



Section 3

DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

3.3 Framework Components

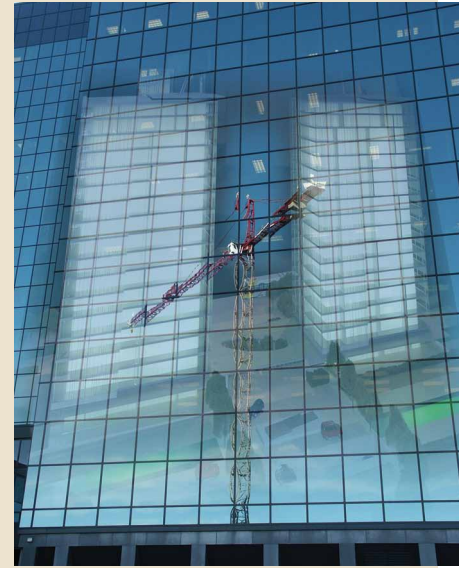
The Framework Components establish the foundation to guide new development and redevelopment in South Loop District. The four framework components describe the primary elements affecting physical development of the District. These include: land use; circulation and movement; parks and open space; and utilities. Together, these components describe a development vision that embraces the following principles:

- Development ideas must be **forward looking**, but also grounded by sound analysis of past and emerging trends.
- The planning horizon is the year 2050. A **long-term time frame** is crucial. Opportunities will occur during the next 20 to 40 years that do not seem practical based on today's market demand.
- Market demand, investment and technology are **variables that can speed up or slow down**, resulting in modifications to predicted development pace and concepts.
- The District Plan should be **considered in the larger context** of growth in the I-494 corridor, expansion of Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport (MSP), continuing improvements in regional transit service, and evolving demand for high-density housing options.

Section 3.3.1: Land Use Framework

South Loop is envisioned to become a distinct, sustainable urban neighborhood where employment-intensive office, retail, and hospitality uses are integrated with new residential development. Given its convenient access to MSP, major highways and excellent public transit systems, South Loop has potential to become a center for local, regional, and national commerce. Proximity to extensive natural open space in the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (MVNWR) lends unique character and easy access to a wide range of recreation opportunities. By building on these assets, South Loop can fully realize the concept of live/work/play.

The South Loop District encompasses about 2,350 acres and is comprised of a mix of urban development and natural, open space areas. The largest



South Loop has the potential to become a center for local, regional and national commerce.



Hiawatha Light Rail Transit line connects four stations in the District, providing tremendous opportunity for Transit-Oriented Development.



Directly north of the District, the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport reaches global markets.



The Mall of America is the primary retail and entertainment anchor of the South Loop District.

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single land use consists of conservation/open space areas, with approximately 62 percent (1,460 acres) of the District encompassing the bluffs, ravines, and floodplain along the Minnesota River. Much of the conservation area is located within the MVNWR and cannot be developed. The remaining 36 percent (approximately 890 acres) supports retail, office, hotel and residential development in the upland area above the bluff. Of the developable area north of 86th Street, about 224 acres are currently undeveloped or under-developed.

Development Character and Influences

A primary goal is to transform South Loop from its existing suburban character – consisting of large blocks containing single-use buildings surrounded by surface parking lots – to a more urban character and compact development pattern that supports a mix of uses, higher densities, and pedestrian-friendly streets.

Several existing uses within or immediately adjacent to South Loop have influenced its existing character and development pattern. These uses, described below and shown on **Figure 3.19, page 3.39**, will continue to influence future development in South Loop.

Hiawatha Light Rail Transit (LRT)

South Loop is served by the Hiawatha LRT line. With four LRT stations, South Loop has tremendous opportunity to become a model for compact Transit-Oriented

Development (TOD). The area around the American Boulevard LRT station is particularly well positioned for TOD as it transforms into a new, mixed-use, residential neighborhood. The Hiawatha LRT line provides direct and convenient access to MSP, the Veterans Administration hospital, and downtown Minneapolis. It also connects to other regional transit systems including Cedar Avenue Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Central Corridor LRT, and the Northstar Commuter Rail line. Exceptional connectivity to the region, as well as national and international locations, gives South Loop a real competitive advantage as a place to work, do business, recreate, and live.

Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport

South Loop enjoys quick and convenient access to MSP. This proximity presents many advantages for businesses, employees, and residents. As the economy becomes increasingly global, easy access to MSP will become a key benefit for people engaged in work or lifestyles that involve frequent air travel. Likewise, businesses that rely on air transport or that routinely interact with national or international offices can benefit from convenient airport access. The airport also presents some challenges for development, such as height and use limitations and aircraft noise.

Mall of America (MOA)

The MOA is a major retail and entertainment destination, drawing visitors from the region and

beyond. It is the primary retail and entertainment anchor of South Loop, providing a variety of dining, shopping, and entertainment opportunities to visitors, as well as residents and employees.

The MOA was intentionally designed to be inward focused; which is extremely effective for a stand-alone, multi-tenant retail/entertainment facility. However, it results in the MOA turning its back to the rest of the District. As development occurs to the east, it will be important to better integrate the MOA, physically and visually, with surrounding properties. This might involve creating a street front presence for the MOA Transit Station on 24th Avenue and designing future phases of MOA to be more outward focused.

Visual integration can be improved through coordinated streetscape treatment including distinctive gateway nodes that will visually

connect the east and west sides of 24th Avenue. These ideas are discussed in greater detail in the 24th Avenue signature element. See **Section 3.2, page 3.21.**

Bloomington Central Station (BCS)

Approved in 2005, the BCS master plan proposes a mix of office, hotel, and residential uses centered around an existing two-acre park and LRT station. Plans call for a pedestrian-friendly mixed-use neighborhood incorporating state-of-the-art sustainable practices and sound abatement. Completing the BCS master plan and extending its development pattern and design character throughout South Loop is a key objective of this Plan.

Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge (MVNWR)

With its entire eastern edge formed by the MVNWR, South Loop enjoys

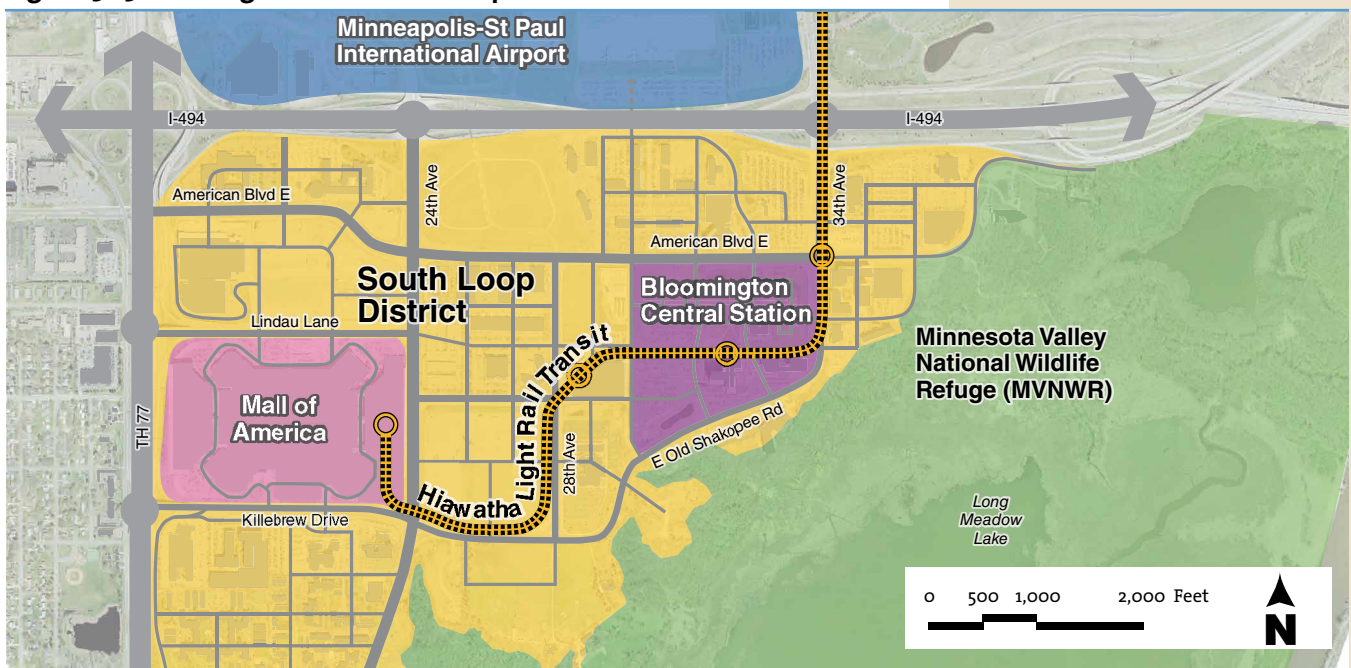


The Bloomington Central Station master plan provides an important model and catalyst for Transit-Oriented Development in South Loop.



The Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge forms the southern and eastern edge of the District.

Figure 3.19 Existing Influential Development Features



Source: City of Bloomington, MN.

direct access to a significant natural amenity and extensive trail system. Several existing and proposed trailheads provide opportunities throughout South Loop to enter and enjoy the MVNWR. These ideas are discussed further in the Bluff District signature element. *See Section 3.2, page 3.33.*

Sustainable Development

To realize the development vision for South Loop, specific regulatory tools can be used to foster sustainable development and achieve the desired urban character, density, and form. Two new zoning districts are proposed to reflect the new land use categories described later in this section. The new districts will allow greater flexibility to foster the desired mix of land uses. Development standards will allow for higher densities and intensity of development while encouraging low-impact site design, energy conservation and high-quality urban design.

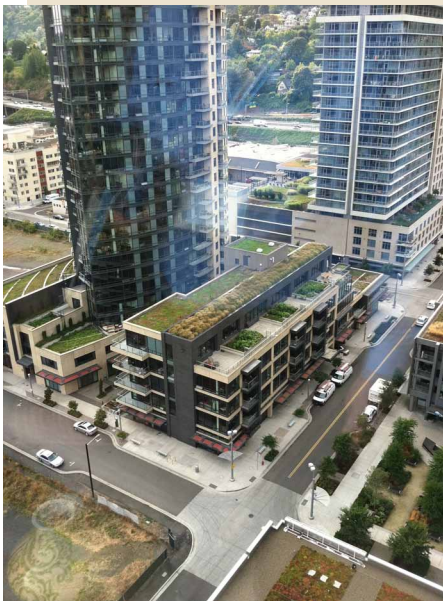
Use of sustainable, low-impact development techniques is particularly critical in locations adjacent to the bluff and steep, wooded ravines. This edge transition zone provides a range of habitats and supports a great diversity of species. It is important to preserve the ecological function of this area and protect it from development encroachment. Some protections already exist in the *Bluff Report District Plan (December 1982)* and

the Bluff Protection Overlay Zoning Districts (BP-1 and BP-2).

Development Phasing and Investment Priorities

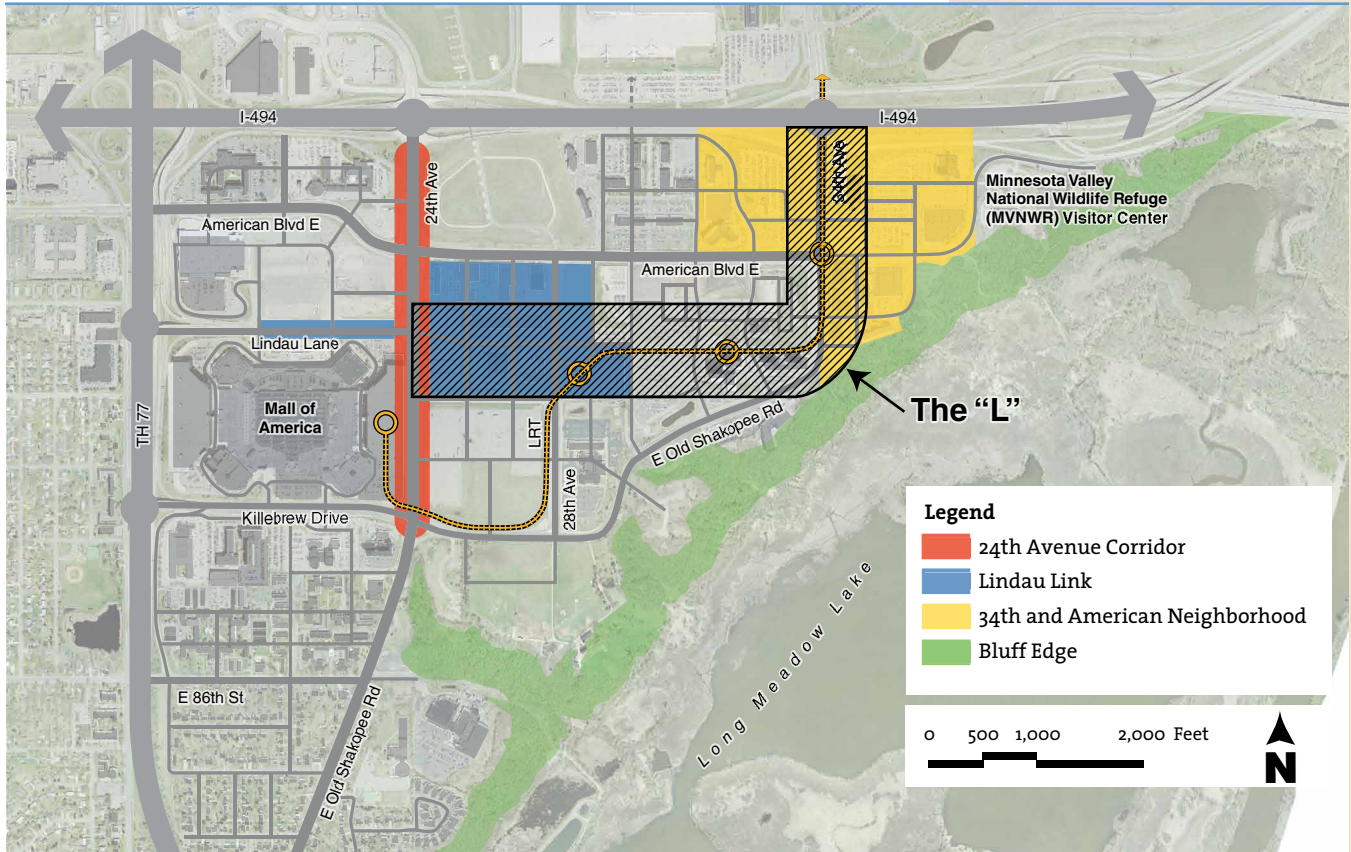
In preparing development projections, historical development trends in Bloomington were reviewed to gauge whether development forecasts for South Loop are reasonably achievable. While the amount of projected new development (over 10 million square feet) is ambitious, it is fairly consistent with what has occurred in the past. However, the economic downturn and market shifts at the regional, national and global scales, will likely lengthen the time needed for South Loop to reach full development. Accordingly, development projections were extended beyond the 20-year horizon typical of a long-range plan, with full development of South Loop not anticipated until about 2050.

Development projections were allocated into two development phases: mid-term (2030) and full development (2050). Through 2030 the City will focus public infrastructure investments, subsidies, and use of tools such as Tax Increment Financing (TIF) to incentivize development within the L-shaped area encompassing Lindau Link and the quadrants around the American Boulevard LRT station. *See Figure 3.20, page 3.41.* Priority will be given to new development that



Landscaped “green” roofs and pervious pavers can significantly reduce the amount of stormwater run off from a development site.

Figure 3.20 The “L” and Signature Elements



Source: City of Bloomington, Minnesota.

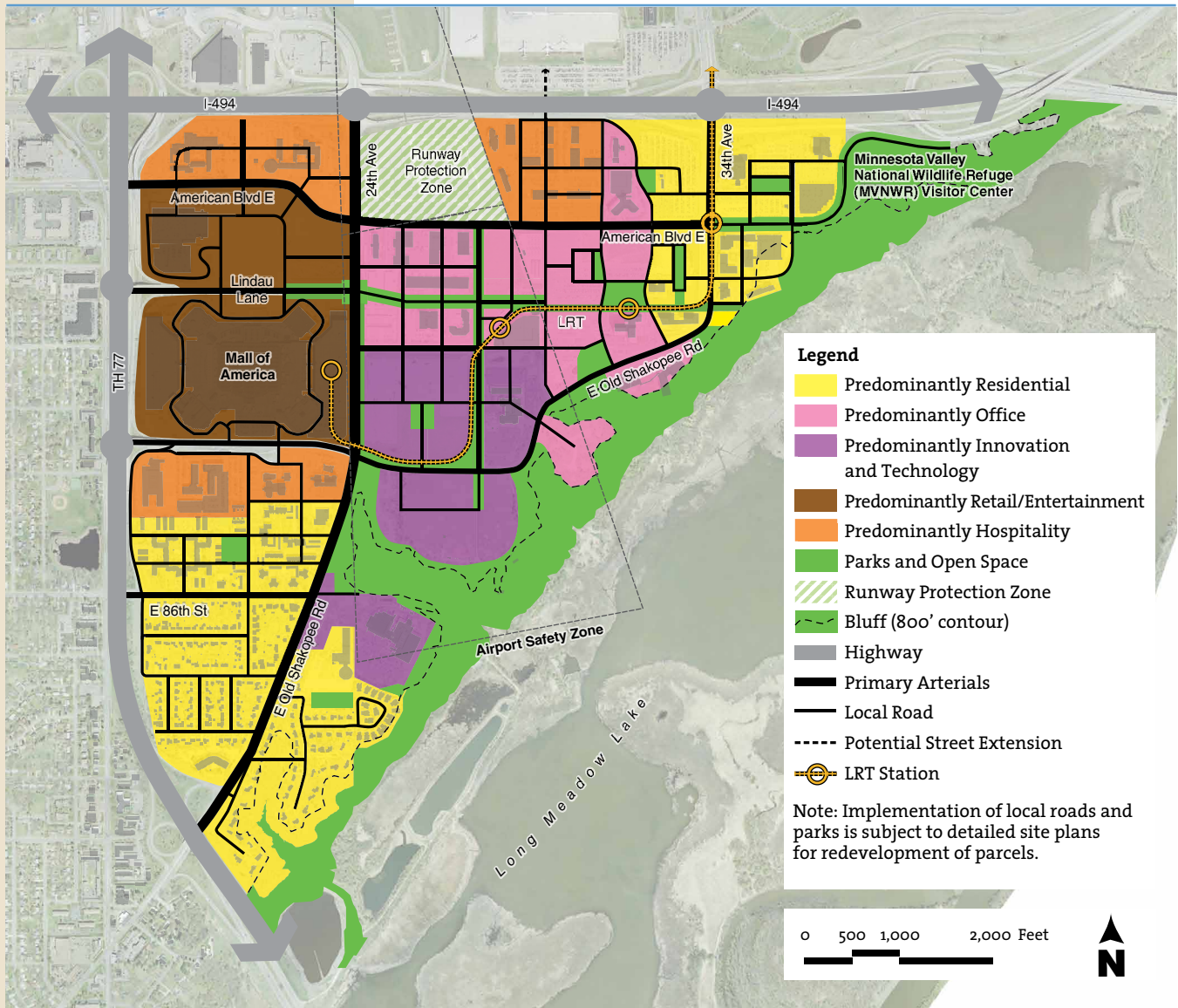
complements and leverages existing private development investments (particularly, MOA and BCS) and public transit investments.

Of course, development in other areas of South Loop will proceed during the first phase (2030) and through 2050. Beyond the “L”, public investments will be directed at strategic implementation of key elements described in the Signature Elements. See **Section 3.2**, page 3.13.

District-wide public investment priorities include:

- Establishing a fine-grained network of streets;
- Creating a system of parks and open spaces connected by trails and “green streets”;
- Enhancing access to the MVNWR; and
- Increasing energy efficiency and sustainability.

Figure 3.21 Land Use Framework Concept



Source: Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC.

Land Use Designations

The South Loop Land Use Framework, shown in **Figure 3.21**, above, includes seven (7) land use designation categories. These categories are intentionally broad in scope. To establish South Loop as a true mixed use district, each land use category allows for a variety of uses, but focuses on the predominant use indicated by the category name. Specific use provisions (and restrictions) are described in and

governed by the *Bloomington Zoning Code*. Development will also need to abide by the design and sustainability guidelines outlined in the *South Loop Design Guidelines*.

The major land use categories in the South Loop Land Use Framework are described below:

Residential: This designation applies to areas where residential uses will be predominant. A variety of residential densities and typologies

is encouraged. Mid- and high-rise residential development are favored north of 86th Street where more intensive development, traffic, and airport noise impacts are greatest. The area between Killebrew Drive and 86th Street is envisioned to redevelop and potentially become denser, but maintain its existing mix of multi-family, office and hospitality uses. The area south of 86th Street will be maintained as a single-family neighborhood.

Office: This designation applies to areas where professional and business offices will be the predominant land use. Ground floor retail uses, convenience retail, restaurants, and commercial services are encouraged to complement office uses. Hospitality uses are a compatible secondary land use. High-tech uses may also be allowed as a secondary use, although buffering may be required to minimize visual and noise impacts on adjacent properties.

Hospitality: This designation applies to areas where hotels and related uses (e.g. conference or meeting facilities, banquet facilities, etc.) will be the predominant land use. Ground floor retail and restaurants are encouraged. Office is a suitable secondary use. Residential uses are generally discouraged, and in some locations not permitted due to land use restrictions in the airport runway zones.

Retail/Entertainment: This designation is focused on the MOA (existing and future phases). The predominant land uses in this area are retail and entertainment.

Hospitality uses, in support of the MOA and other retail and entertainment venues, are also encouraged. Office and multi-family residential development may be appropriate secondary land uses, if integrated with the MOA.

Innovation and Technology: This designation provides for flexible, high-tech fabrication and research-oriented uses that may include integrated office uses. Pure office uses, commercial services, and restaurants are also allowed. Residential uses are not allowed, although may be appropriate on adjacent properties if adequate buffering is provided.

Parks and Open Space: This designation applies to areas designed as parks, open space or natural, conservation areas. Whether publicly or privately owned, these areas are intended for public use, unless access is specifically restricted due to sensitive natural resource characteristics. Development in these areas is limited to public, institutional, or accessory service facilities related to park, open space, and conservation uses.

Runway Protection Zone (RPZ): The runway protection zone extends immediately south of Runway 17-35 to American Boulevard. The land is owned by the Metropolitan Airports Commission and is subject to Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations that require the area be maintained free of trees and structures, except FAA instruments and runway lighting.



South Loop is home to a number of hotel and hospitality uses.



HealthPartners, a Minnesota-based not-for-profit HMO, is headquartered in South Loop.

Relationship to the Comprehensive Plan

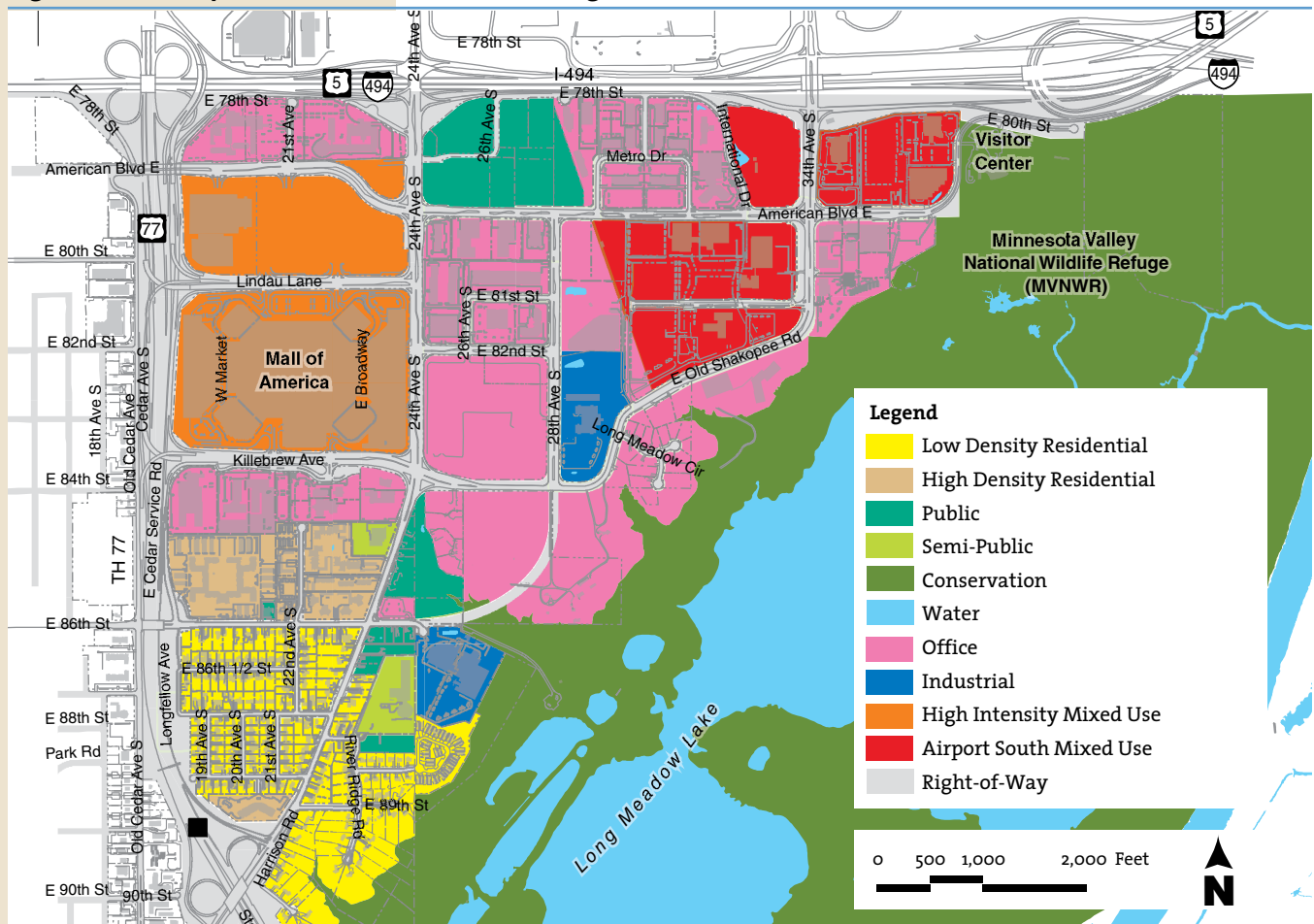
The *City of Bloomington, MN Comprehensive Plan 2008* contains fifteen distinct land use categories. Of those, eleven are represented in the South Loop District. See **Figure 3.22, below**. The categories in the South Loop Plan Land Use Framework are intentionally generalized to convey the envisioned mixed use development concept.

The City's official land use designations will continue to be those defined by the *City of Bloomington, MN, Comprehensive Plan*. Few amendments are needed to align the land use designations

proposed in the South Loop Plan Land Use Framework with the City's *Comprehensive Plan*. The most significant change will be the creation and application of two new land use categories:

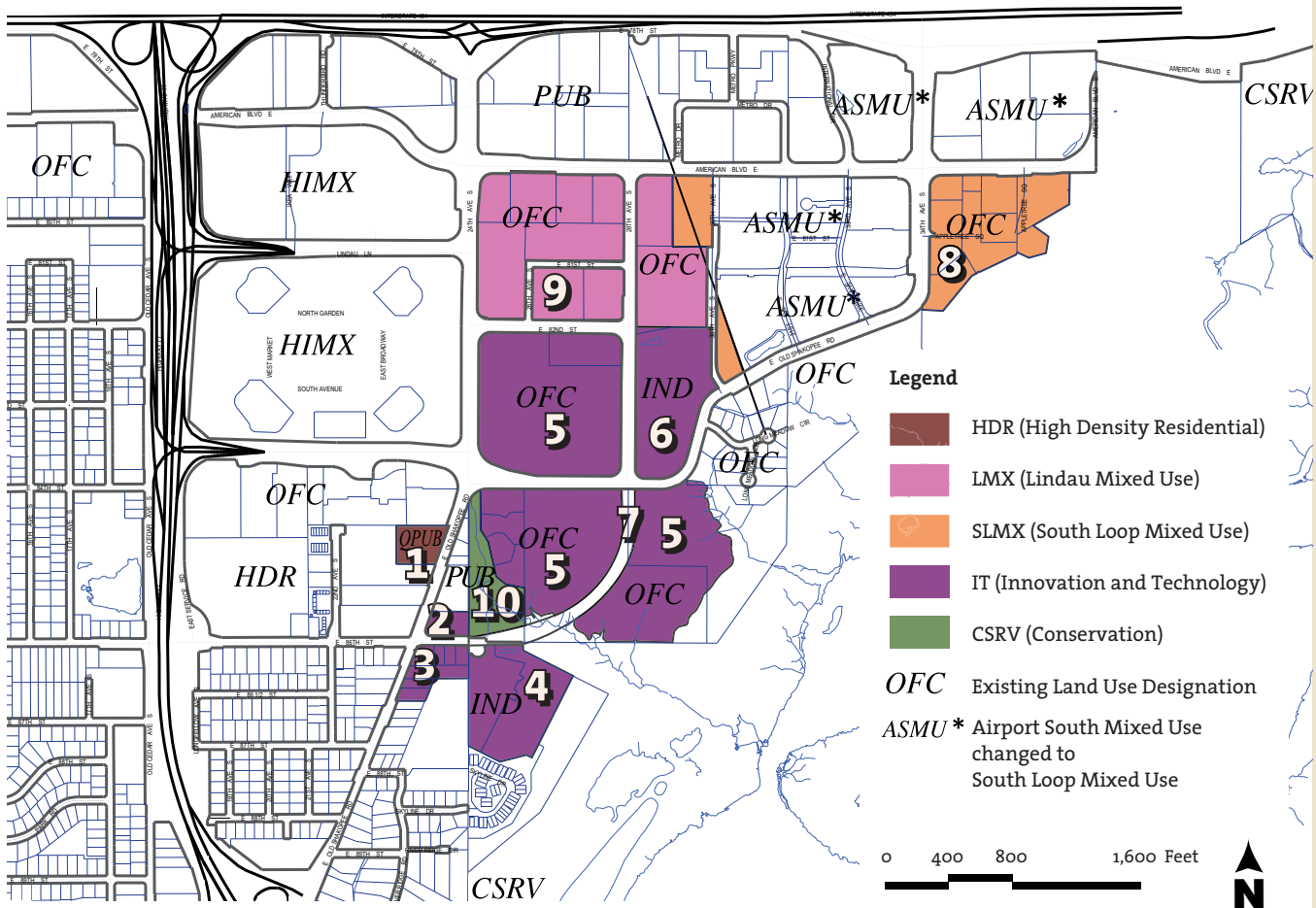
- **Innovation and Technology (IT)** category will accommodate a flexible mix of high-tech manufacturing, research and development, and pure office uses. It will also allow hotels and supportive retail and service uses.
- **Lindau Mixed Use (LMX)** category will provide for a more dense mix of office, hotel, retail and service uses (e.g., coffee shops, restaurants, groceries, pharmacies, dry cleaners) along Lindau Link.

Figure 3.22 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Designations, 2008



Source: Bloomington Comprehensive Plan 2008.

Figure 3.23 Proposed Land Use Amendments



Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2012.

Parcels proposed for land use amendments are highlighted on **Figure 3.23**, above, and include:

1. Change the designation from Quasi-Public (QPUB) to High Density Residential (HDR) on the parcel at 2350 East Old Shakopee Road. (Qwest switching station).
2. Change the designation from Office (OFC) to Innovation and Technology (IT) on the parcel at 2300 E. 86th Street, future Cypress expansion.
3. Change the designation from Public (PUB) to Innovation and Technology (IT) on the parcels at 2275, 2271, 2263, and 2255 E. Old Shakopee Road, and 2305, 2313, and 2325 E. 86th Street (future Cypress expansion).
4. Change the designation from Industrial (IND) to Innovation and Technology (IT) on the parcels at 2401 and 2411 E. 86th Street (Cypress).
5. Change the designation from Office (OFC) to Innovation and Technology (IT) on two parcels at 8200 28th Avenue S. and 8201 24th Avenue S. (aka the “Adjoining Lands”) and six parcels south of E. Old Shakopee Road (Spruce Shadows Farm and former apartment site).
6. Change the designation from Industrial (IND) to Innovation and Technology (IT) on the parcel at 2800 E. Old Shakopee Road (Polar Semiconductor).
7. Change the designation from Right-of-Way (ROW) to Innovation and Technology (IT) and Conservation (CSRV) to remove the proposed 86th Street extension.
8. Change the designation from Office (OFC) to South Loop Mixed Use (SLMX) on eleven parcels southeast of American Boulevard E. and 34th Avenue S. (Appletree Square area), and portions of the parcels at 8170 34th Avenue S. and 2401 American Boulevard E.
9. Change the designation from Office (OFC) to Lindau Mixed Use (LMX) on 10 parcels located north and south of the proposed Lindau Link alignment.
10. Change the designation from Public (PUB) to Conservancy (CSRV) on two parcels located adjacent to the ravine east of E. Old Shakopee Road.

Relationship Between Land Use and Zoning Designations

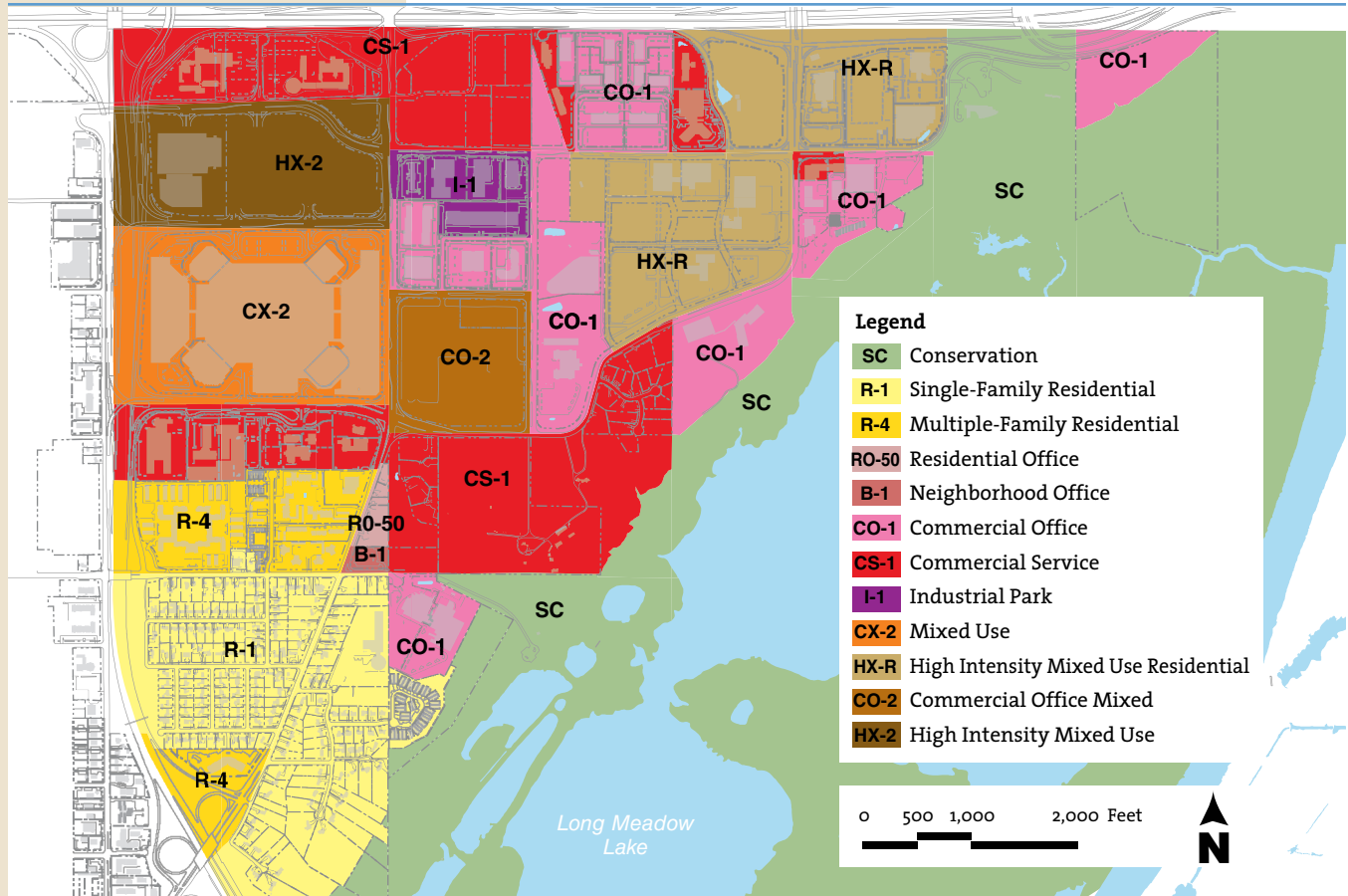
Zoning districts outline specific development regulations and are used in conjunction with land use designations to implement the City's development vision. Whereas land use designations are broad in focus and are intended to establish the basis of the development vision, zoning districts stipulate detailed use parameters and site development standards.

Achieving consistency between zoning and land use designations is required by law. In practice, this means that uses allowed in specific zoning districts should be compatible

with the intent of the land use designation on the property. For purposes of determining land use and zoning compatibility, the City's official land use designations will continue to be those defined in the City's *Comprehensive Plan*.

Currently the City has thirty-five separate base zoning districts. Twelve are represented in the South Loop District. See **Figure 3.24**, below. There are also five overlay zoning districts applied to specific parcels in South Loop. Overlay zoning provides additional use parameters and development standards beyond those required by the base zoning.

Figure 3.24 Existing Zoning, 2008



Source: Bloomington Comprehensive Plan 2008.

Overlay districts include:

- Flood Hazard Overlay (FH);
- Airport Runway Overlay (AR-17);
- Bluff Protection Overlay (BP-1 and BP-2); and
- Planned Development Overlay (PD).

With a few exceptions, the existing zoning is compatible with the land use designations in both the South Loop Land Use Framework and the *Comprehensive Plan*. The zoning amendments described below will eliminate any existing zoning/land use inconsistencies.

Proposed Zoning Amendments

About half of the parcels north of 86th Street are recommended for zoning amendments. See **Figure 3.25**, page 3.48. Proposed zoning changes fall into three types:

- 1) Application of a new (not yet created) zoning designation;

- 2) Application of a different zoning designation (where the new designation is an existing zoning category); and

- 3) Application of the commercial zoning districts adopted in 2006.

The majority of zoning changes involve application of new commercial zoning districts (adopted in 2006) and won't significantly change the status or types of uses permitted on the property. While the relationship between the existing and new commercial zoning districts is not one-to-one, the recommended zoning was selected to most closely match the existing use or to best reflect desired future uses.

Proposed zoning amendments are shown on **Figure 3.25, below**, and include:

- 1.** Rezoning of several parcels along I-494, Killebrew Drive, and the former Long Meadow Circle, to replace existing commercial zoning designations (CO-1 and CS-1) with the Freeway Commercial (C-4) commercial zoning designation adopted in 2006.
- 2.** Rezoning of ten parcels that make up the Runway Protection Zone (RPZ) to Freeway Office (C-4) to be consistent with adjacent properties along I-494. It is also recommended that the Planned Development (PD) overlay be eliminated, however the AR-17 Airport Runway Overlay District would remain in place.

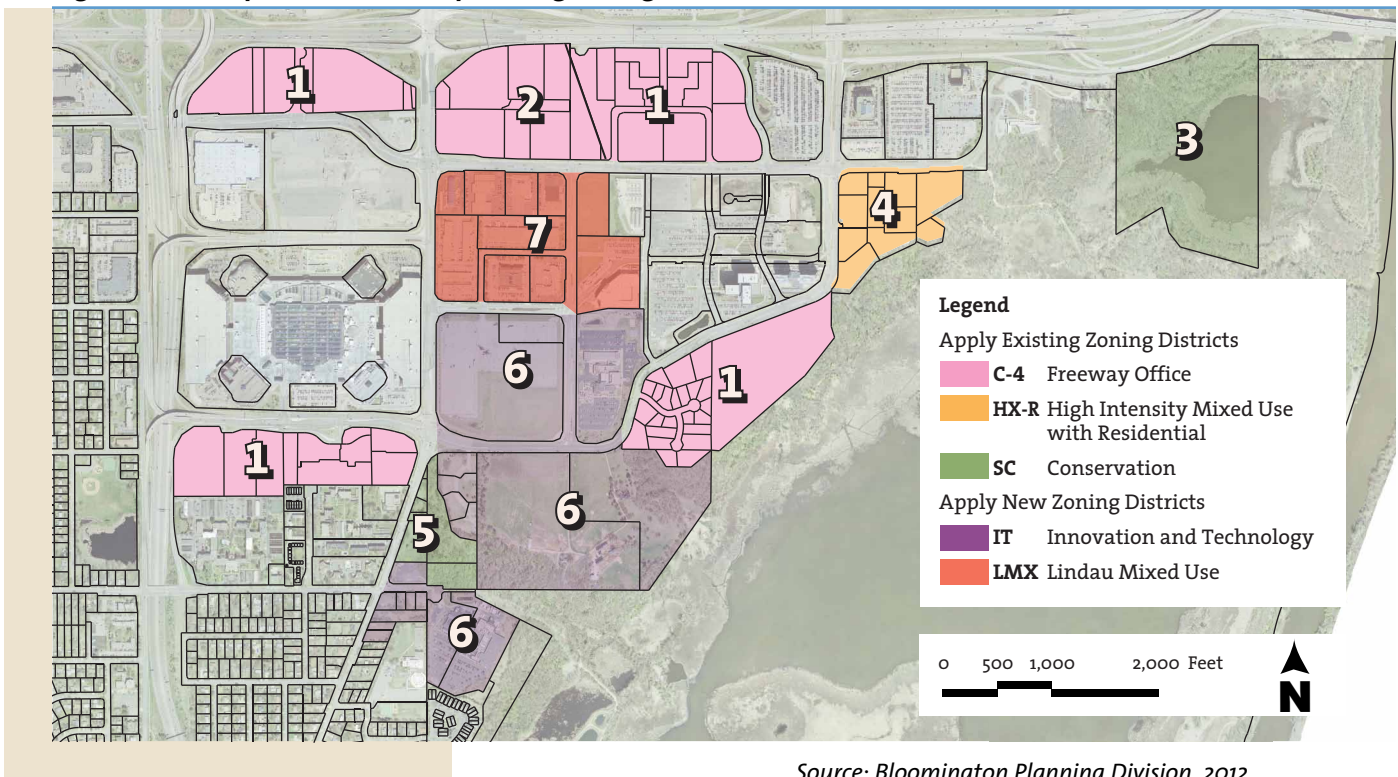
- 3.** Rezoning of a parcel owned by MnDOT located east of the MVNWR Headquarters to Conservancy (SC) to reflect its use and ensure it remains undeveloped.
- 4.** Rezoning of 10 parcels south of American Boulevard and east of 34th Avenue to High Intensity Mixed Use (HX-R) to be consistent with zoning on adjacent properties (i.e., BCS).
- 5.** Rezoning of seven parcels in and around the Forest Glen Park to Conservancy (SC) to accommodate a proposed new park and trail head, and to protect the ravine environment from intensive development.
- 6.** Creation of a new zoning district focused on “innovation” or high-tech type manufacturing. This new – Innovation and Technology (IT) –

zoning designation will be applied to 19 parcels; several of which are currently developed and/or used for high-tech manufacturing and fabrication (i.e., Polar Semiconductor and Cypress).

- 7.** Creation of a new zoning district to foster a higher density mix of office, hotel, retail, and services uses along Lindau Link. This new – Lindau Mixed Use (LMX) – zoning designation will be applied to ten (10) parcels abutting the new Lindau Link roadway.

Except as noted above, all existing overlay zoning districts will remain intact.

Figure 3.25 Proposed South Loop Zoning Changes



Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2012.