

Engagement Series #2: Design Framework

March 2020

At the beginning of March 2020, a three-day Design Week was held at a vacant storefront in the Clover Center at 98th and Lyndale. The event was modeled in the form of a charrette, an immersive design process for a short period of time, resulting in a draft concept. In this case, the planning team developed an urban design framework for the entire corridor by meeting with developers, property owners, city staff, and vetting the concepts with the public.



Design Week Theme

Visitors entered an immersive, garden-themed hub of activity. People were primed for a hands-on experience by the window painting in the storefront, posing a question about the future of Lyndale Avenue and their role as its caretakers. Upon entering, they were greeted first by the smell of mulch and then by City staff offering to escort them through the space.

Artificial turf formed paths through the space, leading visitors to areas informing them about the planning process so far, current points of focus, and opportunities to contribute to the planning process.

Additional areas provided space for stakeholder meetings, children’s activities, and workspace for Stantec designers. Additional wayfinding and divisions between these spaces were created by picket fences; backyard furniture and other accessories created a casual and inviting atmosphere.

The information provided, and engagement activities, utilized gardening as a metaphor to make the process accessible and engaging. The existing conditions of Lyndale Avenue (market analysis, current infrastructure) were likened to the soil conditions of a garden: what will thrive in the current mixture? What can be added to encourage other forms of growth?

In an introductory activity, visitors were asked to choose a type of growth (a particular business or feature of Lyndale Avenue) they would like to nurture and to add their “seedling” to a “nursery”. Sketched maps of sections of Lyndale Avenue were broken down into “districts” reflecting their

characteristics. These maps evolved throughout the three days as designers responded to participants’ suggestions as to what forms future development on Lyndale Avenue should take.

Analysis Summary

On Tuesday night, after two days of concept development, visitors were presented research completed prior to Design Week and the concepts developed in the previous two days. Feedback was solicited in a variety of ways:

- Writing their ‘top priority for cultivating Lyndale Avenue’ on a paper flower and planting it in a raised flower bed
- Using colored blocks to express massing and composing mixed uses around 98th and Lyndale
- Writing location-based comments and concerns on post-its and placing on a large-scale aerial
- Creating street sections by using scale paper cutouts of travel lanes and streetscape amenities
- Commenting on the urban design framework and node prioritization
- Commenting on the mobility framework and planning multi-modal routes



One overarching duality presented itself throughout Design Week and was amplified during Tuesday night’s main event: people want new development, more housing, and more businesses, but they want to protect and build on the affordability that is currently present. People want to protect affordable housing as much as they want to accommodate new housing. They want to protect affordable storefronts as much as they want to attract new businesses and commercial development.

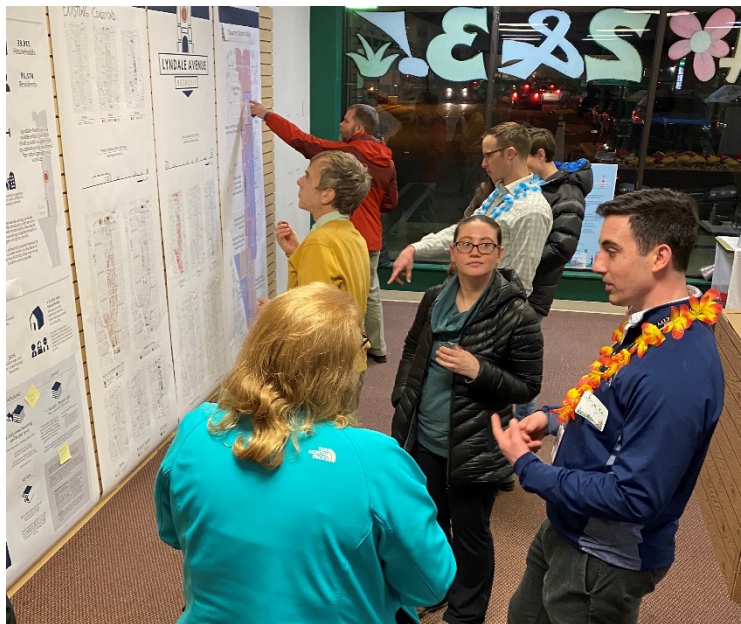


People pushed the concept of accessibility for all – meaning both physical and financial accessibility. Some prioritized physical accessibility by highlighting the need for better sidewalks, crosswalks (including many crossings of private driveways), and access to businesses. Others pointed to the need for public space for people to gather and build community with each other that doesn’t require spending money to utilize the space. Places to have small meetings, and places for start-ups and entrepreneurs to work with limited funds, were also considered to be of public benefit.

Participants also expressed a need to prioritize environmental factors along the corridor such as green space, native street trees, pollinator gardens and stormwater management. People want to bike along Lyndale, with safety being a priority. People mentioned several times that healthy food options were

missing from the corridor and suggested co-ops or other small locally owned businesses and restaurants to fill the healthy food gap.

There was general consensus that the area surrounding 98th and Lyndale is the prime location for redevelopment in the short term. This area was understood as underutilized, vacant, accessible to the freeway, and (perhaps most notably) accessible to the planned Orange Line BRT station (slated to open December 2021). Another node around 86th and Lyndale was also supported as another place to highlight housing density, connections to employers like Thermo King, and improve pedestrian comfort through a variety of interventions.



Full Documentation

Comments on the Vision Statement (Tuesday)

People were asked to give feedback on the following vision statement:

Lyndale Avenue is a dynamic, walkable boulevard that connects a series of vibrant and distinctive neighborhoods along one, cohesive corridor. It is the cultural heart of the community, with a diverse population and interests that embrace equitable and safe neighborhoods for all. The corridor includes a series of destinations to live, dine, play, and work – preserving Bloomington’s unique history, while providing a framework to build new and existing experiences. Public gathering places are conveniently accessible and reinforced with a range of restaurant and shopping destinations. Opportunities to preserve and enhance the environment are incorporated into future growth, creating a place where nature meets business.

- Rotaries [“roundabouts”] along Lyndale (similar to Richfield). One or two more restaurants along the line of Luna Di Luna, divide Lyndale, plant trees and flowers in the median. Create nice shops in new cul-de-sacs or along the side streets. A bookstore? More niche, destination shops.
- This area needs to be truly accessible, not only for mainstream but especially for those with mobility, sensory or cognitive issues. Accessibility during winter and/or incremental weather is imperative. Business access for wheelchair users is a must or those dollars are less likely to continue being spent in Bloomington. To have and maintain a level playing field, enforcement must be upgraded so stoplight and stop sign violators better understand the risk to pedestrians in that area. Wider sidewalks can contribute to a “walkable” community as well as a health initiative for citizens to gather and walk a route together. Building design would help cross out barriers for wheelchairs, strollers, etc. if more universal design principles were used. Environmental concerns not addressed enough, include trash in the streets and then storm drains, especially near fast food businesses both along Lyndale as well as parallel and perpendicular streets.
- Please consider native plants, trees and shrubs in the design and perhaps a more direct statement about natural amenities (and connections to them) in the Vision Statement. Proximity to the river trails/wildlife preserve provide an opportunity to expand habitat along the urban corridor (planting a pollinator corridor along Lyndale could be an aesthetic and ecological asset).
- Need stop sign for cars leaving Wells Fargo drive-thru. Narrow sidewalks and steep cuts and driveways (cars don’t look) difficult to cross. Pork chops poorly cleaned out and below block has blind spot. Cuts by Applebee’s direct toward streets. Need enforcement of stop signs – especially by Applebee’s and 96th and Lyndale. Businesses need a bell or paddles for those who have mobility issues. Move Starbucks to old Bakers Square. Too many broken sidewalks.
- No grates- they stick up from sidewalks. Unbroken sidewalks that are more level. No intrusions into sidewalk area.
- Businesses aren’t really accessible – entrances/exits and aisles.

- Shovel curbs better. Mark crosswalks better. Yield to pedestrians. Garbage from food places – yuk. And diapers. Richfield has better signage. Business doors near impossible to open and places like LeeAnn Chin and Wendy’s have very difficult entryways in 2 directions.
- A question- if redeveloping Lyndale, how would that change Nicollet?
- Create a “Mall Directory” for all the businesses, apartments, services, parks on the corridor. Show by category what’s nearby. No business association exists, so doing this “as-is” view of the corridors’ existing will help jump-start one, be a helpful service to people who live here now and get ready for the “to-be” future.
- This is mostly about stuff one pays for. This is nice but focused on an affluent white perspective. Love ‘where nature meets business’. Example is Edina indoor gardens/parks. But what’s not here is: people, community, co-created neighborhood power and solidarity, co-ops/non-profit centers such as Sabathani, Midtown Global Market, etc. What if the City set aside space for a cooperative co-working/artist/writers/music and a community meeting space – co-owned with free or sliding scale space/materials costs – and encouraged development of neighborhood organizing for people from all backgrounds, businesses, tenants and homeowners to problem-solve together. Which community does “cultural heart of the community” refer to? Does “Public gathering places” refer to indoors?
- Gathering places (indoors and outdoors) where residents can meet friends, make new friends and build relationships, non-profit groups can gather for meetings. Businesses (smaller type – not chain type) i.e. bookstore and valuable services (i.e. tutoring children) (other organizations such as The Works and activity-based places). Preserve pharmacy, grocery store, post office, health services, banks. Add restaurants other than fast food places.
- Build for multi-modal transportation or electric scooters, e-bikes, electric cars, robot-taxis. Build around BRT on 35W with stop at 98th Street and eventually other areas. Advocate for BRT to run on Old Shakopee from MOA to Eden Prairie. Make Clover Center into a high rise with preferential parking for electric vehicles, e-scooters, robot-taxis, charging, make it super insulated so it requires only very little energy to power it. Power with heat pumps or renewable hydrogen. Make it a showcase. Do traffic calming on Lyndale. Operate it as a single lane in each direction like Portland and other streets in Richfield and Minneapolis. Whatever you do, don’t recreate France and Old Shakopee fiasco. It has become traffic hell. The emissions from that area are terrible.
- Continue the single car, bike, ped, and rotaries [“roundabouts”] established in Richfield. Cluster similar independent owners in same area i.e. Keg and Case in St. Paul (mushroom growers, beer, coffee, pastries, cheese, organic preserves, pottery), these Etsy artists that have become successful and are looking for brick and mortar, Plano, TX online brands testing products in short term leases. Public art – sculptures along streets i.e. Minnesota Landscape Arboretum have seasonal featured artists. Benches. Luna di Luna – know the owner, see neighbors. Lyn 65 – farm to table. Local Roots- kid play room, they work with mom’s co-ops, free sandwiches, music on weekends, outdoor seating. Beer. Eric’s bike to set up rental and repair or Pedago – ebikes to

rent with circle trip to River and back, Highland and back, Normandale Lake, National wildlife preserve, suggested loop trails. Places where people can take classes or rent supplies. Photography, knitting, painting, sewing, needlework, quilting, book making, pottery. See Center for Book Arts and Textile Arts. Memorial Day parade and free music events. See National Geographic's 'end of trash' segment from March 2020.

- Independent and startup businessowners need a better variety of unique workspaces. It is hard to find nice space at 200-1,000 square feet that has reasonable parking and professional customer access at a reasonable price.

Priorities - Flower Exercise (Monday, Tuesday)

People were asked to write their single top priority for helping Lyndale grow on a garden-themed piece of paper, and 'plant' it in the raised garden. Responses (numbers in parenthesis indicate when checkmarks or other notes were left by other participants to indicate agreement or support for the idea):

- More apartments, more people
- Healthy food co-op/dining
- Native plants, gardens in walkable corridor + trees and shrubs
- Do an Open Streets Bloomington, like Richfield, Minneapolis, Edina, etc.
- Buffered/protected bike lanes (+2)
- The sounds of humans and bicycles and pedestrians, not mini racetracks
- More housing density
- Slower traffic, better flow, safer bikeable connections
- Beautify. Make Lyndale a boulevard! (+1)
- More housing! (+1)
- More housing with mixture of market rate and affordable, more middle income and lower income (+1)
- Late night gathering/entertainment options
- Don't want small businesses to leave due to improvement costs
- Reroute semi traffic off Lyndale (+1)
- Safe access into and out of commercial locations – driving and walking and biking and bus
- Bikeability – feeling safe sharing the road. And breweries!
- Green spaces & trees
- Less concrete
- Bike trails, walking paths, locally owned businesses
- Places to have a drink – distillery, brewery, coffee shop (+1)
- Designate large spaces for creative placemaking
- Healthy food, co-op
- Rebuild tree lined boulevard. We're losing all the beautiful large old ash trees!
- More non-chain restaurants (+1)
- Safe spaces to cluster and meet with plants, trees, grass, etc. nearby!
- More flower, more community decoration (+1)
- Create spaces that are co-operatively owned and operated for making, coworking, and community organizing
- Affordable housing for families and seniors. Keep the clocktower!
- More local businesses (brewery, restaurant)
- No roundabout (+1)
- Create a more coordinated visual – not this hit and miss with different types of buildings
- Safer space for families with homes on Lyndale – less busy streets

- Maggie was here!
- Breakfast spot (+2)
- Bike lanes that will go all the way to the River! (+2)
- Improve bike and pedestrian access
- Lyndale Ave is so long there needs to be four to five nodes with names
- Community walking spaces with shopping
- Improve look and feel of transit stops to reduce crime
- Bike racks near businesses and an open common space (+1)
- More green spaces set aside for pollinators and birds that utilize native plant ecosystems
- Public art
- Affordable senior housing – maybe one level townhouses
- Maintenance – keep things constantly getting refreshed, not necessarily replaced (+1)
- Create visual identities for each node on Lyndale
- Better/more public transit. LRT?
- Businesses and residents work and live with planet 1st intention
- Destination public spaces – fountain, mural, park
- Breakfast spot! (+1)
- Outside seating, outdoor stage, do not displace current business
- Fresh air and not noxious emissions
- Encourage artist live/work spaces
- Raised community garden near multi-housing (+2)
- Better wheelchair accessibility
- Make Lyndale a “Main Street”
- Improve walkability

Street Design Exercise (Tuesday)

Visitors at the open house were asked to create their ideal street section, using a variety of pieces that were too-scale, including lanes for driving, biking, walking, and streetscaping. The comments that people left are listed here:

- Keep blinking lights at rush hour
- Safer sidewalks for walkers/runners
- Native plants, pollinators corridor
- Bus shelters with arrival times
- Signage/branding
- Nodal identities
- Sidewalk maintenance
- Vegetation and buffers from street
- No sidewalks on curb!
- Keep iconic elements (clock tower, gems)
- Accessible for all (ped, bike, car, trucks)
- Gathering space, multiple destinations
- Bike lanes, sidewalks, transit shelters
- Richfield, 66th section west. Median trees
- Safer walk, buffer from street
- Elevated bike/ped structure
- Bus stops maintained and located better
- Mixed use path with passing space
- Bus stop locations should be safer
- Pedestrian scale lighting

Mobility Framework Exercise (Tuesday)

People at the open house engaged in an idea of how to design a safe and inviting north-side pedestrian and transit route along the corridor. Part of the idea included “parking villages” in strategic locations along Lyndale to act as district parking. These consolidated parking locations could be beneficial for the redevelopment of small, constrained sites as well as places adjacent to Lyndale that might see a reduction in parking due to an expanded multiuse path. General comments included:

- There was fairly regular interest in the Parking Village concept, especially because it might let some smaller sites find higher and better uses.
- There was divided opinion on the multi-use path as shown – some advocated for having this entirely on Lyndale and not weaving around as much; some were in favor of the idea of trying to find connecting parallel streets, even if this means looking west of Lyndale to use Aldrich as a neighborhood bikeway.
- Most participants seemed to favor the idea of removing right-turn slip lanes at intersections where they exist.

Design Framework Exercise (Tuesday)

People at the open house were presented with a working version of a design framework corridor that had been created based on input from the public earlier in Design Week, outlining the key areas for redevelopment, secondary or longer-term areas of focus, and allocation of open space.

- People generally agreed the 98th St & Lyndale Ave area was an appropriate place to start
- People also liked the location of our other “node” further north near the intersection of Lyndale at 86th Street, though agreed it could be considered a more long-term opportunity
- People supported the idea of signature open spaces at/around the 98th/Lyndale and within one or more development clusters adjacent to Lyndale
- Walkability and handicapped accessibility are important for success
- Many people feared the circles on the diagram represented proposed roundabouts – they were very relieved to hear there is no such proposal at that time – many were disgruntled with the treatment of Lyndale in Richfield

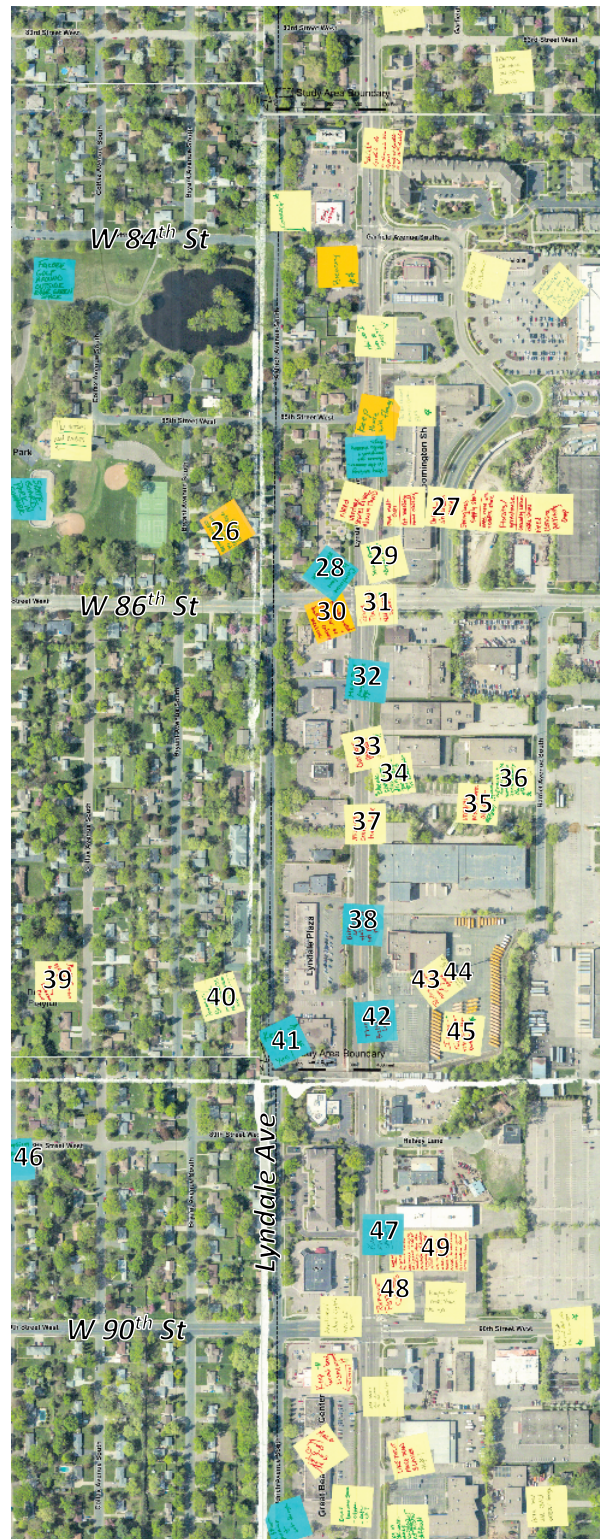
Location Based Comments - Large Aerial (Monday, Tuesday)

People left comments on a large aerial to indicate their priorities and concerns (numbers in parenthesis indicate when check-marks or other notes were left by other participants to indicate agreement or support for the idea):

1. Raising Cane's
2. Need anchor store at corner
3. Costco
4. Possible name: "Lyndale American"
5. How do I bike to shop? REI?
6. Top golf/drive shack
7. Spaces for artist to share equipment and ideas
8. Flashing yellow arrows on 82nd
9. 4-to-3 lane road diet with bike lanes on 82nd (+3)
10. Sidewalks directly adjoin street on Lyndale between 82nd and 83rd Street. Difficult to plow/keep clean – dangerous for pedestrians
11. Better crossing at 83rd
12. Traffic calming on 83rd to Grand
13. Shrink Lyndale Ave to eliminate 35W bypass – look at Lyndale north of 75th in Richfield
14. Connect [84th Street between Lyndale and Aldrich] (+1)
15. Frisbee golf around outside edge green space
16. Brewery (+2)
17. Stop sign compliance
18. Consider a survey of the folds hat shop at Cub Foods – the most racially/economically diverse
19. This street keeps traffic off Pillsbury
20. How do I bike to shop?
21. Very blinding in the summer – flowers get overgrown and make visibility tough
22. Keep those with flowers
23. Better crossing between 85th and 86th
24. The nodes need names
25. Skateboard park in summer

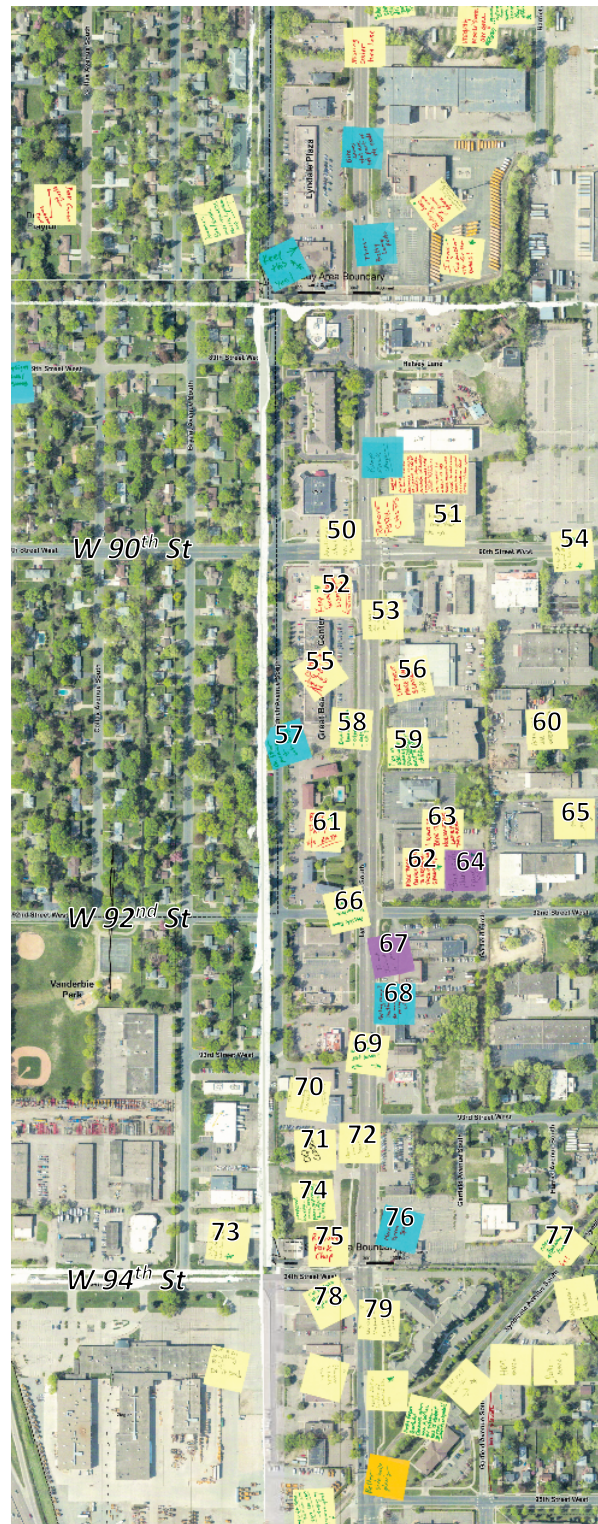


26. Better access to healthcare clinics (dental, eye, etc.)
27. Need vintage stores like 'now & then'; more malt shops, pet boarding, hand crafting; Online showroom store; Stained glass supply store; Need more arts and crafts stores; Florists/greenhouse; Specialty clothes; Coffee shops; Need clothing printing shop
28. Continue bike lane through intersection
29. Possible name "Bryant Park"
30. Roundabout consider a traffic calming measure
31. Remove pork chops – add green space (+1)
32. More trees along Lyndale (+2)
33. Outdoor patios (+2)
34. Check slope/cross slope of driveway – too steep for people in wheelchair
35. Unsightly mobile homes are gone
36. Individuals and families with lower incomes need housing they can afford (+2)
37. Missing center turn lane
38. Bike lanes that are not part of the road
39. Park connect Bryant Park and Vanderbie Park
40. Amenities/biz/retail more towards middle Lyndale Avenue
41. Keep this [Lunda Di Luna] (+3)
42. Trees – pretty lamp posts
43. Parking buses here is a waste of prime space (+2)
44. So where do you propose they go – this is close to schools
45. I agree – find another site for the buses (+2)
46. Add stop signs along north/south streets
47. Keep pork chops
48. Remove pork chops
49. Log Homes: Organize to have small business rentals on Lyndale side of the building. Offer the purchase of building. Company was told ventilation system needs to be redone to allow as log home manufactures food. So



decided ventilation could not combine food space with other space.

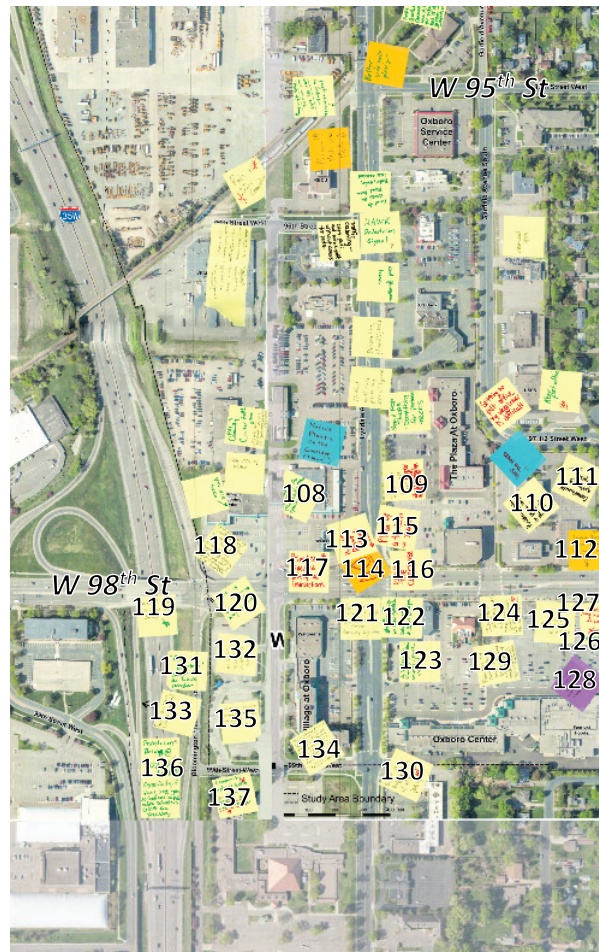
50. Additional street lights NW, SE corners
51. Empty for more than ~10 years
52. Keep Great Bear sign – historic (+3)
53. Add trees all along to be more attractive
54. 4-to-3 lane road diet with bike lanes on 90th (+2)
55. More food options – brunch
56. Like TWCLT more than 3 lanes (+2)
57. On-street parking and cut-through
58. Small business space – coffee, café, etc.
59. Jog in sidewalk makes snow removal and wheelchair access difficult
60. Area could use central outdoor storage
61. Bike path north-south route
62. More bike connections to regional facilities like greenway/lake (+1)
63. I want to bike to Normandale Lake from this area
64. Bike paths where I don't have to think
65. No sewer on Grand
66. Possible Name "Vanderbie Park"
67. Too many individual lot parking
68. Parking ramp? Instead of many parking lots
69. How do I walk to eat lunch?
70. Community center [between I-35 and Lyndale near 94th Street]
71. DQ Closed
72. Open common space to hang
73. 4-to-3 lane road diet with bike lane on 94th (+1)
74. Proposed housing – some preliminary plat approved by City Council in 2019
75. Remove pork chop
76. More green space
77. Nice bikeway here (+2)
78. Cars don't stop on right turns
79. No sidewalk present and cars not knowing where to enter or exit



80. Warehouse/office – 6 tenants
81. Want to do something big – do it here
82. Straight sidewalk path
83. Road diet on Lyndale and protected bike lanes (+1)
84. Light rail corridor (+1)
85. HRA owned
86. Parks owned
87. Lack of sidewalks [on Garfield]
88. People from Garfield Commons often use Aldrich for safety – but it doesn't go thru – 'Safety on Lyndale'
89. Better sidewalk plowing
90. Tough intersection for walking, walk APS was not working, RRFB upgrade timing
91. Rails to Trails connection (+1)
92. Modern multi-use path
93. Need to cross right here, better, safer, less exposed
94. HAWK pedestrian signal (+1)
95. Traffic calming – cars pull out onto Lyndale without concern for peds
96. Westwood Sports
97. Get out of the business of overregulation and business will come – retain something that says you are in Bloomington
98. More greenspace here
99. Decorative streetlights
100. 10 foot multi-use path one side of Lyndale
101. Mom and pop shops something for preteens, teens
102. Getting to the post office by wheelchair is difficult
103. Keep post office (+1)
104. Put community center here. 3 stories. 1st for kids, 2nd for seniors, 3rd for management and office space
105. Native plants on the corridor and more
106. Keep the Works (+1)
107. Clean this up please



- 108. Seek out businesses for Clover Center vacant space
- 109. Trees torn out last year – ripped out, chopped up, replaced with saplings
- 110. Public park in place of large parking lot
- 111. Community gathering place (+1)
- 112. 98th and Grand – Improve pedestrian signal timing – no one else needs to die here
- 113. Put in roundabout
- 114. No
- 115. Plaza with a fountain and shade
- 116. Keep the clocktower
- 117. Prioritize bike/ped safety at intersections (+1)
- 118. Connect this to VEAP, create a city-owned or cooperative space here for coworking and community organizing together with new transit center with child and elder care
- 119. Make it safer to cross the freeway (+1)
- 120. This is a dangerous way to walk
- 121. Additional street light southeast corner towards Lyndale
- 122. Connect to new Lyndale bike lanes and 35W bridge
- 123. Help Duluth Trading to get the empty space rented
- 124. Inhibit the development/addition of more big-box/generic stuff, let's not look like Eden Prairie/Maple Grove (+1)
- 125. Missing middle, small mid-rises <20 apts per building
- 126. Put something here
- 127. Mixed housing retail “mini blocks” (+1)
- 128. Running trails, safe outdoor trails to run
- 129. Redo these strip malls so the shops are on street with bike/walk/rest spots with shade – park in back – like Hopkins and Robbinsdale
- 130. Build a shopping mall with adequate parking



- 131. Mall directory concept for 3-mile corridor
- 132. MT station should have a parking ramp
- 133. Eye doctors (Metro Vision Care)
- 134. Hard rains flood our basement parking- 4 streets run water toward our basement. We have had up to 9” of water in the basement – 9650 Lyndale
- 135. More bus service, extend route 4 bus down Lyndale to South Bloomington
- 136. Pedestrian bridge at 102nd especially if they are going to continue to make middle schoolers cross the freeway
- 137. Community festival here but needs a new location (+2)

Massing and Uses at 98th and Lyndale – LEGO Exercise (Tuesday)

People were asked to arrange blocks based on how they would organize land uses at the corner of 98th and Lyndale and leave comments to describe their priorities:

- No current options for accessible housing
- “Local Roots” is a local restaurant with play place and beer
- Shared gardens
- Places to get together and work together
- Mix in upscale housing with affordability
- Attractive for new residents, mid to high income to support local businesses
- Mixed apartments with retail have helped revitalize other areas around the Twin Cities
- Health foods attract young people
- Love low income housing
- How to protect affordability?
- Use Festival Foods lot
- Low income housing
- Fishing lake, veterinarian, double bungalow

Other Comments

- Lives in Summer House – does not drive, does not have a vehicle, no bus service along Lyndale Ave, no place to sit at 98th and Lyndale, no bus service to get to Cub Foods (can walk to Festival Foods, but would like to go to Cub sometimes), only decent place to eat on Lyndale is Luna di Luna, need green space, need a place to have a coffee that is not Starbucks – it is run down and small and not impressed with updates, go to MOA out of sheer desperation for something different, have to take a bus downtown to have a different experience, likes the Heart of the City in Burnsville – beautiful
- As a resident of Bloomington, I grew up near Lyndale in the 90’s and always found the old Great Bear Center sign to be a beautiful piece of history. I was wondering what the plans were for the sign with the project to update Lyndale? Is there any chance that the project will include preserving the Great Bear Center sign? I love the updates I have seen around the City and I love the idea of updating Lyndale, but I don’t want to see the Great Bear Center sign discarded. If possible, is there a way to preserve the iconic piece of Bloomington history that is the Great Bear Center sign?