# Section 2 • Land Use Element

2.1: Introduction

As a second-ring suburb of Minneapolis, Bloomington experienced significant growth between 1950 and 1970 and is now considered "built out." Despite very little remaining undeveloped land, Bloomington will continue to grow as businesses and residents take advantage of the city's excellent location near an international airport, several freeways, transit, major employment centers, numerous services and excellent amenities.

Future growth will occur through redevelopment of older and under-utilized properties. The vast majority of residential growth is expected to be multi-family. Most non-residential growth will be in office, retail, service, and hotel uses. Major redevelopment activity is expected to be concentrated in the City's three development districts along the I-494 corridor. However, properties in older, out moded neighborhood commercial centers, industrial areas, and along major roadways will likely experience a range of redevelopment activity from physical rejuvenation to more significant transformation to allow new uses.

Community Designation

To more effectively target its policies, the Metropolitan Council assigns "community designations" that categorize local communities on the basis of existing development patterns, common challenges, and shared opportunities. The Metropolitan Council defines five community designations: urban center, urban, suburban, suburban edge, and emerging suburban edge (see Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Community Designation
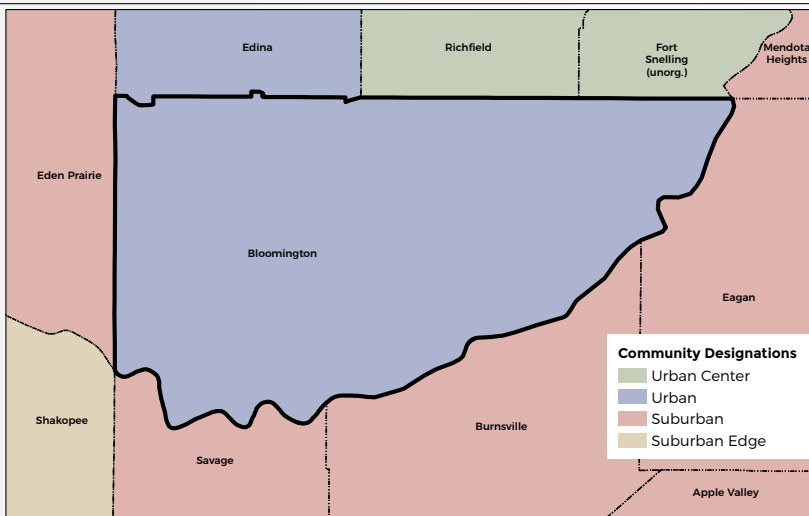
Source: Metropolitan Council, Bloomington 2015 System Statement

FORWARD 2040
Taking Shape Together

Bloomington's Future

In 2040, Bloomington envisions itself as a city with:

- Stable, well-maintained and distinctive neighborhoods;

- Attractive, thriving, neighborhood-oriented commercial and mixed use areas;

- Diversified employment opportunities;

- A mixture of housing choices to meet residents needs at all life stages;

- Safe and convenient options for transit users, cyclists, pedestrians and motorists;

- Well maintained and accessible natural areas, parks, and recreation facilities; and

- Cultural and entertainment facilities that celebrate our history and provide opportunities for creative learning and engagement.

The goals and strategies described throughout this plan provide the road map for achieving this vision.

Bloomington is designated as an "urban" community having developed primarily during the economic expansion after World War II. Urban communities are beginning to redevelop to meet the needs of their changing demographics through a greater mix of uses, increasing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and planning for enhanced transit service. The Metropolitan Council expects urban communities to plan for new residential development or redevelopment to achieve average densities of at least 10 dwelling units per acre, with higher densities expected in transit corridors (i.e., at least 25 dwelling units per acre near light-rail stations and 12 dwelling units per acre near bus rapid transit stations). This density goal is consistent with new Bloomington multiple family housing developed over the last decade, which has densities much higher than 10 units per acre. As described later in this chapter, Bloomington's land use designations are aligned with zoning districts to achieve net densities of 10 dwelling units per acre or more for new development and redevelopment, particularly in areas well served by transit. While residential zoning districts define allowed density ranges, mixed use zoning districts regulate intensity through minimum floor area ratio.

2.2: Land Use and Redevelopment Strategy

Bloomington's redevelopment strategy supports the Metropolitan Council's regional development strategy (Thrive MSP 2040), which seeks to maximize efficient use of public investments by strongly encouraging infill development and redevelopment within and along the I-494 beltway, around transit stations, and within neighborhood commercial districts. In line with the Metropolitan Council's designation of Bloomington as an "urban" community, change over the next 20 years will occur through strategic redevelopment in accordance with the following principles:

- Capitalize on regional infrastructure improvements while minimizing their negative impacts;

- Foster additional employment opportunities, services and amenities for the City and the region;

- Support higher land use intensities and mixed use development in areas currently or proposed to be well served by transit;

- Work toward a 50/50 balance of residential and non-residential property tax base;

- Encourage redevelopment of outdated, under-utilized, or incompatible land uses;

- Protect, preserve, and enhance open space and conservation areas and celebrate their value as hall-mark community amenities;

- Preserve and enhance natural drainage systems for their flood mitigating ability, natural habitat and environmental benefits;

- Adjust to a population that is aging and increasingly diverse; and

- Prepare to transition to a sharing economy and increased automation in transportation, jobs, and services.

Redevelopment Themes

The City's redevelopment and enhancement strategy is centered on three over-arching themes:

1. **Build on Assets:** Bloomington has long been a community that attracts residents and businesses. With almost two jobs for every resident in the work force, Bloomington is a major regional employment center. Community assets include:

   • Close proximity to downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul;

   • Close proximity to an international airport, major highways, railways, and major transit lines;

   • Vibrant mixture of hotels, restaurants, entertainment and retail;

   • A wide range of housing and employment options;

   • Ample open space, park and recreation amenities; and

   • Quality K-12 and higher education institutions.

2. **Focused Renewal and Intensification:** In support of the City's vision, Bloomington has updated its land use policies and zoning to promote mixed use and higher intensity development in appropriate locations. Bloomington has modified its commercial zoning districts and created several new zoning districts that allow or require residential uses mixed with commercial uses, particularly near high-frequency transit lines (LRT, BRT). The City and its HRA and Port Authority provide financial incentives to foster mixed use and transit-supportive projects, most notably in the Penn American and South Loop Districts. The City recently completed studies of its older, neighborhood commercial areas and industrial properties to identify redevelopment opportunities and priorities.

3. **Land Use-Transportation Coordination:** Bloomington recognizes the value of coordinated land use and transportation planning in achieving its community vision. To coordinate land use and transportation planning, Bloomington will:

   • Advocate for state/federal road improvements and pursue local road improvements to accommodate anticipated development levels.

   • Advocate for new transit investments in alignments and station/stop locations that maximize land use benefits.

   • Improve the ease of travel by non-motorized means.

   • Channel most new development to locations near transit, services, amenities and employment centers in order to reduce vehicle miles traveled.

   • Revitalize neighborhood commercial centers to ensure that goods and services are well distributed across the city to reduce vehicle miles traveled.

   • Direct regionally oriented uses to locations near freeways to reduce non-local traffic on internal city streets.

   • Consider special design features for roads that border or cross conservation areas to minimize impacts on animal movement and habitat.

Redevelopment Priorities

To implement its land use vision and guide future growth, Bloomington will pursue the redevelopment strategies outlined in Table 2.1, below.

Redevelopment Tools & Incentives

Public assistance is sometimes needed to incentivize new development, particularly where redevelopment poses significant challenges. Through the years, the City has utilized a variety of financial tools and other incentives to foster and facilitate both redevelopment and new development. Some examples include:

• Land acquisition and/or parcel assemblage

• Removal of existing structures to clear sites for redevelopment

• Clean up of polluted land

• Installation of public infrastructure (roads, sewers) or enhancements (lighting, streetscape fixtures, etc.)

• Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

• Tax Abatement

• Flexibility to development standards (e.g., density, parking, etc.)

Table 2.1: Redevelopment and Community Enhancement Strategy

Land Use Type	Priority Strategies
Residential Areas	• Enhance neighborhood identity and sense of community. • **Preserve the quality of existing housing and expand housing options.** • Reinvest in neighborhood amenities such as parks, trails, and playgrounds. • Encourage medium and high density housing to locate near transit, services, employment and amenities.
Public Parks, Trails, Open Space and Conservation Areas	• Preserve high-quality and ecologically significant natural areas and work to enhance their environmental quality and function. • Enhance access to natural areas, parks, and recreation facilities for all members of the community. • Renew public parks and recreation facilities. • Work to expand and improve connectivity of the trail system.
Neighborhood and Community Commercial Areas	• Improve pedestrian and bicycle access to neighborhood commercial areas. • Reinvest in aging neighborhood commercial areas to improve their function, market viability, and aesthetics. • Encourage residential uses in and adjacent to redeveloping older commercial nodes.
Industrial Areas	• Support the continued viability of Bloomington's industrial areas as part of a diversified local economy. • Preserve industrial sites with access to highway freight and rail systems. • If necessitated by market conditions, prepare plans for the rezoning of industrial land in a manner compatible with surrounding land uses.
I-494 Corridor	• Promote additional high intensity development along the I-494 Corridor, especially within the City's three primary growth nodes (South Loop, Penn American, and Normandale Lake). • Advocate for improved transit within the corridor and for funds to study the potential long-term implementation of a transitway within the corridor. • Encourage high density residential development within the corridor near services, amenities, employment, and transit. • Support timely improvements to I-494, especially the interchange of I-494 and I-35W.

2.3 Land Use Context

Land Use History

Before World War II, Bloomington was predominantly rural and agricultural. Fueled by an economic expansion in the post-war years, population soared from 9,902 in 1950 to 50,498 in 1960 and the city began its transformation into a major regional employment center. Large scale single family residential development began in northeast Bloomington and generally spread to the south and west. In 1960, U.S. Census Bureau records show a total of 12,281 single unit dwellings and only 77 multiple unit dwellings. After 1960, residential development diversified to include apartments, condominiums, and townhomes. Today, vacant land has been virtually exhausted and construction of new dwelling units now occurs via redevelopment of previously developed properties.

Commercial development in Bloomington first located along major transportation corridors, notably Lyndale Avenue (previously U.S. 65) and I-494 (previously Highway 5), and at crossroads such as France Avenue and Old Shakopee Road. Heavier industry concentrated in central Bloomington where railway access was available. Industrial land uses were later promoted in the Western Industrial Area, which is now fully developed.

One striking feature of Bloomington is that almost one-third of the City is set aside for public and quasi-public land uses. These natural and community assets contribute greatly to the high quality of life enjoyed by Bloomington residents and employees.

Existing Land Use Distribution

Today, just over one percent of Bloomington's 24,540 acres (38.3 square miles) is vacant and suitable for development. Over 70% of the land area in Bloomington is devoted to residential and public/quasi public land uses, accounting for 38.3% and 33.4% of total land area, respectively. The broad categories of existing land uses are described below. The current distribution of existing land uses is summarized in Table 2.2 and depicted on Figure 2.2. Planned land use is shown on Figure 2.10 and is described later in this chapter. Very little change in land use distribution is proposed, or needed, to accommodate forecast development through 2040.

Residential: Bloomington's residential areas developed over many decades and include a variety of single-family neighborhoods and multiple family enclaves. Single family neighborhoods contain a range of housing types from mid-century ramblers, duplexes, bi-level and split entry houses, to the larger houses built in the 1990's and 2000's. Multi-family residential areas include a mixture of medium to higher density apartments, townhomes, and condominiums. Multi-family housing for seniors has increased significantly over the last decade. Overall, Bloomington provides its residents ample choices of neighborhoods and housing styles.

Public/Quasi-Public: Open space and public facilities occupy almost one-third of the City's land base. Most of that land is preserved in its natural state as conservation areas, including the Minnesota River Valley, Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Park Reserve, and large wetlands and parks along Nine Mile Creek. Churches, schools, and other quasi-public uses are scattered throughout the City. Few schools exist in western Bloomington, which developed when the school district was experiencing a rapid decline in enrollment which halted the construction of new schools and resulted in closing one-third of existing schools.

Employment hub and tourist destination

Bloomington is recognized as the home of the largest shopping and entertainment complex in the United States - Mall of America. MOA employs approximately 13,000 and attracts 42 million visitors each year. As the state's number one tourist attraction, MOA attracts more visitors than all other Minnesota tourist destinations combined.

Bloomington is also home to many well-known national and international corporations, including: HealthPartners, Seagate Technology, Toro Company, Donaldson Company, Express Scripts, Thermo King, Skywater Technology, Ceridian Corporation, Polar Semiconductors, and Ziegler, Inc.

In addition, with many entertainment facilities and over 9,000 hotel/motel rooms, Bloomington is a major regional and national business and meeting center, employing an estimated 10,000 workers in the hospitality industry.

Commercial Areas: Bloomington contains a range of commercial areas from smaller neighborhood centers to concentrated office and intensive retail nodes (e.g., 90th and Penn, Mall of America). Neighborhood centers are located throughout the City and provide goods and services to local residents and, in some areas, serve as neighborhood gathering places. Given the decline in demand for "bricks and mortar" retail stores, some of these neighborhood centers will redevelop and convert to other uses over the next few decades. Most large office and retail developments draw employees and customers from around the region and are thus located near major roadways and are often well served by transit.

Industrial/Warehouse Areas: Bloomington supports a mixture of old and new light industrial and manufacturing uses. However, Bloomington offers very few vacant industrial sites large enough to meet current industrial spatial requirements. It is unlikely that Bloomington will be able to compete with the developing suburbs to attract major industrial users looking for large vacant parcels. However, trends indicate that some older suburban industrial parks are beginning to redevelop to accommodate a more diverse mix of uses. Likewise, in some locations, older, functionally obsolete industrial properties are being retrofitted for reuse by small "maker" manufacturers of custom goods.

Vacant/Agricultural: As a fully developed suburb, very little land remains undeveloped in Bloomington. Most vacant parcels are remnants of other developments or subdivisions. Only one functioning farm remains in Bloomington – Spruce Shadows Farm located in the South Loop District. This property is currently on the market and is likely to redevelop before 2040.
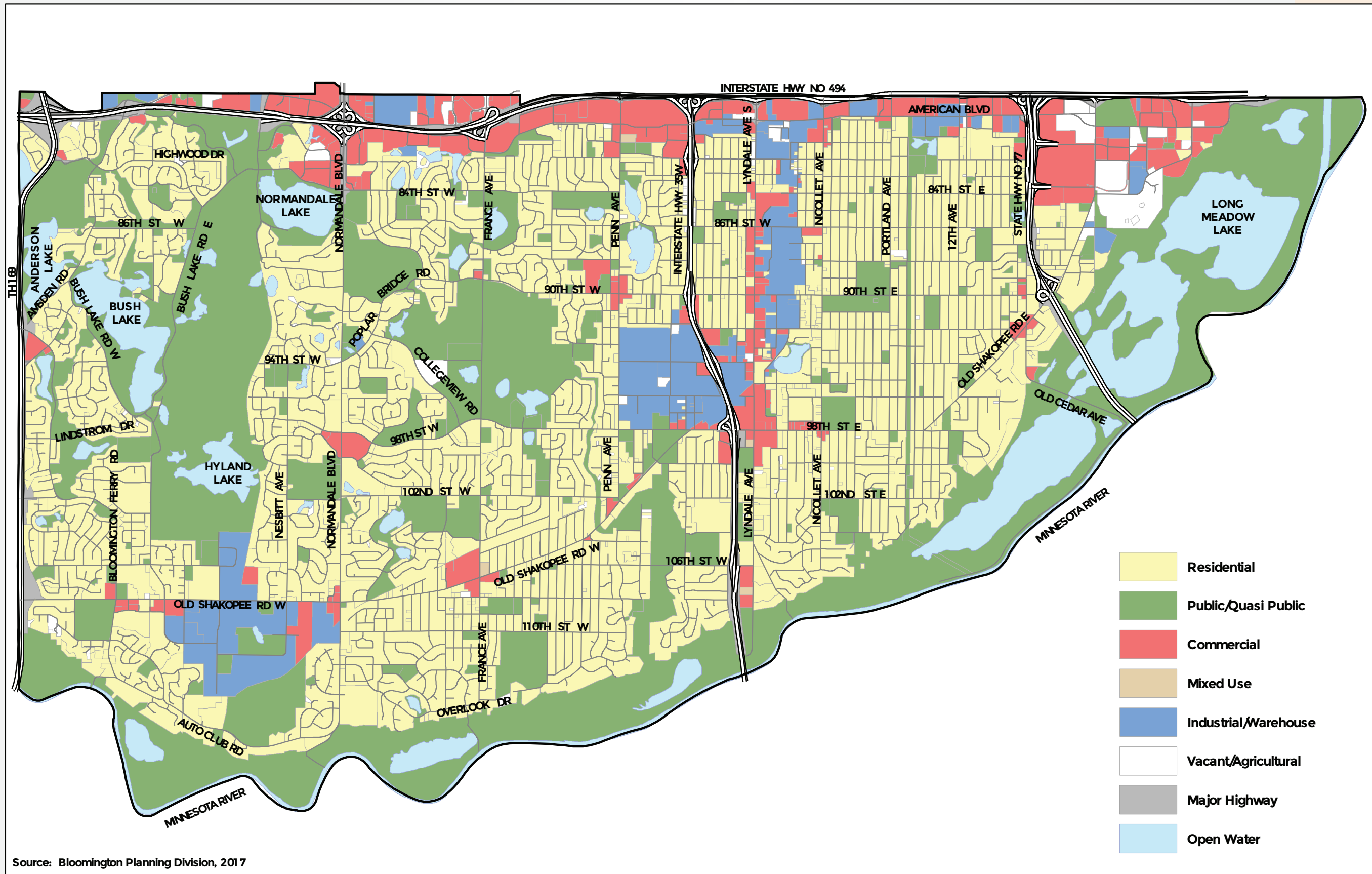
Right-of-Way: Includes land covered by existing public road rights-of-way.

Table 2.2: Existing Land Use Distribution, 2018

	Land use Type	Acres	Percent
Residential			
	Single-Family Detached	7,562	30.8%
	Two Family	108	0.4%
	Townhouses	341	1.4%
	Condominiums	311	1.3%
	Apartments	728	3.0%
	Other	343	1.4%
	Subtotal	9,393	38.3%
Public/Quasi Public			
	Schools	407	1.7%
	Churches	249	1.0%
	Government Facilities	82	0.3%
	Parks	3,075	12.5%
	Golf Courses	283	1.2%
	Conservation Areas	4,002	16.3%
	Other	90	0.4%
	Subtotal	8,188	33.4%
Commercial			
	Retail	412	1.7%
	Vehicle Oriented	183	0.7%
	Restaurants	74	0.3%
	Hotels	223	0.9%
	Service Oriented	93	0.4%
	Office	495	2.0%
	Subtotal	1,480	6.0%
Industrial/Warehouse			
	Manufacturing	420	1.7%
	Warehousing	604	2.5%
	Other	132	0.5%
	Subtotal	1,156	4.7%
Vacant/Agricultural			
	Vacant	214	0.9%
	Agricultural	59	0.2%
	Subtotal	273	1.1%
Major Highways			
	Subtotal	4,050	16.5%
Grand Total		24,540	100.0%

Source: City of Bloomington

Figure 2.2: Actual (Existing) Land Use, 2018

INTERSTATE HWY NO 494

AMERICAN BLVD

HIGHWOOD DR

NORMANDALE LAKE

84TH ST W

FRANCE AVE

LYNDALE AVE S

NICOLLET AVE

PORTLAND AVE

84TH ST E

12TH AVE

STATE HWY NO 77

LONG MEADOW LAKE

86TH ST W

PENN AVE

INTERSTATE HWY 35W

86TH ST W

90TH ST E

ANDERSON LAKE

BUSH LAKE RD E

NORMANDALE BLVD

BRIDGE RD

90TH ST W

TH 169

AMSDEN RD

BUSH LAKE RD W

BUSH LAKE

POPLAR

COLLEGEVIEW RD

OLD SHAKOPEE RD E

OLD CEDAR AVE

LINDSTROM DR

94TH ST W

98TH ST W

PENN AVE

98TH ST E

BLOOMINGTON FERRY RD

NESBITT AVE

NORMANDALE BLVD

HYLAND LAKE

102ND ST W

NICOLLET AVE

102ND ST E

MINNESOTA RIVER

OLD SHAKOPEE RD W

106TH ST W

LYNDALE AVE

OLD SHAKOPEE RD W

FRANCE AVE

110TH ST W

AUTO CLUB RD

OVERLOOK DR

MINNESOTA RIVER

Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2017

Legend:

- Residential
- Public/Quasi Public
- Commercial
- Mixed Use
- Industrial/Warehouse
- Vacant/Agricultural
- Major Highway
- Open Water

Seth Eastman painting of the MInnesota River Valley in Bloomington, 1847.

Pre-European Cultures

The pre-contact period in Bloomington extends from the retreat of the Wisconsin glaciers from southern Minnesota approximately 10,000 years ago to the explorations by Groseillers and Radisson on the lower Minnesota River in 1660. Bloomington was in a transition zone from the Paleo-Indian, Eastern Archaic, Woodland, and Late Mississippian prehistoric cultures because it was almost too far north for corn cultivation and almost too far south to rely on wild rice as a major food source.

Resources

Bloomington possess a wealth of natural and cultural resources and is strongly committed to being a good steward to ensure their protection, enhancement, and wise-utilization.

Natural/Environmental

Large areas of the City have been set aside as conservation and natural areas, including the Minnesota River Valley, significant wetland and woodland areas along Nine Mile Creek and the large Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lake Park Reserve. As development progressed through the years, the City has taken steps to:

- preserve numerous natural corridors linking larger natural areas to facilitate wildlife movement;

- provide for watershed protection; and

- maintain and enhance biological diversity and recreational open space.

More detailed information about natural systems, open space, and parks is provided in section 7: Community Facilities element.

Cultural and Archaeological Resources

Cultural and archaeological resources contribute to a community's sense of historical context, tradition and distinctiveness. Native Americans settled in the Bloomington vicinity for generations, drawn to its location on the Minnesota River. With the completion of Fort Snelling in 1825, the Minnesota River became a strategic waterway to the West. This drew increasing numbers of white settlers who transformed Bloomington into a farming-oriented community. Today, as a suburban city of 88,800 people, remnants remain of indigenous settlements and structures built by pioneer-era settlers. These have become increasingly important and rare resources that document the influence of human activity on the development of the City, particularly since the mid-1800s.

Pre-settlement: Numerous burial mounds and earthworks located in the Minnesota River valley and on the adjacent bluffs are primary evidence of the presence of indigenous peoples and cultures. Much of what we know about settlement in Bloomington during the pre-contact period is derived from field studies and notes compiled in a report by N.H. Winchell titled: *The Aborigines of Minnesota* (1911). This report describes several groups of Native American burial mounds in the Minnesota River valley within Bloomington. A more recent survey conducted in 1977, and compiled in the report *Bloomington: A Community Survey of Historic Sites* (Miller-Dunwiddie Architects, Inc.), identifies five existing mound groups and lists eleven destroyed or unlocated mound groups within Bloomington that are protected by State Law and City Ordinance. This report also provided a preliminary survey and an initial compilation of architectural and historical information on a number of structures and sites.

European Settlement: The period of European settlement is marked by numerous people, events, and activities that transformed Bloomington, including: Fort Snelling; Peter Quinn; the Pond family; Joseph Dean; the Bloomington Ferry; Colonel Savage; and the Dan Patch Line. These are some of the people and places with local and regional significance that shaped the growth and development of Bloomington. An extensive history of the City is provided in both *Bloomington on the Minnesota* (Judith A. Hendricks, 1976) and *Bloomington – A Sesquicentennial Celebration* (John C. Chalberg, 2007).

Preservation Activities: The community survey report classified sites into categories for preservation activities. It is important that sites be evaluated not in isolation, but in relation to their current, urban setting, recognizing that the context of historic sites is inevitably altered through the years. The City of Bloomington Heritage Preservation Commission (active 4/23/79 through 3/31/86) and City staff evaluated and measured the relative architectural, historical, and community development value or significance of existing sites listed in the 1977 community survey. The methodology made distinctions between "historic sites" (Class I) and "sites of general interest" (Class II) and was used to compile a *Bloomington Historical Register* that was adopted by the City Council in 1979 (see Figure 2.3 below).

The register is used as the basis for the City's historic site regulations and control. It is important to note that not every building warrants architectural or historic significance simply because it is old. It is not the aim of Bloomington's historic preservation efforts to create museums or simply preserve old structures but to expand awareness of pre-contact and historic resources in a meaningful manner. More information on cultural and archaeological resources and efforts to increase awareness of these resources is provided in the Community Facilities element.

Gideon Pond House - a class 1 historic site.

Figure 2.3: Historic Sites
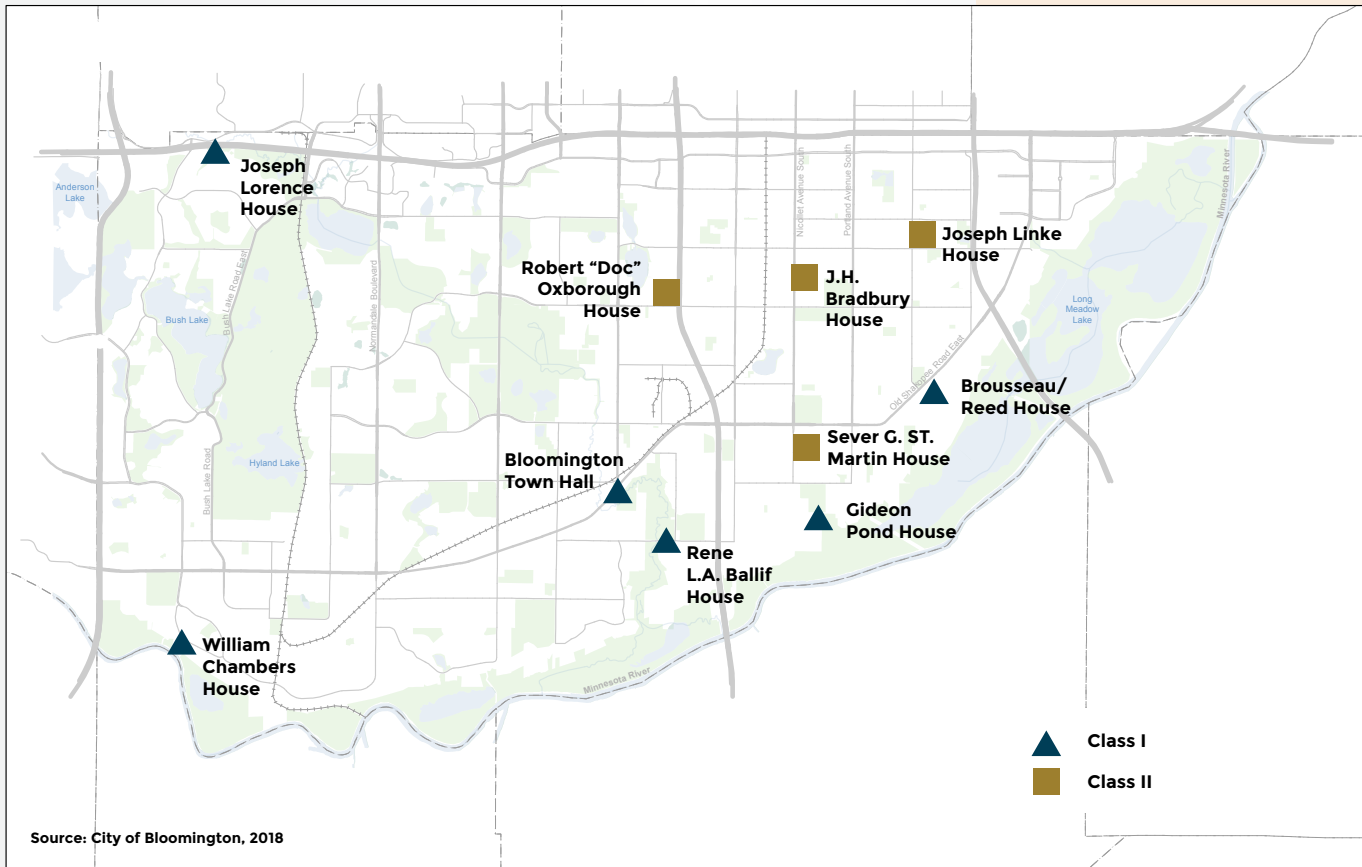
Aggregate Resources

Although aggregate resources are present in Bloomington, and have been mined in the past, Bloomington's status as a fully developed community restricts additional aggregate mining in the community.

The City's Energy Action Plan sets a goal to reduce city-wide energy-related greenhouse gas emissions 75% by the year 2035. One strategy to accomplish was to join SolSmart a national program for cities, counties, and towns that helps foster development of mature local solar markets by offering no-cost technical assistance to improve solar market conditions, making it faster, easier, and more affordable for residents and businesses to install solar energy systems. SolSmart provides three levels of recognition for municipalities taking deliberate steps to improve solar feasibility – Bronze, Silver, and Gold. Bloomington has achieved Gold Level Status.

Energy Resources

Given the uncertainty around future fossil fuel supplies and concerns about their negative environmental impacts, interest and investments have grown in alternative energy sources and diversifying available energy options. Advances in technology have greatly expanded the technical and economic viability of alternative energy for a broad range of industrial, commercial and residential applications. Over the next two decades, it is anticipated that significant resources will be focused on diversifying the range of energy options available. It will be important for the City to keep abreast of these trends and remain flexible to accommodate alternative energy.

Following is a brief description of the availability of alternative energy sources in Bloomington.

- *Solar Energy:* Techniques to convert solar radiation into electricity or heat generally fall into two categories: active and passive. Active solar techniques use photovoltaic panels, solar-thermal panels, pumps, and fans to convert solar radiation into usable energy. Passive solar techniques include a range of applications such as the use of materials that deflect or retain heat, use of natural ventilation and air circulation, and positioning buildings or landscaping to maximize or minimize solar gain. While passive techniques do not actually increase energy supply, they reduce demand for other energy resources.

Historically, the economics of active solar power have favored smaller, individual property generation units. Technological advances, specifically onsite fuel cell energy storage, could play a major role in the expansion of large scale solar energy generation.

The City has taken several steps to promote use of solar energy, increase awareness of this alternative, and reduce barriers to installation of active solar infrastructure, including:

- In 2013, Bloomington amended its zoning code to provide standards for solar installations, including non-rooftop installations.

- In 2018, Bloomington adopted an Energy Action Plan through its collaboration with Xcel Energy's Partners in Energy (PiE) program.

- In 2018, the City joined SolSmart (see sidebar) and an audit of the City Code was conducted to identify potential barriers to implementation of solar infrastructure.

To further promote the use of solar energy, Bloomington will:

- Amend the City Code and permitting processes to reduce barriers to installation of solar infrastructure as recommended in the SolSmart code audit;

- Work to implement recommendations in the Energy Action Plan and identified via SolSmart technical advisors.

- Encourage use of shadow cast studies to determine solar feasibility of development proposals;

- Actively enforce existing setback and height limits that help preserve solar access;

- Consider solar access impacts on adjacent properties when reviewing development proposals;

- Base analysis of solar access on measures of need (heating/cooling degree days) or measures of availability (Langleys) rather than solstice conditions that occur only once per year;

- Balance desires for solar access with sometimes competing City desires for increased density in areas near transit, services, amenities and employment; and

- Install solar panels on City facilities where feasible.

Figure 2.4 depicts gross solar potential in Bloomington based on calculations of gross solar and rooftop solar resources in the City made by the Minnesota Solar Suitability Analysis. The lighter the area, the higher the solar potential. It is important to note that viewing at the community-wide scale does not capture the 1-meter granularity of the data. Field examination may be needed to verify actual solar potential in some areas that appear black on the map below, particularly on rooftops.

Figure 2.4: Gross Solar Potential, City of Bloomington
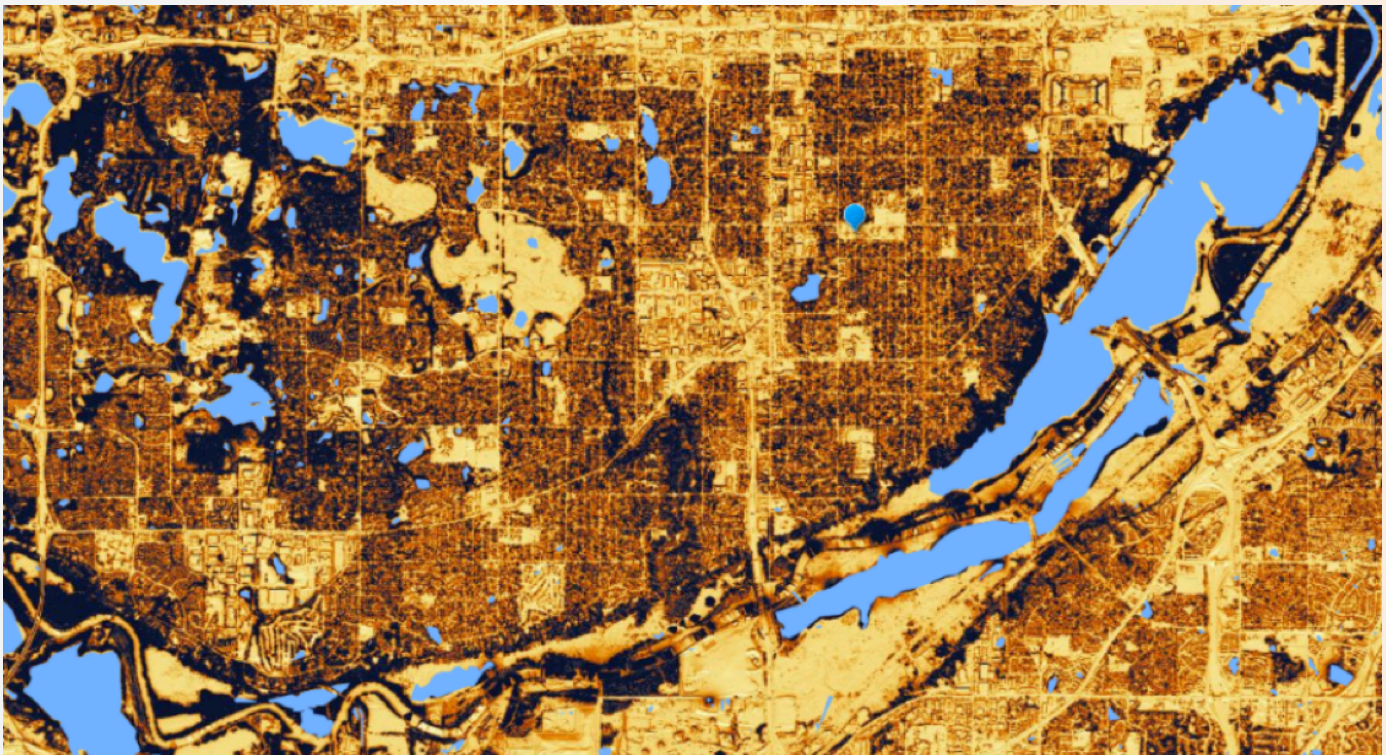
Source: University of Minnesota U-Spatial Statewide Solar Raster

The solar resource calculations, shown in Table 2.3, are not intended to demonstrate the amount of solar likely to develop within the City, but reflect the estimated total potential electricity that could be generated using existing technology and assumptions about the efficiency of conversion. The conversion efficiency of 10 percent is based on benchmarking analyses for converting the Solar Suitability Map data to actual production, and solar industry standards used for site-level solar assessment. Data suggest that Bloomington's gross rooftop generation potential is about 43 percent of the City's total electric energy consumption. However, the estimated potential does not consider ownership, financial barriers, or building-specific structural limitations, all of which could present barriers to using solar resources. Further, the ability to use solar power on any site can be impeded by obstacles on an adjacent site that are under separate control.

Table 2.3: City of Bloomington Gross Solar Rooftop Potential

| Gross Total Potential (MWh/yr)	Rooftop Generation Potential (MWh/yr)	Rooftop Capacity (MW/yr)	Top 10 Rooftop Potential (MWh/yr)
4,556,580	581,327	447	42,934

Wind Energy: Relative to other parts of Minnesota, Bloomington's wind resources are minimal and are hampered by obstructions such as buildings and trees that slow the wind. Given the limited benefit of small wind generators in an area where wind resources are poor and the potential negative impacts on residential uses, Bloomington advocates the construction of large wind farms in those Minnesota and U. S. locations where wind resources make wind turbines the most cost-effective. Residents and businesses can also participate in Excel Energy's wind energy programs.

Geothermal Energy: To promote sustainability and reduce reliance on fossil fuels, Bloomington will continue to explore opportunities to use geothermal heating and cooling systems within the City.

In addition to accommodating specific sources of alternative energy, the City will continue to explore opportunities to implement alternative energy systems, such as district energy and "smart grids".

District Energy: These systems produce heating or cooling in a centralized location for distribution to multiple users or buildings in a defined district. District energy systems provide higher efficiencies and better pollution control than dispersed heating and cooling systems. In 2011, a feasibility study was conducted to determine the cost-effectiveness of developing a district energy system to serve the South Loop District. While such as system was not developed, the study outlined factors that need to be considered should the City want to pursue this approach in the future.

Smart Grids: These are a type of electrical grid that utilizes "smart" technologies to predict and respond to the behavior and actions of all electric power users connected to the system. The goal is to more efficiently deliver reliable, economic, and sustainable electric power. "Smart" meters are used to monitor energy use in real time. Energy suppliers can use this information to define variable rates to reflect peak and off-peak generation costs. Consumers may then choose to consume electricity when rates are lower. As "smart" technologies become more commonplace in homes and businesses, large-scale application of Smart Grid systems will become increasingly feasible.
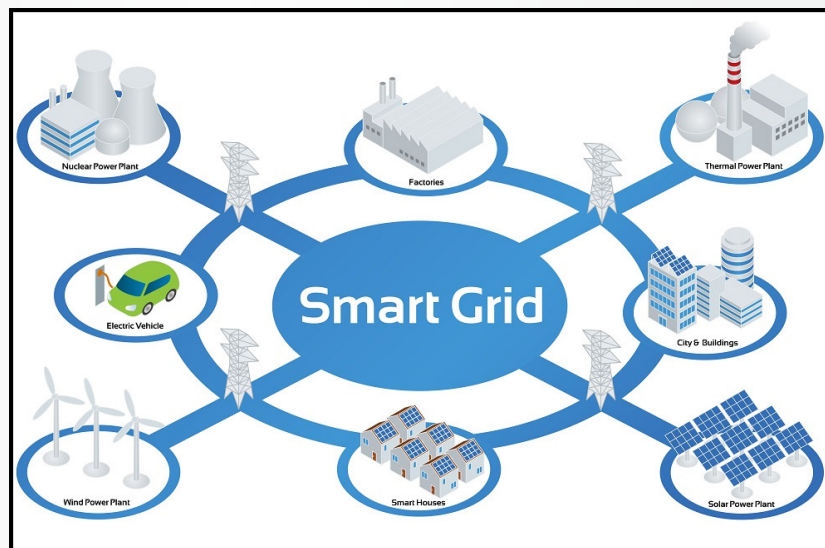
2.4 Opportunities & Challenges

Over the next 20 years, demographic shifts, changing markets, and application of new technologies will affect the array of choices residents and businesses make regarding where they live and locate, how they consume goods and services, how they move around, and how they prioritize their time. Given the rapid pace of change - and uncertainty over its direction and magnitude - the City must position itself to manage transitions and nimbly respond to unforeseen needs and demands on public infrastructure and services.

Demographic Changes

The demographics of Bloomington have changed significantly since the 1960s and 70s. Forecast changes to the City's population, households, and employment through the year 2040 are described below.

Population: As shown in Figure 2.5, the vast majority of Bloomington's population growth occurred in the 1950s and 1960s, with the number of residents increasing more than five fold between 1950 and 1960. Since 1970, Bloomington's population has remained relatively stable, with a net increase of less than 1,000 people between 1970 and 2010. Continued modest growth is forecast over the next 20 years resulting in an overall population increase of about 6,900 residents between 2020 and 2040 (7.8% increase), as shown in Table 2.4.

Figure 2.5: Population and Households – Historic Data and Forecasts
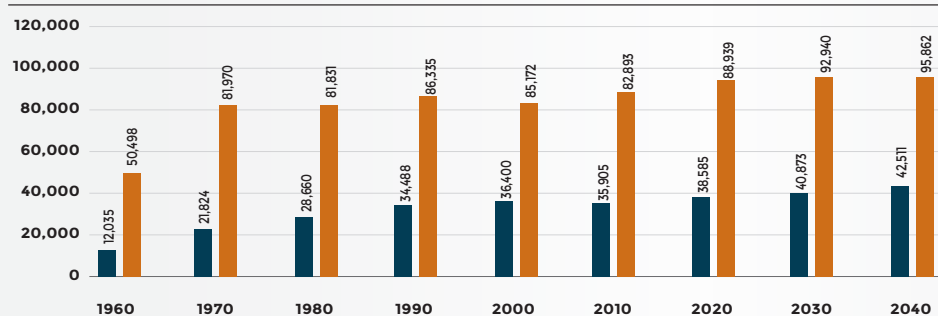
Source: U.S. Census (1960-2010 data), City of Bloomington forecasts (2020-2040), 2016

Table 2.4: Population Forecasts, 2020 to 2040

	2020	2020-2030	2030-2040
Decade Forecast	88,939	92,940	95,862
Decade Growth	–	+4,001	+2,922

Source: City of Bloomington, 2016

Bloomington's population has become older and more racially diverse. These trends are forecast to continue over the next two decades and have implications on housing, services and public facilities. While residents identifying as "white alone" still make up the majority, their representation decreased from 94% of total population in 1990 to 74.2% in 2016. The most dramatic change in Bloomington's racial and ethnic diversity occurred between 1990 and 2010 as illustrated in Figure 2.6. Enrollment data from the Bloomington School District #271 indicate that in 2016, 52% of kindergartners were non-white. This underscores the trend toward increasing racial diversity in the future.
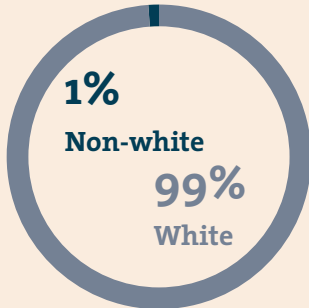

Bloomington's Aging Population

Beginning in the 1970s, the number of children in Bloomington has declined while the number of older adults has increased. While the majority of Bloomington's population is under age 55, over the next decade or two, the largest population gains are forecast for the age 65 and older age groups. Between 2020 and 2030, the population over age 65 is forecast to increase by 40%. By 2040, over a quarter (26.9%) of the population is forecast to be seniors aged 65 and older.

Bloomington is becoming more diverse

1970

1%
Non-white
99%
White

2010

20%
Non-white
80%
White

2016

24%
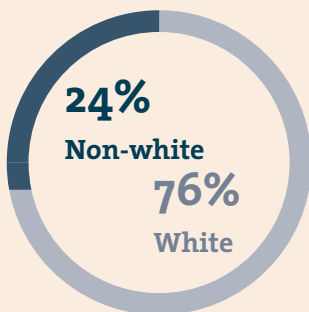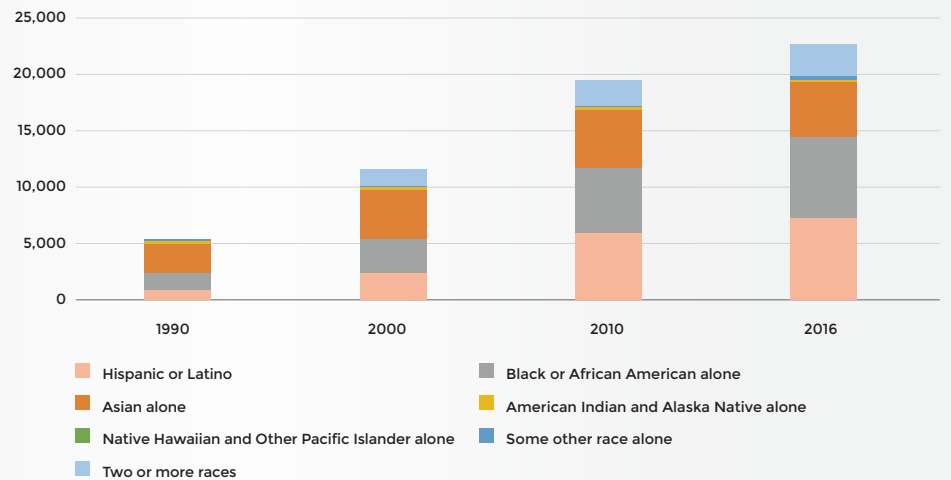Non-white
76%
White
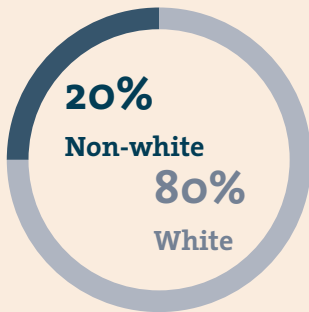
Figure 2.6: Change in Bloomington's Non-White Population, 1990-2016

- Hispanic or Latino
- Asian alone
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone
- Two or more races
- Black or African American alone
- American Indian and Alaska Native alone
- Some other race alone

Source: US Census and Metropolitan Council

Table 2.5 below illustrates change in the City's population for the major racial and ethnic categories.

Table 2.5: Change in Race and Ethnicity 1990-2016, Bloomington MN

Race/Ethnicity	Percent of Total City Population		Change 1990-2016
	1990	2016	
White alone	94.1	74.2	-19.9
Asian alone	3.0	5.6	+2.6
Black or African American alone	1.6	8.3	+6.7
Hispanic or Latino	0.9	8.2	+7.3

Source: US Census and Metropolitan Council

Households: Looking ahead to 2040, the number of households (occupied housing units) in Bloomington is forecast to increase at an average annual rate of about 196 households per year through 2040. Forecast household growth is illustrated in Figure 2.5 (above) and summarized in Table 2.6 below. Through 2040, the rate of household growth is forecast to be slightly higher than population growth. This reflects the steady decline in household size since the 1960s as household characteristics have changed and unit growth has been almost entirely in multi-family units. Household size in Bloomington dropped from 4.2 people per housing unit in 1960 to 2.3 in 2010, a 45% decline. Currently, more than 60% of Bloomington households are comprised of individuals living alone and couples without children. While growth in the City's senior and "empty-nester" population will contribute to smaller household sizes in the future, immigration and resident turnover may attract larger families to Bloomington, acting to stabilize further decline in household sizes.

Table 2.6: Household Forecasts, 2020 to 2040

	2020	2020-2030	2030-2040
Decade Forecast	38,585	40,873	42,511
Decade Growth	–	+2,288	+1,637

Source: City of Bloomington, 2016

Employment: Bloomington's excellent location near an international airport and major freeways, along with good access to transit, quality housing, and amenities has made it a major regional employment center for decades. The number of jobs located in the City has more than doubled since 1970. Although some shrinkage of jobs occurred during the recent recession (2007-2009), employment is forecast to experience a steady increase between 2020 and 2040, with an average annual growth of 840 jobs per year. Bloomington's historic employment levels and forecast employment through 2040 are summarized in Tables 2.7 and 2.8.

Table 2.7: Total Employment, Actual and Forecasts, 2000-2040

Year	Employment
2000	106,322
2010	88,928
2016	91,878
2020	95,250
2030	105,750
2040	112,050

Source: MnDEED (2000, 2010), City of Bloomington (forecasts)

Table 2.8: Forecast Employment Growth, 2016 to 2040

	2016-2020	2020-2030	2030-2040
Decade Forecast	95,250	105,750	112,050
Decade Growth	+3,372	+10,500	+6,300

Source: U.S. Census, City of Bloomington, 2016

While Bloomington is renowned for its robust retail and hospitality sectors, it is also home to several regional job clusters. These include: information and technology; headquarters and advanced business services; finance and insurance; and advanced manufacturing. Major employers include: Mall of America, Health Partners, Toro, Donaldson, and Seagate.

Managing Transitions

Across the globe, economic, technologic, and cultural changes are underway that will disrupt and fundamentally transform how cities develop, utilize resources, and interact. While some of these changes have begun, overall, the period of transition is just beginning. Some effects of these trends are already occurring, however the pace and magnitude of change is uncertain, and their impacts over the next 20 years are hard to predict.

To successfully navigate this period of transition and stay ahead of these changes, the City will need to actively track them, remain nimble, and respond with adequate flexibility to ensure policies and regulations do not become barriers to innovation in the future economy. Some of the key trends the City will need to follow closely include:

Shifting Markets

Change in retail model: How people shop has changed radically with growth in online shopping. As a result, the amount of building area devoted to retail stores has steadily declined. This trend is expected to continue as the nature of retail transactions evolves. Quick turnaround deliveries have raised expectations of convenience, while reducing
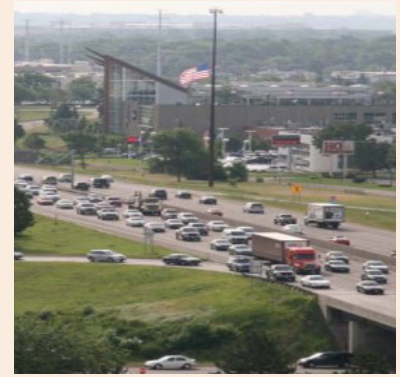
Commuter City

According to a March 2018 article in MnPost, over 29,560 (69%) of Bloomington residents who work, commute to jobs located outside the City. Conversely, over 68,460 non-residents commute to jobs located in Bloomington. This represents a net in migration of over 38,900 workers into Bloomington.
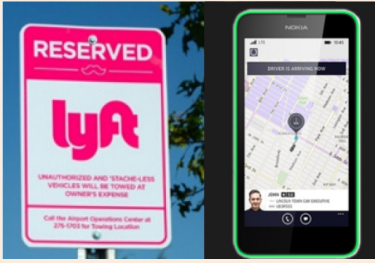
Ride share services are expected to remain popular in the future.

the need for onsite merchandise inventories. To accommodate these expectations stores are adapting physically. Some stores are combining warehouse functions with small retail outlets under the same roof. Others are adopting smaller footprint stores where customers can examine, test, and pick up merchandise. These stores may also focus on offering high levels of services and amenities to enhance consumer experience.

Patterns in consumer spending are also shifting. Consumers are increasingly searching for unique shopping, food and entertainment venues that provide ambience and tangible experiences. As major department store anchors struggle and downsize, mall retailers are responding by increasing the floor area devoted to leisure, entertainment, and experiential uses.

Some possible land use and development implications include:

- Greater demand for smaller store footprints

- Conversion of some existing retail stores to warehouses to serve online shopping

- Increased mix of uses in shopping centers that allow customers to engage in activities from work to leisure, with increased emphasis on entertainment

- Pop-up retail stores that allow small independent makers to enter the market without large upfront investments in bricks and mortar

- Increase in service industry businesses

Sharing economy: The spread of smart technology has fueled growth in peer-to-peer transactions, known as the "sharing" economy. This is shifting our economy away from traditional ownership and selling of things to selling *access to the functionality* of those things. The ability to share and track data is critical to the success of this model.

Given how fast technology changes and new ideas for sharing emerge, governmental entities at all levels are scrambling to determine how to regulate the sharing economy to minimize unintended negative impacts without unduly stifling technological and economic innovations. Successful large-scale applications such as Airbnb, Uber, and Lyft, emerged before control mechanism were in place to monitor and regulate them. Consequently, a number of communities have had to patch together regulations and enforce protocols in a reactive mode.

One of the challenges for government during this transition period is to ensure that policies and regulations do not unduly disadvantage traditional services (e.g., taxi cabs, hotels) while trying to accommodate and regulate the new sharing services. With the growth in the sharing economy in recent years, cities are struggling to define approaches to apply regulations, fees, taxes, and permitting in a consistent, fair and equitable manner. It is challenging to accurately predict how new sharing economy concepts will affect future land use, public infrastructure, or public services. Moving forward, Bloomington will need to be both proactive in researching and understanding these new approaches and flexible in responding to them.

New Technologies

Technological innovations will have multiple impacts on the City's built environment, how goods and services are provided, and how jobs are performed. Key technologies include:

Autonomous Vehicles: The rapid advance of "self-driving" or autonomous vehicles could have drastic impacts on how land is used (particularly streets and parking lots) and how people move around the City. Predictions vary widely about how and when these impacts will occur. Most experts anticipate the transformation will occur in denser, urban areas first; potentially within the next 10 to 15 years. When this transformation arrives in suburbs like Bloomington is harder to determine. While wide-spread transformation may not occur in Bloomington until after 2040, it is not too early to begin planning to accommodate this mode of transportation. It is also important to continue to monitor technological advances and successful pilot projects for guidance. Some potential implications on development and infrastructure include:

- Reductions in demand for onsite parking requirements. This could lead to increased requests for parking reduction variances and subsequent code amendments to reduce minimum parking standards. It could also result in redevelopment of existing parking lots and ramps for other uses and consideration of off-site parking facilities for AVs.

- Whether use of autonomous vehicles will result in an actual reduction in vehicle trips is the subject of much current debate. However, if this occurs, there will be excess right-of-way capacity that could be repurposed to accommodate drop off/pick up lanes or other travel modes (transit, bicycles etc.).

- Development and adoption of site design standards to accommodate autonomous vehicles (i.e., drop-off lanes). Standards would need to address the size and location of drop-off areas as well as passenger waiting facilities.

- Installation of sensors and other technology infrastructure when roads are reconstructed to facilitate autonomous vehicle navigation.

- Impacts to many auto-oriented land uses. If autonomous vehicles lead to a shift away from individual ownership toward a mobility provider model, needs for vehicle dealerships, parking lots, part stores and fueling stations will diminish.

- Impacts on transit service and potential decline in ridership.

Job Automation: Technological advances have altered the work environment for many years. Likewise, businesses will always make efforts to increase cost-efficiency and productivity. Advances in robotics and artificial intelligence and corresponding reductions in their costs will inevitably result in displacement of certain types of jobs. But new jobs will also emerge, which will require workers to shift occupations. As a result, strategic and deliberate workforce development may become increasingly vital to sustaining a healthy workforce. New technologies will also continue to make telework more viable, reducing demands for office space.

"Smart" Systems: "Smart" devices are changing how individuals and organizations consume and share information and make transactions. Over the past several years the City has made significant investments in new technologies to vastly improve both internal and external processes and information sharing (e.g., electronic plan review and meeting packets, use of social media, etc.). These smart systems have the potential to greatly enhance the City's ability to engage with its customers and the community. They also enhance the City's ability to routinely monitor and evaluate a variety of systems (e.g., sewers, roads) and practices (e.g., use of deicing chemicals, recreation

Robots are expected to become increasingly common in the work place.

The aim of the "One Bloomington" efforts are embodied in the following statement:

"We are a community that includes all residents, working together to accomplish the same goals. We live in different neighborhoods, but we're not defined by boundaries. We are united, not by sameness, but by our desire to build a strong community that we can all enjoy. We are...One Bloomington"

program participation) to determine where shifts in priority or approaches are needed to improve cost-effective use of resources

Workforce Development

The Twin Cities metropolitan area is currently experiencing very low unemployment rates. According to a recent report by Greater MSP, worker shortages are most pronounced in lower skilled jobs, including health care, hospitality, construction and warehousing. At the same time, demand for jobs in the health care sector is expected to grow significantly in the foreseeable future, largely due to increased health-related demands of aging baby-boomers. Given the prominence of hospitality and retail employment in Bloomington, shortages in these sectors could pose challenges for some local businesses.

While the City has little direct control over its labor force, it can work cooperatively with businesses, developers, educational institutions, and other organizations to support the growth of a skilled workforce. The focus will need to be on supporting training and leveraging partnerships to strengthen connections between our workforce and our local business community.

The City can also work to provide housing and transportation choices that enable workers to live near and conveniently access workplaces and support services. These investments benefit everyone and could serve to enhance Bloomington's competitive advantage with other metropolitan areas – and cities in the region - to recruit new residents, employers, and a talented workforce.

Enhancing Image and Identity

Bloomington consistently receives high ratings as a place to live, play, and conduct business. However, community survey results indicate increasing concern around the City's overall image. Enhancing community image was highlighted as a priority in the City Council's 2016 strategic plan. Since then, a number of community engagement and listening sessions have been undertaken to define steps the City can take to enhance its image and identity. These efforts have collectively been branded "One Bloomington", reflecting a desire to work together as a community to advance shared values and goals. Some key strategies include: strengthening civic engagement; igniting partnerships; embracing our diversity, telling our story and creating a bold vision; and creating community through neighborhoods.

Airport Impacts and Opportunities

Convenient access to Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP) was central to Bloomington's emergence as a major regional center for employment, hospitality, and entertainment. As the economy becomes increasingly global, proximity to MSP will be particularly beneficial for individuals and businesses engaged in work or lifestyles that involve frequent air travel.

However, airport adjacency poses challenges to development through restrictions on certain land uses and building heights. To address these challenges, the City adopted Airport Runway Overlay Zoning Districts to regulate land uses in areas corresponding to the safety zones for runways 17-35 (affects South Loop District) and 4-22 (affects are south of I-494, west of TH 77).

More detailed information about the MSP Airport, its impacts, and mitigation strategies is provided in Section 5: Airport Element.

2.5 Future Land Use

With just over one percent of Bloomington's 24,540 acres (38.3 square miles) remaining in a vacant or undeveloped/agricultural state, Bloomington is considered "fully developed". With the exception of a few minor land use amendments to better align existing uses and zoning with land use guide designations, no significant changes are needed or proposed to the City's future land use guide map to accommodate forecast growth. Consequently, there is significant overlap between existing and guided future land uses and very little change in land use distribution is expected between 2018 and 2040. The distribution of existing land uses is summarized in Table 2.2 and depicted in Figure 2.2 Actual (Existing) Land Use, 2017. Future land use guide plan designations are shown in Figure 2.10 Future Land Use Guide Plan Map. Existing land use categories, while generalized, describe the predominant type of use currently existing on a property. Future land use guide categories describe planned future land uses in more specific terms. The City's seventeen individual future land use guide designations are described later in this section.

Today 273 acres remain vacant or in agricultural use. The land use guide designation of these vacant acres is shown in Table 2.9. These land use guide designations are not expected to change and are reflected on the Future Land Use Guide Plan Map (Figure 2.10). About 214 acres are expected to develop over the next 20 years. These vacant acres, along with redevelopment of land that is currently developed, will accommodate future growth as described below.

Table 2.9: Land Use Guiding of Remaining Vacant Lands

Land Use Guide Designation	Acres
Low Density Residential	29
Medium Density Residential	3
High Density Residential	22
High Intensity Mixed Use	19
Lindau Mixed Use	6
South Loop Mixed Use	13
Office	48
Regional Commercial	4
Innovation & Technology	52
Industrial	12
Public, Quasi-Public, and Conservation	27
Right of Way	45
Total	**273**

Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2018

Accommodating Future Growth – Land Capacity Analysis

Given the very limited supply of vacant, developable land in Bloomington, the vast Given the very limited supply of vacant, developable land in Bloomington, the vast majority of future growth will occur through redevelopment or intensification of previously developed property. The 2008 Comprehensive Plan directed most new growth to Bloomington's three development districts along I-494. Since then,

detailed plans were adopted for each district, which established land use and zoning to foster high intensity and transit-supportive uses. The district plans also identify infrastrastructure needs to accommodate forecast future development. Through 2040, the majority of new growth is expected to continue to locate in these three development districts. Additional new residential, commercial, and/or industrial development will also occur through redevelopment, intensification, and potential reuse of existing neighborhood commercial nodes, under-utilized industrial properties, and the limited remaining vacant land.

The City uses a parcel-specific forecasting methodology (aka "forecast tracker") that tracks approved development entitlements, likely development based on discussions with developers and landowners, and potential development based on zoning/development standards. Forecast residential and commercial development (described in terms of households and employment) is assigned to Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ) and specific parcels. Figures 2.7 and 2.8 illustrate where most residential development and new or expanded commercial and mixed use development is forecast to occur through 2040. Tables 2.10 and 2.13 provide detailed information regarding forecast increases in residential units and employees in the TAZs where the majority of growth is anticipated through 2040. Consistent with the City's establish redevelopment vision, the majority of the high growth TAZs are well served by existing and planned transit and infrastructure improvements needed to accommodate forecast future development have been identified.

Future Residential Growth: Areas forecast to accommodate new residential growth are highlighted in Figure 2.7. As shown in Table 2.10, about 182 acres are forecast to re/development with residential uses through 2040. This will result in over 5,100 new residential units at an average density of over 28 units per acre. Applying anticipated minimum and maximum densities indicates the potential for between 1,966 and 16,221 new residential units through 2040. This translates into a possible density range of 11

Figure 2.7: Areas Forecast for High Household Growth, 2016 to 2040
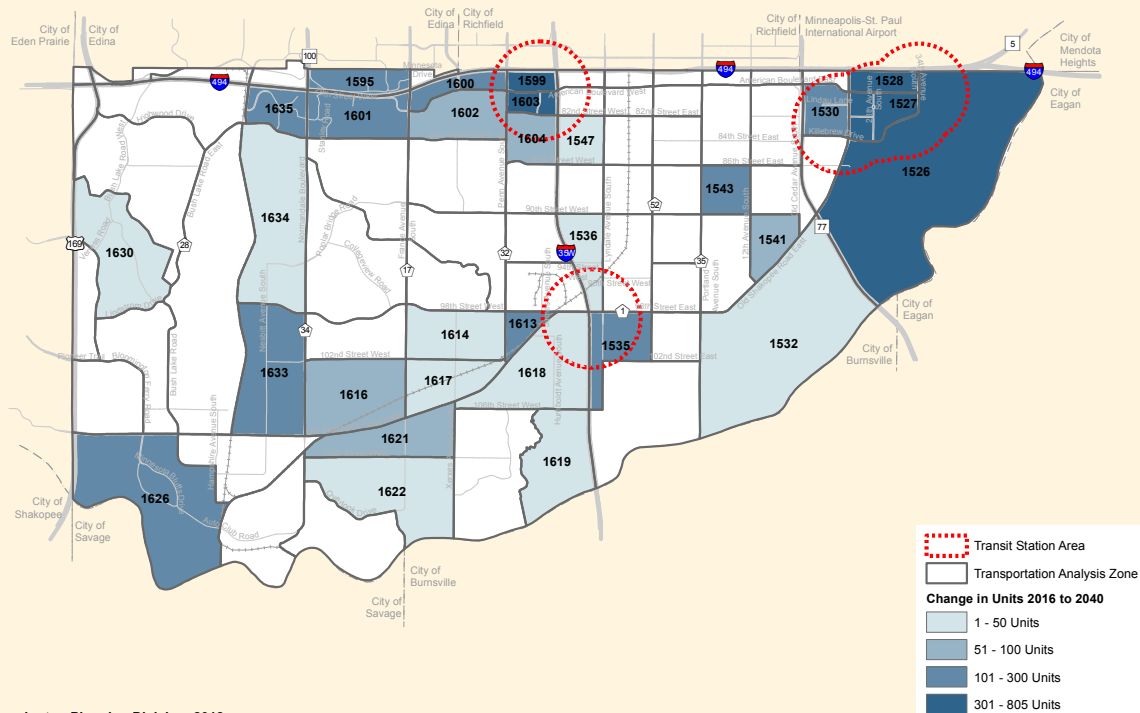
Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2018

to 89 units per acre, which achieves the average minimum 10 dwelling units per acre density goal for the Metropolitan Council's "urban" community designation.

Table 2.10: Forecast Multi-Family Unit Growth by TAZ, 2016-2040

TAZ	Acres	Land Use Guide (density range)**	Forecast New Units*	Forecast Density	Minimum Units	Maximum Units
1526	15.6	SLMU (30-130)	596	38.5	468	2,028
1527	7.8	SLMU (30-130)	840	107.7	234	1,014
1528	12.5	SLMU (30-130)	500	40	375	1,625
1530	8.8	HIMX (10-60)	120	13.6	88	528
1532	5.6	LDR (0.1-5)	22	3.9	1	28
1535	5.5	HDR (10-150)	205	21	55	825
	0.9	MDR (5-10)	9	10	4	9
1536	1.1	HDR (10-150)	25	22.7	11	165
1541	3	HDR (10-150)	100	33.3	30	450
1543	4.8	HDR (10-150)	166	34.6	48	720
1547	2	HDR (10-150)	50	25	20	300
1595	5.2	CC (8-80)	250	48	41	416
1599	5.3	RC (8-80)	350	66	42	424
1600	4.7	OFC (10-80)	150	31.9	47	376
1601	2.5	HDR (10-150)	100	40	25	375
	8.6	OFC (10-80)	100	11.6	86	688
1602	1.5	OFC (10-80)	56	37.3	15	120
1603	2.4	RC (8-80)	100	41.7	19	192
	3.2	CC (8-80)	250	78.1	25	256
1604	1.3	LDR (0.1-5)	5	3.8	1	6
	2.8	HDR (10-150)	50	17.9	28	420
1613	3	HDR (10-150)	200	66.7	30	450
1614	10	LDR (0.1-5)	40	4	1	50
1616	2.5	CC (8-80)	100	40	20	200
1617	1.8	LDR (0.1-5)	7	3.9	1	9
1618	2.5	LDR (0.1-5)	10	4	1	12
1619	2.5	LDR (0.1-5)	10	4	1	12
1621	1.8	HDR (10-150)	80	44	18	270
1622	8.3	LDR (0.1-5)	33	4	1	41
1626	10.7	HDR (10-150)	134	12.5	107	1,605
	10	LDR (0.1-5)	15	1.5	1	50
1630	5	LDR (0.1-5)	20	4	1	25
1633	9.6	PUB (reguide w/ redevelopment to MDR and/or HDR)	280	29.2	48	1,440
1634	2.5	LDR (0.1-5)	10	4	1	12
1635	7.2	HDR (10-150)	179	25	72	1,080
Total	**182.5**		**5,162**		**1,966**	**16,221**
	Ave Density = 20.6 u/a			**Ave Density Range: 13-105 u/a**		

Source: City of Bloomington, 2016 forecast tracker data

Employment Density Factors used to calculate future employment associated with forecast new commercial and hotel development:

- Hotel (full service) – 0.7 jobs/room

- Hotel (limited service) – 0.25 jobs/room

- Hotel (other) – 0.4 jobs/room

- Office – 0.0033/SF

- Retail – 0.0025/SF

- Restaurant – 0.0045/SF

- Manufacturing – 0.001/SF

- Warehouse – 0.0005/SF

- Institutional – 0.002/SF

- Other (entertainment, water park) – 0.0017/SF

The land use categories and associated zoning districts and anticipated density ranges corresponding to the acres forecast for new residential development are listed in Table 2.11. While residential zoning districts generally define specific maximum densities, commercial and mixed use zoning districts often control density through floor area ratio (FAR). Thus the density range anticipated for areas designated for mixed use and commercial development are estimated based on FAR and development standards in the various zoning districts. Recent and past development suggests that residential redevelopment in commercial and mixed use areas generally far exceeds the minimums allowed by zoning. The land use breakdown shown in Table 2.11 illustrates the percent of residential and non-residential development forecast to occur through 2040.

Table 2.11: Density and Intensity of Land Forecast for Redevelopment through 2040

Land Use Guide Designation	Corresponding Zoning Districts	Use Breakdown for Land Forecast for Redevelopment			Anticipated Density Range** (units/acre)		FAR***	
		Acres	% Residential*	% Non-Residential	Min	Max	Min	Max
Residential								
Low Density (LDR)	R-1, RS-1, R-1A	49.6	100%		0.1	5	NA	NA
Medium Density (MDR)	R-3, R-4, RM-12	10.5	100%		5	10	NA	NA
High Density (HDR)	R-4, RM-12, RM-24, RM-50, RM-100	44.5	100%		10	150	NA	NA
Mixed Use								
High Intensity Mixed Use (HIMX)	CX-2	82.9	10.6%	89.4%	10	60	NA	2.0
South Loop Mixed Use (SLMU)	HX-R	66.9	53.7%	46.3%	30	130	1.5	2.0
Commercial								
Office (OFC)	C-4, CO-1, CO-2, CS-0.5, FD-2	72.6	20.4%	79.6%	10	80	Varies	2.0
Community Commercial (CC	C-2, C-3, C-5, CS-0.5, B-4, FD-2	26.8	40.7%	59.3%	8	80	Varies	2.0
Regional Commercial (RC)	CX-2, C-2, C-3, C-4, C-5, CS.05	32.4	23.1%	76.9%	8	80	Varies	2.0

Source: : Bloomington Planning Division, 2018
Percent residential broadly reflects forecasts based on land use policy, district plans, and anticipated market demand. Specific zoning requirements and limitations will vary by parcel.
**Density ranges are based on development standards in the various zoning districts associated with the guiding land use. Specific zoning requirements and limitations will vary by parcel.
***Minimum and maximum FARs for specific parcels are regulated by the underlying zoning district.

Figure 2.8: Areas Forecast for High Employment Growth, 2016 to 2040

Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2018

Legend:

- - - Transit Station Area

☐ Transportation Analysis Zone

Employment Change 2016 to 2040

- Less than 500 employment gain
- 501 - 1,500 employment gain
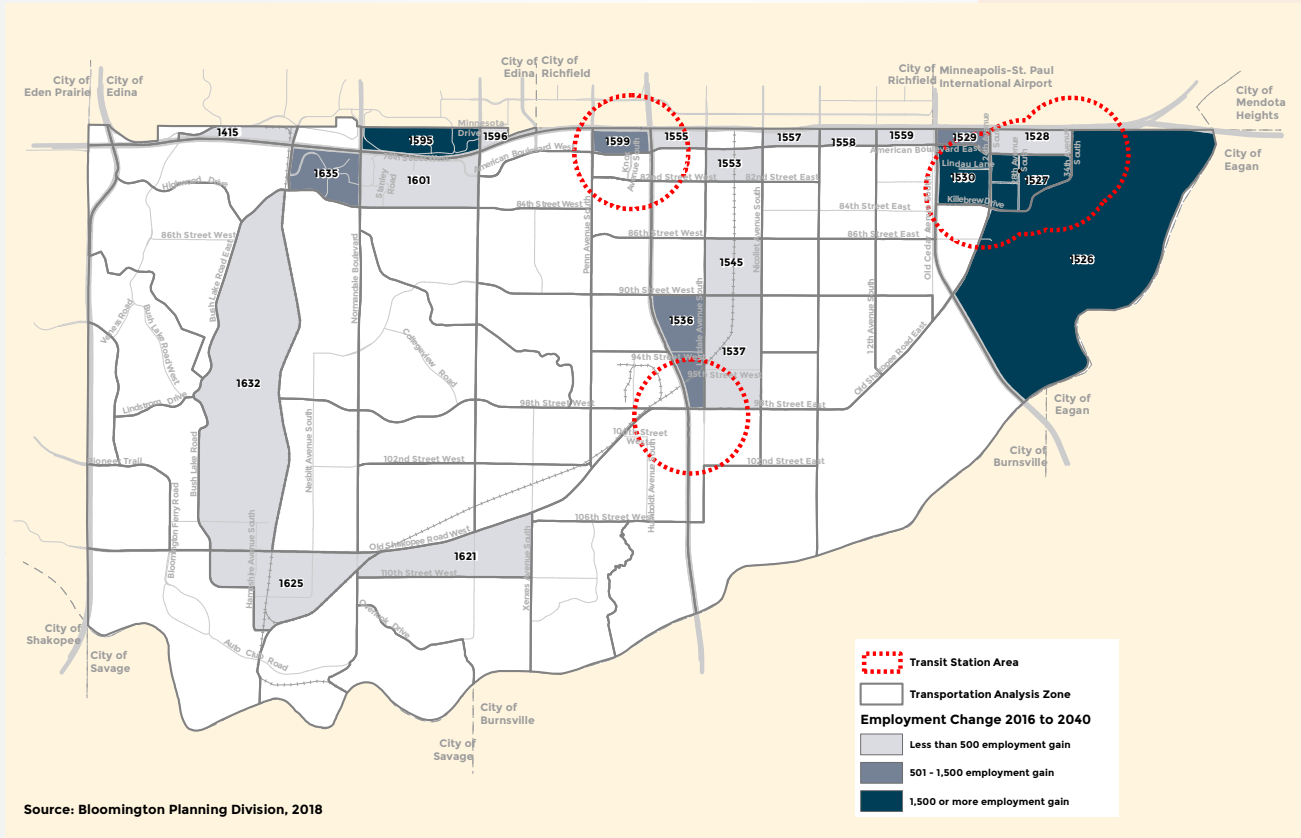- 1,500 or more employment gain

Table 2.12 correlates the acres forecast for new residential development by decade with the corresponding land use designation. The City will support residential uses in office/commercial land use categories when allowed in the underlying zoning district.

Table 2.12: New Residential Growth by Land Use Category, 2016-2040

Land Use Category	Forecast Residential Growth						Total Residential Growth 2016-2040	
	2016-2020		2021-2030		2031-2040			
	Units	Acres*	Units	Acres*	Units	Acres*	Units	Acres*
Low Density Residential	40	16.3	52	13.1	80	20.3	172	49.6
Medium Density Residential	9	0.9	280	9.6	-	-	289	10.5
High Density Residential	-	-	864	33	425	11.4	1,110	44.5
High Intensity Mixed Use	120	8.8	-	-	-	-	120	8.8
South Loop Mixed Use	395	3.9	945	15.8	596	16.3	1,936	35.9
Office	-	-	250	13.3	56	1.5	485	14.8
Community Commercial	250	3.2	100	2.5	250	5.2	600	10.9
Regional Commercial	-	-	150	4.0	300	3.5	450	7.5
Total	814	33.1	2,641	91.3	1,707	58.1	5,162	182.5

Source: City of Bloomington, 2016 forecast tracker data
*Represents net acreage available for residential based on the City's 2016 forecast tracker data.

Future Commercial Growth: Areas forecast to accommodate the highest amounts of commercial growth are highlighted in Figure 2.8 and forecast new employment in these areas is provided in Table 2.13. Between 2016 and 2040, employment is forecast to increase by 20,172 citywide. The high growth TAZs are forecast to accommodate 19,548 employees, which represents 97 percent of total forecast employment growth. Employment forecasts are based on researched employment density factors (jobs per square foot or jobs per room for hotels) and further refined based on spot checks performed by staff. The employment density factors used to forecast employment are shown in the sidebar. These factors were then applied to forecast new development by land use type (office, retail, etc.) and forecast new hotel rooms to calculate forecast new employment.

Land use guide designations associated with commercial development in these high growth TAZs is also listed in Table 2.13. These land use categories allow for a range of commercial, retail, and hotel uses. Development intensity is controlled by the underlying zoning district through minimum lot areas and/or maximum floor area ratios (FAR). Some zoning districts require minimum FARs to ensure higher intensity development, particularly in areas with existing or planned transit stations.

Table 2.13: Transit Station Area Density and Activity

TAZ	New Employment	Land Use Guide Designation
1415	237	OFC
1526	2,161	SLMU, OFC, IT
1527	6,687	SLMU, HIMX, LX, IT
1528	260	SLMU, OFC
1529	874	HIMX, OFC
1530	3,839	HIMX
1536	1,010	CC, GB, IND
1537	53	CC, GB, IND
1553	268	OFC, IND
1555	352	RC
1557	270	CC, IND
1558	90	RC, OFC, IND
1559	129	CC
1595	2,435	OFC, CC, RC, IND
1596	136	CC
1599	1,274	RC
1601	392	OFC, CC, RC, GB
1621	47	GB
1625	88	IND
1632	217	IND
1635	646	OFC
Total	**19,548**	

Source: 2040 Regional Transportation Policy Plan and City of Bloomington
*Existing activity level provided by the Metropolitan Council

Future Transit Station Area Growth: The Metropolitan Council's 2040 Transportation Policy Plan recommends that transit station areas be planned to accommodate densities and activity levels that support transit use relative to community designation and transit type (LRT, BRT, etc). Guidelines for both density and activity vary depending on transit type, with the highest levels expected along LRT corridors. Bloomington's "urban" community designation signifies an expectation that new residential development or redevelopment achieve average minimum densities of 10, 12, or 25 dwellings per acre in transit corridors and around transit stations. The City's development district and station area plans and forecasts anticipate residential development that exceeds these minimums.

Figure 2.9 illustrates the six designated transit station areas in Bloomington: four along the Blue Line LRT in the South Loop District and two along the planned Orange Line BRT. The six transit station areas encompass over half of the high growth TAZs noted in Tables 2.10 and 2.13 and shown in Figures 2.7 and 2.8. It is also noted that all of the station areas are located in areas where more detailed studies have been completed (i.e., district and station area plans). These plans are described in more detail later in this chapter.

Average minimum residential density and activity levels expected in the City's six designated transit station areas are summarized in Table 2.14. Activity refers to

uses that typically generate transit trips such as housing, employers, schools, retail, entertainment, and recreation destinations. Average density and activity levels indicated are based on the City's parcel-specific forecast methodology within each station area. Activity level reflects existing and forecast population, employment, and students within the half-mile station area.
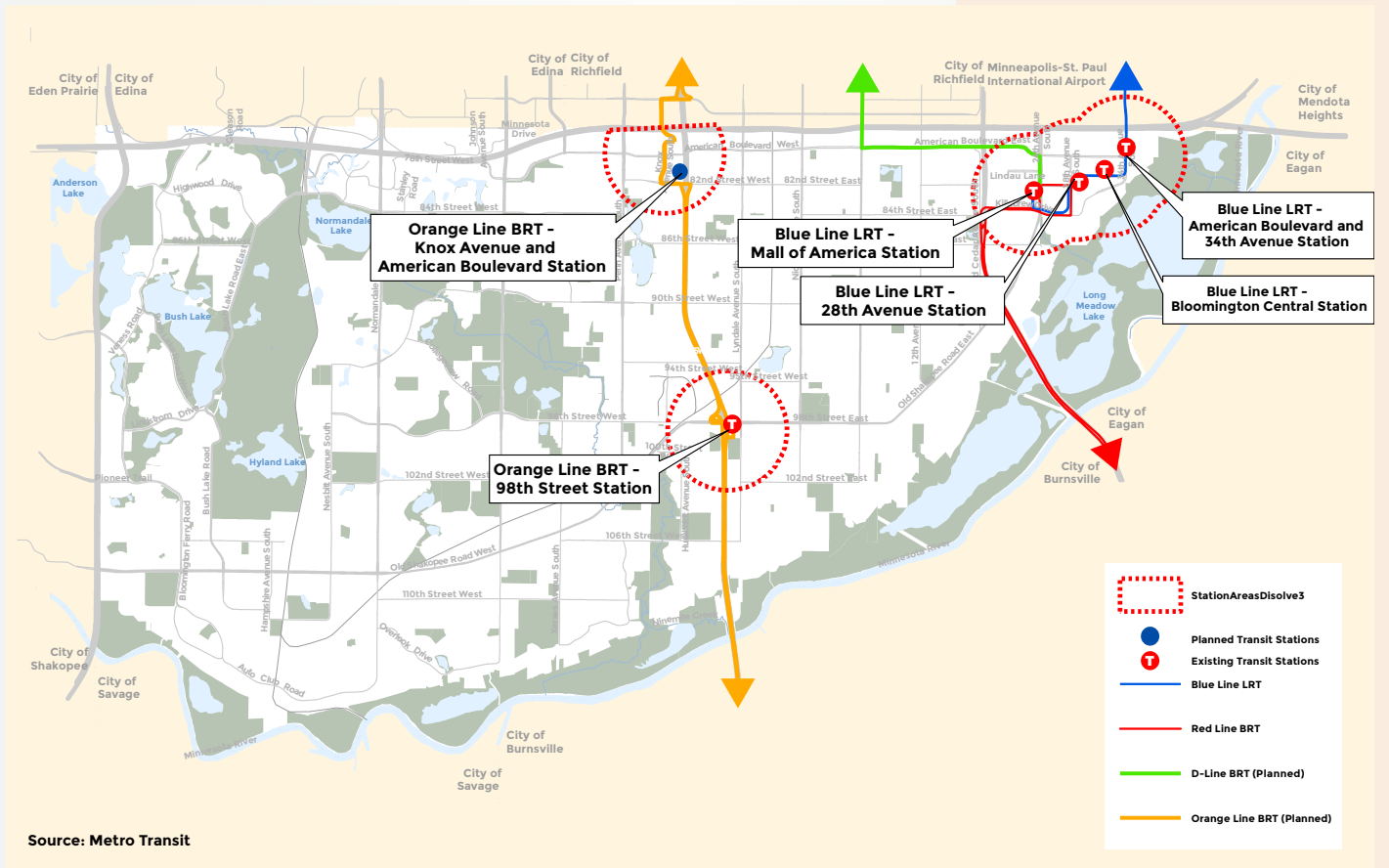
Land use guiding and zoning in transit station areas supports more development than is forecast for 2040. Our forecasts in Table 2.14 and 2.15 reflect what we believed to be realistic market demand in at the time forecasts were made in 2016. Changes have occurred since that suggest residential development in some locations may exceed the forecasts shown in the tables below. For example, in the 98th and 35W station area, rezoning is pending on approximately 23 acres as recommended in the recently approved 98th Street Station Area Plan. The pending B-4 zoning incentivizes residential infill in conjunction with redevelopment of three older shopping centers (guided Community Commercial) by allowing FARs up to 2.0 with residential development.

Table 2.14: Transit Station Area Density and Activity

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
South Loop Stations (LRT)	188	25 du/ac	28,000	19	22,474	66	39,738
Knox and American (BRT)	94	12 du/ac	7,000	10	6,098	42	8,613
98th and 35W (BRT)	72.5	12 du/ac	7,000	6	5,405	25	7,637

Source: City of Bloomington, forecast tracker data 2016

Figure 2.9: Transit Station Area Map

Orange Line BRT –
Knox Avenue and
American Boulevard Station

Blue Line LRT –
Mall of America Station

Blue Line LRT –
28th Avenue Station

Blue Line LRT –
American Boulevard and
34th Avenue Station

Blue Line LRT –
Bloomington Central Station

Orange Line BRT –
98th Street Station

Source: Metro Transit

Legend:
- StationAreasDisolve3
- Planned Transit Stations
- Existing Transit Stations
- Blue Line LRT
- Red Line BRT
- D-Line BRT (Planned)
- Orange Line BRT (Planned)

The acreage breakdown of forecast residential and commercial land uses within each station area is summarized in Table 2.15. As noted above, this acreage breakdown is based on our 2016 forecast tracker data and we anticipate more land in some areas will redevelop with residential uses than indicated in Table 2.15.

Table 2.15: Station Area Land Use Breakdown

Station Area Land Use Designations	Acres Forecast for New Development*		
	Residential	Commercial	Total
Residential			
High Intensity Mixed Use (HIMX)	8.1	41	49
South Loop Mixed Use (SLMU)	27	56	83
Lindau Mixed Use (LX)		16	16
Office (OFC)		8	8
Innovation & Technology (IT)		32	32
Total	**35 (19%)**	**153 (81%)**	**188**
Mixed Use			
High Density Residential (HDR)	2.5		2.5
Community Commercial (CC)	4.5	7.5	12
Regional Commercial (RC)	7.5	68	75.5
Office (OFC)	4.3		4.3
Total	**19 (20%)**	**75.5 (80%)**	**94**
Commercial			
High Density Residential (HDR)	13		13
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	10.5		10.5
Community Commercial (CC)		16	16
Industrial (IND)		33	33
Total	**23.5 (32%)**	**49 (68%)**	**72.5**

Source: City of Bloomington, 2016 forecast tracker data
*Represents net acreage available for redevelopment based on the City's 2016 forecast tracker data

Planned Land Use

Planned land use refers to the general types of uses or development that may occur within each land category. The appropriateness of specific land uses within any category depends on several factors, such as transportation access, natural or physical land characteristics, and compatibility with adjacent land uses. There may be multiple zoning districts associated with each of the land use categories, which more specifically define permitted uses, density ranges, and development standards. Descriptions of each land use designation are provided below and their distribution across the City are depicted in Figure 2.10 Future Land Use Guide Plan Map.

Guide Plan Designations:

Low Density Residential (LDR): This designation allows residential development up to five dwelling units per acre. Typical development includes detached single family homes, although cluster housing below five units per acre and individual two family units meeting the minimum lot size requirements of the Zoning Ordinance are also allowed. Access requirements in this designation are low compared to other uses and this designation should generally not be applied in areas adjacent to high-volume roadways unless buffering is provided. In areas with steep slopes or other natural features worthy of protection, clustered housing design or large lots are appropriate to protect natural resources.

Medium Density Residential (MDR): This designation allows residential development between five and 10 dwelling units per acre, depending on the underlying zoning. Typical development includes townhomes, patio homes, two family dwellings, condominiums, and low rise apartments. Access requirements in this designation are moderate, therefore locations with access to nearby arterial and collector streets are most appropriate.

High Density Residential (HDR): This designation allows residential development between 10 and 150 dwelling units per acre, depending on the underlying zoning. Typical development includes multiple story apartments and condominiums. Given that access requirements for high density residential uses are high, this designation should only be applied in areas adjacent to arterial and collector streets, and transit service should be available.

Office (OFC):): This designation allows professional and business offices and related accessory retail and restaurant uses serving the needs of office building or hotel tenants. Residential uses are allowed within this designation when fully integrated with an office or hotel land use and allowed in the underlying zoning district. Residential density is limited by the floor area ratio (FAR) in the underlying zoning district, which may range from no minimum to a maximum FAR of 2.0. It is anticipated that approximately 20% of land designated Office that is forecast to redevelop, with consist of residential uses. Access requirements for office uses are high, so land should only be designated Office when adjacent to arterial and collector streets. Non-accessory commercial uses are not allowed within this designation based on the desire to establish areas free from the intrusion of more intensive commercial enterprises. Due to compatible land use characteristics, hotels are allowed on sites guided Office, provided the site is appropriately zoned for a hotel and located within one mile of a freeway interchange.

General Business (GB): This designation allows a wide range of commercial uses

that are suitable for the relatively small, shallow parcels of the City's neighborhood commercial nodes. Typical development includes retail and service uses such as neighborhood supermarkets, small shopping centers, drug stores, restaurants, and gas stations. Office uses are allowed within this designation when integrated with a commercial use or as a stand-alone use. Residential uses are allowed within this designation only when allowed in the underlying zoning district. Access requirements for this designation are moderate to high, so land should only be designated General Business when in close proximity to arterial or collector streets. This designation excludes larger scale retail and service uses that require larger parcel sizes or freeway visibility, such as hotels and motels, "big box" retail, medium and large sized shopping centers, hospitals, and automobile sales.

Community Commercial (CC): This designation allows all General Business activities plus additional, larger scale service and retail uses that require larger parcels such as supermarkets and restaurants of any size, medium sized shopping centers, and theaters. Hotels and motels are allowed within the Community Commercial designation only when the site is within one mile of a freeway interchange. Office uses are allowed within this designation when integrated with a commercial use or as a stand-alone use. Residential uses are allowed within this designation only when allowed in the underlying zoning district. Residential density is limited by the floor area ratio (FAR) in the underlying zoning district, which may range from no minimum to a maximum FAR of 2.0. It is anticipated that approximately 40% of land designated Community Commercial that is forecast to redevelop, with consist of residential uses. Access requirements for this designation are high, so land should only be designated Community Commercial when adjacent to arterial or collector streets. This designation excludes regionally oriented retail and service uses that demand easy access from the freeway system such as large shopping centers, "big box" retail, hospitals, or automobile sales.

Regional Commercial (RC): This designation allows all "General Business" and "Community Commercial" activities plus additional service and retail uses that require easy access from the freeway system such as hotels and motels, "big box" retail, large shopping centers, hospitals, and automobile sales. Office uses are allowed within this designation when integrated with a commercial use or as a stand-alone use. Residential uses are allowed within this designation only when allowed in the underlying zoning district. . Residential density is limited by the floor area ratio (FAR) in the underlying zoning district, which may range from no minimum to a maximum FAR of 2.0. It is anticipated that approximately 23% of land designated Regional Commercial that is forecast to redevelop, with consist of residential uses. Access requirements of regional commercial uses are very high, so land should only be designated Regional Commercial when it is in close proximity to freeways and adjacent to arterial or collector streets.

Industrial (IND): This designation allows industrial uses including manufacturing and warehousing. Industrial uses are heavy generators of employment and truck traffic and should have locations that are served by arterial and collector streets and close to freeways. Office uses play an important support role in industrial areas and are allowed within this designation when integrated with an industrial use or as a stand-alone use. Unrelated commercial and residential uses, including auto sales are not allowed in industrial areas so that they do not interfere with industrial activities.

High Intensity Mixed Use (HIMX): This designation works together with the CX-2 Mixed Use Zoning District to allow only master-planned, high intensity uses that are physically integrated with one another, that attract visitors from within and beyond the region, and will achieve a magnitude of economic activity sufficient to generate

significant additional development on surrounding properties. Typical uses include a mixture of retail, services, office, hospitality, and residential. The expected general mix of uses is 50% commercial, 35% office, and 15% residential. Floor area ratios up to 2.0 are allowed.

South Loop Mixed Use (SLMU): This designation works together with the HX-R High Intensity Mixed Use Residential zoning district and is intended to foster a mix of office, hospitality, and supportive service and retail uses integrated with higher density residential development in areas with excellent transit service. The expected general mix of uses is 15% commercial, 50% office, and 35% residential. Floor area ratios are expected to be at least 1.5 but not more than 2.0. To establish a true mixed-use, transit-oriented neighborhood, all development projects must include a residential component when required by the underlying zoning, achieve minimum development intensities, and minimize surface parking. Projects are also expected to incorporate pedestrian enhancements that provide for connections to public transit and outdoor spaces and amenities.

Lindau Mixed Use (LX): This designation works together with the LX Lindau Mixed Use zoning district to provide for an integrated mix of commercial and hospitality uses located in a pedestrian-scaled environment along Lindau Lane (east of 24th Avenue) in the South Loop District. This area is envisioned as the central core of activity connecting South Loop's predominant development anchors: Mall of America and Bloomington Central Station. A mix of office, hotel, restaurant, and retail land uses should be integrated horizontally (side-by-side) and/or vertically (one use located above another) along Lindau Lane. Development is expected to occur at a minimum FAR of 0.7 up to a maximum FAR of 2.0. Residential uses are not allowed in this district due to aircraft noise impacts. Emphasis will be placed on creating pedestrian-oriented activity at the street level, convenient access to public transit, and attractive public and private outdoor spaces. On-street parking and shared parking arrangements are encouraged.

Innovation and Technology (IT): This designation provides for a flexible mix of office, research and development, and high-tech manufacturing and assembly uses. Medical laboratories and hotels are also appropriate uses. Development may include service and retail businesses when allowed in the underlying zoning district. Residential uses are not allowed in this district due to compatibility issues. This designation is intended to foster a diversity of employment opportunities in a setting with high quality and sustainable site and building design and excellent accessibility.

Public (PUB): This designation applies to areas set aside for public uses. Typical uses include parks, schools, fire stations, municipal buildings, libraries, and open space. Specific uses are controlled by the underlying zoning. Uses in the Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Regional Park Reserve must adhere to the *Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lakes Regional Park Reserve: Joint Master Plan* (June 2010), as approved by the Metropolitan Council. While many public buildings and active community facilities are allowed in a range of zoning districts, most areas intended for natural resource based open space uses are zoned Conservation, which restricts development to 20 percent of site area. Access requirements of public uses vary widely and must be evaluated according to the nature of the particular use.
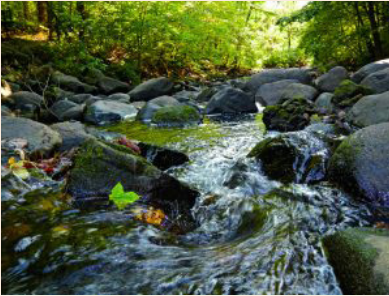
Quasi-Public (QPUB): This designation, when combined with the proper zoning, provides areas throughout the community for privately owned uses that resemble public uses such as places of worship, private schools, private country clubs, nursing homes, funeral homes, day care, and private cemeteries. Certain open spaces used for utility transmission lines are also included. Access requirements of quasi-public uses vary widely and must be evaluated according to the nature of the particular use. Larger traffic generators should be located adjacent to arterial or collector streets.

Conservation (CSRV): This designation applies to areas to be preserved in their natural condition for the protection of habitat, wildlife, and surface water drainage. Typical uses include natural areas, park reserves, wildlife conservation areas, storm water storage and associated facilities. Most of these areas are zoned Conservation and many are also covered in whole or part by the Flood Hazard Overlay District and/or the Bluff Protection Overlay District. Access to conservation areas should be controlled and roadways which border or cross conservation areas require special design consideration.

Water (W): This designation applies to medium and large bodies of water. Typical water bodies receiving this designation include rivers and open water lakes as classified by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.
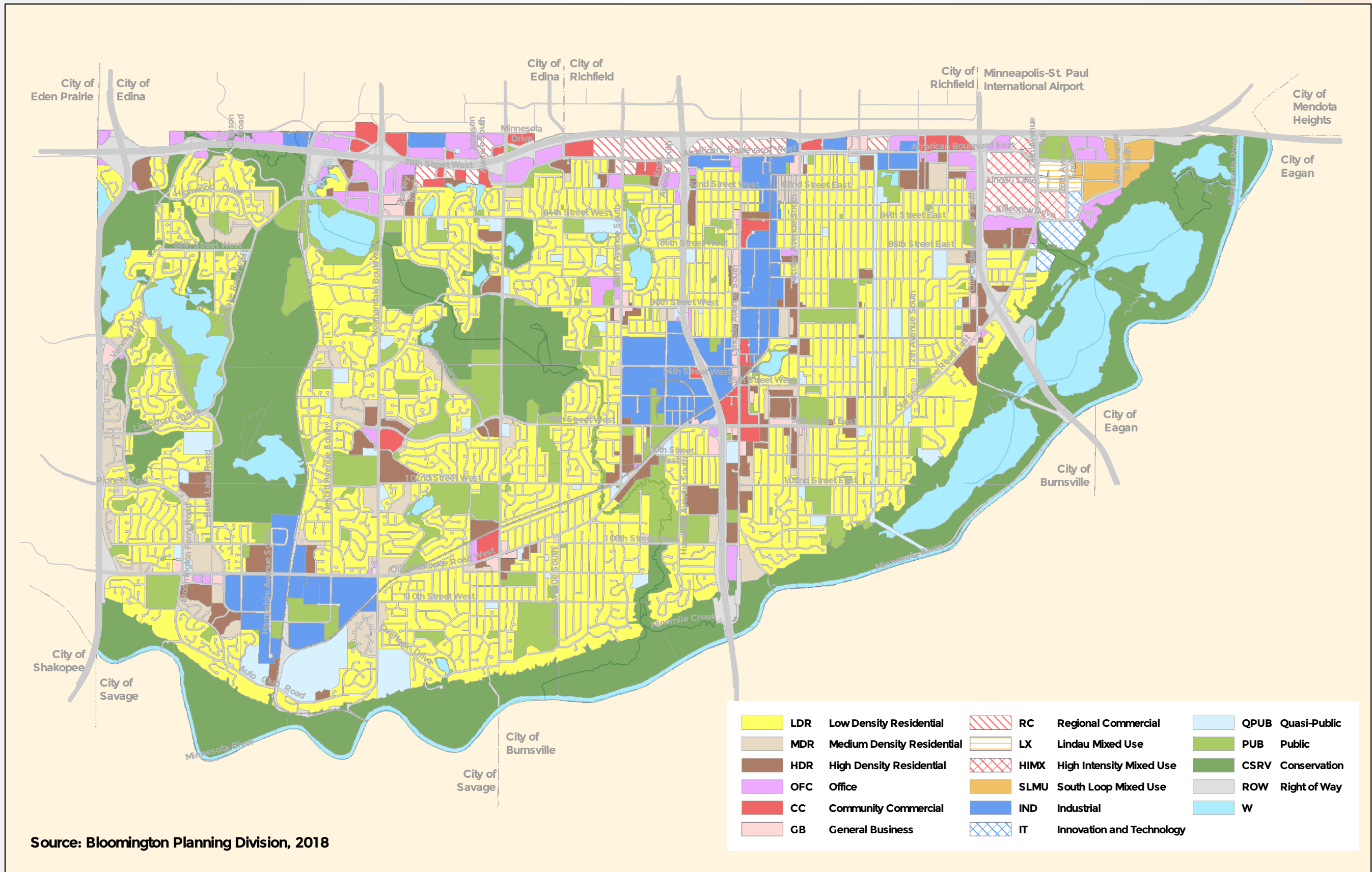
Right of Way (ROW): This designation applies to existing public rights of way and large areas that are reserved for future right of way needs. The designation is not meant to delineate every future right of way need and does not substitute for a master right of way plan. As portions of parcels are dedicated or otherwise acquired for right of way purposes, their designation is automatically changed to the Right of Way designation without formal plan amendment.

Land Use/Zoning Relationship

The land use designations in the Land Use Guide Plan work hand-in-hand with zoning districts to implement the City's development vision. While zoning districts operate on the micro level describing detailed development and performance standards, the future land use designations operate on the macro level and deal with broader land use issues, such as access requirements. To ensure consistency, development proposals must comply with both the applicable zoning district and future land use designation.

Occasionally, landowners submit applications to amend the land use guide designation that applies to their property. In evaluating requests for such amendments, the City will carefully consider 1) whether there has been a change in the factors upon which the existing designation was originally adopted that would justify the amendment (for example, the opening of a new freeway ramp or transitway or a change in air traffic noise) and, if not, 2) whether the proposed use constitutes an unanticipated development opportunity that would better serve the City and the surrounding neighborhood than the uses envisioned by the existing land use guide designation.

Figure 2.10: Future Land Use Guide Plan Map

Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2018

LDR	Low Density Residential	RC	Regional Commercial	QPUB	Quasi-Public
MDR	Medium Density Residential	LX	Lindau Mixed Use	PUB	Public
HDR	High Density Residential	HIMX	High Intensity Mixed Use	CSRV	Conservation
OFC	Office	SLMU	South Loop Mixed Use	ROW	Right of Way
CC	Community Commercial	IND	Industrial	W	
GB	General Business	IT	Innovation and Technology		

2.6 Associated Plans

The City of Bloomington has a long history of land use planning at both the citywide and district levels. This Comprehensive Plan is supplemented by a series of plans and studies, often intended to provide more detailed analysis and recommendations around specific areas or subjects. Some of these plans are formally adopted into the Comprehensive Plan by reference. All contribute to implementation of the Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, and priorities. The various types of plans and studies are described below.

Strategic Priorities

In 2016, the City Council created a strategic plan that identified six strategic priorities the City will focus on through 2020. The aim of this strategy is to improve awareness of Bloomington and its strengths across the region and state and ensure the City's reputation and image are viewed favorably by residents, businesses and others. The six strategic priorities include:

- Community image

- Equity and inclusion

- Community amenities

- High-quality services

- Focused renewal

- Environmental sustainability

Development District Plans

Over the last decade, most of Bloomington's new development has concentrated in the City's three development districts: Normandale Lake, Penn American, and South Loop, shown in Figure 2.11. Together, these three districts are forecast to accommodate 74% of the City's future employment growth, 62% of new population growth, and 63% of new household growth through 2040 (see table 2.16.) The districts share a common goal to provide a mix of uses at densities that support frequent transit service in walkable and attractive settings. In all of the districts, the City has been an active partner in redevelopment, mostly through investments in public infrastructure to incentivize and leverage private market investments. To date more than $100 million of public improvements have been implemented to realize the mixed-use, transit-oriented redevelopment vision of these districts.

District Plans are formal extensions of the Comprehensive Plan that apply to specific areas in the City. Development proposals and official controls must be consistent with the recommendations in the District Plans as well as the Comprehensive Plan overall. In the event of a conflict between the Comprehensive Plan and a District Plan, the Comprehensive Plan shall supersede. The three District Plans, described below, are fully incorporated, by reference, as part of this Comprehensive Plan.

Development District Plans

Full copies of adopted plans for the City's three development districts are available online at:

- South Loop District
  blm.mn/southloop

- Penn-American District
  blm.mn/pennamerican

- Normandale Lake District
  blm.mn/NLDupdate

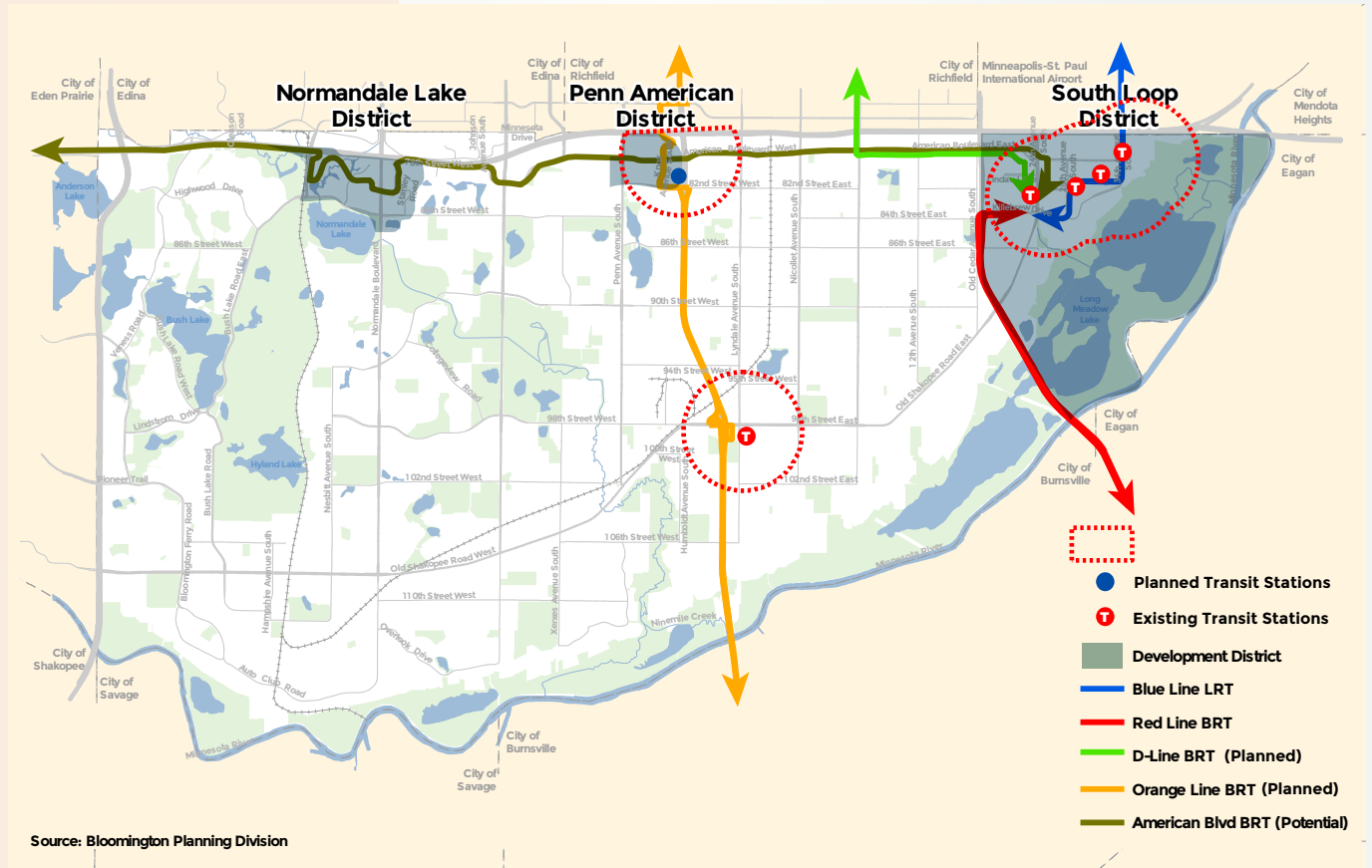Figure 2.11: Bloomington Development Districts

Source: Bloomington Planning Division

Table 2.16: Distribution of Growth in Development Districts

District	Population	Households	Employment
Normandale Lake	8%	7%	5%
Penn-American	15%	15%	5%
South Loop	40%	40%	64%

Normandale Lake District Plan - BLM.MN/NLDP

Adopted in 2008 and updated in 2017, the *Normandale Lake District Plan* focuses on the area north of the intersection of West 84th Street and Normandale Boulevard. Key recommendations of the District Plan include:

- Implementing transportation and transit improvements to support full development of the District;

- Establishing a balance of residential, office, hotel and retail uses;

- Renewing the neighborhood retail center;

- Improving resident and employee access to parks in the vicinity;

- Establishing development principles that protect the environment and surrounding open space;

- Improving the District's appearance with consistent streetscape and landscape;

- Installing a sign and wayfinding system that helps people navigate the area while enhancing the District's identity; and

- Implementing a viable financing strategy to implement recommended public improvements.

South Loop District Plan - BLM.MN/SLDP

Adopted in 2012, the *South Loop District Plan* covers the area of Bloomington east of TH 77 with a focus on the area north of East 86th Street. The plan outlines a strategy to transform South Loop from a dispersed, suburban commercial area into a walkable, mixed use urban neighborhood. The primary goals of the *South Loop District Plan* include:

- **Build on the District's unique mix of assets** including: LRT and bus transit, proximity to MSP International Airport, adjacency and convenient access to the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Mall of America, and Bloomington Central Station, and available sites for development.

- **Mitigate the Districts disadvantages** including: aircraft noise, airport zoning restrictions, and access limitations due to freeways and the river valley surrounding the district.

- **Transform the District's density and character** by promoting a mix of land uses based on Transit-Oriented Design (TOD) and sustainable development strategies; creating a hierarchy of complete streets to increase connectivity, accessibility and mobility; establishing a safe and interconnected network of parks, trails, and sidewalks; enhancing character through high quality public and private spaces, and fostering engagement.

- **Accelerate the District's development** through strategic public investments that foster placemaking and leverage private investments; promotion and branding of the District; and proactive marketing of publicly-owned development sites.

- **Create a sustainable district** through promotion of energy conservation and low-impact design techniques; exploring district-scale alternative energy systems; use of intelligent transportation technology (ITS) to

maximize the efficiency and capacity of the street network; implementing a district shared parking strategy; expanding housing choices; preserving and enhancing existing residential neighborhoods; and protecting natural and cultural resources.

Penn American District Plan - BLM.MN/PADP

Adopted in 2014, the *Penn American District Plan* focuses on the area around the intersection of Penn Avenue and American Boulevard extending east to I-35W, between I-494 and 82nd Street. The plan outlines a strategy to establish the Penn American District as a high-intensity, mixed use, transit-supportive neighborhood. The primary goals of the *Penn American District Plan* include:

- **Create public and private stakeholder value** by increasing allowed levels and types of development; providing gap financing for redevelopment projects; maintaining flexibility to respond to market cycles; and establishing a district identity.

- **Create a comprehensive transportation system** through increased transit service; improved roadways; improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities; and creation of new streets and blocks.

- **Create a visually attractive district** by creating attractive public spaces; promoting quality design within developments; and providing gap financing for design improvements.

- **Promote sustainability** by promoting mixed use development; adding residential uses for all life stages; increasing transit service; and encouraging sustainable building and site development.

Special Area Plans

These plans focus more on addressing specific impacts (predominately environmental) rather than redevelopment.

Bluff Report District Plan

Adopted in 1982, the *Bluff Report District Plan* laid the foundation for establishment of the bluff district overlay zoning districts and design guidelines for development along the Minnesota River bluff. The goal was to define an appropriate regulatory approach that balances development and conservation interests. The design guidelines in the *Bluff Report* address the visual impacts of development along the bluff with the intent to preserve its natural character and minimize physical alteration of the bluff. Updates to the *Bluff Report District Plan* and/or City Code should be considered to incorporate current best practices to minimize environmental impacts of development.

Minnesota River Valley Strategic Plan

Adopted in 2016, the *Minnesota River Valley Strategic Plan* establishes a framework of strategic actions the City can undertake on city-owned land in the river valley to achieve the Plan's vision and goals, which include:

- Enhance access to recreation opportunities in the river valley;

- Increase awareness and understanding of the river valley environment;

- Improve utilization of land and resources in the river valley; and

- Ensure protection and preservation of natural and cultural resources in the river valley.

The Strategic Plan recommended development of four "system" plans to provide detailed direction relative to natural and cultural resources enhancement (completed in 2018); trails; signs; and maintenance. Work on these plans is underway.

South Loop Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR)

The *South Loop District Alternative Urban Areawide Review (AUAR) and Mitigation Plan* was initially adopted by the City Council in April 2002 and updated in 2009, 2012, and 2017. The original AUAR and subsequent updates, were prepared in accordance with the requirements of Minnesota Rules Section 4410.3610.

An AUAR is an alternative to site specific environmental reviews such as an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) or Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and provides for analysis of the cumulative environmental impacts of development in a defined study area over multiple years. Given the amount of development envisioned to occur in the South Loop District, the City chose to conduct an AUAR to analyze collective environmental impacts rather than require EAW or EIS reviews for individual development projects meeting minimum size thresholds. With an adopted AUAR in place, individual EAWs or EISs are not required, provided the development proposal is consistent with what was analyzed in the AUAR. Thus, the South Loop AUAR analyzes a development scenario based on assumed maximum development amounts anticipated through 2040. It is noted that the development projections used in the 2016 AUAR update are consistent with the forecasts and projections used for this comprehensive plan update.

Key advantages of an AUAR are a more streamlined environmental review process and analysis of shared impacts that affect multiple sites (e.g., traffic). The major disadvantage is that impacts are based on assumed or forecast development rather than a specific development proposal. Regular AUAR updates (required every 5-years) provide an opportunity to modify the development scenario to reflect details that become known as actual development proposals are more clearly defined.
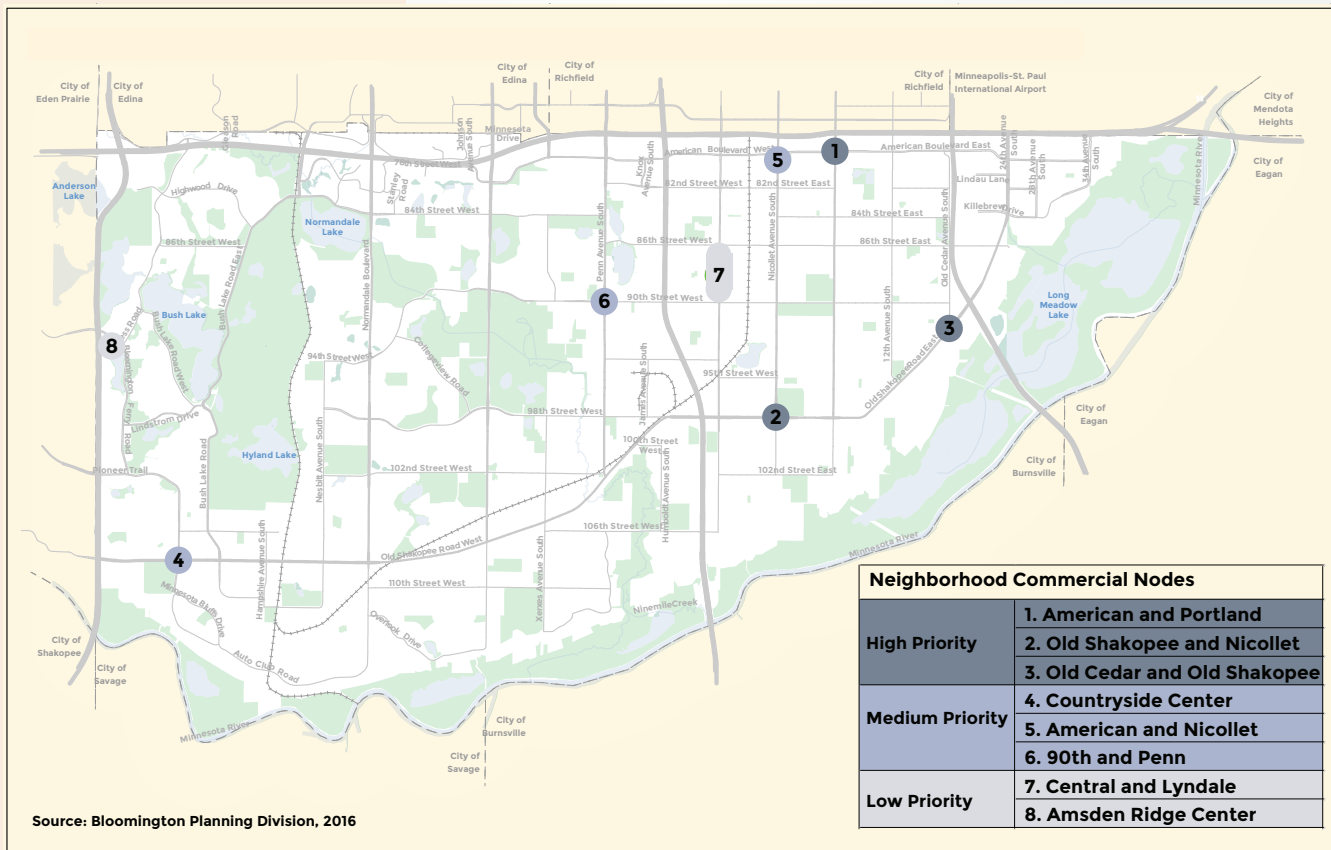
Focused Studies

As needs arise, the City conducts focused studies to address specific challenges that may impact multiple areas or to address the impacts of a large project, such as a new transit line. These studies provide for a more fine-grained analysis and crafting of strategies to address distinct challenges. Recently completed focused studies are described below.

Neighborhood Commercial Area Study

Aging neighborhood commercial centers were evaluated as part of a study conducted by the Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) in 2016. Eight neighborhood commercial areas throughout the City were evaluated and ranked according to their redevelopment potential. These are shown in Figure 2.11. The aim of the study was to assist the HRA in prioritizing its renovation and redevelopment efforts. The process resulted in ranking the neighborhood commercial areas into three tiers, as shown on Figure 2.12.

In the near-term, the HRA will reach out to owners of the high priority centers to gauge their interest in renovation or redevelopment. They will also identify opportunities to coordinate redevelopment with planned public infrastructure investments. The HRA will then select where to proceed with preparation of detailed studies to more clearly define a redevelopment project(s) to implement.

Figure 2.12: Neighborhood Commercial Center Revitalization

Neighborhood Commercial Nodes		
High Priority	1. American and Portland	
	2. Old Shakopee and Nicollet	
	3. Old Cedar and Old Shakopee	
Medium Priority	4. Countryside Center	
	5. American and Nicollet	
	6. 90th and Penn	
Low Priority	7. Central and Lyndale	
	8. Amsden Ridge Center	

Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2016

Industrial Obsolescence Study

Given a large portion of Bloomington's industrial buildings are over fifty years old, the City Council directed staff to study industrial building and site obsolescence in the City. Many older industrial buildings and properties pose challenges for reuse and redevelopment due to small lot sizes, limited on-site parking, nonconforming site characteristics, small building footprints and low clear heights. The study provided background information for updating the City's industrial zoning districts and standards.
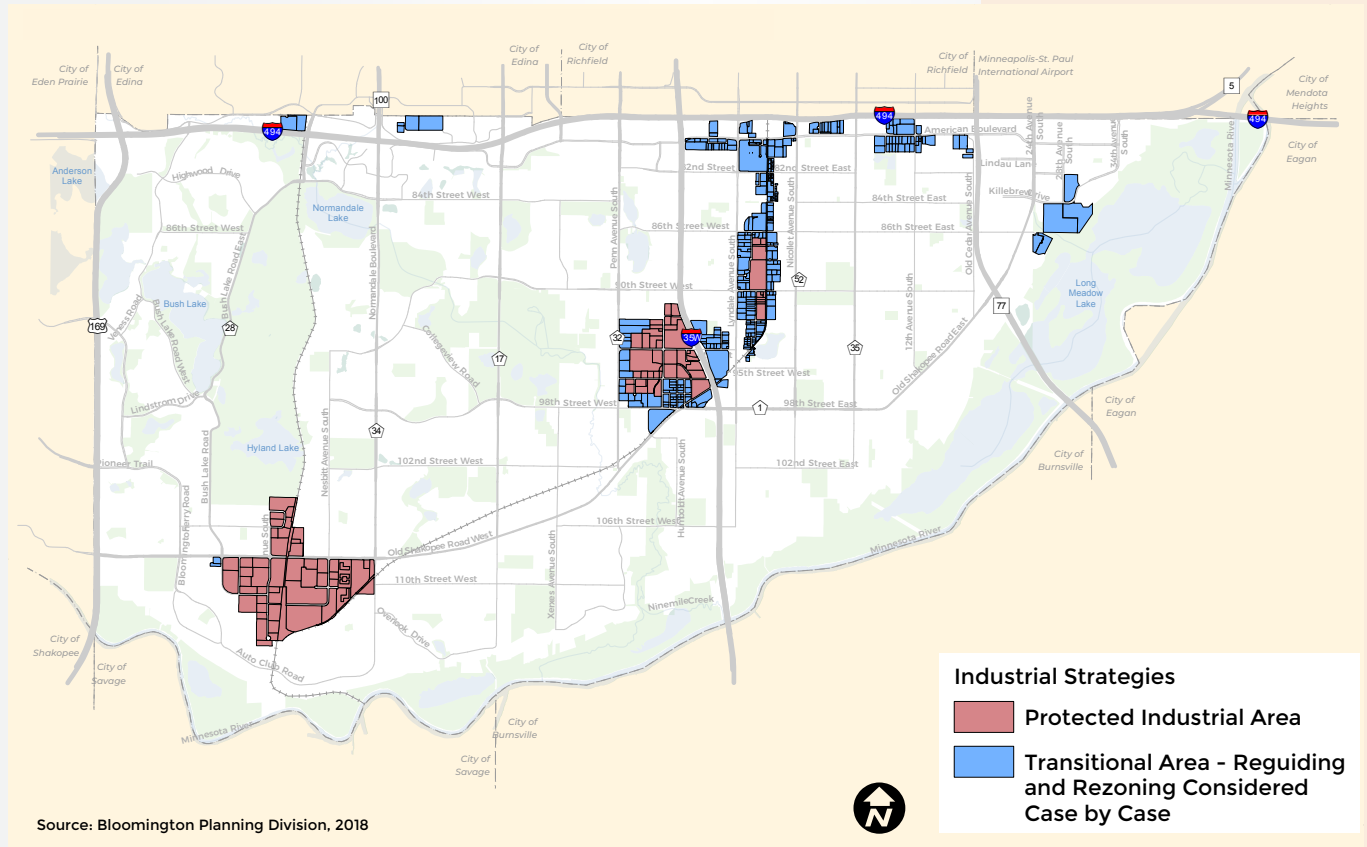
The study evaluated all industrially zoned or guided sites in the City based on seven factors that contribute to industrial obsolescence, including: zoning, existing land use, clear height, total assessed value per square foot, site size, floor area ratio, and effective age. The evaluation revealed:

- Where existing industrial uses remain viable, despite some physical obsolescence;

- Where existing industrial buildings are transitioning to non-industrial uses such as retail, service, and institutional uses; and

- Common barriers to improvement or expansion of existing industrial uses or properties.

Based on the evaluation, two industrial policy designations were recommended to guide future zoning and redevelopment as shown in Figure 2.12 and described below. While no land use guide changes are anticipated, numerous zoning changes were recommended.

- *Protected industrial area* – These areas include properties where existing industrial uses remain viable. Properties in this area should remain zoned for industrial use and rezoning to non-industrial districts should be avoided.

- *Transitional area* – These areas include an existing mix of uses and should remain zoned and guided industrial. However, the City would be open to consider market driven guide plan and zoning changes, depending on the proposed land use, relationship to the surrounding land uses, and consistency with the comprehensive plan.

Figure 2.13: Industrial Redevelopment Strategy

Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2018

Industrial Strategies

Protected Industrial Area

Transitional Area - Reguiding and Rezoning Considered Case by Case

A full copy of the adopted 98th Street Station Area Plan is available at: blm.mn/orangeline

98th Street Station Area Plan

The 98th Street Station Area Plan, identifies opportunities the City and its partners can pursue to improve the transit experience for users of the planned METRO Orange Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). The plan focuses on the area within a half mile of the 98th Street BRT Station, located just west of the intersection of W. 98th Street and Lyndale Avenue. This area has long been a commercial node and currently includes a mix of commercial and residential uses. The aim of the plan is to identify public improvements that will enhance pedestrian and bicycle comfort, ADA accessibility, vehicle mobility, user safety, and creative placemaking. It identifies redevelopment potential for the four quadrants around the intersection of 98th Street and Lyndale. While land use guide plan amendments are not anticipated, recommended zoning amendments would foster more intensive, transit-support development.

Implementation of streetscape improvements will mostly occur in conjunction with road reconstruction, although some enhancements may occur with redevelopment of adjacent properties. Some zoning amendments will be implemented following adoption of the station area plan. Others will occur in conjunction with redevelopment proposals.

2.7 Goals, Strategies, Actions

Goal 1: Encourage an efficient, desirable arrangement and distribution of land uses.

Strategy 1.1: Encourage a balance of uses.

- Carefully evaluate proposals to amend land use designations to ensure that an appropriate mixture and distribution of uses is maintained citywide.

- Establish a range of land uses that support a diverse employment base and diversified local economy.

Strategy 1.2: Encourage growth to occur in appropriate locations

- Use land use controls to encourage higher density residential and mixed use development in locations near services, amenities and employment centers and where significant investments in transit have been made or are planned.

- Use land use controls to channel most non-residential development to defined nodes and corridors with appropriate access, sufficient road capacity, and regular transit service.

- Use land use controls to preserve the character of low density neighborhoods.

- Use land use controls to restrict development in natural areas and mitigate development related impacts on natural resources.

- Where appropriate, preserve industrial sites, particularly those with rail access and convenient access to the regional highway freight network.

Strategy 1.3: Craft the Zoning Ordinance to work hand in hand with the Comprehensive Plan to achieve the City's development vision.

- Continue to update and modernize Bloomington's Zoning Ordinance to align development standards with the City's vision.

Strategy 1.4: Mitigate land use conflicts.

- When considering development proposals and requests to change zoning or guide plan designations, evaluate the surrounding land uses and their level of compatibility with the proposed land use. The location of inherently incompatible land uses adjacent to one another will be strongly discouraged, unless the incompatibility can be sufficiently mitigated.

- Ensure that mixed use developments are designed in a manner that maximizes the benefits of mixing uses while mitigating any less positive impacts.

- In instances where it is desirable, or unavoidable, to have less compatible land uses adjacent to one another, require the proposed land use to provide an appropriate transition or buffer.

- Where land use conflicts currently exist, encourage mitigation measures such as the provision of screening or the redevelopment of one of the incompatible land uses.

- Continue to enforce existing noise standards and ensure developers and property owners in impacted areas are aware of aircraft noise mitigation requirements.

Strategy 1.5: Manage parking to meet demand in a flexible manner that maximized efficient use of land and mitigates impacts on adjacent uses and traffic patterns.

- Continue to monitor minimum parking requirements and consider establishing maximum limits.

- Protect residential areas from the parking impacts of nearby business districts.

Goal 2: Ensure redevelopment improves local conditions.

Strategy 2.1: Coordinate infrastructure upgrades and expansion with redevelopment.

- Renew the City's transportation and utility infrastructure on an ongoing basis to accommodate forecasted growth.

- Where appropriate, require applicant funding of infrastructure improvements necessary to serve the proposed redevelopment.

- Encourage additional density to occur in locations where infrastructure capacity is or will be in place to support growth.

- Consider infrastructure constraints during development reviews and avoid redevelopment that cannot be adequately served by existing infrastructure or planned infrastructure improvements.

Strategy 2.2: Promote redevelopment of incompatible land uses and outdated buildings.

- Develop and maintain an inventory of outmoded land uses, under-utilized, and non-conforming properties and structures. Use this information to prioritize redevelopment activities and public investments.

- Prepare redevelopment plans for priority redevelopment sites to define future land uses and desired infrastructure and site improvements.

- Assist where feasible, in site assembly to facilitate redevelopment.

Strategy 2.3: Ensure that redevelopment sites are suitable for the proposed land use and mitigate negative impacts on adjacent property.

- Discourage conversions of existing structures to alternative uses unless the site and structures can meet Code requirements and accommodate the proposed new land use.

- Evaluate the potential for negative impacts on adjacent property and public infrastructure during development reviews.

- Require mitigation of negative impacts as necessary through conditions of approval.

- Pursue enforcement action against illegal use conversions.

- Encourage property owners to plan for ultimate build-out scenarios of sites that have expansion potential.

Strategy 2.4: Avoid redevelopment or land subdivision that leaves behind difficult to develop "orphan parcels". "Orphan parcels" are parcels that are unlikely to be redeveloped unless they are combined with an adjoining parcel.

- Discourage development proposals that result in creation of "orphan parcels" that cannot meet the performance standards of the underlying zoning district due to their small size, lack of access, or other factors.

- Encourage consolidation of existing orphan parcels with adjoining parcels in conjunction with proposed redevelopment.

Goal 3: Enhance neighborhood commercial centers to create anchor nodes.

Strategy 3.1: Improve safety and accessibility.

- Improve the pedestrian environment and street crossing systems within and around neighborhood commercial centers to make walking, biking, and the use of mobility devices safe for people of all ages and abilities.

- Encourage high frequency transit service and high-quality transit infrastructure (shelters, etc.) near neighborhood commercial centers.

Strategy 3.2: Enhance aesthetic character and create a sense of identity.

- Improve streetscapes and public space amenities in and around commercial centers to enhance the adjacent neighborhood and complement private development.

- Encourage property owners and developers to incorporate public art and public activity space into commercial center redevelopment plans.

- Prioritize City financial assistance on elements that enhance public or private spaces designed for public use.

Strategy 3.3: Explore the viability of alternative uses to foster market supportive redevelopment of aging neighborhood commercial centers.

- Use land use controls to encourage medium and higher density residential and mixed use development near neighborhood commercial centers.

- Assess market demand when considering reguiding and rezoning land in and around neighborhood commercial centers.

- Engage neighborhood residents and business owners to identify needs and desired improvements to neighborhood commercial areas.

Goal 4: Promote continued economic development for the City and region.

Strategy 4.1: Promote and facilitate State and Federal transportation investments to improve the local and regional transportation network.

- Support the completion of planned Bloomington transitway improvements.

- Advocate for and support freeway and roadway improvements necessary to accommodate future traffic and redevelopment, including reconstruction of the I-494/I-35W Interchange.

- Obtain dedication of rights-of-way and easements as necessary to accommodate future transportation infrastructure improvements.

Strategy 4.2: Promote and facilitate regional investments in public utility infrastructure.

- Advocate for and support improvements to the local and regional public utility system that are necessary to support forecast future development.

- Obtain dedication of rights-of-way and easements as necessary to accommodate future utility infrastructure improvements to support added development.

Strategy 4.3: Promote Bloomington's location and amenities.

- Continue to work closely and cooperatively with the Metropolitan Airports Commission to coordinate development around MSP International Airport.

- Market the City's amenities to attract new residents and businesses. This could involve working with partners to coordinate marketing and outreach efforts.

Strategy 4.4: Leverage partnerships and funding tools to foster public and private investment in infrastructure, economic development, and community services.

- Target grants and other funds to leverage public and private investments.

- Improve the coordination of economic development activity among units of government, the business community, and nonprofits.

Strategy 4.5: Encourage environmentally sustainable development.

- Develop guidelines and incentives to encourage sustainable building and site design approaches. This will involve review of standards utilized in programs such as LEED, Minnesota Sustainable Design Guideline's or other sustainable practices to identify the most effective and feasible approaches.

- Encourage changes to International and State building codes to encourage sustainable construction and design.

Strategy 4.6: Foster entrepreneurship, job growth and business retention,

expansion, and recruitment.

- Actively research and pursue opportunities to attract businesses that create livable wage jobs.

- Continue to assist businesses in identifying appropriate locations to develop and/or expand within the City.

- Encourage small business opportunities, through provision of access to resources and creation of business incubators.

- Facilitate coordination between public and private educators and employers to promote workforce development; invest in education, job training, apprenticeships, and entrepreneurship.

Strategy 4.7: Understand and be responsive to trends, changing demographics, and shifting markets.

- Routinely evaluate and update development and use standards to respond to changing markets and needs.

- Support testing of new uses or standards through temporary or short-term installations or events.

Goal 5: Prepare for and respond to new technologies.

Strategy 5.1: Explore approaches to address and respond to new technology impacts on infrastructure and land use.

- Research and evaluate the implications of new technologies on City land use, operations, regulations, and procedures.

- Identify where regulatory flexibility is needed to manage land use, public infrastructure improvements, and development during transition to new technologies.

Strategy 5.2: Address potential impacts of autonomous and alternative fuel source vehicles.

- Encourage the installation of alternative fuel source infrastructure, where feasible and appropriate.

- Develop policies and standards for alternative fueling facilities, including parking, sign, and safety standards.

- Explore City ownership and maintenance of publicly accessible alternative fueling facilities.

- Develop standards for drop-off/pick-up areas, including design of passenger waiting areas.

Strategy 5.3: Encourage transition planning.

- Encourage parking ramps to be designed to facilitate transition to other uses over the life of the structure (e.g., flat floors, inclines or spirals that can be removed, adequate floor to ceiling heights to allow other uses, etc.).

- Encourage site design that facilitates future repurposing of parking lots if onsite parking demands are significantly reduced in the future as a result of technological advances (e.g., automated vehicles) or other factors.

- Support implementation of temporary facilities or roadway modifications to explore use of under-utilized rights-of-way areas for alternative transportation and other uses.

Goal 6: Preserve natural and historic resources.

Strategy 6.1: Protect and enhance environmentally sensitive areas, such as floodplains, bluffs, steep slopes, and wetlands.

- Continue to enforce and update as needed, existing City Code regulations and development standards aimed at environmental and natural resource protection.

- Update the Bluff Report District Plan to reflect current best practices.

- Preserve wetlands for wildlife preserves, open space or stormwater management.

- Promote the restoration and/or regeneration of wetlands and related natural systems where appropriate.

- In conjunction with development review, determine whether, and what level, of environmental review is required by State Statutes and ensure completion of required environmental review and documentation prior to issuance of any permits.

Strategy 6.2: Encourage the identification, preservation, and maintenance of sites with historic, architectural, archeological, and cultural value or significance.

- Integrate historic, architectural, archeological, and cultural preservation in the routine activities of the City, such as zoning, code enforcement, public works, and economic development.

- For properties identified as having a high potential to contain historic or archaeological resources, encourage the property owner and/or potential developer to proactively conduct archaeological or historic structure surveys prior to initiating any development activities.

- Continue to review applications for permits in relation to a Class I or Class II historic or identified prehistoric site and determine if a Certificate of

Appropriateness is required to be reviewed by the City Council.

Strategy 6.3: Protect, restore, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat.

- Identify high quality natural plant communities and significant wildlife habitat areas and develop strategies to protect, preserve, and manage.

- Protect sensitive areas of groundwater recharge from inappropriate development activity.

- Partner with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Lower Minnesota River Watershed District, State and other agencies in the development of resource management and implementation plans affecting the Minnesota River Valley.

- Collaborate with the Federal, State, and regional agencies in efforts to promote and educate the public regarding protection of water resources and natural areas.

- Identify opportunities for fish and wildlife habitat restoration as part of City projects, in cooperation with various governmental agencies and other partners.

- Work with U.S.F.W.S., Hennepin County, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and Watershed Management Organizations to develop and implement strategies to limit the negative impacts of invasive species.

Goal 7: Create an environment for our residents to become healthier.

Strategy 7.1: Expand access to healthy food.

- Identify potential locations to create new community gardens, particularly in higher density neighborhoods.

- Enhance pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access to farmers markets and community gardens in Bloomington.

- Continue to work with Metro Transit to ensure transit routes connect neighborhoods, particularly those with higher densities, with commercial areas.

Strategy 7.2: Minimize and mitigate development related environmental impacts.

- Identify opportunities to provide vegetative barriers to reduce air and noise pollution from high traffic volume roadways, consistent with Federal EPA recommendations and guidelines.

- Use land use controls to ensure adequate buffering between sensitive uses (e.g., residential, institutional) and industrial and commercial uses that generate high traffic, noise, and/or other potentially negative impacts.

- Continue to enforce regulations regarding environmental remediation and clean up.

- Identify opportunities to work with partner agencies and/or pursue grant funding to assist in environmental remediation and clean-up of known contaminated sites.

- Encourage use of non-toxic materials in construction and redevelopment projects.

- Continue to coordinate hazard abatement and environmental mitigation activities with Public Health, Environmental Health, Building Inspections, and other City departments.

- Ensure timely removal of hazardous buildings within or in close proximity to residential areas.

Strategy 7.3: Enhance access to parks, recreation facilities and natural areas.

- Identify and work to eliminate gaps in the City's sidewalk and bicycle trail network. Priority should be given to network segments that improve access to parks, recreation facilities, and natural areas.

- Continue to work with Metro Transit to ensure transit routes connect neighborhoods, particularly those with higher densities, with parks, recreation facilities, and natural areas.

- Maintain up-to-date information about public parks, recreaton facilities, and natural areas on the City's website.

- Explore opportunities to use temporary and/or mobile recreation units (i.e., "pop up parks") to serve neighborhoods that lack close proximity to park and recreation facilities.