

# Land Use and Zoning Analysis

8-20-2020 DRAFT

The land use and development patterns along Lyndale Avenue in Bloomington have stayed relatively the same for the last few decades. Industrial uses – both large and small – dominate the east side of the corridor while the west side contains a variety of small shopping centers, automotive uses, and fast food restaurants. Multifamily housing developments have been built over time, interspersed among these other primary uses. The Lyndale Avenue Suburban Retrofit offers an opportunity to influence the character of land uses and types of development patterns through reinvestment into a walkable, authentic, community-supportive corridor.

The purpose of this analysis and the subsequent recommendations is to review the Framework Plan in the context of future land direction and existing zoning. The resulting recommendations will outline potential opportunities to revise the regulatory framework to best achieve the land use and design strategies in this plan.

The Framework Plan identifies two Key Nodes that will be the primary focus of this land use and zoning analysis. Ultimately, this document will provide guidance to City staff on how to create an ideal zoning framework that helps themselves and property owners implement the vision of this plan.

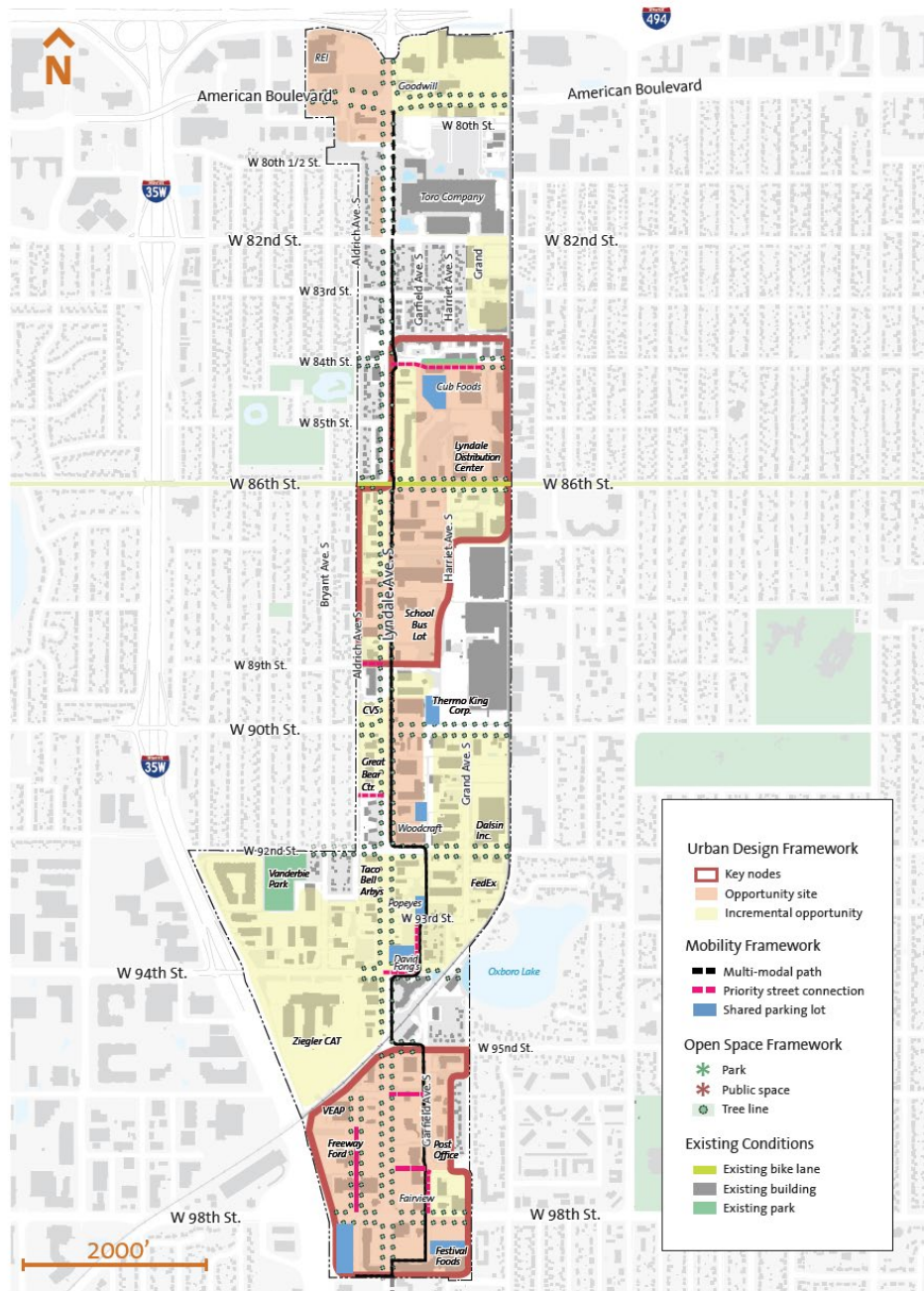
## Land Use and Development Priorities

The Framework Plan – the primary plan guidance – offers a visual representation of both redevelopment and public realm strategies to make Lyndale Avenue an inviting, walkable, and livable corridor for both existing and future residents. More than that, the Framework Plan is market-driven and exemplifies ways to increase fiscal value. The elements of the Framework Plan that are most relevant to a land use and regulatory analysis include:

- *Identification of two key redevelopment nodes.* These are locations where the City should be the most proactive to encourage redevelopment that can help catalyze redevelopment throughout the corridor.
- *Create areas for shared parking.* This idea is intended as an interim strategy to overcome one of the key barriers to redevelopment – meeting on-site parking requirements. As redevelopment occurs, the need for these shared parking areas would diminish as underground or structured parking is built with new development.
- *Ground-level activation.* Building frontages facing public spaces (sidewalks, streets, park) should foster interaction between the private space (business, building) and the public space through location of entrances, window transparency, public art, etc. The highest levels of activation should occur along frontages directly facing public areas – particularly in the two Key Nodes - with high levels of pedestrian activity.



- *Expand mix of uses.* This area is characterized by a wide range of uses from residential, to retails/service, and industrial. There is potential to build on this mix, and in particular, expand residential uses in this area to enhance its vibrancy.
- *Land use transitions and buffering.* As the area redevelops, it will be important to ensure adequate buffering and transitions between different uses and different height and massing.



## Future Land Use Plan

The Future Land Use Plan will support a process to officially amend the Lyndale Avenue Plan into *Forward 2040*, the City's Comprehensive Plan. It is also a key step in achieving a regulatory framework that implements the plan effectively. The Future Land Use Plan provides guidance as to the location and type of uses desired in the corridor in the future.

The Future Land Uses proposed here build upon the direction in the Comprehensive Plan and will be used by property owners and the City as a tool for encouraging and regulating long-term land use decisions. Identifying future land uses allows the City of Bloomington to preserve areas that should largely stay the same over time, such as established residential neighborhoods, while promoting investment and change in other areas where needed.

Based on the priorities in the Framework Plan, we propose the Future Land Use Plan is guided by these classifications:

**Residential** – Parcels with existing housing are proposed to generally maintain their designations of Low Density Residential (LDR), Medium Density Residential (MDR), and High Density Residential (HDR). The Plan does not anticipate changes to any single-family blocks or multifamily housing sites.

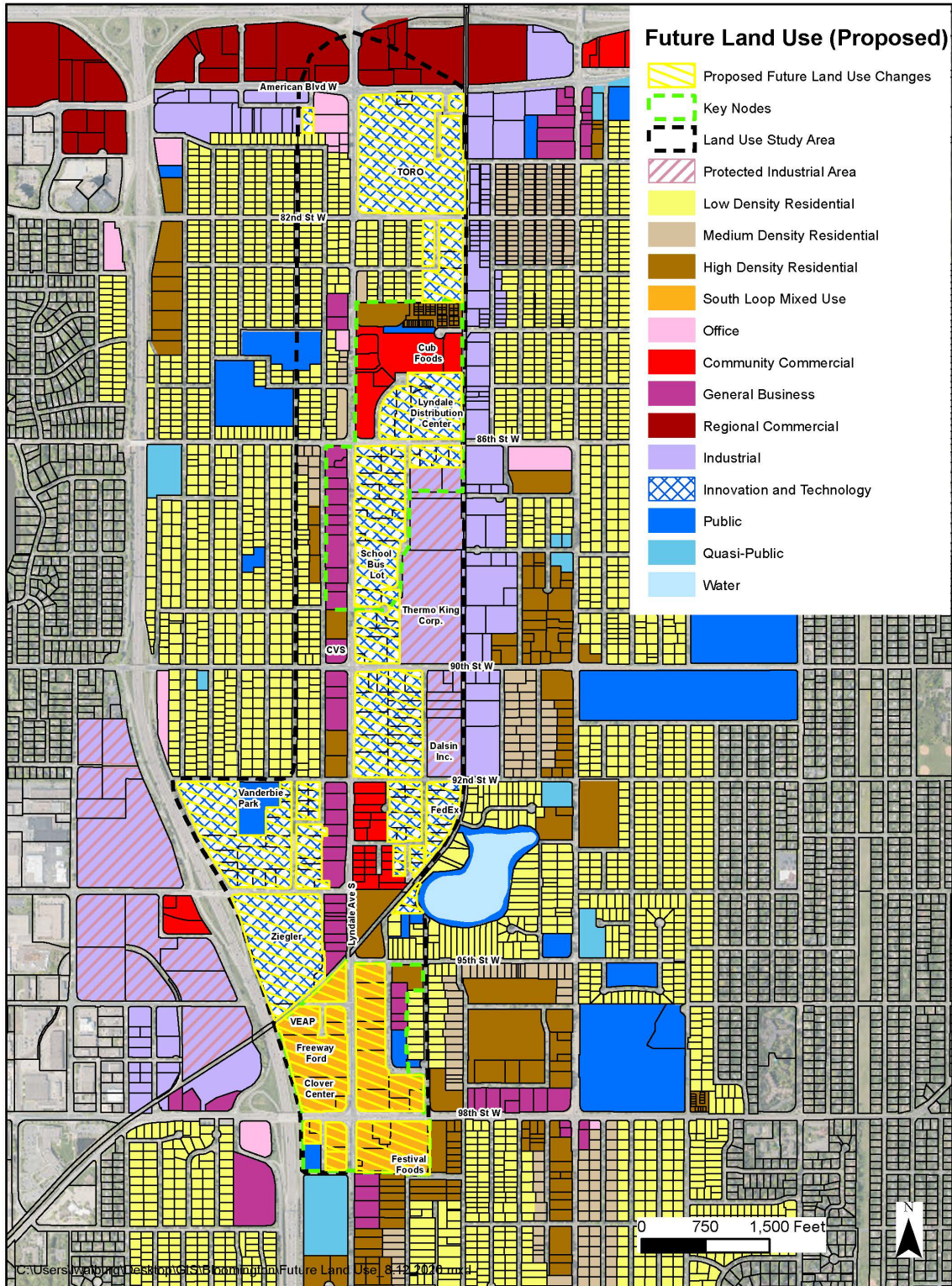
**General Business** – This is a category that allows a wide range of commercial uses geared toward smaller sites in neighborhood commercial nodes. Residential uses are allowed based on the underlying zoning. Right now, most of the west side of Lyndale from 86<sup>th</sup> to the rail crossing near 95<sup>th</sup> has this designation. This plan recommends maintaining the General Business in these locations since many of its characteristics are consistent with the direction of this plan.

**Community Commercial** – Land use direction for this category captures uses guided under the General Business classification (e.g. small-scale retail) plus larger-scale services and retail. Hotels on sites with this designation would be allowed anywhere along the Lyndale corridor since it is within one mile of a freeway interchange. Residential density is limited to a floor area ratio (FAR) of 2.0. The Cub Foods block falls under this category as well as the block face on the east side of Lyndale just south of 92<sup>nd</sup> that includes a variety of automotive uses and a couple restaurants, including David Fong's. The plan proposes maintaining it in those locations. Community Commercial is also used at the 98<sup>th</sup> node as a change proposed from the *98<sup>th</sup> Street Station Area Plan* – this plan proposes an alternative land use strategy that more ideally meets the transit-oriented development goals of that area surrounding the future BRT station.

**Regional Commercial** – Properties along the freeway are designated as Regional Commercial since it allows big box retail, large shopping centers, hotels, and auto sales. As with the other Commercial categories, residential is allowed if it is consistent with the underlying zoning. This plan does not propose changing the location and extent of this classification.

**Innovation and Technology** – This plan proposes introducing this land use district to Lyndale Avenue that is used in other parts of Bloomington. The prevalence of industrial uses in the eastern portion of the corridor is an employment asset but also creates a challenge for reuse of underutilized sites and buildings. For example, the industrial zoning along Lyndale does not allow retail storefronts even though many of the existing buildings could accommodate it. This plan proposes to reclassify much of the transitional industrial fronting Lyndale to the Innovation and Technology land use category. This category allows for a flexible mix of office, research and development, high-tech manufacturing, assembly uses, and service and retail uses if allowed under the underlying zoning. This category could maintain many of the existing uses while allowing for some sites to transition into more employment density and activities that add value to nearby residents.

**South Loop Mixed Use** – As its name explains, this is a land use category exclusively used in the South Loop around a light rail station. It is intended to create a true mix of office, hospitality, retail, and higher density housing in an area with excellent transit service. It also promotes minimum development intensities, minimized parking, and pedestrian enhancements and connections to transit and outdoor spaces and amenities. This definition is perfectly aligned with the ambitions in the 98<sup>th</sup> Street Key Node and should be considered to replace the Community Commercial surrounding this intersection.



## Zoning

The study area has a mismatched pattern of zoning that reflects historical uses paired with future aspirations. Due to the breadth of zoning districts along with corridor, the permitted uses are not consistent. While a mismatch of zoning is common along traditional commercial corridors, creating a common identity for its growth and character is difficult.

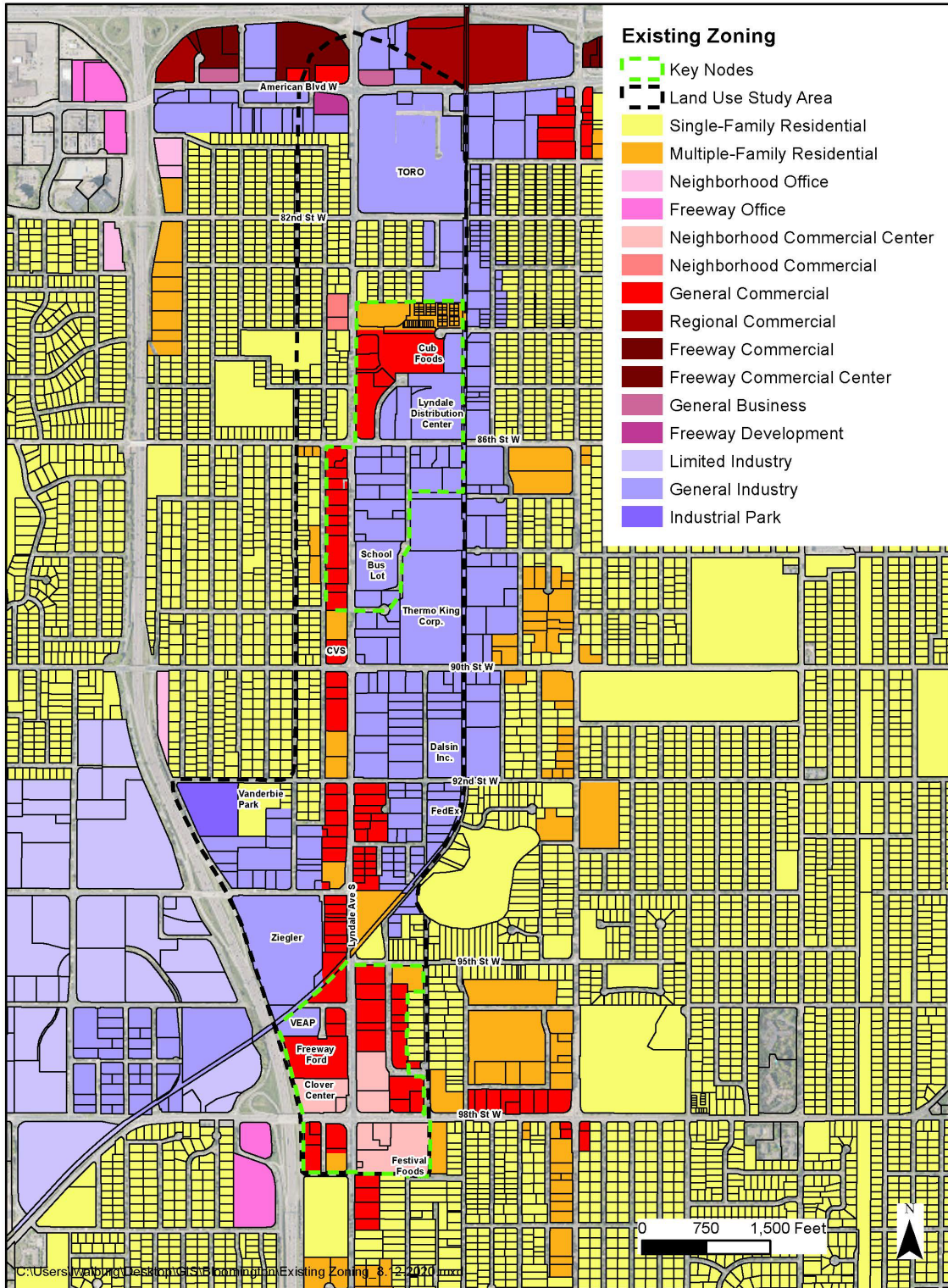
The following analysis provides an overview of existing zoning along Lyndale Avenue and then highlights how to better tailor the regulatory conditions to match the aspirations in this plan.

## Overview

The table below outlines some of the most prevalent existing zoning districts and standards along the corridor. Subsequent information highlights regulations for the design of structures and other ordinance details.

ZONING CLASSIFICATION	USES	DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS
<b>B-4 Neighborhood Commercial Center</b>	Multifamily residential, cultural facilities, office, breweries, retail, restaurants (including drive-throughs as CUP), firearm sales, farmers markets. Prohibits hotels, pawn shops, and most motor vehicle services.	FAR 0.4 minimum and 2.0 maximum with residential, 40,000 sf site minimum, 10-foot setback minimum and 40-foot maximum
<b>B-2 General Commercial</b>	Some public services, cultural facilities, office, breweries, hotels, gas stations/car washes, motor vehicle sales, vehicle repair, retail, restaurants, firearm sales, pawn shops, funeral homes, farmers market. Prohibits residential.	FAR no minimum and 0.5 maximum, 25,000 sf site minimum, 35-foot setback
<b>I-3 General Industry</b>	Work/live units, public services, social service distribution, office, breweries, medical labs, gas stations/car washes, motor vehicle sales, vehicle repair, restaurants w/o drive-throughs, incidental retail, manufacturing, machinery, makerspace, research labs, warehousing, wholesaling, indoor agriculture, dry cleaning, hazardous waste/recycling collection, solid waste transfer, self-storage, sexually-oriented businesses, farmers market. Prohibits residential, retail, hotels, and drive-through restaurants.	FAR no minimum and 1.0 maximum, no site area minimum, 30-foot setback

<b>RM-24 Multiple-Family Residential</b>	Townhouses, multifamily residential, congregate living, home businesses, public services, limited agriculture, farmers market. Prohibits single-family.	40,000 sf site minimum, density 12-24 units/acre, FAR 0.5, 40-foot setback
<b>R-1 Single-Family Residential</b>	Single-family homes, congregate living, accessory dwelling units, home businesses, schools, public services, cultural facilities, limited agriculture, farmers market	11,000 sf site minimum, 2 stories maximum





## Development Standards

Design characteristics that also shape the character and functionality of buildings and sites include:

- Height – Majority of corridor is 4 stories. At the 98<sup>th</sup> Street intersection, the NW corner has no height limit and the other three corners have a limit of 6 stories.
- Window transparency – no more than 25% of total window area can be obscured. The B-4 requires a minimum of 50% transparent windows.
- Street entrances – Each building and separate tenant space adjacent to a street “where on-street parking is provided must include at least one entrance, on the street side of the building that is open to the public during regular business hours.
- Canopies and awnings – Encouraged.
- Shared parking – Proposed shared parking needs to be within 500 feet of entrance and the agreement is filed as a deed restriction.
- Park dedication – This only applies in situations of platting or replatting. The required need for a developer to dedicate space (or cash) for parks, trails, wetlands, etc. is based on density calculations for number of employees or residents.
- Travel Demand Management (TDM) plan – Allows developers to reduce off-street parking requirements if near transit, part of a Planned Development, or through available on-street parking options.
- Drive-throughs – The number of lanes are limited to one in the B-4, C-3, C-5, and LZ zoning districts.

## Zoning Analysis in Key Nodes

The Key Nodes represent parts of the corridor that are best positioned for catalytic development based on market conditions, nearby employee density, major infrastructure investments, and the physical condition or land uses on existing sites. While the Key Nodes are positioned well for successful redevelopment, proactive actions will be required to regulate the type and design of development most desired in this plan.

The Key Nodes have significant redevelopment potential but the characteristics of their individual sites need to be reconciled with zoning to ensure future projects are aligned with the corridor vision and act as a cohesive whole. The Lyndale Avenue corridor currently has a mix of Residential, Commercial, Industry, and Neighborhood Commercial zoning districts. The map below illustrates the boundaries of the Key Nodes along with existing zoning categories.

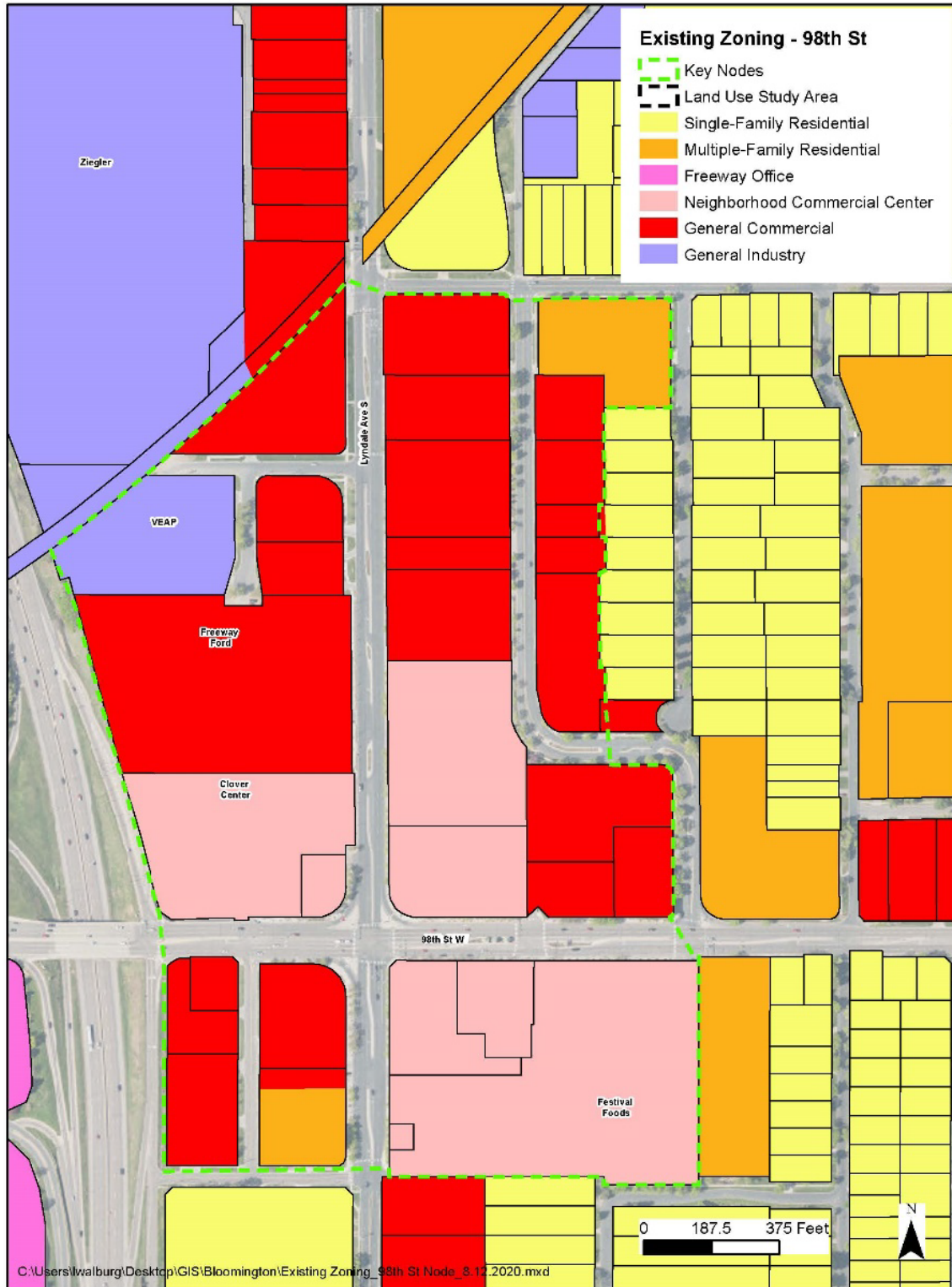
### 98<sup>th</sup> & Lyndale Node

The intersection of 98<sup>th</sup> & Lyndale has the most redevelopment potential along the corridor due to existing developer interest, the upcoming BRT station, and large sites with limited owners. It will also require the most proactive effort on the City’s part to not only set the stage through zoning changes, but also to establish consistent relationship building to better position the City in its negotiations with

property owners and developers to achieve the ideal reinvestment scenario. The City revised the land use guidance and then rezoned three of the four corners after the adoption of the *98<sup>th</sup> Street Station Area Plan*.

98<sup>th</sup> and Lyndale is envisioned as a hub of activity with retail, restaurants, and public spaces all supported by a compact critical mass of residential density. Sites and the connections between them are designed to prioritize walking, biking, and transit use. Residents, employees, and visitors are drawn to authentic local businesses and spaces – both indoor and outdoor – that create unique experiences to share with neighbors and friends.

The Future Land Use Plan above recommends a land use category solely used in the South Loop. The definition of South Loop embodies the vision described above for the 98<sup>th</sup> node with the introduction of BRT – the City should aspire to the same level of development intensity and public realm priorities here as it does in the South Loop. A close-up of the current zoning for 98<sup>th</sup> and Lyndale is shown below.



**Current Zoning Classifications and Recommended Changes**

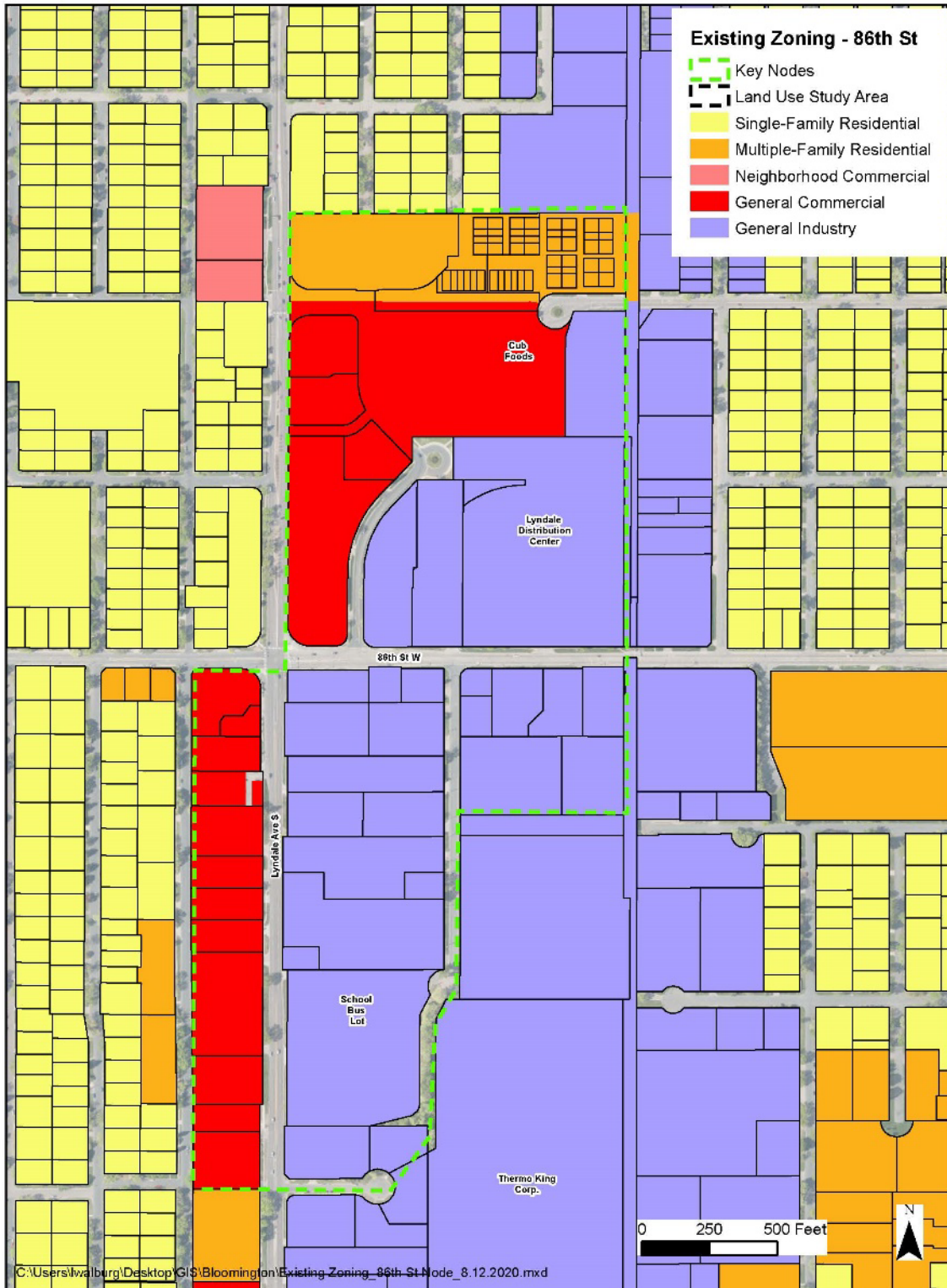
Zoning Classification	Recommendation	Uses	Dimensional	DRAWBACKS
<b>B-4 Neighborhood Commercial Center</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep, it is intended for walkability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mostly commercial and residential</li> <li>No hotels</li> <li>Limited auto-oriented uses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10' front setback</li> <li>FAR 0.4 - 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited FAR</li> <li>Allows drive-throughs</li> <li>Prohibits hotels</li> </ul>
<b>B-2 General Commercial</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rezone, does not allow residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial, including auto sales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35' front setback</li> <li>FAR up to 0.5</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited FAR</li> <li>Allows drive-throughs</li> <li>Setback too much</li> </ul>
<b>Height</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep, it is intended for reinvestment</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No limit on NW corner, 6 stories otherwise</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer more height in return for amenities</li> </ul>

The recommendation is to broadly utilize the B-4 district within the 98<sup>th</sup> Street Key Node.

**86<sup>th</sup> & Lyndale Node**

The area around this intersection has a wide variety of existing commercial, residential, and industrial uses. The Future Land Use Plan above recommends a combination of Community Commercial on the Cub Foods block, General Business along the west side of Lyndale, and the introduction of Innovation and Technology for the existing industrial on the east side of the corridor. These main land use categories help to maintain the mixed-use character of the node while supporting increased density and higher utilization of large industrial buildings and sites. This plan prepares for most development and reinvestment to happen based on market demand – the zoning configuration needs to offer flexibility for market conditions but set baseline requirements to get a consistent character. A close-up of the current zoning for 86<sup>th</sup> and Lyndale is shown below.

86<sup>th</sup> Street and Lyndale is envisioned as an eclectic mix of uses that offer increased daily services for the community and nearby employees. Sites and buildings are designed to encourage walking, browsing, and staying. Support and expansion of local and authentic businesses drives this area’s potential and creates pride in this thriving commercial node.



**Current Zoning Classifications and Recommended Changes**

Zoning Classification	Recommendation	Uses	Dimensional	DRAWBACKS
<b>I-3 General Industry</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rezone, does not allow residential. Keep I-3 zoning in protected industrial area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most industrial</li> <li>No residential and</li> <li>Retail as accessory use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>30' front setback</li> <li>FAR 0-1</li> <li>No minimum site size</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prohibits residential</li> <li>Too limited in retail options</li> <li>Limited FAR</li> <li>Setback too much</li> </ul>
<b>B-2 General Commercial</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rezone, does not allow residential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commercial, including auto-oriented uses (including sales)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>35' front setback</li> <li>FAR up to 0.5</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited FAR</li> <li>Allows drive-throughs</li> <li>Setback too much, particularly on small sites</li> </ul>
<b>Height</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Keep, it is intended for reinvestment</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 stories</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer more height in return for amenities</li> </ul>

One option is to replace the B-2 district along the west side of Lyndale Avenue within the 86<sup>th</sup> Street node to the B-4 Neighborhood Commercial Center zoning district. A significant consideration here compared to at the 98<sup>th</sup> Street node is that many existing auto-oriented uses will be impacted as non-conformities. Another option is the C-5 Freeway Mixed Use district but a potential barrier is the large minimum site size requirement.

For the current industrial properties, the IT Innovation and Technology zoning district is designed to transition traditional industrial sites to more high-tech, innovative, and job-dense industry. The primary drawback to this category is that it prohibits residential uses. Many of the allowed uses mimic the existing I-3 district

**Recommended Alternative Zoning Classifications**

Zoning Classification	Recommendation	Uses	Dimensional	DRAWBACKS
<b>B-4 Neighborhood Commercial Center</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option to replace B-2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most commercial and residential</li> <li>No hotels</li> <li>Limited auto-oriented uses</li> <li>No vehicle sales</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10' front setback</li> <li>FAR 0.4 - 2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited FAR</li> <li>Allows drive-throughs</li> </ul>
<b>C-5 Freeway Mixed Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option to replace B-2</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most commercial and residential</li> <li>Hotels</li> <li>Medical services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FAR 0.75 (as bonus) – 1.5</li> <li>80,000 sf min site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows drive-throughs</li> <li>Minimum site requirement</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Limited auto-oriented uses, does allow vehicle sales</li> </ul>		
<b>IT Innovation and Technology</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Option to replace I-3 for transitional industrial. Keep I-3 zoning in protected industrial area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultural facilities, recreation, restaurants, hotels, high-tech manufacturing</li> <li>No residential</li> <li>Limited auto-oriented uses, does allow vehicle sales</li> <li>No drive-throughs</li> <li>Retail as accessory use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>FAR 0.4 – 2</li> <li>80,000 sf min site</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prohibits residential</li> <li>Minimum site requirement</li> <li>Too limited in retail options</li> </ul>

## Key Takeaways

In developing the future land use guidance and then comparing that against existing zoning, we have identified a few key takeaways from this analysis:

1. Future land use designations in *Forward 2040* are generally consistent with the direction in this plan as a base but do not direct developers and property owners to produce ideal scenarios.
2. Floor Area Ratio (FAR) requirements in both the land use categories and the zoning districts place unnecessary barriers to redevelopment in the Key Nodes.
3. Current site and building design standards will help support implementation of this plan. While this analysis did not specifically analyze parking requirements, other analyses in this plan have and indicated a strong need to lower requirements.
4. The Industrial sites along the east side of Lyndale do not have adequate flexibility at this point to allow a wider variety of uses, including retail and residential. There is no perfect fit for a future land use category nor a zoning classification. One option may be a floating use district.
5. Significant parts of the corridor do not allow residential as part of the base zoning.
6. The eclectic direction for character and uses at the 86<sup>th</sup> Street Node can generally be accommodate with a method to expand potential uses on the east side industrial sites.
7. The 98<sup>th</sup> Street Node should be viewed as a true TOD investment area similar to the South Loop. The proposed future land use category reflects that understanding.