful in an area with much higher

Figure 4.6 Area C Recommendations





traffic volumes. Adding this feature to 99th Street will assist pedestrians who are heading to adjacent neighborhood and commercial areas.

C2. Complete sidewalk connection

Along 99th Street, the sidewalk on the north side is missing near Aldrich Avenue. Grading may be an issue that prevented the original installation. Similar issues were overcome along Old Shakopee road, and applying

those techniques here is worth exploring. This sidewalk connection compliments the improved crossing in recommendation C1 and will help facilitate connection to the adjacent neighborhood and commercial areas.

C3. Reconfigure 99th Street and Lyndale Avenue

Once the BRT line is operational and more bus traffic is in service, there might be a need to reconfigure the corner of 99th Street and Lyndale Avenue. It was pointed out during outreach events that buses frequently overrun the curb. Adjusting the geometry of the corner could help improve this.

Additionally, if Bloomington Freeway becomes restricted to allow only buses (as described in C8), then more vehicular traffic leaving from the transit station will turn left onto Lyndale from 99th Street in order to get to 98th Street and go west across the interstate. This plan acknowledges that some of its recommendations



may trigger the need for additional improvements elsewhere. The intersection of 99th Street & Lyndale Avenue is one example of an area that may need improvements if there is an increase in vehicular traffic.

C4. Reconfigure Parking at Festival

Outreach efforts have indicated that many people find the parking configuration at Oxboro Plaza to be confusing and difficult. This recommendation is completely on private property and not under the City's control. However, minor

reconfiguration can improve vehicular flow. In the short term, reconfiguring drive aisles and medians can create more directionality. Parking configuration should be addressed in any redevelopment scenario.

C5. Aldrich Right-in Right-out at 98th Street.

At the intersection of Aldrich and 98th Street a right-in right-out median was installed. Many times the center median on the main road would create a natural right-in right-out scenario. In this case a gap in 98th Street's median allows left turns from 98th Street to the property to the north. In order to prevent northbound vehicles on Aldrich from exploiting this gap, a triangular median was installed. This median poorly directs vehicles because it is small and does not meet today's design standards. The damaged condition of the triangular median and the crooked signs located in its center prove this point. Furthermore, the triangular median it is not ADA compliant. This was highlighted as

a priority during the walking audit as something to address. Although compliant, the truncated domes (tactile bumps indicating that you are approaching an intersection) are angled in a direction that points visually impaired users into 98th Street rather than across Aldrich Avenue. Additionally, the triangular median does not have curb ramps, forcing those in a wheelchair or with physical disability to navigate around them in the street. Metro Transit plans to address this issue during station construction. They will cut the median shorter so it does not impede pedestrians and the curb ramps will be reconstructed.

C6. Enhance Public Realm Near station

For daily transit users or those offloading into Bloomington for the first time, the area around the station makes up peoples' impressions of the City. Attractive facilities that further serve the needs of transit users can greatly improve the City's image. While the station site is mostly full

with platforms, soon to be constructed landscaped waiting area, and parking, the area that makes up the eastern side of the transit center has a sidewalk and large boulevard area. This area along Aldrich can be repurposed to include a refuge area with seating or wayfinding signage for transit riders. There is about 12 feet of boulevard space between the sidewalk and street that could accommodate public art, seating, phone charging stations, and signage. These facilities create a more inviting environment and fit even when space is limited.

C7. Bioswales and raingardens

Stormwater in the area is an important issue. The City continues to work with Metro Transit engineers to determine storm water solutions. During construction or redevelopment of the area, a focus on accommodating raingardens or bioswales into site design would help alleviate some of the stormwater issues.

C8 Restrict Access to Bloomington Freeway

The new BRT buses will utilize the Bloomington Freeway/I-35W Exit Ramp blocking this access. In the future, it might be necessary to restrict access to this area to buses only. The FHWA prefers that frontage roads do not connect to freeway ramps, and this would further that agency's goals.

C9. 98th Street and Lyndale Intersection

The largest barrier for pedestrians is the intersection of 98th Street and Lyndale Avenue. This intersection is the commercial center of the station area. Retail, health care, social services, and offices are all located adjacent to the intersection. As transit use increases and more people live in the area, it is increasingly important to improve the pedestrian environment at this intersection. Perhaps someday the area will have so much pedestrian traffic that a scramble crossing (pedestrian only crossing signal allowing diagonal movement) becomes necessary at 98th Street and Lyndale. In the meantime, creating an environment that balances transit, pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles is a challenge but is crucial to the area's success.

Free Right Turns

Free right turn lanes for vehicles are major barriers that hinder the safety and comfort levels of pedestrians. These turn lanes encourage vehicles to



move quickly through the area without stopping. Yield signs are located at each turn but are positioned in a manner that implies vehicles should yield only to other vehicles. Vehicles entering the turn have no indication they should be looking for pedestrians.

Furthermore, if a driver becomes aware of pedestrians they often lack the ability to stop because of the high speed at which they enter the turn. It is recommended that the free right turn lanes be studied in order to be removed.

Removing the traps

Each of the free right turns have a dedicated lane when entering the turning movement. This forces those in the lane to turn. The two free right turns on the west side of the intersection are relatively short, clearly indicating that they are turn only lanes. However the free right turn on the east side of the intersection from westbound 98th Street entering northbound Lyndale has a two block long lane. This essentially traps vehicles that, unbeknownst to them, thought the lane was a third travel lane. This situation also occurs at Grand Avenue from westbound 98th Street. It is recommended to remove the free right turns and keep the third lane on westbound 98th Street as a travel lane. This will alleviate confusion about which lane provides access to I-35W.

Repurposing lanes

When removing the free right turns there is opportunity to repurpose some of the lanes. Southbound Lyndale

to westbound 98th Street has a high number of vehicles because of its direct access to I-35W, and will likely need to remain a dedicated right turn lane. However, at the jog in roadway that creates the right turn lane there is a driveway that has poor site lines for vehicles and is difficult for pedestrians to cross (described further in B3). When the site redevelops, adequate right-of-way should be dedicated to this lane to improve the function of the lane, and repositioning of the driveway should be considered to help alleviate the conflict. A focus on promoting utilization of the driveway to the north is one potential way to reduce conflict at this driveway.

As described in the removing traps section, the third lane accommodating the free right turn for westbound 98th Street can potentially be repurposed as a travel lane. The third lane on northbound Lyndale has high potential to be repurposed. The lane was installed to accommodate the free right turning movement rather than

to address capacity. The lane drops off at the railroad tracks. This could be a potential bicycle route or widened sidewalk space for pedestrians.

Similarly, the third lane on southbound Lyndale has high potential to be repurposed. Depending on a traffic study, removing the turn lane altogether might be a possibility. This would free up space in the right of way along 98th Street to potentially shift lanes to accommodate a wider center median or add sidewalk space. The added lane on southbound Lyndale also has the potential to be repurposed, and could accommodate a wider sidewalk, wider center median, or bicycle route. Refuge Islands

Removing the free right turn lanes could potentially lengthen the walking distance from corner to corner. By removing the islands the corners will shift, and in some cases the right turn lanes will still be present. Lengthened crossing times, installation of leading pedestrian intervals (LPI), and refuge islands can help ensure pedestrian

safety.

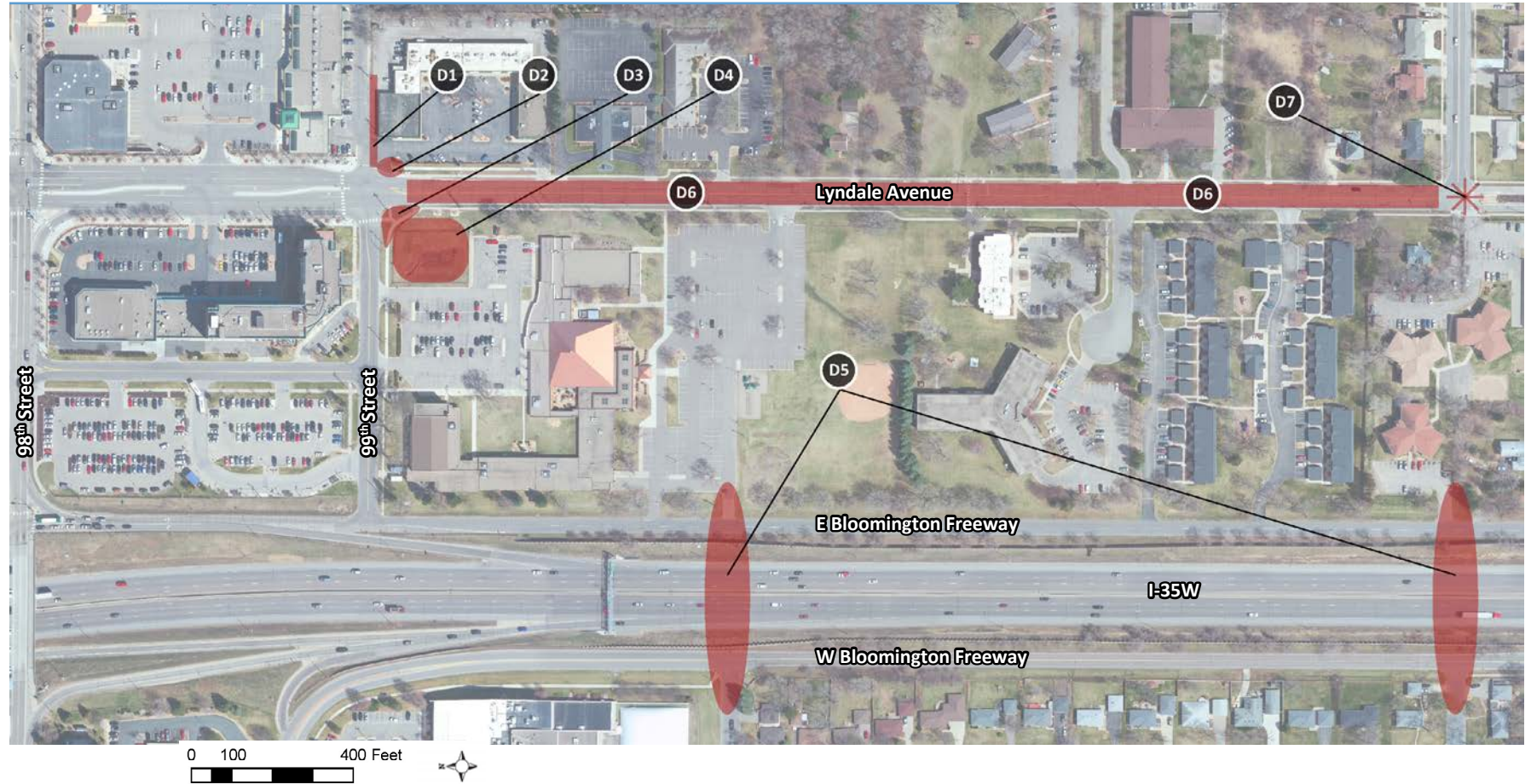
A refuge island is an enhanced median space that is wide enough to accommodate pedestrians who were unable to cross the street in the provided time. They often are outfitted with pushbuttons tied to the signal. Enhanced safety features that move pedestrians quickly through an intersection will encourage users to cross at the intersection rather than at undesignated crossings.

As described in the repurposing lane section, the potential to remove the turn lane on eastbound 98th Street at Lyndale will free up right-of-way. This added space and reconfigured lane sizes could create enough room to add a refuge island on 98th Street on the west side of Lyndale Avenue. This will take careful study to determine the needs of the turning lanes on this side of the roadway.

On the east side of Lyndale Avenue on 98th Street there is higher potential for a refuge island. The double left turn

lane from westbound 98th Street to southbound Lyndale Avenue matches the double left turn lane on the west side. However, the west side has over three times as many vehicles turning left which warrants the additional turn lane. The extraneous left turn lane on the east side would provide sufficient space to install a refuge island.

Figure 4.7 Area D Recommendations

**Area D**

The area south of 98th Street along Lyndale is a mix of commercial and residential uses. The area has much less

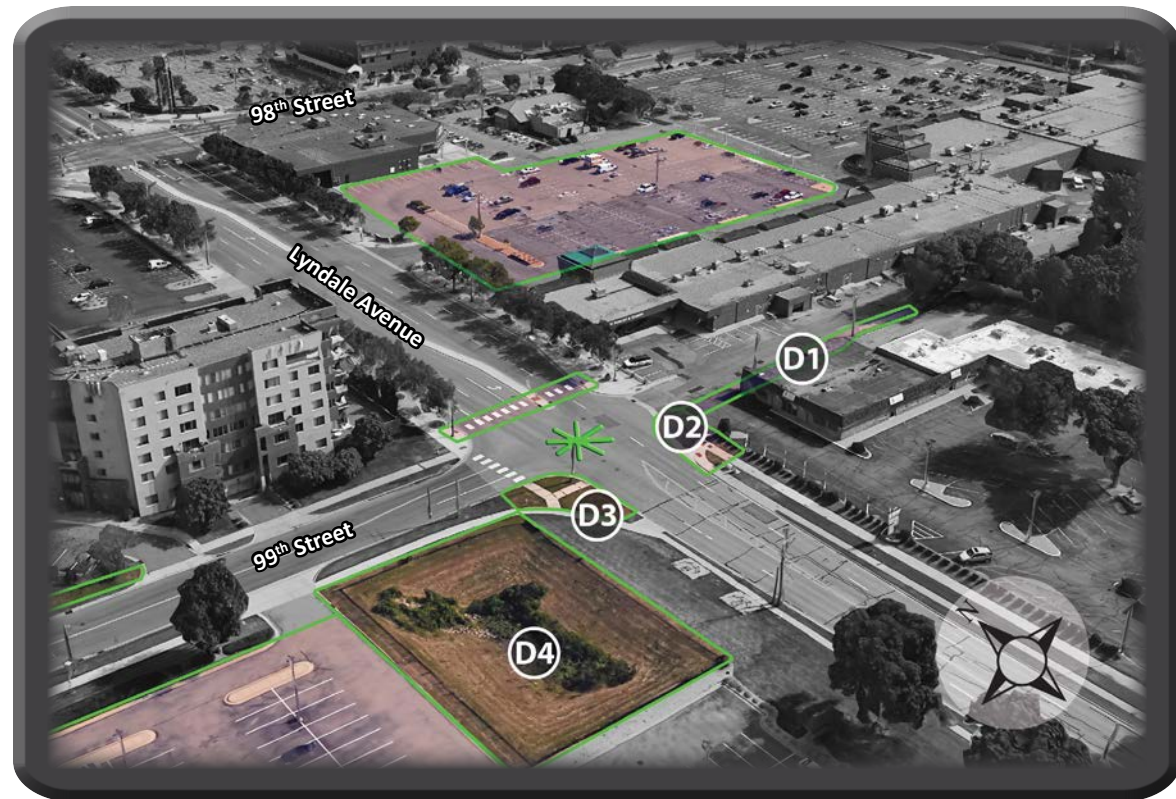
vehicle traffic and is fairly accommodating to bicyclists and pedestrians. Building off that strength by improving pedestrian connections will encourage additional transit ridership.

D1. Improve neighborhood connection

Currently, a pedestrian connection from the neighborhood is provided by a narrow and incomplete sidewalk. This sidewalk dumps pedestrians into the back parking area of the 9900 Shoppes and Oxboro Square buildings. This area is seldom accessible during the winter due to snow storage. Since the connection is provided on private property, property owners support is needed to make any improvements. If the parcel to the north redevelops, there might be potential to reconfigure the path to create a more prominent neighborhood connection that requires less maintenance.

D2. Address wide driveway

The driveways located at 9847 Lyndale Avenue and 9901 Lyndale Avenue act as one large 65 foot wide driveway. This confusing entrance to both properties would benefit from a median or narrowed driveway. This would alleviate confusion by clearly indicating where vehicles are intended



to enter and exit the site, and help pedestrians safely cross the driveway.

D3. Sidewalk reconfiguration

The sidewalk on the southwest side of 99th Street and Lyndale Avenue is oddly oriented. The sidewalk follows a curve with a spur that creates a y shape to the north and east. The north segment provides an excellent

crossing, while the east segment is not oriented correctly towards the sidewalk on the other side. This is partly due to the wide drive discussed in recommendation D-2. Adjusting the sidewalk configuration, especially where it connects to other sidewalk, can better accommodate persons with disabilities.

D4. Nativity of Mary Stormwater Pond

The pond outside of Nativity of Mary Church is essential to stormwater management. The functionality of the pond does not preclude beautification efforts from being undertaken. Potential for plantings or other beautification of the otherwise empty space will help draw people's attention to the importance of stormwater management, and can improve stormwater infiltration rates of the pond. The pond is on Nativity of Mary Church's property and improvements will require the Church's support and collaboration.



D5. Pedestrian Bridge

I-35W creates a barrier for pedestrians. A pedestrian bridge could connect the adjacent neighborhoods and provide direct access to Civic Plaza, Harrison Park, and the transit station. As funding becomes available this

could be a viable option to enhance pedestrian access in the area.

D6. Three lane conversion

The far south portion of Lyndale Avenue has recently undergone successful conversion from a four lane

roadway to three lanes (two travel lanes with a center turn lane). Converting the roadway creates a safer environment for those turning, as they only have one lane to cross and have lesser risk of rear end collisions. Fewer lanes also make it easier for pedestrians to cross. Converting the section between 102nd Street and 99th Street from four to three lanes is planned and will extend the existing bike lanes and enhance safety.

D7. Turning Movements at 102nd Street

The intersection of 102nd Street and Lyndale Avenue was highlighted during outreach events as difficult for cars to turn. The private driveway on the west side of the intersection is slightly skewed from the intersection, making it difficult for vehicles to enter and exit. It is recommended that this intersection be monitored and studied for public improvements that could be made.

Figure 4.8 Area E Recommendations



Area E

The area to the east of the station is an important connection to neighborhoods and Kennedy High School. Attention to the built environment is required to help create a comfortable, walkable neighborhood.



E1. Pedestrian environment upgrades

Similar to 98th Street on the west side improvements are recommended on the east. Students from Kennedy High School, as well as the large number of residents living in the neighborhoods, will be more likely to walk rather than

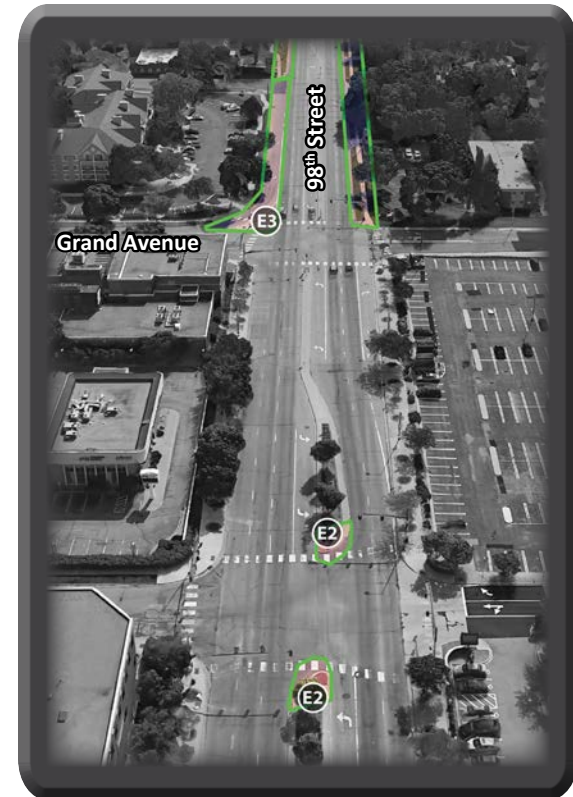
drive to the station area if provided a comfortable pedestrian environment.

E2. Add Pedestrian Refuge Islands

The medians located on 98th Street at Garfield Avenue (the entrance to the shopping centers) are wide enough to be extended and accommodate refuge islands. They were designed to stop short of the crosswalk rather than extend into the crosswalk and provide a refuge. Due to the large distance of 6 lanes of traffic for pedestrians to travel, extending these medians would provide a refuge for pedestrians to stop if necessary.

E3. Remove Free Right at Grand Avenue

As explained in C6, removing the free right would remove this trap lane. The additional lane could become a through lane adding capacity to the roadway as it approaches I-35W. It could potentially be repurposed. Additional study and modeling would be required before any reconfiguration of lanes.



4.3 Corridor & Interchange Study

A formal corridor and interchange study should be conducted to understand the true feasibility of improvements recommended in this plan. While recommendations are based on high level analysis, many of these recommended projects require a detailed study that will model and determine impacts on crash rates and capacity. The area from the split of 98th Street and Old Shakopee Road to the intersection of 98th Street and Grand Avenue should be evaluated. In addition to or in conjunction with the corridor study, an interchange study should be conducted for I-35W and 98th Street. This study should incorporate pedestrian infrastructure and safety as major factors in addition to traffic circulation and roadway components.

The City and Metro Transit own the site currently occupied by the station. A portion of the station site was purchased with RALF funds to

complete the interchange so that it could mirror the west side of I-35W. However, given the success of the transit station, a different layout that retains the transit center would be more beneficial. The interchange study should identify a design that addresses issues in detail such as the single left turn lane, the narrow bridge, and less than ideal pedestrian facilities.

Figure 4.9 Recommended Area for Corridor & Interchange Study



4.4 Land Use

Promoting transit supportive development is a vision for this plan. This Section reviews the guided land use and existing zoning and determines how best transit supportive development can be encouraged. The result was recommending rezoning key properties near the transit station to encourage redevelopment.

Land Use Guide Plan

The uses found in the Station Area today reflect the underlying Land Use Guide Plan. The Land Use Guide Plan provides general direction about which types of uses should be permitted in certain areas of the City now and into the future. The areas mapped in the Guide Plan help determine applicable zoning districts, which regulate permitted uses and design standards.

The land use guide plan map (Figure 4.10) shows nine different future land use designations in the Station Area.

Commercial

Many of these land use designations have been in place since redevelopment occurred in the 70's and 80's. The **Community Commercial** designation that predominately covers the commercial areas is intended to ensure the area is more locally focused. While it permits more intense commercial uses than **General Business**, it restricts and discourages regional uses such as large shopping centers and auto sales that are more appropriate for the Regional Commercial designation. The **Community Commercial** designation was largely a result of the market studies conducted during the last wave of redevelopment. Since the area is located near other regional centers such as South Town, Southdale, and the Burnsville shopping mall, the station area should continue to provide local service and focus on niche markets. Excellent freeway and transit access to the area will continue to provide a regional draw, but not to the

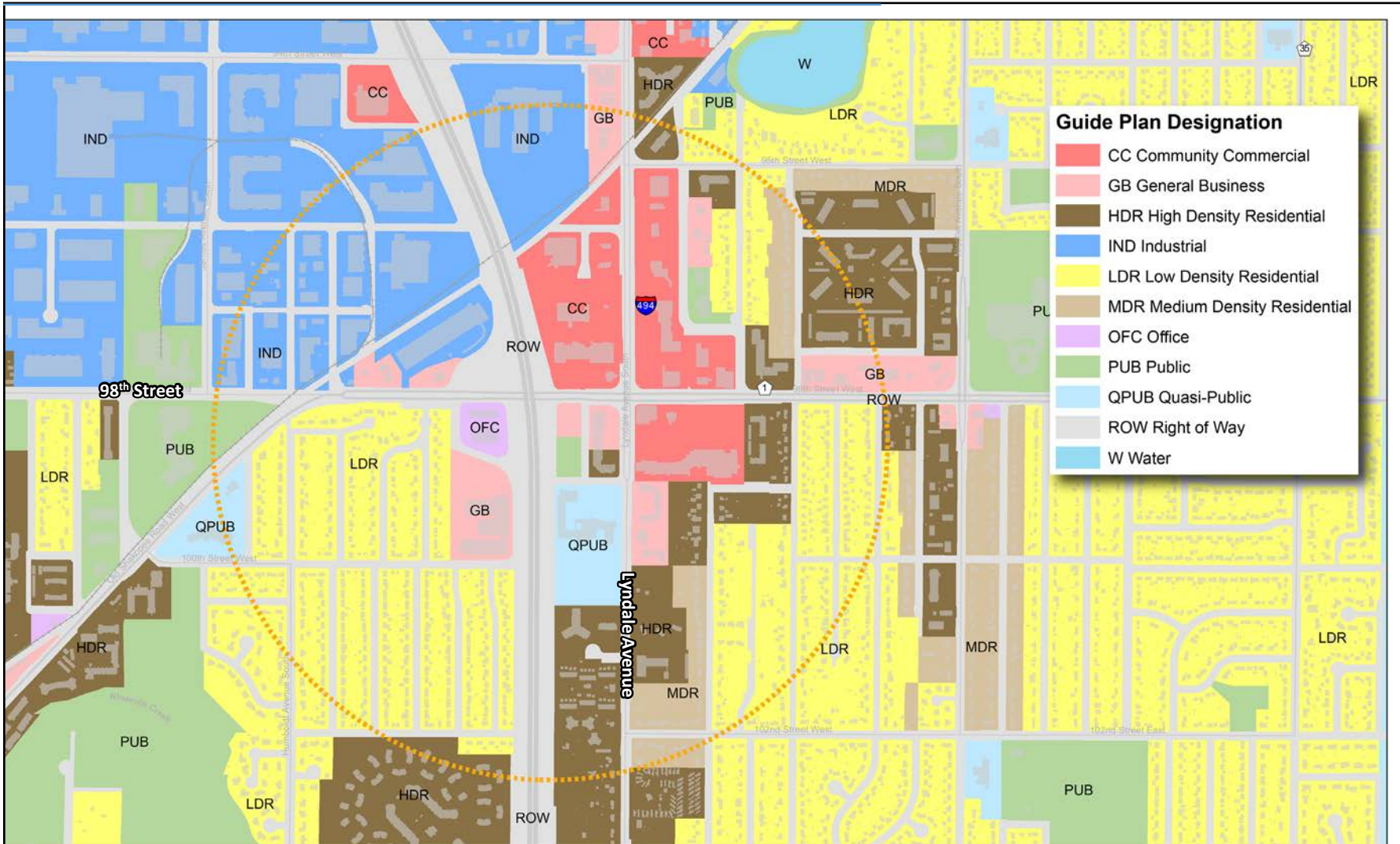
extent that would warrant a regional commercial designation.

Residential

A significant part of the area is guided for low density residential, as evidenced by the large amount of single family homes. However, since the 70's much of the area south of 98th Street along Lyndale has been guided for high and medium density residential. Some of these properties include multi-family buildings, but many single family houses still remain in these areas. While it is desirable to increase density around the transit station, the likelihood is low that major redevelopment will displace single family homes.

Redevelopment is more likely to occur at the corners of 98th Street and Lyndale Avenue. The **Community Commercial** designation does not preclude mixed use development, and is appropriate for high density residential. Encouraging mixed use, high density residential at the

Figure 4.10 Guided Land Use



Community Commercial sites will increase population density, promote businesses, and support the transit station while preserving the nearby single family neighborhoods.

Industrial

The northwest portion of the Station Area is guided **Industrial**. Many of the industrial uses in this area, such as manufacturing and distribution, comprise a significant portion of the station area's employment and are fully operating. However, some portions of the industrial area contain non-traditional industrial uses, such as single-family homes and fitness centers. Nationwide trends show that industrial uses and districts are changing. Recognizing these trends, the City created an industrial zoning strategies map to guide future development in industrial districts. In this map, many of the **Industrial** guided properties in the Station Area are labeled 'transitional,' meaning that the City would be open to market-driven, privately-initiated reguiding

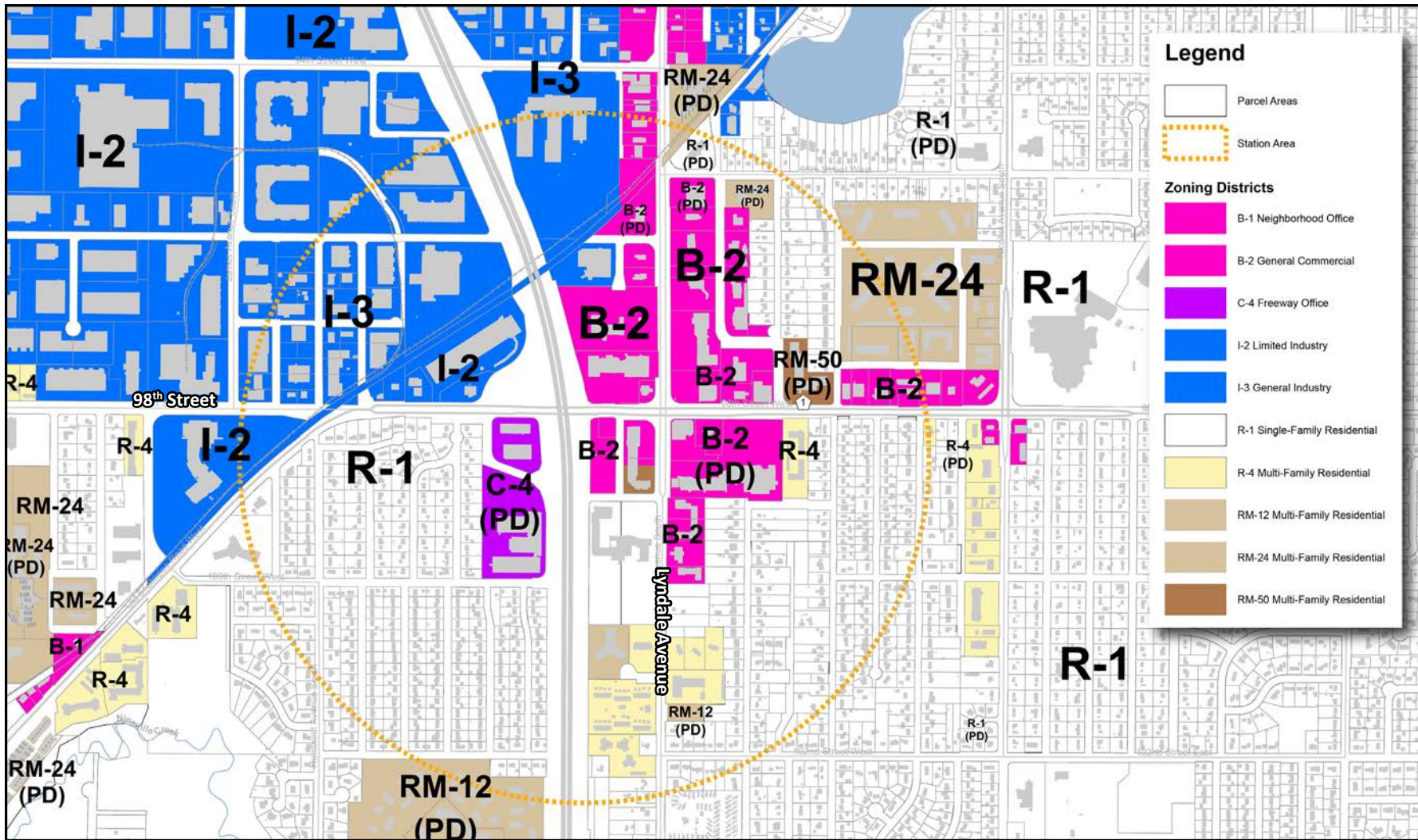
and rezoning of these properties on a case by case basis. The properties along high traffic corridors, such as 98th Street, are more likely to be reguided and rezoned if privately requested. However, much of this area is likely to remain industrial due to its good access to the railway and the interstate.

Zoning

Zoning districts, guided by the Land Use Guide Plan, specify permitted land uses and site design standards. Most of the properties located in the station area meet the land use and site design standards of their underlying zoning district. However, today's sites could be more transit supportive by better accommodating those visiting by foot. This can be accomplished by creating compact, mixed use buildings while conforming to today's zoning standards.

Existing zoning in the station area has encouraged a mix of industrial, general commercial, multifamily residential, and single family residential. As guided by land use and zoning, the area is part neighborhood commercial center and community commercial center. The industrial area to the northwest helps establish the area as a job center with a regional draw. Commercial and retail uses are generally oriented to serve the residential neighborhood. Organizations that have a regional

Figure 4.11 Zoning



draw, such as the Works Museum, VEAP, and Civic Plaza, are located here because of easy access from I-35W, Old Shakopee Road, Lyndale Avenue, and the transit station.

The following are major Zoning Districts located within the 98th street station area, and the impact they have on form and land use.

The **B-2 General Commercial District** is designed to provide a wide variety of retail and other commercial uses essential to support surrounding neighborhoods. This is a zoning district used in many of Bloomington's neighborhood commercial nodes because of its range of permitted commercial uses, its low minimum site size requirements, low building area requirements, and no minimum floor area ratio. These standards fit well in most commercial nodes throughout Bloomington.

However, the B-2 zoning district is not compatible with the station area plan's vision. First, the B-2 zoning district

has a maximum floor area ratio of 0.5 which limits the permitted size of the buildings, and restricts density. Second, there is a minimum setback of 35 feet along a public street, which promotes parking between the building and the street and is not oriented for pedestrians. Third, the district does not have a maximum setback along the street and would allow an expansive parking field between the building and the street. Last, the B-2 zoning district does not permit residential uses. For this reason, the parcel on the southwest corner of Lyndale and 98th Street is split zoned, with B-2 zoning on the north half and RM-50 zoning on the south half.

The **C-4 Freeway Office District** is designed to provide for regionally oriented office and hotel uses as well as supporting accessory uses. Currently, an office building and fitness facility occupy the sites zoned C-4. These types of uses directly benefit from the freeway access.

The **I-2 Limited Industry District** is intended to provide for areas of large-scale industrial development with limited off-site impacts, including research and development, high technology, biotechnology, small-scale distribution, and activities requiring flexible floor space. Limited service and commercial uses are permitted in the I-2 district which can be seen along 98th Street.

The **I-3 General Industry District** is intended to provide for areas of large-scale industrial development with potentially significant off-site impacts, including manufacturing, processing, and assembly; ware-house and distribution; and large equipment supply and sales. These uses comprise a large part of the employment in the area. Many businesses in this area report that many of their employees use trans-it.

The **R-1 Single-family Residential** is the primary district for single-family residential uses. Compatible non-single family residential and

institutional uses are also permitted. Single family homes are an important part of the character of Bloomington. In the station area, some parcels zoned R-1 are guided for higher density residential nearest the commercial centers. For those areas to transition, a developer would have to acquire and request rezoning of the site. The likelihood of this happening in the

near future is significantly low.

Multiple-family Residential

Multi-family residential districts are differentiated by permitted densities. The ranges of permitted units per acre are shown in Table 4.1.

Other than the SummerHouse site that was developed in the late 90's and zoned RM-50, the remaining multi-

family areas were developed before 1990. The likelihood of redevelopment in these districts is low as these properties are mostly well maintained.

Table 4.1 Residential Zoning District Density Standards

Zoning District	Minimum Density	Maximum Density
R-4	4 units / acre	12 units / acre
R-12	8 units / acre	12 units / acre
R-24	12 units / acre	24 units / acre
R-50	20 units / acre	50 units / acre



SummerHouse Property zoned RM-50

4.5 Rezoning

In addition to public and streetscape improvements, land use and zoning are additional tools for promoting transit-supportive development patterns. Businesses and residents in the station area benefit from improved regional access brought by the METRO Orange Line. Conversely the METRO Orange Line can benefit from commercial and residential uses in the area assuming there are destinations that drive ridership and residents that use the service. To this point, the Metropolitan Council in the Transportation Policy Plan recommends that the City plan for a combined 7,000 residents, employees, or students within one half mile of the Station. Through its zoning and land use guide plan, the City can support and promote forms of development that best take advantage of the transit station, thereby reducing the need for single occupant vehicle travel, reducing emissions and greenhouse

gases.

Existing zoning districts have permitted and encouraged a built environment that is auto oriented. As the area enters its next phase of development, rezoning properties can help to encourage a built environment that creates a sense of place, is inviting to pedestrians, and best supports the high frequency transit line.

The City evaluated potential parcels for rezoning based on three criteria:

- Likelihood of redevelopment,
- Potential non-conformities, and
- Impact.

First, likelihood of redevelopment was identified by looking at the ages of buildings, dates of last major renovation, site suitability, guided land use, and discussions with property owners. The lifespan of a typical commercial building is about 50 years. While factors such as building construction and maintenance can effect this lifespan, it is a good proxy

for when a building is ready to be replaced. Additionally, market pressure can influence property owners to redevelop earlier. The prospect of higher rents or a diversified tenant mix, such as multifamily residential, could encourage properties to redevelop earlier. Larger sites also offer greater flexibility for redevelopment, and provide developers and designers space to be creative. Weighing these factors, the properties along Lyndale and 98th Street were identified as most likely to redevelop. These tend to be larger sites, and range from 30 to 60+ years old. The mixed use property at the southwest corner of Lyndale and 98th Street, RBCU Credit Union, and VEAP were considered much less likely to redevelop because they have been recently constructed or renovated.

Figure 4.12 Year of Construction



Second, sites were evaluated for impact. Redevelopment of all sites located along 98th Street and Lyndale Avenue would have substantial impact to the look, feel, and function of the area. Transit supportive development is about ensuring that pedestrians are able to move within the district, with easy access to businesses and residences. Facilitating movement from the transit station to area businesses is best supported by locating buildings along the street and creating a variety of street level improvements.

The highest impact sites for redevelopment are those located nearest to the transit station because they are most accessible. These properties should be rezoned to increase potential density and improve pedestrian accessibility. Large parking lots and limited access to these sites create an inhospitable environment for pedestrians. Concentrating high density residential in this area will allow residents to utilize transit and

access local businesses, which will reduce vehicular congestion. All of the identified properties are good candidates for rezoning, but the high impact sites are recommended for proactive rezoning in order to ensure redevelopment is transit supportive.

Third, sites were evaluated based on whether rezoning would create potential non-conformities with the City Code. Rezoning a property may change the permitted uses, structure placement, and lot size standards. For instance, the single family homes that are guided for high density land use are not recommended to be rezoned to a multifamily residential zoning district because that would create legal non-conformities in all three types of standards - structure, site, and use - as demonstrated below:

- Structure: Building placement, size, and landscaping are not likely to meet the multifamily district requirements.
- Site: The single family properties

found in the station area do not meet the minimum lot size of multifamily districts.

- Use: These sites are occupied by single family residences, which is not a permitted use in multifamily zoning districts.

Even if sites have a legally non-conformity status, property owners and businesses can continue to utilize their sites as they do currently. With this status, general maintenance and upkeep of property is allowed as is full replacement. The impacts of this status relate primarily to expansion. A nonconforming use may not expand. If the property became damaged to an extent beyond 50% of its current property value, the property could be rebuilt to match its current condition as long as a building permit is applied for within 180 days of the damage. After 180 days without application for a replacement permit, the site would be required to rebuild in a manner that meets the standards of the new zoning district. Applicants may apply for either

a variance or planned development flexibility to standards.

All of the properties identified as likely candidates for redevelopment were evaluated for upzoning. They are all currently zoned B-2 (General Business), and were evaluated for potential to meet the requirements of the B-4 (Neighborhood Commercial Center) and C-5 (Freeway Mixed Use) zoning districts. These two districts are the most transit supportive because they provide the opportunity for mixed use commercial and high density residential. These districts also require site features that promote a walkable environment. A comparison of zoning district standards is found in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Commercial Zoning District Comparison

	B-2 (Existing) General Commercial	B-4 Neighborhood Commercial	C-5 Freeway Mixed Use
Uses			
Office/Medical Office	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Retail	Permitted	Permitted	Permitted
Residential	No	Accessory	Accessory
Restaurant w/ drive-though	Conditional	Conditional (single lane drive thru, not street side)	Conditional Accessory (single lane drive thru, not street side)
Restaurant w/out drive-though	Conditional	Conditional	Conditional Accessory
Auto Dealers	Conditional	No	No
Standards			
FAR	Min: N/A Max: 0.5	0.2 0.5; (2.0) With Residential	1.0 1.5
Building Floor Area	Min: 3,000 sq. ft.	4,000 sq. ft.	20,000 sq. ft.
Impervious Surface Area	Max: 90%	95%	95%
Site Width	Min: 100 ft; 150 ft for corner sites	150 ft; 200 ft for corner sites	200 ft; 250 ft for corner sites
Site Area	Min: 25,000	40,000	80,000
Setbacks Along Public Street	Min: 35 ft Max: N/A	10 ft (or width of public easement) 40 ft	10 ft (or width of public easement) 20 ft
Rear	Min: 15 ft	15 ft; 30 ft for buildings over 4 stories	20 ft
Side	Max: 10 ft	10 ft; 20 ft for buildings over 4 stories	20 ft; 30 ft for buildings over 4 stories
Abutting Residential	Min: 50 ft	50 ft	N/A

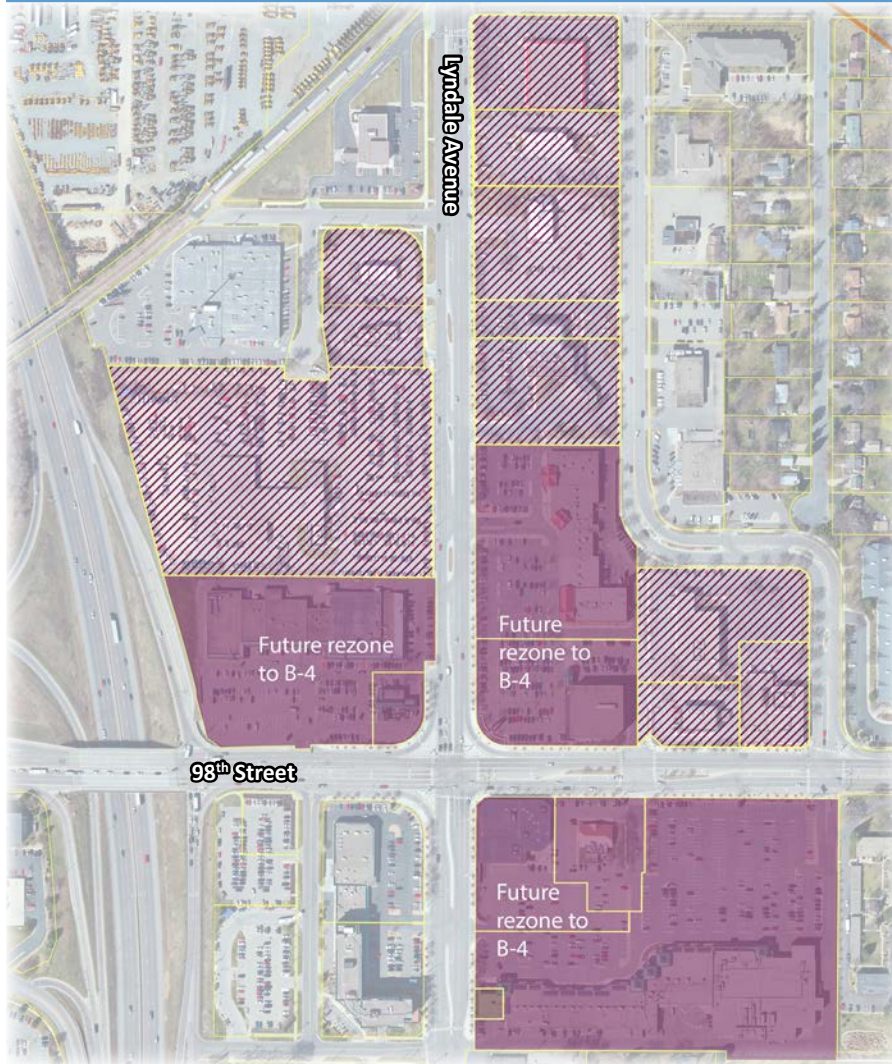
The properties that were identified for potential redevelopment mostly conform to the B-2 standards. If these sites were upzoned to the B-4 or C-5 zoning district, they would all become legally non-conforming. Extra scrutiny was applied to those sites recommended for proactive upzoning. This Plan recommends that the B-4 zoning district be immediately applied to the highlighted properties shown in Figure 4.13. Additionally, this Plan recommends support for rezoning the properties located in the hashed area to the B-4 District if initiated by the property owner.

The B-4 zoning district was selected because of its flexibility and suitability for the area. At the sites recommended to be proactively rezoned, existing land uses are in conformance with the standards of the B-4 district. The minimum lot size for B-4 is 25,000 sq. ft. compared to 80,000 sq. ft. for C-5, which some properties in the Station Area do not meet. The minimum floor area ratio for B-4 is 0.2 as compared

to 1.0 for C-5. Most of the sites located in the Station Area, including the sites recommended for proactive rezoning, are at an FAR of about 0.25. To achieve 1.0 would mean four times as much building area than what currently exists. This would substantially change the character of the area and potential shift from a neighborhood oriented with some regional uses to a regionally oriented business district.

Another consideration is water and sewer service. Residential uses tend to have greater demand on water and sewer than commercial uses. Redevelopment that incorporates a substantial residential structure may require additional utility upgrades to accommodate the added demand. While formal modeling will need to be completed, the existing water and sewer mains are likely too small to accommodate a substantial increase in residential uses and would need to be upgraded, a fact that will likely raise the cost of residential redevelopment.

Figure 4.13 Areas Recommended for Rezoning



Strategies



Proactive Rezone - properties will be rezoned to B-4 following the adoption of this plan



Transitional - properties remain zoned B-2, but market driven upzoning to B-4 would be considered on a case by case basis.

The current concentration of employment supports retail and neighborhood commercial uses in the area. To strengthen support of these businesses even more, the City can encourage increased residential density. Businesses and transit need customers in order to be profitable and sustainable. By increasing rooftops in the area, customer counts increase as

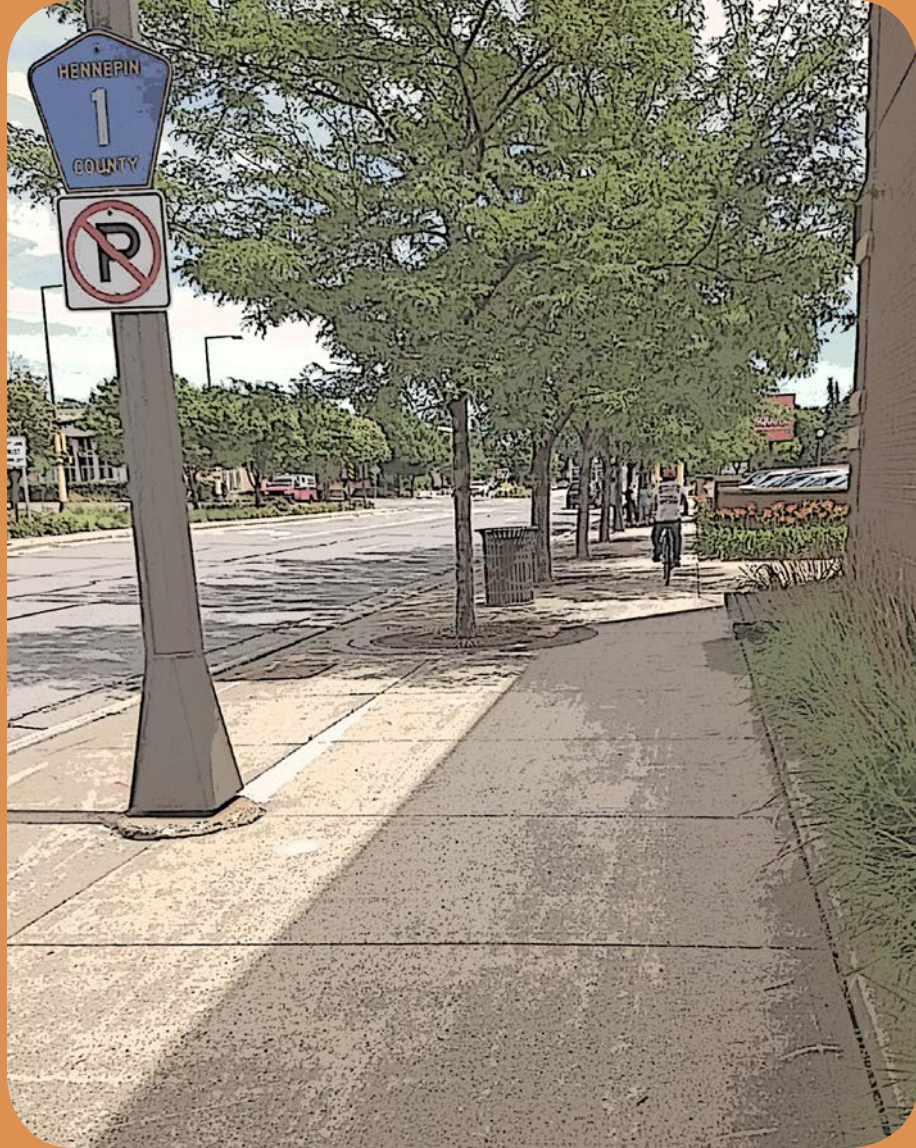
well. A moderate increase in density has already resulted in an increase in transit ridership. Continuing this trend will support the retail in the area. In its Comprehensive Plan, the City forecasts that the activity level (total population, employment, and students) in the Station Area will increase to over 7,000 by 2040 based on guided land use and zoning changes.

Table 4.3 Activity Levels, Existing & Forecasted

Station	Acres Forecast for New Development	Metropolitan Council 2040 Transportation Policy Plan Guidelines		Existing (2018)		Forecast Future (2040) Minimums	
		Average Residential Density	Activity Level	Average Residential Density	Activity Level*	Average Residential Density	Activity Level
98th & 35W (BRT)	75	12 dwelling units/acre	7,000	6 dwelling units/acre	5,405	25 dwelling units/acre	7,637

Source: 2040 Regional Transportation Policy Plan and City of Bloomington

*Existing activity level provided by the Metropolitan Council



IMPLEMENTATION

5

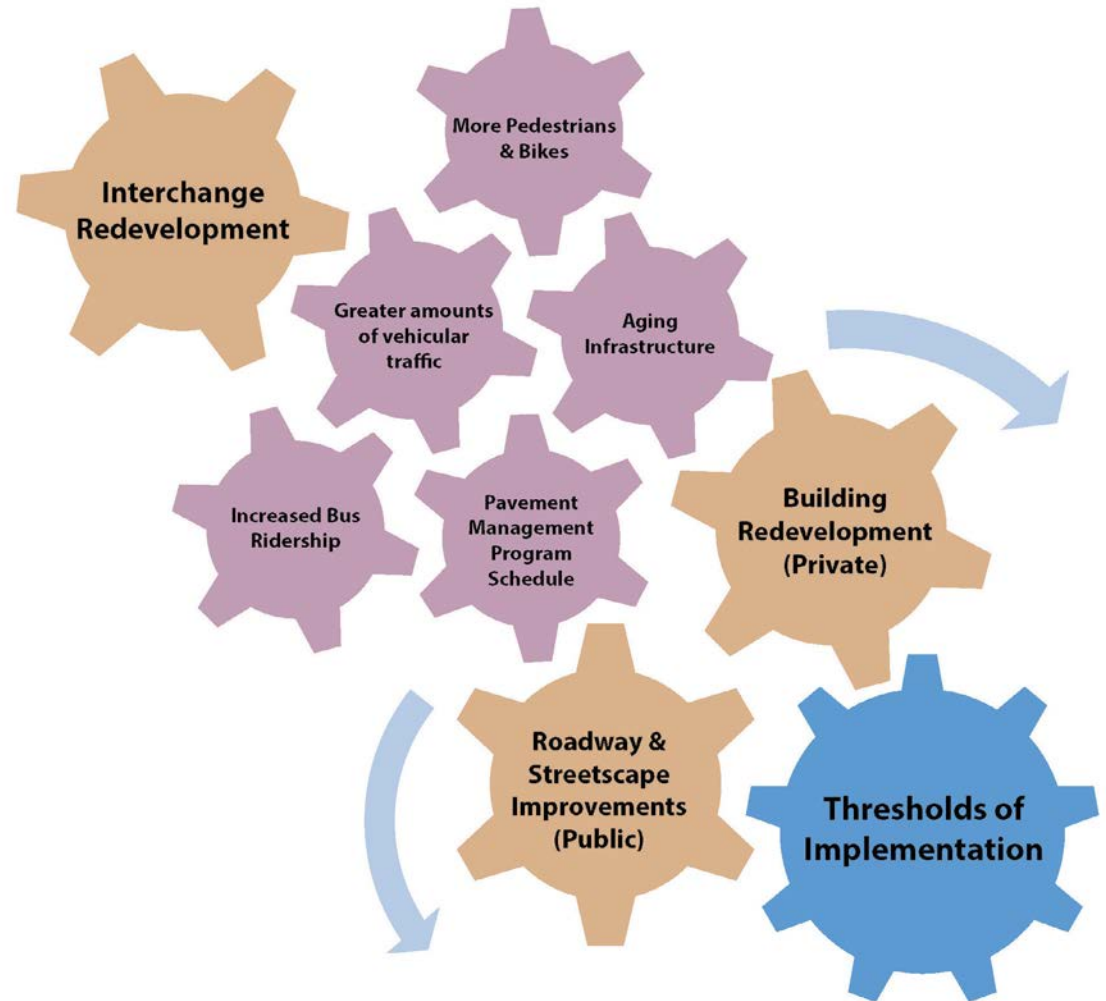
Implementation of the plan recommendations will start immediately, and could take years or decades to complete. Low cost and highly impactful recommendations are of higher priority than those with high cost and low to moderate impact. Implementation is dependent on a number of variables and requires public and private investment. For these reasons, a prescriptive timing of implementation for each of the recommendations is not included. Rather, the recommendations should be incorporated into jurisdictional capital improvement plans as thresholds are triggered. These recommendations should be reevaluated periodically as the area changes due to the METRO Orange Line, redevelopment, or major infrastructure improvements.

5.1 Thresholds of Implementation

The recommendations from this Plan will occur at varying intervals. Some recommendations, such as rezoning of the properties, should occur following the adoption of this Plan. Other recommendations are dependent on a series of factors, most importantly the opening of the METRO Orange Line.

Factors influencing implementation are categorized in Figure 5.1. The development of one component or gear prompts the advancement of others, thus creating thresholds for implementing the recommendations. For instance, increased bus ridership with the METRO Orange Line will create new demands on existing public and private infrastructure. The orange gears represent larger components of the built environment that this Plan seeks to address through its core recommendations (Section 4).

Figure 5.1 Implementation Thresholds



5.2 Roadway and Streetscape Improvements

Various levels of public infrastructure improvements will be completed in the short and long terms. The timing of improvements depend on funding availability, further studies, and coordination with existing planned projects. The City has much more control over what occurs in city-owned public right-of-ways, such as Lyndale Avenue. Improvements on 98th Street (Old Shakopee Road) will require coordination with Hennepin County because of its status as a County road. Given funding and timing limitations, not all improvements can occur immediately.

High Impact, Low Cost Infrastructure Improvements

There are numerous high impact and low cost improvements that could be included in the short term. These projects typically require minimal

study, are fairly inexpensive, and help advance the station area's vision. These projects include:

- Pedestrian friendly signal timing
- Upgrading inadequate curb ramps
- Install planned bike infrastructure south of the station area
- Rapid Flashing Beacon on 99th and Lyndale crosswalk
- Planned streetscape improvements (public)
- Other streetscape improvements/enhanced landscaping as part of redevelopment (Private)

Corridor & Interchange Study

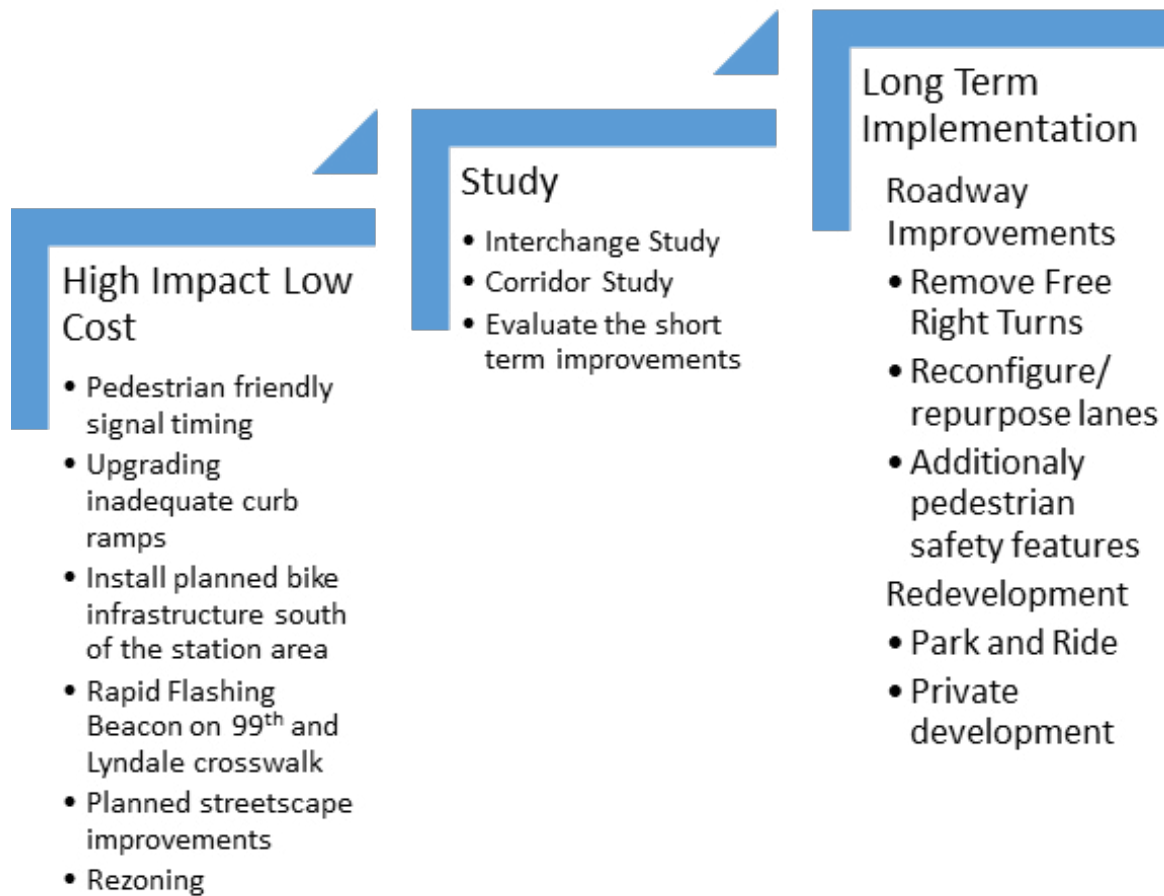
The most impactful recommendation will be an interchange and corridor study. These may be coordinated as one study or potentially two separate studies. Either way, the goal remains to promote safe and efficient multimodal transportation.

A corridor study will allow the opportunity to evaluate the impacts

to altering the lane configuration including the feasibility of removing free right turn lanes and adding refuge islands. Evaluation of repurposing lanes for sidewalk or bicycle facilities could be incorporated into the study. Additionally, potential impacts from redevelopment, such as increased trips due to high density residential, could be incorporated into traffic modeling. The study could also evaluate any potential improvements that could be made to the 98th Street/Old Shakopee split, which is often cited a barrier to pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

The corridor study could be completed in coordination with an interchange study. The age of the interchange warrants replacement in the short term. In the long term, as funding opportunities permit, a new interchange configuration is a possibility. The original plan, designed as part of the RALF loan in 1997, was to create an additional loop where the transit station exists today. This is obviously in conflict with the

Figure 5.2 Timing of Improvements



investment in the transit station and is considered obsolete. A new plan is needed that will evaluate the best

design for the interchange; one that balances the high traffic demands of I-35W with the needs of transit,

pedestrians, and bicyclists. Any study should include the City, Hennepin County, Metro Transit, and MnDOT.

Long Term Roadway and Streetscape Improvements

Roadway improvements can be programmed and installed once a corridor study is complete. The study will indicate the lane configuration and potential changes to access, medians, signals, etc. These will substantially improve the environment for pedestrians while maintaining a minimal level of service on the road. It will also identify what triggers warrant investment. Triggers that move improvements up in the scheduled could be an increase in traffic volume, pedestrian count, transit ridership, or redevelopment size. Additionally, improvements may be scheduled based on age of existing infrastructure or availability of funds.

Additional streetscape enhancements should be designed and installed once the roadway design is identified.

Having knowledge of potential sidewalk expansion, new refuge islands, and redevelopment will guide the design of landscaping, furniture, historical markers and wayfinding. Wayfinding signage and historical placards could be designed and installed in the short or long term. A public-private partnership could be explored for funding some improvements. A sense of when other projects might be installed, as indicated in a corridor study, will save money and reduce the chance that new signage would need to be moved or reinstalled due to future roadway redevelopment.

5.3 Interchange Redevelopment

The interchange design and corresponding bridge have ramifications for the area as a whole. Structure age, funding, and design feasibility impact the timing of reconstructing the interchange. An interchange design that incorporates METRO Orange Line, transit, and allows for redevelopment of the station is ideal. Reconstruction of the interchange certainly creates many unknown scenarios.

First, the interchange needs to feed into the lane configuration of 98th Street. Evaluation of designs for their potential to accommodate bicycle and pedestrian movements over I-35W is important. In its current layout, the ramps on the north side of 98th Street are difficult for pedestrians to cross. Other designs exist that could better facilitate pedestrian and bicycle movements and accommodate high traffic volumes.

Second, the interchange influences the future of the sites currently occupied by the transit station and BRT platforms. The park and ride and transit center properties are land banked for the interchange, and were once shown as being needed for a potential freeway exit ramp. However, the highest and best uses for those properties is transit and mixed use redevelopment. Knowing the future interchange design will influence how improvements to the station are performed. There may be potential to place BRT platforms near the freeway, assuming access can be accommodated. The land occupied by the transit center and park and ride are owned by the City and Metro Transit, and could be redeveloped to include mixed use or high density residential, along with the transit station. A new interchange design will provide the first step in determining the transit site's potential.

5.4 Rezoning and Redevelopment

The City is working to fulfill the station area plan vision through its zoning. While the City, County, and Metro Transit are attempting to influence how the area redevelops through infrastructure investments, the City hopes to further encourage a mixed use, walkable environment by rezoning key properties to B-4. The B-4 zoning district complements the City, County, and Metro Transit pedestrian and transit improvements by allowing for increased density, mixed use development, and moving buildings closer to the street to create a pedestrian focused environment.

Redevelopment will be market driven. The rezonings will not force redevelopment, but will require that new uses and structures support the station area plan's vision when redevelopment does occur. Redevelopment will occur in stages. Each property is unique, with different

challenges and opportunities. The City will work with property owners to ensure that development meets both public and private development goals.

5.5 Funding and Partnership

Funding these improvements will require a mix of sources. Different levels of government all have an interest in improving transportation and supporting redevelopment in the station area. As described, project timing is complex and often relies on triggers. Additionally, projects are subject to available funding. Implementation will entail collaboration with partners to fund projects and achieve mutual goals.

City of Bloomington

The City of Bloomington has a 10 year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This process is how most capital projects in the City are funded. It helps identify funding needs and program funds for 10 years out. Projects recommended in this plan may be included as stand-alone projects or incorporated into other projects like the Pavement Management Program.

The CIP is updated annually and helps the City prioritize projects. Projects in the CIP may shift in importance as circumstances, such as redevelopment, change.

Hennepin County

Hennepin County also has a capital improvement program. The City has the ability to submit projects to be programmed in this process. Supporting material such as feasibility studies, preliminary concepts, and preliminary cost estimates will encourage inclusion into the County's CIP. As described earlier in this Section, many projects will require additional study. These studies will ensure the recommendations have positive outcomes and meet the County's goals to improve safety, mobility, economic development, and the environment.

MNDOT

Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) is an important participant in implementation. The bridge over I-35W is a significant barrier to pedestrian

and bicycle access. Reconfiguration of the interchange and reconstruction of the bridge will have significant impacts that have a ripple effect on the area. Future improvements to the METRO Orange Line might include highway level platforms. Understanding MnDOT's right of way needs, priorities for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and timeline for the bridge/interchange reconstruction are important. MnDOT should participate in any corridor or interchange study.

Metropolitan Council

Metro Transit is under the umbrella of the Metropolitan Council. Metro Transit will continue to be a significant partner in investments directly related to the transit station. They have already planned significant improvements to the area as part of the station construction.

This Station Area Plan is consistent with high level policy goals outline in the Metropolitan Council's 2040 Transportation Policy Plan. It

encourages high density, mixed use, pedestrian friendly areas around stations. The Metropolitan Council supports these goals by providing grant opportunities which is described in the next Section.

Potential Grant Opportunities

There a number of grant opportunities available to help supplement and fill funding gaps. Below are a few local grant programs identified that should be pursued.

Hennepin County TOD

Hennepin County has been managing the transit oriented development program since 2003. The program funds, available to cities, private entities (for profit and non-profit developers), and Hennepin County Departments provide grants and loan assistance for projects that support transit oriented development. Funding may be used to support redevelopment, infrastructure projects, or site acquisition. The TOD program criteria support projects and developments that generally:

- Enhance transit usage
- Increase density along transit corridors
- Reinforce both the community and the transit system
- Exhibit a compact and efficient use of available space, rather than auto-oriented sprawl
- Contain a diversity and mix of uses with daily conveniences and transit at the center
- Support pedestrian-friendly physical design that encourages walking, bicycling and access for people with physical disabilities
- Are within a comfortable walking distance to transit

Livable Communities Grants

Metropolitan Council administers the Livable Communities Grants to help encourage projects that address regional goals such as transit oriented development or affordable housing. Three of the four grants

under this program would fit projects recommended in this plan. These grants as described by the Metropolitan Council are:

- Livable Communities Demonstration Account (LCDA) - Supports innovative development and redevelopment that links housing, jobs and services and demonstrates efficient and cost-effective use of land and infrastructure.
- Local Housing Incentives Account (LHIA) - Produces and preserves affordable housing choices for low to moderate incomes.
- Transit Oriented Development (TOD) - Catalyzes development around light rail, commuter rail and high frequency bus stations.

There is strong potential to improve access to jobs, affordable housing, and encourage transit in the station area. With the large presence of social services in the area (Civic Plaza, VEAP, Creekside Community Center), there

is a strong case for encouraging affordable housing under the LHIA. Additionally, the transit line will help increase employment potential in the area, making this a good candidate for the LCDA program. Finally, the TOD program is an obvious option with the potential for sites to redevelop under new zoning requirements that encourage transit oriented development patterns.

Regional Solicitation

Metropolitan Council also allocates federal transportation funds every two years as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Twin Cities region. These funds are distributed through the Regional Solicitation competitive grant process. The Transportation Advisory Board reviews and scores applications in 10 different categories related to transportation. Relevant categories include roadway modernization, bridges, multi-use trails, pedestrian, transit expansion, transit modernization. Many of the projects identified in this plan would

be very competitive for this grant program, and should be considered in the future.

The City will coordinate among its partners to implement the recommendations in this plan. Understanding impact, evaluating feasibility, and identifying funding are the first steps to implementation. The Plan recommendations will continue to be reviewed as the plan is implemented and redevelopment occurs.