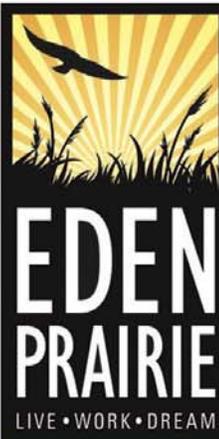




Eden Prairie Major Center Area Study

*The Next 25 Years:
A Framework for Decision-Making*



Final Report

City of Eden Prairie
January 17, 2006

In cooperation with:

SRF CONSULTING GROUP, INC.

Eden Prairie Major Center Area – Framework Plan

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executive summary

Eden Prairie Major Center Area Study

Purpose and Intent

The 2005 Major Center Area (MCA) Study proposes a vision for the next 25 years of coordinated public and private investment. This plan was undertaken to update the original 1973 document that guided the Major Center Area, titled “Eden Prairie Major Center Area Public Planned Unit Development (PUD).” As private investment continues at a strong pace, it is the responsibility of the public agencies to consider the impacts on road capacity and other public infrastructure. Just as important from the City’s perspective is the need to better define the area’s desired uses and physical identity for the future.

The planning analysis addressed the following: land use and redevelopment, transportation systems (auto, pedestrian, bike, transit), parks and open space, wayfinding and the image of the area.

Public Involvement and Process

Citizen and policy-maker participation was an integral part of the process. City officials worked with an appointed Task Force to study and evaluate alternative scenarios for change in the MCA. Task Force members met on five occasions to guide the work of the planning team. They convened to respond to analysis and provide critical participation in evaluating findings and creating new alternatives. A Technical Advisory Committee composed of staff from various City departments

and county, regional, and state agencies also met throughout the study to provide feedback.

Two community open houses were held to solicit opinions on the MCA’s long-term future. In April 2005, a group of 75 attended a meeting at the Eden Prairie Library. In September 2005, approximately 100 people participated in a public meeting held at the Eden Prairie Center.

Several meetings with business representatives and landowners occurred throughout the process and included:

- Interviews with the consultants
- One-on-one meetings with staff and small group meetings, such as the Chamber of Commerce in July 2005 and November 2005
- Developers roundtable held in July 2005
- Rotary breakfast meeting on July 14, 2005

The Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Commission reviewed plan alternatives in June 2005, and the final draft plan in October 2005. In addition, the Planning Commission and City Council reviewed the study findings at three work sessions.

Current Conditions

The MCA today functions as a prime destination for city residents and others from the larger regional area seeking commercial

goods and services. Its dominant character is commercial, although there is some higher density residential land use located on the southern edge of the MCA boundary along TH 212 and, more recently, within the central area close to the water tower and immediately southeast of the Eden Prairie Center. Trails, parks and open space penetrate the area and provide potential connections between city-wide park systems and existing development. One of the greatest challenges in the area is wayfinding in a visually



MCA Study Area

confusing landscape that offers limited landmarks that visitors can use to navigate.

As a crossroads for highways serving regional trips, such as I-494, TH 5 and TH 212, the MCA offers advantageous access for businesses and residents. Locational advantages have reinforced the continued economic success of the area. Development intensities and the design of new buildings have responded to the dominance of the automobile as the preferred travel mode. The model has been that of traditional suburban commercial development, with low-rise buildings flanked by ample surface parking.

Trends and Influences

A number of recent trends were identified as significant to the future character of the MCA. Some of these trends were specific to the City of Eden Prairie. Others are metropolitan (regional) level as well as national scale trends that affect many Twin Cities communities. Understanding trends assists in matching market driven demand, community aspirations and best planning practices.

Local trends that have brought substantial change to the area within the last five to 10 years include:

- Successful renovation of the Eden Prairie Center
- Increasing land values
- New housing and restaurants in the MCA

- Completion of the Southwest Transit Station and Purgatory Creek Recreation Area
- Light Rail Transit (LRT) planning and development
- Difficulty of wayfinding to, from and within the MCA

Regional and national trends that have influenced conditions within the MCA include:

- Increased congestion on roadways
- Increased desire for walking and biking
- Higher density, mixed-use developments, which are a desirable option for aging baby boomers
- Opportunities for alternative retail sought out by customers and entrepreneurs
- Value placed on civic and community spaces
- Desire for readily accessible amenities, such as walking paths, natural resource preserve areas, gardens and urban plazas
- Steady demand for parks by residents of multi-family housing.

Values (Needs) and Aspirations

Early in the planning process, the MCA Task Force was surveyed for their opinions on the plan's ultimate objectives. The purpose of the survey was to identify the key priorities or values held by Task Force members. Broadly speaking, the survey results showed that there were two main areas of interest: expanding the public realm and enlivening and diversifying land uses. A more detailed list is provided below:

Strengthen the public realm with specific projects

- Build additional park, trails and open space.
- Strengthen pedestrian connections through new trails, required sidewalks, tree plantings and boulevard design.
- Promote continuity and distinct character in the streetscape appearance (image, wayfinding, pedestrian comfort).
- Ensure clarity and logical movement on local streets.
- Improve signage and access from regional highways.

Diversify activities through shared public and private initiatives

- Incorporate additional civic and community land uses.
- Create a compact and walkable central district.
- Require a mix of land use types. but make sure that the MCA remains a predominantly retail and service area.
- Allow more mid-rise redevelopment to support the desired amenities, additional services and improvements to the public infrastructure.

A community survey, conducted at the April 2005 open house, indicated a range of support for different components of the plan. The results of the survey showed that there was strong support for:

- Additional sidewalks, trails and greenways
- Improvements to the outer ring road system, such as wayfinding and aesthetics
- A compact walkable district

Most other plan elements, such as improved regional access and LRT, received balanced support. However, two components prompted a neutral or split opinion:

- Mid-rise (two- to six-story) buildings
- High-rise (seven- to 10-story) buildings

From these results and in consultation with other stakeholders (such as landowners and business representatives), the planning team concluded that there is a clear priority for public facilities and infrastructure changes related to streets, signage, parks, trails and open space and that there is also an expectation that private investment (in residential and nonresidential land uses) will provide amenities that further the natural beauty and economic vitality of the MCA.

Vision

The MCA's future as a great place in the metropolitan area and a place that is viable, livable and memorable is based on the following vision:

“Development patterns should continue as they have throughout most of the area abutting the outer ring road of Prairie Center Drive and Valley View Drive.

A compact, walkable Town Center should be created that would cluster around Singletree Lane and Lake Idlewild. Eden Prairie's highest development densities should be found within the Town Center.

Organized by a new grid system of streets and urban amenities, the Town Center should

emphasize residential, retail and mixed-use development types.

Public investment in streets, parks and greenways are envisioned in the plan, to create a streetscape design identity that will link all the street system components together.

Bus and light rail transit service should be completely integrated into the street network and development pattern to take advantage of concentrations of people who will choose to use transit to get around the area.

Pedestrian-friendly design of streets and open spaces is expected to balance the emphasis on transit and pedestrian movement.

Open spaces and amenities, supported by both public and private resources, are needed to make the Town Center and the entire Major Center Area livable, attractive and successful over the next 25 years.”

Principles

A set of comprehensive planning principles that provide policy direction are included in the Appendix. These principles are important tools intended to assist staff and city officials as future proposals are brought to the City for

consideration. The principles are expected to be adopted by the city as a subsection of their comprehensive plan.

The principles address the following topics:

- Land use
- Town center
- Transportation
- Regional roads
- Collector roads
- Local streets
- Outer ring road
- Mall ring road
- Transit
- Pedestrian/bike features and facilities
- Wayfinding
- Urban design/streetscape
- Green systems
- Environmental systems
- Parking

Recommendations

The key actions deemed necessary to realize this vision include:

Land Use and Mix

- Create a Town Center area in the vicinity of Lake Idlewild south to Regional Center Drive that promotes vertical mixed-use buildings and a critical mass of residential units.
- Development should be served by convenient structured and short-term on-street parking.
- Invest in a continued mix of land uses, including side-by-side mixes as well as ground floor retail, service or restaurants with housing or offices above.

Regional Role

- Retain the Eden Prairie Center as a regional destination for commercial and noncommercial uses.

Physical Character

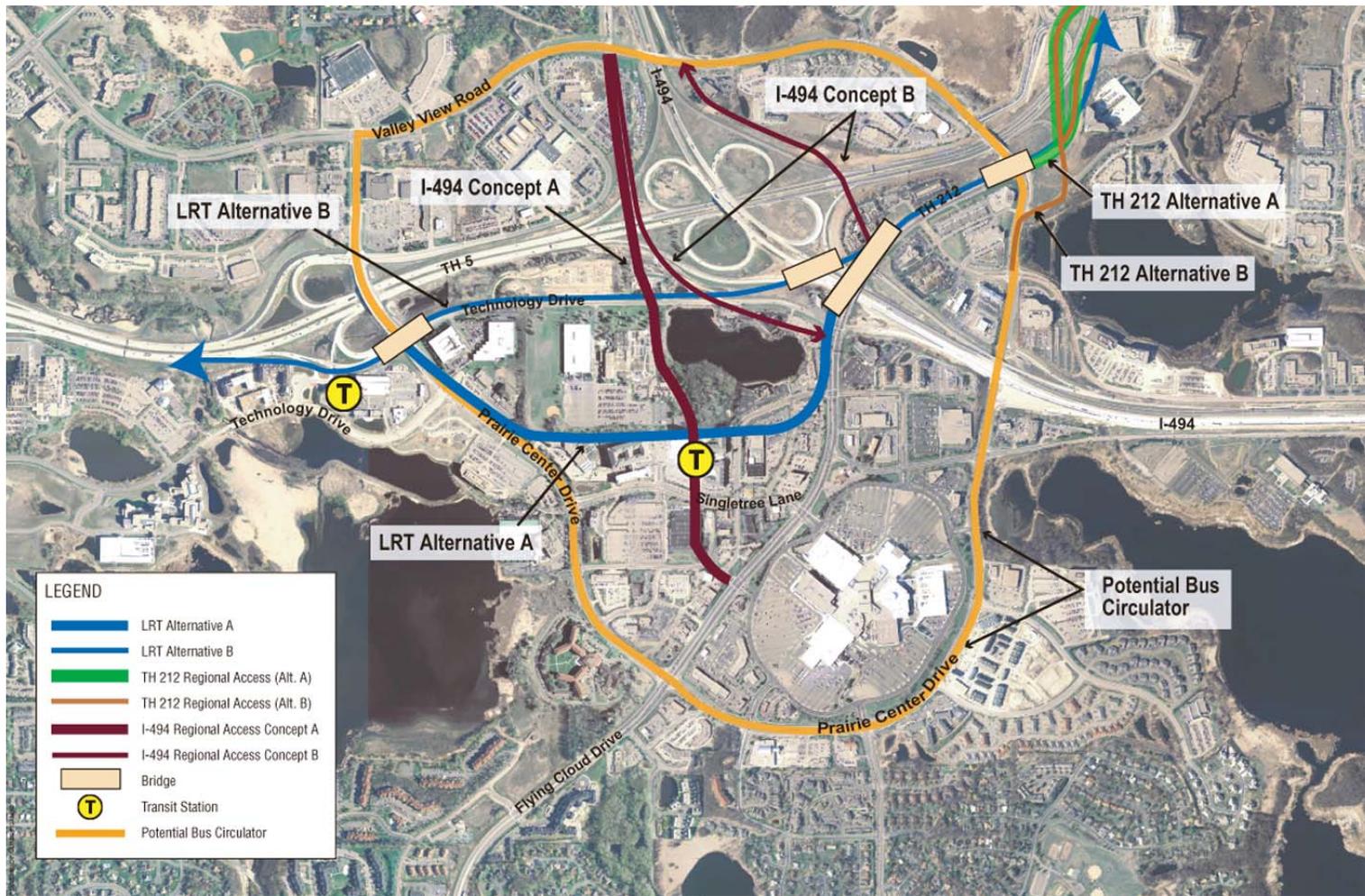
- Break down the scale and better articulate large format commercial uses to emphasize pedestrian and nonmotorized traffic.
- Pursue additional regional access from I-494 and more convenient access from TH 212 if outer ring road changes do not improve regional access patterns.

Streets and Trails

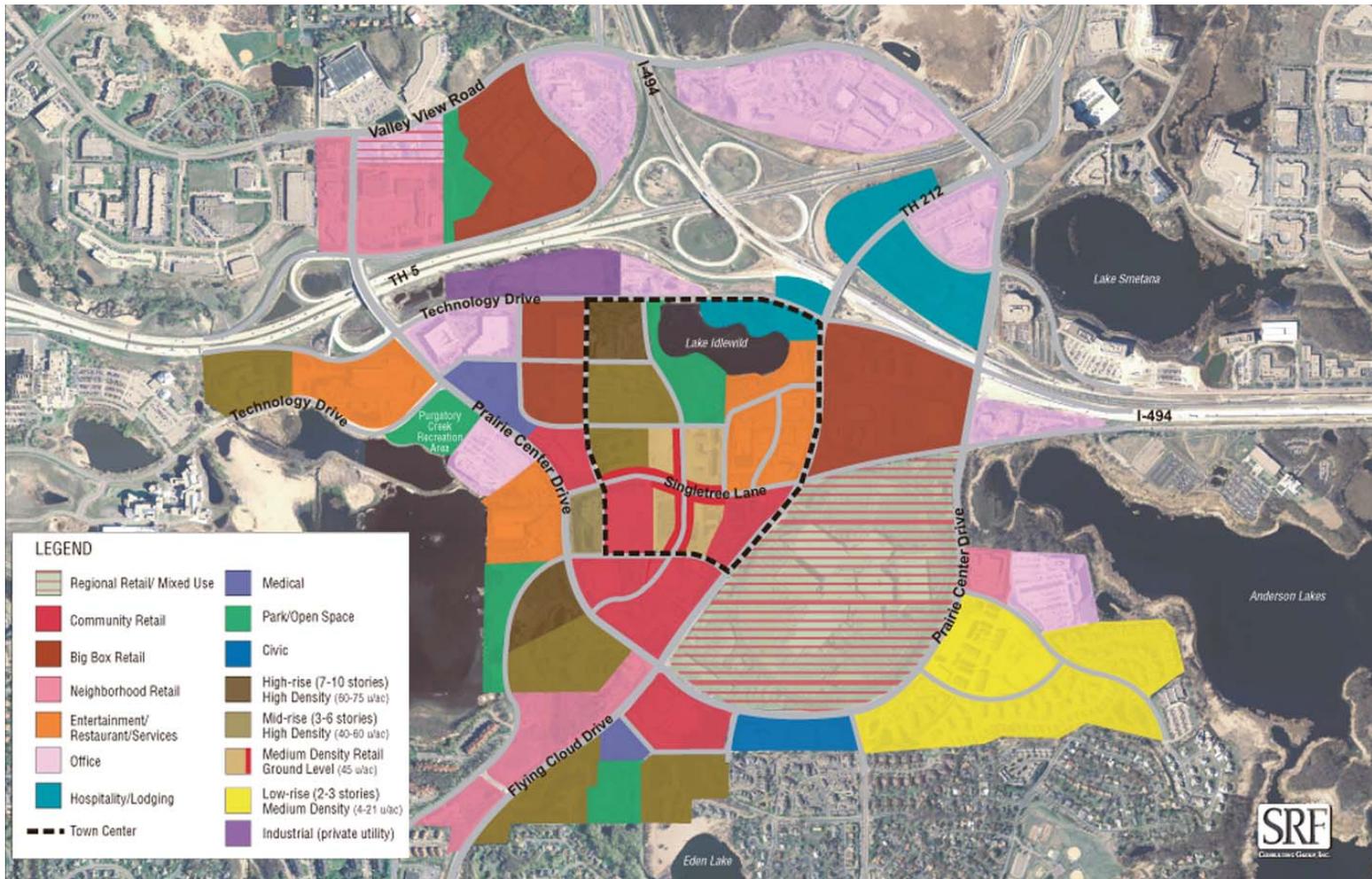
- Retrofit and rebuild the outer ring road (Valley View Road/Prairie Center Drive) as needed to efficiently move vehicle traffic,

while still providing an environment that is friendly to bicyclists and transit riders.

- Realign roadways, such as Singletree Lane and West 78th Street, to create an interconnected grid pattern and full service (four-way) intersections where possible.
- Create connected major east-west and north-south roadways (collectors) at regular intervals in the MCA to emphasize a grid pattern.
- Increase intersection dimensions and/or roadway widths where required, such as at Prairie Center Drive and TH 212.
- Retain or narrow local streets at intersections that handle notable pedestrian traffic whenever possible.
- Consider limited TH 212 grade-separation at key intersections, such as Prairie Center Drive and TH 212.
- Create new local streets, particularly in the northwest quadrant of the area bounded by Technology Drive, TH 212 and Prairie Center Drive, to support new residential development, disperse trips and create convenient connections.
- Consolidate intersections along Prairie Center Drive and other locations as possible.

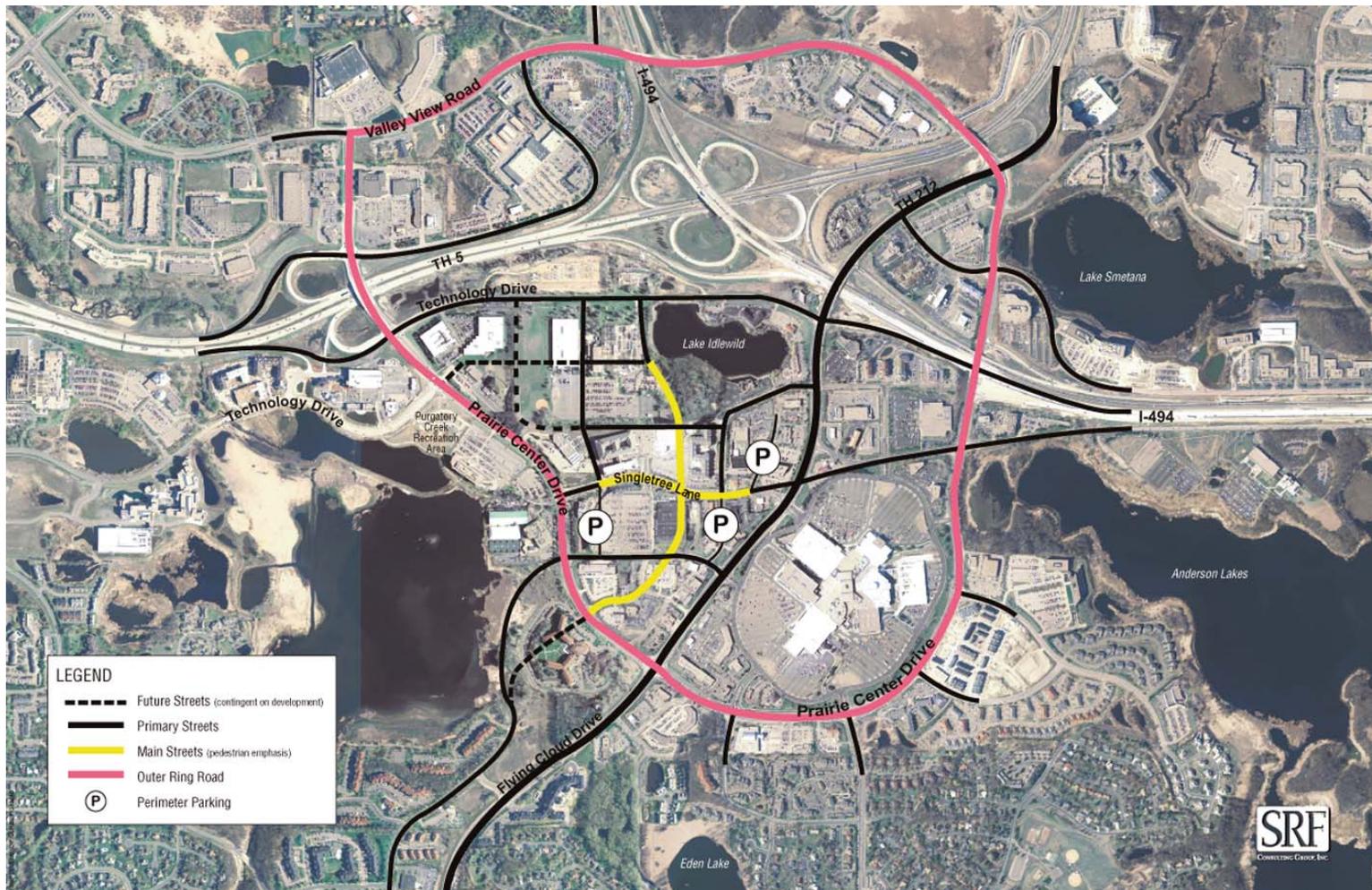


Long-term transportation improvements

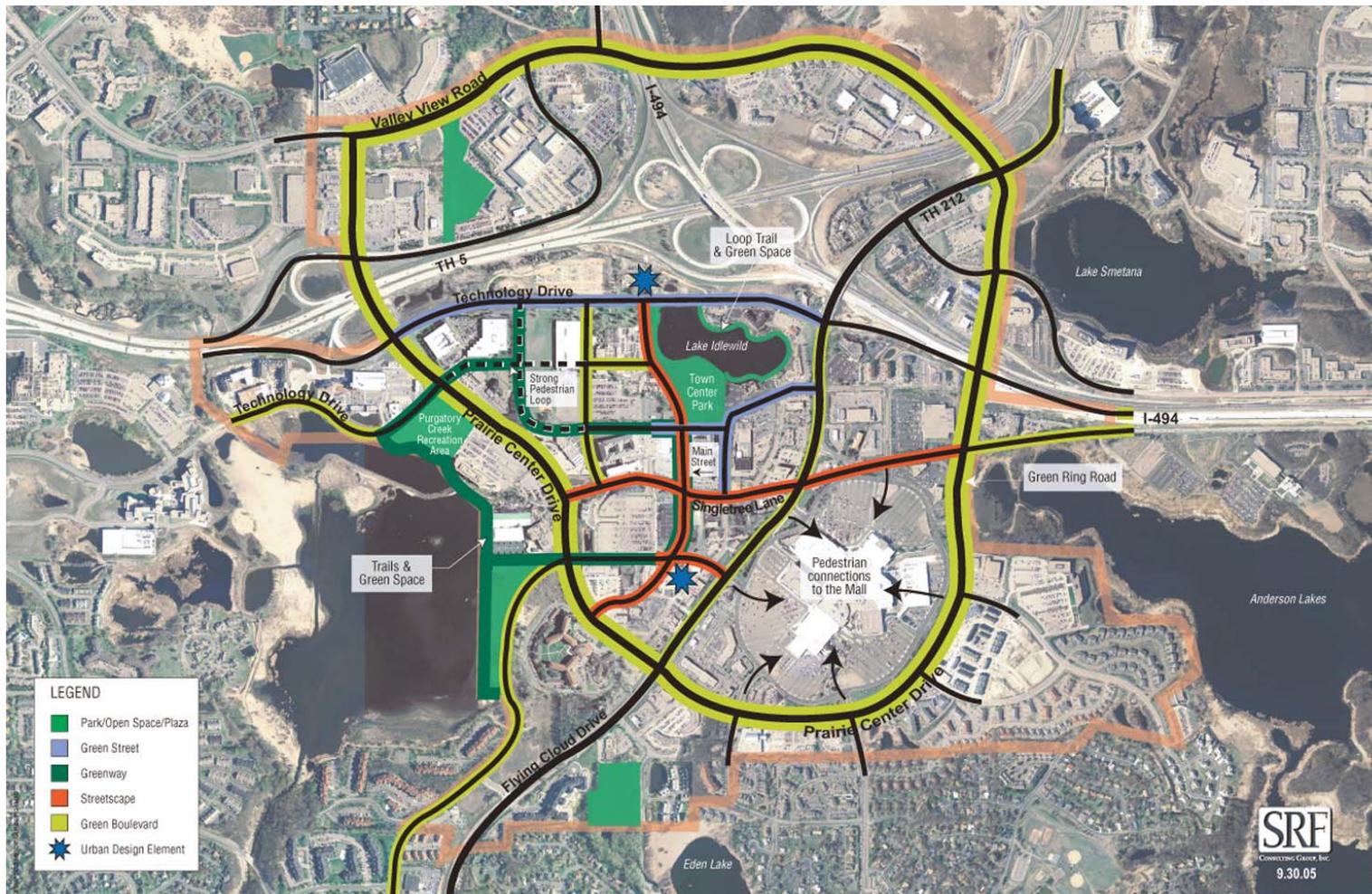


Land use plan





Base street network



Parks, open space and amenities



1.0 – Project Purpose, Intent and Background

The 2005 Major Center Area (MCA) Study was commissioned by the City of Eden Prairie to chart a course for public and private investment in land development, urban design and infrastructure over the next 25 years. City officials are committed to establishing clear concise guidelines that would assist in decision-making. The study's recommendations demonstrate to stakeholders (such as citizens, landowners, business owners and City decision-makers) that the Major Center Area (MCA) will continue to evolve while retaining its vibrancy, attractiveness and significant role in the city.

The study identifies the primary land use, transportation and urban design features of the MCA, which is centrally located in the City of Eden Prairie (Figure 1.1). Major road improvements, realignments and changes to access are identified to define the transportation system for the next 25 years, keeping in mind that growth is likely to result in increases in motorized and nonmotorized traffic. Development intensity and building height guidelines are included that describe how new construction will shape the landscape over time. The study describes desired long-term change in land use, but it does not assign responsibility for implementation or a timeframe for redevelopment.

Recommendations about transportation infrastructure, parks, trails and open space are central to the plan, as they define the public realm upon which private sector development relies. With a

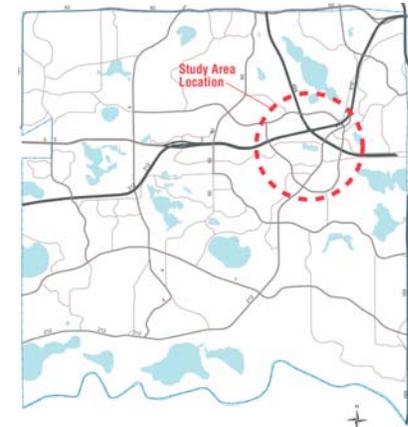
greater amount of control and responsibility for the public realm, the City and their partner public agencies are in a position to set the stage for the next decades of the MCA's growth and identity by pursuing the public improvements recommended in this plan.

What is the MCA's Role in the City?

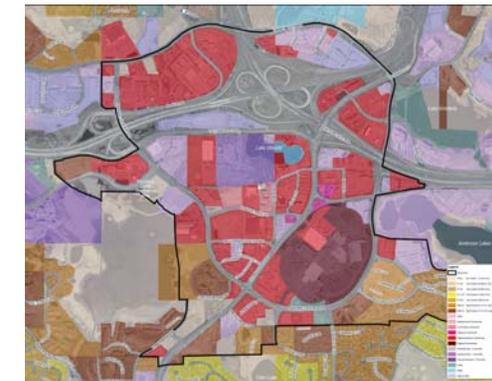
The mix of uses found in the 1,200 acre land area (Figure 1.2) includes virtually all land use types. Traditionally, the MCA has been the city's primary destination for shopping, entertainment and commerce. Regional shopping attractions, such as the Eden Prairie Center, draw residents from surrounding communities and the region. Recent development has added more large-scale retail and medium- to high-density residential to the area. Transportation improvements have resulted in better capacity and operations on TH 212 and the outer ring road.

As a crossroads for highways serving regional trips, such as I-494, TH 5 and TH 212, the MCA offers advantageous access for businesses and residents. These locational assets make it readily accessible to city residents as well as those traveling from other regional locations.

1.1 – Major Center Area Location in Eden Prairie



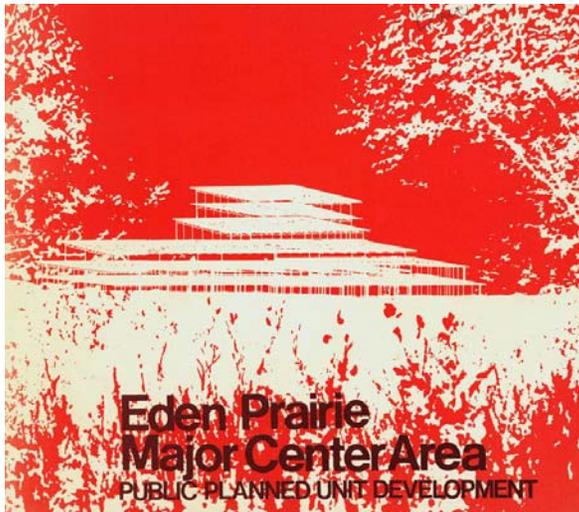
1.2 - Existing Land Use



The predominant land use is commercial (shown in red) followed by office (purple) and residential (brown). The Eden Prairie Center stands out as regional retail (burgundy).

1.0 – Project Purpose, Intent and Background

1.3 – 1973 Eden Prairie Major Center Area Public Planned Unit Development Report



The 1973 Planned Unit Development study was completed as Eden Prairie began to experience significant urban development.

History

One of the metropolitan area’s first planned suburban mixed-use centers

The Metropolitan Development Guide identified the MCA as a Major Diversified Center in 1968. The original planning document detailing the MCA vision, published in 1973, (Figure 1.3) called for a cluster of uses of all land use types. Integrated development was expected, and transportation and

pedestrian circulation systems were planned to be integrated and complementary to the land uses and other transportation modes.

Generally, the original MCA plan called for a land use pattern of integrated regional scale development of retail, service, medical, cultural, civic, entertainment and office facilities located in a ‘relatively compact’ area blended with high-density residential development and certain kinds of manufacturing, warehouse and research operations.

Sensitivity to the existing (undeveloped) landscape

The primary goal of environmental inventory work completed as part of the 1973 study was to guide development of the MCA in a way that would respect and preserve, to the highest possible degree, the natural environment existing at the time the MCA began to experience significant development activity. This approach emphasized locating development within the MCA where it would be compatible with natural resources and managing growth to protect important resources.

The end result of the environmental inventory was consensus on a set of evaluation criteria that would be used to make geographically specific decisions about appropriate locations for development.

Getting around

The ring road of Prairie Center Drive and Valley View Road was an important component of the proposed street system that emerged early in the original planning process as key to mobility and circulation within the MCA.

Regional access to major freeways was seen as a benefit to attract regional trips. The integration of the outer ring road with regional routes was the subject of extensive discussion. However, the pattern of local streets was not addressed in the original document. Similarly, pedestrian systems were not defined, although physical distances in the MCA were deemed walkable and encouraged.

One of the nine main objectives established in the original Public PUD document was to establish a “fast link” transit terminal in the MCA and local public transit facilities and service in the larger “tributary” area. Bus transit in the interim followed by rail based transit (personal rapid transit, or PRT) were anticipated in the planning time frame.

Land use types and activity patterns

The MCA Public PUD called for development to be integrated with pedestrian and transportation circulation. In addition, the plan called for staged development of the MCA to be coordinated with metropolitan and local capital improvements programming.

The primary land uses that were named included regional shopping, service, cultural, entertainment, governmental and high-density residential uses.

At the regional planning level and based on the City's own initiative, the Eden Prairie suburban center was intended to be a major feature in the southwest quadrant of the metropolitan area. Its location at the junction of the outer freeway ring justified a strong profile as a major center. The so-called tributary market area was defined as approximately 5,000 acres of developing land on all four cardinal points surrounding the center. One of the explicit land use goals called for in the document stated: "New uses should be considered in terms of their potential to serve the tributary market, to reinforce the regional destination character of the area."

Housing was intended to be developed within the MCA. High-density housing was anticipated to support the services and the pedestrian network anticipated, and it was recommended rather than single-family housing to provide improved tax base revenue.

Urban Design and Built Form

The plan called for coordinated site planning between neighboring PUDs and stated the need to include protective (buffering) plan elements between more intensive MCA land uses and anticipated low-density areas on the periphery of the center. It also called for provisions to be made for pedestrian and vehicle circulation between adjoining land uses (e.g., regional retail and community retail facilities).

"Rosemount Pond (known today as Lake Idlewild) is self standing. It is and will continue to be the more urban park area – more important for its amenity impact than for its wildlife and habitat potential"

In summary, the original 1973 document called for the MCA to be "balanced in its land use mixes and well-served by two principal transportation modes (automobiles and 'fast-link' transit)." The recommendations in the policy document were based on fiscal best practices of the day as well as sensitivity to existing environmental conditions in a rural landscape that was rapidly transforming into a low-density suburban landscape. Locational decisions about development were based on a comprehensive assessment of environmental conditions throughout the 1,200 acre MCA boundary.

Compare and Contrast: Then and Now

Ultimately, the original planning that cast a vision for the MCA leaves current efforts with a number of important legacies, including the following:

Create truly walkable, memorable environments

The City has realized their primary goal of making the area a diverse mixed-use environment. However, much of the area's success is based on the assumption that the automobile is the mode of choice for shoppers, workers and residents. Site planning and design of new development as well as investment in transportation infrastructure has kept up with this assumption. Balancing the influence of the automobile with the desires of residents and visitors to move around on foot has been a challenge, given development pressure and consumer preferences. Feedback collected during this planning process indicates that there is a need to do more for nonautomobile travel in the area. Walking, biking and transit are all modes that require additional investment to improve conditions and make the area attractive to cyclists, pedestrians and transit riders.

1.0 – Project Purpose, Intent and Background

Transportation choices

As called for in the original plan, direct access to regional roadways, such as I-494 and TH 212, is adequate but not optimal. With urban development far exceeding the metropolitan highway ring and daily trip-making rates per capita climbing steadily since the early 1970s, demand for road capacity has furthered the need for improved access to regional roads. The MCA's ring road carries significant amounts of traffic. Arterials, such as TH 212, carry regional trips and also provide some local access to commercial land uses. The system of local access streets has made wayfinding challenging and further emphasized use of the ring road and collectors, such as Singletree Lane or Regional Center Drive.

Fast-link transit service (fixed rail such as commuter or light rail transit) has not yet arrived in Eden Prairie, but the Southwest LRT Corridor is in the early planning stages. The success of the Southwest Transit station as a home to commuter bus service is recognized. However, the station functions as a park-and-ride resource and does not integrate smoothly with nonmotorized systems, including sidewalks and trails that traverse the MCA.

Sensitivity and awareness of natural resources

A critical component of the original MCA plan was an environmental resource inventory. This work drew from a study of land forms, hydrology, microclimate, vegetation and wildlife to come to

an understanding of how development of the day (circa 1974) and future construction would impact the existing natural landscape. The clear goal articulated in the plan was to locate the MCA where it would be compatible with natural resources and manage development to protect important natural features.

Today, natural resources continue to be highly valued within the boundaries of the MCA. A key component of the plan is to create a focal point and public park from the wooded area southeast of Lake Idlewild (previously called Rosemount Pond). Trail connections to other smaller scale green spaces and community park destinations, such as the Purgatory Creek Recreation Area, are called for so that residents, workers and visitors can use the system and benefit from the open space network.

A mix of land uses to make the area vibrant and economically vital

In keeping with its role as a regional center, a diverse set of land use types were expected to locate in the MCA. However, the heavy concentration of shopping and services has eclipsed a matching presence of governmental and cultural uses. Medium- and high-density residential uses are located on the edges of the MCA, and recent development

has sited medium to high density housing in the central area of the MCA.

What Should Happen Next?

Attention to the following issues will advance the MCA as a viable, memorable location with a distinctive sense of place over the next 25 years:

A remedy for the low-density development effect

While there is a broad range of land uses found in the MCA today, most of these uses are not physically integrated. The majority of parcels have been built at low density (two stories or less) and do not reflect current land values. The absence of true vertical mixed use has made it difficult to create compact, vibrant areas filled with people and other social activity. Civic amenities are scarce and frequently separated by large expanses of parking.

To correct these conditions, the city's highest intensity development, including vertical mixed use, should be found in a compact walkable Town Center area.



Limited alternative transportation choices and capital intensive road network investments

As in many suburban locations, a concentration of retail uses that rely on car travel has influenced design of private development and public infrastructure so that it is inconvenient and/or unsafe to move around except in a vehicle. The area is linked to existing trail and sidewalk systems. However, there are important gaps that must be filled to better connect to usable networks found elsewhere in the city. Although the road system can handle the traffic that exists at the present time, there are likely to be problems as growth continues and physical improvements at intersections are no longer adequate to address these problems.

Creating balance in transportation systems is needed to enhance mobility in the area. Future transportation should focus on creating attractive direct routes and facilities for use by pedestrians, cyclists and fixed-rail transit riders.

Unremarkable physical presence and wayfinding challenges

An additional concern is that it is difficult to find one's way to and from specific destinations in the MCA, whether the trip is a local one or a regional one. With slopes and features blocking many drivers' views, the changing orientation of the outer ring road and the absence of any vertical element to navigate by (except the water tower), wayfinding from most locations in the area is challenging.

Looking forward, there is a shared desire to rebuild public infrastructure as needed (such as roads, streetscapes and landscape features) to have strong design elements that maintain continuity and signal the boundaries of the MCA. Natural resources should remain prominent in site layout and the creation of an interconnected network of open space and connecting greenways, streets and boulevards is important.

Near and far-term initiatives are described in detail in Section 10.0 of this document.



framework plan

Eden Prairie Major Center Area Study

2.0 – Trends that Influence the Area

The MCA has evolved over the last 45 years from an agricultural and rural residential area into a thriving commercial area. This evolution came about through the influence of infrastructure improvements (for example, highways, roads and utilities), city planning, regional and local growth, private and public investment and favorable real estate market trends. Figure 2.1 shows the MCA looking northwest at the southern edge of the study area in 1979, and Figure 2.2 shows the MCA from a similar vantage point in 2005. Clearly, the landscape has been transformed over the last 25 years: how current and unforeseen change will affect the landscape over the next 25 years is the subject of this plan.

Some key actions and trends that occurred in the MCA over the last 45 years include:

1960s

- The MCA is largely an agricultural area with some residences on large lots.

1970s

- *Eden Prairie Major Center Area Study - Public Planned Development (1973)* “Major Diversified Centers” is completed and approved.
- Eden Prairie Mall construction occurs in 1975.

1980s

- Strong retail and service business development continues.

- The local and regional road system evolves and is constructed incrementally.

1990s

- The Eden Prairie Center is renovated.
- The street network becomes confusing.
- Retail and multi-family development continues.

2000 to 2005

- The Southwest Station and transit oriented design development occurs.
- Land values continues to rise.
- MCA is 99% developed with very little vacant land remaining.
- Interest in retail, restaurant and multi-family residential development continues.
- An incremental, parcel-by-parcel approach to development and redevelopment emerges.
- The Purgatory Creek Recreation Area is constructed.
- Traffic congestion increases.
- Pedestrian connections and usable open space are lacking.
- Interest in walking, green space and compact development gains prominence.
- Interest in a downtown (a lively focal point) is generated.

2.1 – MCA in 1979



Eden Prairie Center, recently completed, is labeled on the left side of the photo. There is scarce urban development immediately surrounding the center.

2.2 – MCA in 2005



Eden Prairie Center looking north from TH 212. Very little land remains undeveloped in the MCA today.

2.0 – Trends that Influence the Area

2005 Onward - the Informed Crystal Ball

Anticipating future needs and demands relies to some extent on understanding current patterns and trends. The forces and influences discussed in this plan apply to the study area at the local, regional and national level, drawing on the experience of other suburban centers that have faced issues and opportunities similar to Eden Prairie. The MCA is almost fully developed, and new growth will primarily occur as existing built parcels are redeveloped or existing buildings are renovated. Redevelopment and renovation are relatively new to Eden Prairie given the cycle of its growth as a community. While trends continue to change, it is likely that Eden Prairie can benefit from the experiences of other suburban areas with a successful redevelopment history.

The following are likely trends that will influence the MCA over the next 25 years.

Increased traffic congestion will affect land use and transportation choices. Regional traffic congestion is forecast to increase. The desire for close-to-home shopping, entertainment and employment will continue and be stronger as people have less desire to use congested regional roads. City residents will want a greater variety of services, shops and experiences within the MCA.

*Traffic congestion and **increasing gas prices** will result in the **increased use of transit**, locally within the MCA and for the home-work-home trip. This means more focus on transit oriented design and improved walking connections and the desire for light rail transit, express and local circulator bus service.*

*There will be continued interest in **walking and biking**. People's desire to walk for convenience, exercise, health and enjoyment will increase. This creates a need for more trails, sidewalks, connections and pleasant places to walk.*

***Fluctuating real estate trends** with interest shifting between residential, office, retail and industrial markets will affect development patterns. The cyclical nature of real estate markets means that if the City wants to create a mixed-use area in the MCA or achieve other specific land use goals, it may have to be willing to wait until market conditions are favorable to support city goals. The City may also need to use incentives and prescriptive regulations to obtain the desired development result.*

*There will be a greater emphasis on **mixed-use development** and more intense, **compact development**. Rising real estate values will tend to result in more efficiency in*

redevelopment. This translates into increased density, use of structured parking and housing or offices over shops.

***Evolution of shopping centers** to add other nonretail land uses (that is, housing, medical or civic). Large shopping center sites are typically built to accommodate peak parking demand that occurs only one to two days per year. Shopping centers can typically add other nonretail uses without significantly increasing parking supply or having a negative effect on traffic patterns or circulation.*

***Redeveloping existing properties** instead of developing vacant land. Redevelopment is more complex and costly than new development. This means a need for greater density or a mix of uses on a given site. It also means that the development cycle for a given project may be longer and more involved.*

*More use of **public-private partnerships** for redevelopment. The City may want to enter into partnerships with landowners or developers to achieve their land use and redevelopment goals. This may mean assisting with land assembly, requiring developers to provide public infrastructure (such as streetscaping or wayfinding) or establishing other similar joint actions.*



*New development focused on **public or private open space**.* Quality redevelopment frequently has an open space element, such as a plaza, outdoor dining areas, town center or other similar space, available for public use. This can offset the affect of greater density and intensity and adds to livability and quality of life.

*Desire for **greenways, streetscaping and boulevard treatments**.* This is related to the increased desire to walk or bike as well as for enhanced aesthetics. Enhanced street treatments are usually accomplished through a public-private partnership and as part of an overall area concept plan.

*More **innovative treatment of stormwater** as a resource.* Storage and treatment of stormwater has changed over the last few years. The result is more localized treatment through rain gardens and other infiltration methods and more attention to stormwater storage and runoff rates. This may cause changes in site design or in regional ponding methods.

***Managed parking, involving structured parking and shared parking** between compatible uses is likely to be more prevalent in the future.* The desire for greater land use efficiency will result in more structured parking ramps and increased use of shared parking between uses. The screening and architectural design of ramps and the careful evolution of shared parking will become more

important factors. Centralized parking structures built through public-private partnerships are frequently found in suburban and urban town centers.

Regional influence of the MCA. The MCA is influenced by local, regional and national trends, such as real estate markets, economic conditions and transportation access. The MCA is of a significant enough size that it can also influence subregional real estate trends. Furthermore, the regional draw of the Eden Prairie Center can help attract other regional uses (for example, civic, cultural retail and employment).



3.0 – Existing Conditions

Study Area

The MCA boundary surrounds the intersection of three principal arterials, I-494, TH 212 and TH 5. An outer ring road consisting of Prairie Center Drive and Valley View Road provides circulation between the various subareas of the MCA. Figure 3.1 shows the MCA in the context of the city. The approximately 1,200 acre MCA functions as Eden Prairie’s “downtown,” with the Eden Prairie Center, a shopping mall, as the retail core for the regional area. The surrounding retail, service and office components build on and support the commercial core nature of the area. The City’s 2020 land use plan calls for continued land use transitions toward commercial uses in the MCA. The recent addition of residential and transit uses in the area reinforces the city center character of the area.

The MCA is an auto-oriented area with initial elements of bus commuter transit service. The Southwest Metro transit hub, Southwest Station, is located on the western fringe of the MCA. Preliminary planning identified potential alignments for the Southwest Corridor Light Rail Transit (LRT) line. Two of the LRT alignment options that are currently under consideration by Hennepin County traverse the MCA.

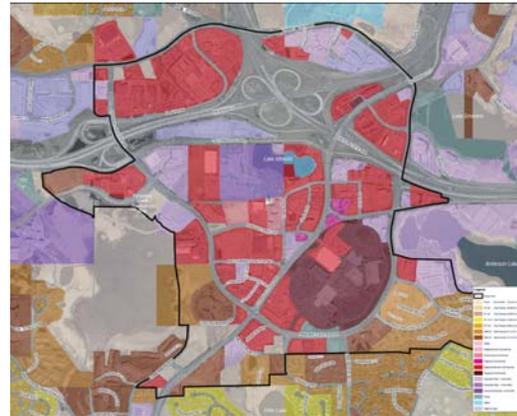
Land Use

The Eden Prairie MCA is a vital suburban area with a diverse mix of existing land uses. Retail,

restaurant and multi-family residential are the dominant existing land uses. Service businesses, lodging and offices are also significant uses (Figure 3.1).

The Eden Prairie Center is the largest single use occupying approximately 70 acres of land between TH 212, Prairie Center Drive and West 78th Street.

Figure 3.1 – Existing Land Use



Recent development has been primarily retail, restaurant and multi-family residences. While the area has a mix of uses, the distances and missing segments in the pedestrian network mean that people get around almost exclusively in vehicles. This vehicle focus is to be expected given the suburban location and

the proximity of several major regional highways (that is, I-494, TH 5 and TH 212).

The vehicle focus allows flexibility of movement and access, but it also makes the area dependent upon regional highways. As regional and local congestion increases, mobility in the MCA declines.

The vehicle focus results in approximately 65% of the area being devoted to surface parking lots (Table 3.1). The parking lots allow easy access to existing businesses and residences, but the parking areas also act as barriers to walking and compact development. A predominant view in the MCA is of landscaping in front of a surface

Table 3.1 – Existing MCA Land Use Percentage and Area by Acres

| Land Use | Area | % of Total MCA |
|------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Retail, Service & Restaurant | 387 acres | 52% |
| Multi-family Residential | 97 acres | 13% |
| Office | 88 acres | 12% |
| Public & Park | 56 acres | 8% |
| Hotels | 30 acres | 4% |
| Industrial | 17 acres | 2% |
| Miscellaneous | 70 acres | 9% |

3.0 – Existing Conditions

Figure 3.2 – Parking Areas



Close to 65% of the 1,200 acres within the MCA study area is currently used for surface parking.

parking lot. The large area devoted to surface parking lots (Figure 3.2) is a resource for future redevelopment and revitalization.

The MCA benefits from excellent regional accessibility, but it is held back by constrained visibility and convoluted access to and from I-494. The existing local street pattern is hard to understand and compounds the confusing regional circulation and access. There is a need for improved clarity of access and movement (way finding system) and a simplified local street pattern.

The City of Eden Prairie is renowned for their parks, natural resources and trail system. However, parks,

natural resources and trails (other than the new Purgatory Creek Recreation Area) are largely absent within the MCA. The MCA study area is bounded by Purgatory Creek on the west and Anderson Lake on the east. Lake Idlewild is the most significant natural resource feature within the study area.

Geographic Subareas

The MCA contains distinct areas that share similar access, visibility and land use characteristics. These areas are separated by major roads or highways. For planning purposes, this study evaluated the unique characteristics, opportunities and limitations of ten MCA subareas (Figure 3.3). The intent of the subarea analysis was to gain a better

Figure 3.3 – MCA Subareas



understanding of these areas and to learn how the areas can best contribute to improving the entire MCA. The location, existing conditions and characteristics of each subarea are described as follows:

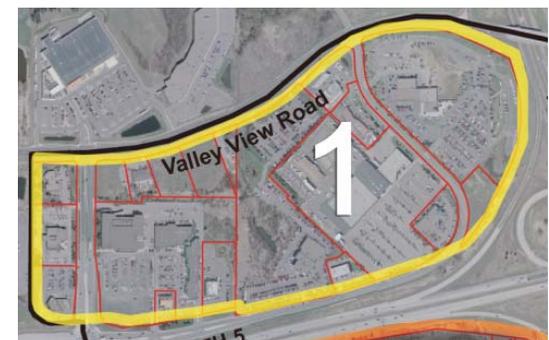
Subarea #1

Location: North of TH 5, west of I-494 and south of Valley View Drive

Existing Uses: Regional service, highway commercial, big box retail, car dealerships and neighborhood commercial and noncontiguous vacant retail-zoned parcels.

Access & Setting: (Direct) East-west access from TH 212/5 is at Prairie Center Drive or Valley View Road. (Direct) North access from I-494 is at Valley View Road

The big box retail and auto uses have good visibility from adjacent highways. The smaller



regional service uses are located behind the big box commercial, somewhat concealed.

Issues & Challenges:

- Vehicle oriented commercial may limit other uses.
- Visibility of regional service uses are hindered by big box uses.

Opportunities:

- Some smaller buildings on larger parcels and values lower than other areas of the MCA may allow future redevelopment.
- There is the potential for a corporate office identity building and campus, big box retail, neighborhood service with related commercial land uses.

Subarea #2

Location: South of TH 5, east of Prairie Center Drive and west of TH 212.

Existing Uses: Primarily retail, service and restaurants with some multi-family residential, hotel and industrial uses.

Access & Setting:

- Access from TH 212 and Prairie Center Drive.
- Lake Idlewild and undeveloped existing parkland



- It is a large commercial area with nondescript and somewhat confusing local collector streets.

Issues & Challenges:

- Deep parcels lack visibility
- Grade changes
- Concentrations of smaller parcels along TH 212
- Future light rail transit (LRT) must be accommodated
- Confusing internal street pattern
- Lack of pedestrian system
- Some parcels with economic obsolescence

- Many smaller, lower than average value properties.
- Need an impetus for land assembly and coordinated redevelopment.
- Traffic congestion could limit development.

Opportunities:

- Large parcels typically have lower than average value (compared to the rest of the MCA) and present redevelopment opportunities.
- Park at Lake Idlewild and potential greenways/civic spaces could be a catalyst for investment.
- Great visibility and development potential.
- Potential for better connections to the Eden Prairie Center.
- Transportation improvements and access changes could trigger redevelopment.

3.0 – Existing Conditions

Subarea #3

Location: South of TH 5, west of Prairie Center Drive north and immediately south of Technology Drive.

Existing Uses: Southwest Station, mixed land use (transit station, restaurants, multi-family housing) and Purgatory Creek Recreation Area.

Access & Setting:

- (Direct) east-west access from TH 212 or TH 5 is from Prairie Center Drive.
- Good visibility, well integrated into park setting. Views of open space. New Purgatory Creek Recreation Area. Area has its own distinct image due to recent development.

Issues & Challenges:

- Limited land available nearby for redevelopment to take advantage of transit access (transit oriented design).



Opportunities:

- Use views of Purgatory Creek Recreation Area.
- Some potential for intensification.
- Potential for future LRT access.

Subarea #4

Location: Southwest of Prairie Center Drive and northwest of TH 212

Existing Uses: Office, commercial, senior housing and care facility, athletic club and vacant city-owned parcel.

Access & Setting:

- (Direct) access from Highway 212 or Highway 5 is from Prairie Center Drive.
- Located on Purgatory Creek Conservation Area.

Issues & Challenges:

- Poor soils in some areas.
- Housing is surrounded by commercial uses.



- Limited room for trail along east shore of Purgatory Creek wetland.

Opportunities:

- Transitional housing, health/wellness, office and entertainment
- Purgatory Creek Recreation Area is an attractive amenity.
- Redevelopment to focus on open space views.
- Pedestrian linkages are important to broader MCA.

Subarea #5

Location: Southeast of TH 212 and southwest of Prairie Center Drive.

Existing Uses: Multi-family residential, auto and fast food retail, library, vacant and single-family parcels. Currently zoned for commercial.



Access & Setting:

- (Direct) access from TH 212 and from Prairie Center Drive.
- Retail surrounded by residential.

Issues & Challenges:

- Slopes and visibility

Opportunities:

- Library as subarea civic “hub”
- Buffer and transition to adjacent residential uses and medical tied to senior housing

Subarea #6

Location: Southeast of TH 212, south of 78th, north and west of Prairie Center Drive

Existing Uses: Eden Prairie Center, which includes approximately 1.3* million square feet of retail/restaurants plus the City Office of Housing and Human Services and a City Police substation and adjacent retail/office.



Access & Setting:

- North access from I-494 is at Valley View Road
- East access from I-494 is at Prairie Center Drive
- Direct access from TH 212

Issues & Challenges:

- Area is not visible from freeway exit points.
- Keeping the land-use mix fresh and diverse.
- Creating safe and pleasant pedestrian access.

Opportunities:

- Mervyn’s vacancy and reuse
- Potential for increased development in parking areas
- Potential for mixed uses beyond retail, including regional retail with mixed-use, high-density residential, civic, entertainment and medical

Subarea #7

Location: Southeast of Prairie Center Drive and south of Anderson Lakes

Existing Uses: Primarily residential with some office and commercial

Access & Setting:

- Prairie Center Drive
- Residential in nature, office and commercial backs onto park



Issues & Challenges:

- Area could be better connected to Anderson Lakes and the Eden Prairie Center.
- Difficulty walking to the Eden Prairie Center and neighborhood services

Opportunities:

- Neighborhood services and improved walkability

3.0 – Existing Conditions

Subarea #8

Location: North of Eden Prairie Center, east of TH 212 and southwest of I-494

Existing Uses: Primarily retail commercial with office, hotels.

Access & Setting:

- Good access off of I-494 and TH 212.
- Mix of big box and small retail.



Issues & Challenges:

- Cub Foods turns its back on the ring road.
- Some small parcels with poor visibility from Prairie Center Drive and Flying Cloud Drive.

Opportunities:

- Regional retail and commercial services.
- Location offers great visibility and access (Eden Prairie Center and TH 212 traffic).

Subarea #9

Location: Northeast of I-494, southeast of TH 5 and bisected by TH 212



Existing Uses: Hotels, office, service, restaurant and TV station

Access & Setting:

- (Direct) east-west access from TH 212/5 is at Valley View Road
- (Indirect) east-west access from Highway 212 / 5 is at Prairie Center Drive
- (Indirect) north access from I-494 is at Valley View Road
- (Direct) south access from I-494 is at Prairie Center Drive

Issues & Challenges:

- Area visible from freeway but not from freeway exits
- Lack of pedestrian connections
- Isolated from remaining MCA

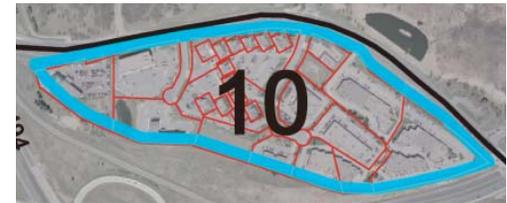
Opportunities:

- Mixed commercial with hotels
- Corporate identity office site

Subarea #10

Location: East of I-494 and north of TH 5

Existing Uses: Office, business park uses with hotel and vacant car dealership.



Access & Setting:

- (Direct) east-west access from TH 212/5 is at Valley View Road.
- (Direct) north access from I-494 is at Valley View Road
- (Indirect) south access from I-494 is at Prairie Center Drive/Valley View Road
- (Indirect) east-west access from Highway 212/ 5 is at Prairie Center Drive/Valley View Road

Issues & Challenges:

- Area is not visible from freeway exits
- Influence of Super Valu campus

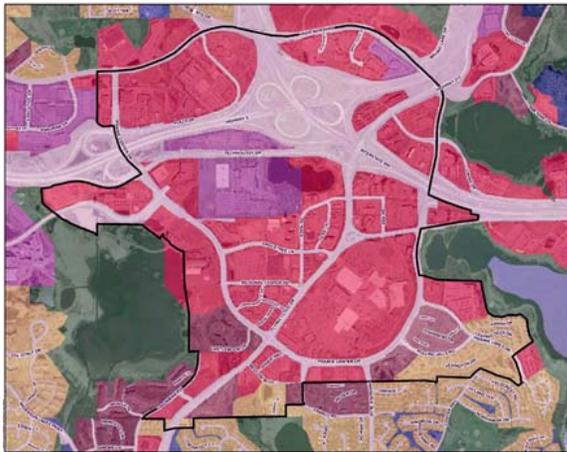
Opportunities:

- High tech or medical uses
- Incubator tech/office

Land Use Vision and Regulatory Framework

The current Eden Prairie Comprehensive Plan (updated in 1995) is the primary document that guides decisions about land use, transportation and parks. The Comprehensive Plan designates most of the MCA for future regional commercial or multi-family residential land use. Figure 3.7 is an illustration of guided land use in the MCA. The current Comprehensive Plan does not provide detailed direction about future MCA land use, redevelopment or transportation. A goal of the MCA study is to determine a more detailed vision for this area and to identify short- and long-term actions to achieve that vision.

3.4 – Guided Land Use



The MCA contains a variety of zoning classifications. Most zoning districts are single-use oriented and have fairly low maximum-density limitations. Mixed-use development can only occur through rezoning and approval of a planned unit development.

3.5 –Existing Transportation Network



Transportation

Regional Roads and Transit. The MCA is located at the intersection of several regional highways (I-494, TH 5, and TH 212) and at the southern edge of a curving section of I-494 (part of the major I-494/I-694 beltway around the Twin Cities). The proximity to regional roads allows convenient vehicle access from the region to the MCA, but the

myriad of highways and the highway entrance/exit spacing make circulation and access to and from the MCA confusing. The existing transportation network is shown in Figure 3.8.

TH 212 bisects the MCA in a north-south direction and is the major roadway in the MCA. Some of the through traffic on TH 212 will shift to TH 312 (located three miles to the west) when it opens in 2008.

Southwest Transit operates bus transit service in Eden Prairie. Southwest Station is a bus transit hub located south of TH 5 and west of Prairie Center Drive. Southwest Transit uses the hub for local, regional and express bus service. Southwest Station contains approximately 1,111 parking spaces available to transit riders and shoppers.

Local Roads. The local road network in the MCA consists of an outer ring road (Prairie Center Drive and Valley View Road) and a series of local connecting streets (Figure 3.8). Prairie Center Drive (east and west) and TH 212 (Flying Cloud Drive) are the primary roads in the MCA and carry the bulk of the traffic. Most local streets run predominantly in an east-west direction. This has a tendency to concentrate traffic on Prairie Center Drive and TH 212 and at the TH 212/Prairie Center Drive intersection.

3.0 – Existing Conditions

Existing Traffic Conditions. Although the existing transportation system offers a balanced hierarchy of road functions, property access and good mobility to users, fault lines are beginning to reveal the limitations of the current system.

The ring road system of Prairie Center Drive and Valley View Road provides direct access across the three principal arterials that bisect the MCA, maintaining visibility for motorists using the outer ring road system. One of the most significant complaints associated with transportation issues in the MCA is that it is difficult to navigate the street network due to the absence of landmarks, disconnected streets and the change in roadway names (for example Prairie Center Drive/ Valley View Road and Leona Road/Eden Road). Other collector streets, including Singletree Lane, West 78th Street and Regional Center Drive, are less prominent in the street hierarchy and occasionally difficult to locate for visitors new to the area. Local access streets, such as Franlo Road, Medcom Boulevard, Eden Road and Commonwealth Drive, are frequently unconnected and serve only local users, forcing most traffic to use collectors or arterials.

Traffic congestion experienced by visitors, residents and workers is the other significant concern expressed about the transportation system. In some instances, signalized intersections on major routes,

such as Prairie Center Drive or TH 212, are not coordinated, which reduces the efficiency of the traffic signal system and causes traffic flow to be interrupted more frequently. At other locations, side-street stop controls usually allocate traffic flow so that vehicles on the minor street experience a greater delay. In situations where local roads encounter major collector routes (such as TH 212) in close proximity to existing signalized intersections, these side-street stop controlled intersections and the delay that goes with them cannot be avoided.

Operations analysis conducted over the course of the study shows that most signalized intersections function acceptably, with some exceptions at Anderson Lakes Parkway and Preserve Boulevard in the southeast quadrant (south of Subareas 5 and 7) and at Prairie Center Drive and Regional Center Drive (Subareas 2 and 4). The intersection of Medcom Boulevard and TH 212 has a high level of delays in the afternoon due to the volumes on TH 212.

Other transportation based concerns include constrained access to property, particularly in the face of increasing congestion on major routes, and the need for medians to ensure safe roadway conditions.

Finally, the need to balance the emphasis on vehicular movement with facilities for the pedestrian/ bicycle network was highlighted early in the analysis of the MCA.

Parks and Open Space

Eden Prairie is known for the quality of their park and open space system. Compared to other areas of Eden Prairie, there are few parks and open spaces (public or private) in the MCA:

- Purgatory Creek Recreation Area is the only park within the study area. Located at the corner of Prairie Center Drive and Technology Drive, the park contains trails, gardens, picnic areas and public art.
- The Purgatory Conservation Area forms the west of edge of the study area. The conservation area is an attractive amenity that contains a large wetland and wildlife habitat.
- Anderson Lakes Park is located east of the MCA. Anderson Lakes is part of the Hyland-Bush-Anderson Lake Regional Park Reserve. The portion of Anderson Lakes next to the MCA is designated as a wildlife conservation area.

-
- Lake Smetana Park, located northeast of the MCA, contains trails, picnic facilities, and boat access.
 - Emerson-Rosemount owns a private park along the south and west shores of Lake Idlewild.
 - Lake Idlewild is an attractive 13.17 acre lake located near the center of the MCA.

Pedestrian/Bicycle Network

Trails and sidewalks are located at the periphery of the MCA area, through Purgatory Creek Conservation and Recreation Area to the west and around Lake Smetana with connections to the Golden Triangle Area to the northeast. There is a need for additional trails and sidewalks that penetrate the MCA to provide loop walking and biking opportunities not only to recreation destinations but to commercial and civic destinations.

These facilities would provide pedestrian access to area shops and services. In particular, it is difficult to walk to the Eden Prairie Center and along TH 212. There is a need for loop walking and biking facilities that connect attractive routes within the MCA as well as to Purgatory Creek Recreation Area and to other nearby parks and trails.



4.0 – Vision Plan 2030

Great places emerge based on a community's vision, market conditions and position, infrastructure and amenities and successful coordination of public and private investment. Many intangibles, including civic pride and policy-maker commitment to a compelling vision, also contribute to making places viable, livable and memorable. The future vision for the MCA can be described as follows.

“Development patterns should continue as they have throughout most of the area abutting the outer ring road of Prairie Center Drive and Valley View Drive.

A compact, walkable Town Center should be created that would cluster around Singletree Lane and Lake Idlewild. Eden Prairie's highest development densities should be found within the Town Center.

Organized by a new grid system of streets and urban amenities, the Town Center should emphasize residential, retail and mixed-use development types.

Public investment in streets, parks and greenways are envisioned in the plan, to create a streetscape design identity that will link all the street system components together.

Bus and light rail transit service should be completely integrated into the street network and development pattern to take advantage of concentrations of people who will choose to use transit to get around the area. Pedestrian friendly design of streets and open spaces is

expected to balance the emphasis on transit and pedestrian movement.

Open spaces and amenities, supported by both public and private resources, are needed to make the Town Center and the entire Major Center Area livable, attractive and successful over the next 25 years.”

The physical features that define the MCA as a great place, now and through 2030, are described in the following pages.

A Compact Town Center

Citizens, Task Force members and other city officials repeated their desire for a compact, walkable Town Center on numerous occasions throughout the planning process. Though all agree that the MCA is successful economically, a resounding comment heard was an interest in establishing an attractive, walkable destination with much to offer people of all ages and interests.

The Town Center area defined in the plan is located west of TH 212 and is clustered along the south side of Lake Idlewild. The Town Center is defined by a series of public amenities and open spaces, which are expected to be flanked by a mix of land uses at varied densities. The city's highest density development is anticipated in the compact Town Center, recognizing the value and

scarcity of land and the proximity to highly desirable goods and services as well as good access to regional roads, future LRT and bus circulator service.

The beauty and unique qualities of public open space and pedestrian amenities, such as Lake Idlewild and the woodland on its southwestern edge and a streetscape treatment (consisting of tree and landscape plantings, lighting, pavement treatment and potential public art) for the principal north-south and east-west streets within the compact Town Center, will have civic and economic value for future development in the area.

The key components of infrastructure (open space and roadways) will lay a foundation for future development. Managed parking resources and an area-wide maintenance district should be implemented. Most important to the long-term success and distinctiveness of the area will be the relationship between public amenities and private real-estate investments.

Parks, Open Space and Green Streets

Parks, open space and pedestrian-oriented green streets are the backbone of the 2030 vision of the MCA. Enhancing connections to existing and future parks of the area, such as

4.0 – Vision Plan 2030

Lake Idlewild and Purgatory Creek Recreation Area, will integrate the area’s new features with the city’s thriving, highly used park destinations. Figure 4.1 illustrates the proposed park, open space and amenity features called for in the plan.

Two new park features are called for in the MCA include a new parcel south of the existing Flagship Athletic Club with frontage onto the Purgatory Creek Wetland Complex. This facility would provide views onto the Purgatory Creek Conservation Area, but it is anticipated to have little additional development or activity. The open space provides a connector to the proposed greenway circuit that loops through the Town Center area.

A second new park feature proposed for the MCA is the woodland area around the currently private park, southwest of Lake Idlewild. This wooded park is envisioned as a quiet respite for passive recreation and a destination on the loop from Purgatory Creek Recreation Area. This park is reminiscent of Turtle Pond in Central Park in New York City (Figure 4.2). Local examples of the relationship between open space used as parks and urban water bodies can be seen in Loring Park in Downtown Minneapolis (Figure 4.3) or in Powderhorn Park in South Minneapolis (Figure 4.4).

Facilities might include picnic shelters, interpretive kiosks, public art installations and trailhead connections. Civic events, such as parades, festivals or other public activities, would be well suited to

4.1 – Parks, Open Space and Amenities Plan



4.2 – Turtle Pond in Central Park



4.3 – Loring Park’s Lake and Park



4.4 – Powderhorn Park Community Festival



this type of urban park setting. Depending on water quality and access to the water, active use of Lake Idlewild could be expanded to include rowboat rental or model boat sailing. Primary users of the park would be office workers, visitors, shoppers or residents from the adjacent high density development.

Enhanced Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Green streets with ample boulevard space for tree planting and pedestrian streetscapes as well as on-street or off street paths for cyclists will connect the existing Purgatory Creek parklands to the woodland area on the south flank of Lake Idlewild.

4.5 – Loop Trail from Town Center to Purgatory Creek



The purpose of an additional loop through the Town Center with connections into the Purgatory Creek facility is to expand recreational destinations city wide, and connect the emergent Town Center area by trail for commuters headed to the Golden Triangle or Major Center areas. Figure 4.5 shows how a trail facility would make this connection.

Light Rail and Other Transit Service

Regional planning for light rail transit (LRT) in the southwest quadrant of the metro area show potential LRT routes passing through the MCA. Figure 4.6 shows one of the proposed routes. As congestion increases, LRT will bring a highly reliable and convenient mode of travel to this area, connecting workplaces and residences in the southwest to other significant regional destinations such as Downtown Minneapolis. Suggested station locations indicated in the plan are at a) the current Southwest Transit Station (Figure 4.7) site with trackage paralleling the south edge of TH 5 and b) on the south side of Lake Idlewild, parallel to the alignment of Technology Drive. The character of development around these station sites will be influenced by their relationship to LRT service, either as parking resources (such as at

the Southwest Transit station as seen in Figure 4.8) or as focal points of pedestrian, retail,

4.6 – Southwest LRT Feasibility Study



4.7 – Southwest Transit Station



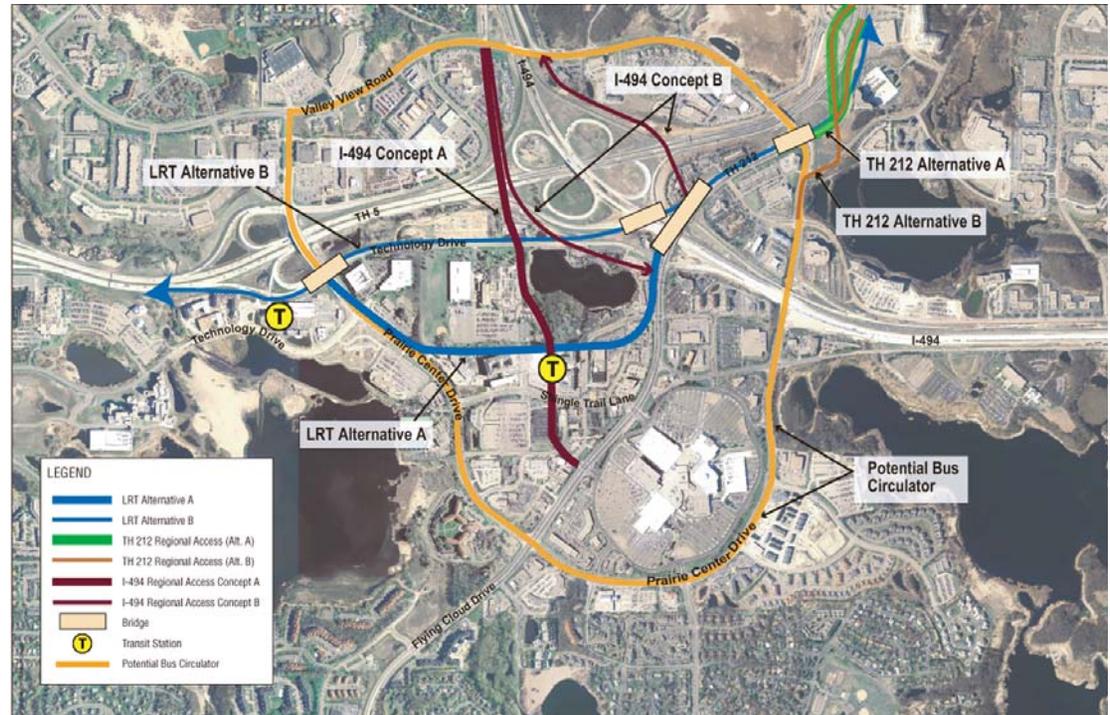
4.0 – Vision Plan 2030

workplace or residential activity (such as at the Town Center location).

Transit-oriented development would concentrate housing or employment related uses closest to any transit station. Development within a 1/2 mile radius of walking distance should emphasize density and details that make the pedestrian environment attractive and pleasant. Retail goods and services are welcomed in these areas as their patron base increases when transit riders walk or ride a shuttle bus to and from an LRT station.

As congestion increases, parking becomes less convenient and fuel costs continue to rise, people will seek out alternative choices to using their own vehicles to move around the MCA for daily trips to restaurants, shops, services or transit stations. Consequently, circulator bus service should be an important service in the area, prior to LRT's arrival and even after LRT service is initiated. Circulator routes should reflect criteria, such as road connectivity (traveling on the ring road, major east-west and north-south routes), direct pedestrian access to prime destinations (e.g., Eden Prairie Center, transit station, and parking resources) and other operational concerns (as defined by the transit operator, Southwest Transit).

4.8 – Long-Term Transportation Improvements



Proposed Street Network through the MCA

Realigning existing roads and acquiring right-of-way to create new roads is assumed in the land use and street network of this plan. The street grid is considered a necessary feature in the MCA because of the mobility, ease of access and convenience it brings to all transportation users. Figure 4.9 shows the proposed street network.

The proposed street network recommended in the plan would improve the current day pattern, which consists of curving and unconnected roadways. There are two primary changes proposed to the street network. The first is to create a new north-south corridor through the core of the Town Center area. The second would realign Singletree Lane and West 78th Street to create a continuous east-west street from Prairie Center Drive to Valley View Road. The addition of these two new corridors would significantly improve circulation alternatives in the MCA.

TH 212 Traffic Flow, Property Access and Pedestrian Crossings

Traffic flow on TH 212 will be improved by coordinating signal timing, so that optimal flow conditions can be reached while still providing safe pedestrian crossing conditions at key locations. An aerial image (Figure 4.10) shows conditions at Regional Center Drive (foreground) and Prairie

4.9 – Proposed Street Network



Center Drive (background). Access to properties fronting TH 212 should be closed or modified wherever possible to conform to the proposed street grid. Pedestrian crossings of TH 212 are recommended at Regional Center Drive to improve connectivity between the existing regional destination (the Eden Prairie Center) and the compact, walkable core of the evolving Town Center area.

4.10 – TH 212 intersections



4.0 – Vision Plan 2030

Grade-separating TH 212 at specific intersections is considered a future possibility. For example, in the vicinity of Prairie Center Drive and TH 212, future year conditions are anticipated to create operational problems for the intersection – elevating TH 212 at this location will reduce congestion and provide safer conditions for pedestrians.

Outer Ring Road Appearance and Function

Landscape, lighting and signage enhancements are strongly recommended to create a design identity and emphasize the functional role of property access that the outer ring road offers to drivers, bicyclists or pedestrians.

Mall Interior Ring Road (Eden Prairie Center)

Improving circulation on the mall's ring road while reducing congestion at adjacent intersections can be achieved by both short- and long-term initiatives. For the short-term, modifying the intersections at mall entry points would result in safer conditions for motorists while reducing the potential for conflicts in turning versus through traffic movements. In the long-term, shifting traffic to a one-way pattern will vastly improve pedestrian and bike crossings of the mall ring road without

4.11 – Mall Ring Road Current Conditions



negatively impacting travel times or congestion levels at adjacent intersections. The one-way pattern should be counter clockwise to ensure right turning movements at adjacent intersections for improved safety.

Figure 4.11 shows current mall ring road conditions.



Improved Access to I-494 and TH 212

Improving the access points to regional roads will only be undertaken if improvements to the ring road (Prairie Center Drive/ Valley View Road) are not successful at reducing traffic congestion and access conflicts.

Given the level of effort and financial resources needed to achieve these improvements, the City's best interests are served by working on improvements to the ring road prior to undertaking changes in the regional system.

Wayfinding

Motorists frequently comment that wayfinding in the MCA is difficult. This is due in part to the absence of distinct landmarks and sporadic, diverse signage that provides ad hoc direction at random locations in the greater area.

The quality of signage has a significant influence on drivers who are attempting to navigate unfamiliar destinations. The wayfinding hierarchy described for the MCA is based on a system of signage, placed at critical locations in and around the MCA. Signs are designed according to this hierarchy to help drivers understand how to find a destination by providing streamlined, basic direction at key decision points. Signage is defined by its shape, color, letter style, placement and mounting.

4.12 – Wayfinding Subareas

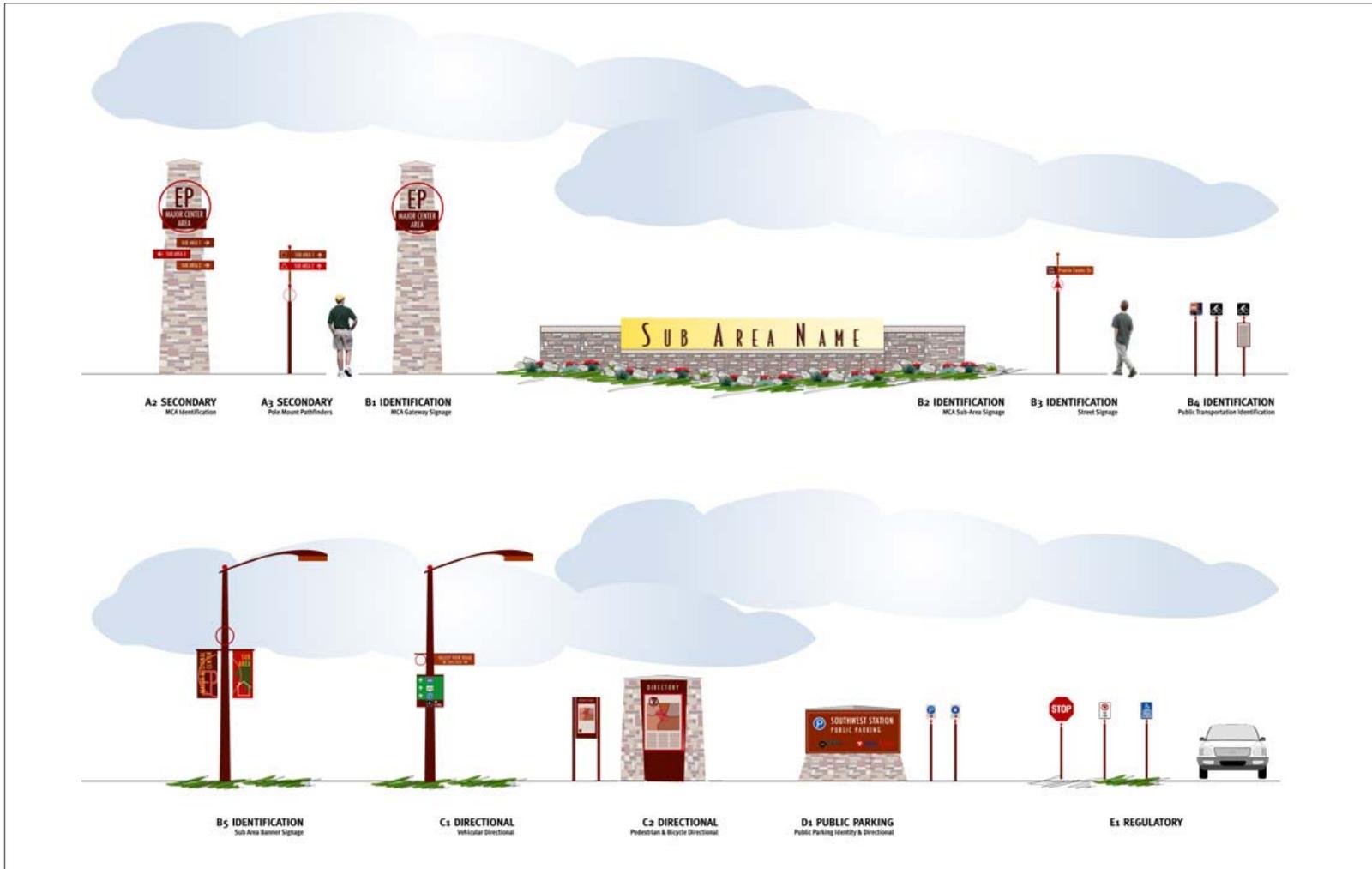


The wayfinding analysis and recommendations undertaken as part of the MCA study are documented in the Appendix. The essential recommendations call for

consistency in sign appearance and placement of a range of sign types at key locations, clustered primarily along public streets, as shown in Figure 4.12 and 4.13.

4.0 – Vision Plan 2030

4.13 – Wayfinding Hierarchy



5.0 – Planning Principles

A set of comprehensive planning principles that provide direction are included in Appendix A. These principles are important tools intended to assist staff and city officials as future proposals are brought to the city for consideration. The principles are expected to be adopted by the city as a subsection of their comprehensive plan document.

The principles address the following topics:

- Land Use (Mix, Density and Types)
- Town Center (Role, Relationship to Surrounding Area and Physical Character)
- Transportation
 - Regional Roads
 - Collector Roads
 - Local Streets
- Outer Ring Road
- Mall Ring Road
- Transit
- Pedestrian/Bike Features and Facilities
- Wayfinding
- Urban Design/Streetscape
- Green Systems
- Environmental Systems
- Parking

framework plan

Eden Prairie Major Center Area Study

6.0 – Land Use

Eden Prairie MCA – Land Use and Urban Design Vision

Over the last 25 years Eden Prairie’s MCA has grown into a viable suburban commercial area containing the Eden Prairie Center and a wide variety of retail, restaurant, residential, lodging and employment land uses. Land values have increased along with traffic congestion. While the area is economically successful, there is little to differentiate the MCA from other suburban commercial areas. There is no heart or focal point, it is difficult for visitors to find their way around and the area is not friendly to pedestrians. For these reasons and others, the City of Eden Prairie commissioned the MCA study to prepare a vision for future land use, transportation and wayfinding.

The Evolving MCA

Cities evolve based on infrastructure, amenities, public and private investment, market conditions and a community plan or vision. The growth of Eden Prairie has been guided by a comprehensive plan that has been updated several times to reflect changing conditions. Development of Eden Prairie’s MCA has been guided by the City Comprehensive Plan (last updated in 1995) and the 1973 Eden Prairie Major Center Area Public Planned Unit Development (MCA PUD). The 1973 MCA PUD study envisioned development of a diversified regional center with ring road circulation, a regional shopping center, compact

high intensity development, preservation of natural resources and pedestrian and transit systems. The MCA was intended to function as the downtown of the metropolitan subregion’s southwest sectors.

Many of the goals of the 1973 MCA Plan were achieved. A ring road is in place. The Eden Prairie Center is thriving, and the area contains a diverse mix of commercial and service businesses and multi-family housing. However, the related elements of compact intense development, a cohesive sidewalk and trail network, parks and natural resources and an area transit system have not been fully realized.

The MCA Today

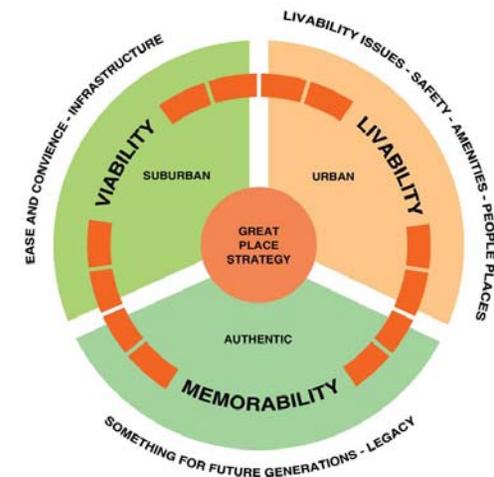
The MCA is a viable area. Reinvestment in the Eden Prairie Mall in the 1990s combined with strong retail and residential markets resulted in rapid high quality development and redevelopment. There are very few building vacancies, land values are rising and new residents and businesses want to locate in the area. However, there is no recently defined vision or goals for the area and detached single-user retail and restaurant development does not create a focal point, address traffic issues or significantly enhance quality of life. Over the next 25 years, the MCA could continue to develop based

primarily on a series of individual property decisions, or it can be guided by a shared community vision, which builds on the 1973 plan for a diversified mixed-use regional center with a compact and efficient development form.

Great Place Strategy

Great cities are viable, livable and memorable. The next step in the evolution of the MCA is to enhance livability, as shown in Figure 6.1. Livability includes quality of life enhancements, such as safe and pleasant places to walk and bike, parks and open

6.1 – Great Places Diagram



6.0 – Land Use

space, transportation options, close to home jobs, entertainment, arts and culture.

The MCA has started to evolve toward enhanced livability through the addition of more housing, signature restaurants, the Southwest Station development and transit hub and Purgatory Creek Recreation Area.

Truly great cities are also memorable. Memorable cities impart a unique experience of having been to that place. Memorable cities have clear authentic identities. This generally occurs through a combination of natural and man-made amenities, cultural and entertainment attractions and a defined identity and sense of place. As the MCA makes livability improvements, the goal should also be to move toward being a memorable place.

The Transition Toward Livable and Memorable

Cities can progress in a dynamic manner to become livable and memorable if they have a vision and take proactive measures to achieve the vision through partnerships. A viable city is sustained by private investment and public maintenance of infrastructure (that is, roads, utilities, etc.). Private reinvestment will renew appearances and respond to consumer demands (for example, replacing an older business with a new business), but those incremental changes alone are not likely to improve livability. A defined

vision and action plan are needed to significantly increase livability. The vision describes the place that the community wants in the future. The action plan is a road map to obtain the vision through coordinated public and private actions. Recommendations for land use and transportation investments included in this document constitute an action plan for the MCA's next 25 years.

Land Use Goals

Recommendations about future land use, density and open space/amenities, as described in the future Land Use Plan, are based on the following objectives:

- Be the best of suburban and urban places. A mix of denser regional uses, vertical mixed uses (i.e., housing over shops), more housing within walking distance of services and more efficient, compact and connected suburban style development.
- Establish a vibrant, compact and walkable mixed-use Town Center.
- Incorporate connections between land uses (walking, driving and visual appearance).
- Reinforce and further develop a hierarchy of streets ("Main Street" pedestrian oriented, local, regional and ring road).

- Create urban parks, civic and cultural spaces, trails, sidewalks and green streets.
- Promote land-efficient parking design, in the conversion of surface lots to new development with structured parking and more use of shared parking.
- Integrate transit service into land use and circulation patterns. Regional light rail transit, bus and local circulator transit service is anticipated in the MCA within the next 25 years. A comprehensive approach to making transit a desirable mode of getting around the MCA is recommended.
- Allow high-rise buildings overlooking Purgatory Creek Conservation Area and immediately south of TH 5. Locate taller buildings to take advantage of views and away from existing low-density residences.

Redevelopment Density and Intensity

Land use change is driven by city and property owner desires, market conditions, land characteristics and zoning regulations. MCA goals include continued redevelopment and avoiding traffic congestion. The density and intensity of future redevelopment in the MCA must be balanced with the planned transportation network capacity. An



evaluation was conducted to identify potential and likely redevelopment that would occur by 2030. The evaluation looked at land value, land to building value ratios, building condition/ quality and property location. Figure 6.2 shows anticipated redevelopment areas, possible redevelopment areas and stable areas.

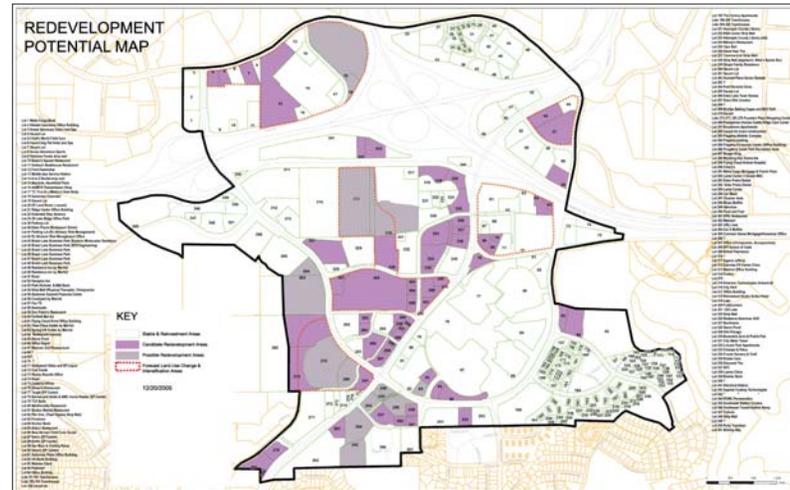
The redevelopment evaluation and MCA land use goals were used to identify areas where land use change and significant intensification is anticipated. Input from metropolitan area real estate developers about the local market and development trends also helped to define where more intense development is likely to occur.

The criteria for selecting these areas are:

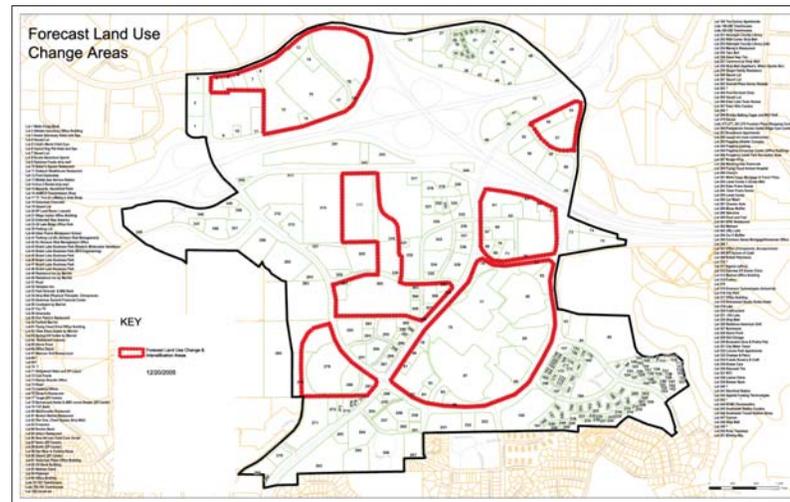
- Concentrations of likely redevelopment sites
- Areas with larger parcels (larger parcels have phased development opportunities and lesser land assembly needs)
- Location and visibility factors
- Ability to create a compact Town Center area
- Intensification balanced with planned roadway capacity
- Proximity of open space amenities for residential

Figure 6.3 shows areas that are likely to either redevelop or increase in land use intensity between 2005 and 2030. The figure identifies six major areas of forecast land use change or land use intensifications. Density is described with a Floor Area Ratio measure (FAR). FAR is the ratio of building square footage to parcel square footage. This measure suggests intensity, but it does not necessarily indicate building height. Height

6.2 – Anticipated Redevelopment Areas



6.3 – Land Use Intensification Areas



6.0 – Land Use

recommendations are described for each of the subareas and addressed later in the chapter.

The six areas of forecast changes/intensification and their assumed densities are described below.

North of TH 5/West of I-494. Eastern and central portion of Subarea #1. Assumed redevelopment to office and higher intensity big box retail (0.5 FAR for corporate office, 0.30 FAR for neighborhood office and 0.35 FAR for big box retail).

East of TH 212 and North of I-494. Northeastern portion of Subarea #9. Redevelopment to office at 0.5 FAR.

East of TH 212 and South of I-494. West and central portions of Subarea #8. Continued redevelopment to big box retail at 0.35 FAR.

Eden Prairie Center. Infill and/or partial redevelopment with additional retail uses and mixed use. New development and redevelopment forecast to increase daily traffic generation by 15 percent.

West of Prairie Center Drive/Northwest of TH 212. Center portion of Subarea #4. Redevelopment to High Density Residential at 40 to 75 dwelling units per acre.

North of Regional Center Road, between Prairie Center Drive and TH 212. Center portion of Subarea #2. Proposed Town Center area. Redevelopment to mid- and high-rise high density residential (40 to 75 units per acre), mixed-use (housing over retail), office (0.3 FAR) and community retail (0.5 FAR).

The recommended future land use plan is based on the land use and intensification areas. A 2030 traffic forecast was prepared based on the identified land use change and intensification areas. Areas not identified for land use change or intensification may still redevelop based on market demand, but they are not forecast to significantly increase in intensity of traffic generation. Significant changes outside of the forecast change areas should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis for their individual and cumulative affect on traffic and their fit with the MCA planning principles.

Land Use Plan and Assumptions

Figure 6.4 illustrates the recommended future land use plan for the MCA. It shows a mix of commercial, office, hospitality, service and residential uses as well as mixed-use areas. The plan assumes a similar land use pattern as found in the MCA in 2005 with the exception of the following changes and additions:

- Redevelopment of key parcels that have either lower property values than the bulk of the MCA, obsolete buildings, key strategic and important market locations or are larger parcels with small buildings. Increases in density and land use intensity at concentrations of key redevelopment parcels.
- Redevelopment in Subarea 2 to create a compact mixed-use Town Center area and additional multi-family residential housing. The Town Center is seen as an alternative and complement to the Eden Prairie Center shopping center. Redevelopment within the Town Center area should adhere to the Town Center planning principles that encourage mixed land uses, parking in structures or to the rear of the developments and pedestrian-friendly design. See Appendix A for more information on the Town Center area.
- A new network of parks, trails and civic spaces, including a new park on Lake Idlewild and trail/greenway connections.

6.4 – Future Land Use Plan



- Continued reinvestment and evolution of land uses. Traffic generation from new development is to be balanced with the recommended transportation network improvements. See Section 7.0 Transportation as well as the Technical Memorandum (Appendix B) for additional detail.
- A strong wayfinding system using district-style signage and a clear identity for the mall ring road.
- The Eden Prairie Center will continue to evolve with a refined retail mix potentially supplemented by nonretail uses, such as senior housing, medical and additional civic uses.

6.0 – Land Use

Overall, the preferred plan envisions future land use in the MCA as more efficient, with better connections, more mixed uses and a higher proportion of residential uses. This land use pattern is assumed to continue to rely predominantly on automobile access, but transit, walking and biking will play a larger role in the future.

Recommended 2030 Land Use by Subarea

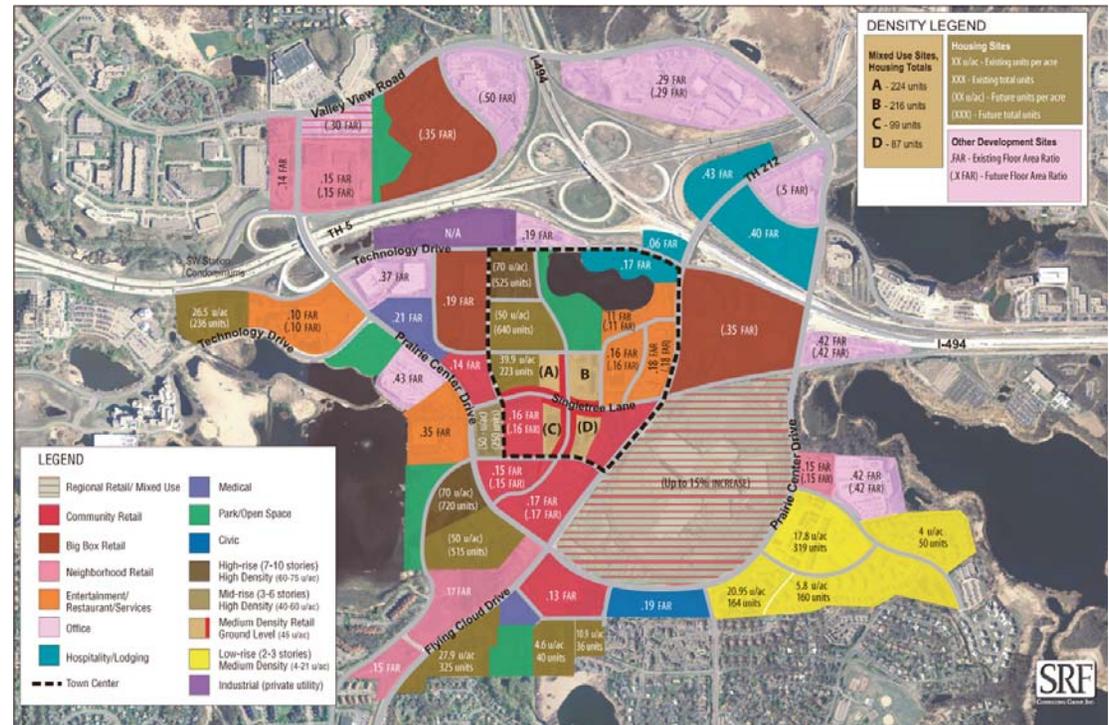
The following is a summary of the recommended land use recommendations for each of the 10 subareas. Development density is expressed in dwelling units per acre for residential uses and floor area ratio (FAR) for nonresidential uses. FAR is the ratio of building square footage to parcel land area square footage. Figure 6.5 shows future land use designations as well as FAR measures for reference purposes.

Subarea #1

Future Land Use

This area (north of TH 5 and west of I-494) has excellent visibility from the regional roadway system, which makes the area a candidate for retail uses and corporate office identity buildings. The existing neighborhood retail uses are likely to remain with building additions. The auto dealerships could offer redevelopment

6.5 – Future Land Use Plan with FAR/ Density Measures



opportunities for corporate office uses, depending on market setting and the evolution of car sales and service. The Ford dealership site could accommodate big box retail use. The Menard's site is forecast to remain as a big box retail use, but at a higher density (i.e., two story building). The

Chevrolet dealership has the potential for future corporate office use. The southeast corner of Valley View Drive and Prairie Center Drive could redevelop as neighborhood office and/or retail/service uses.

Land Use Designations & Density Assumptions

Office

0.50 FAR for corporate office

0.30 FAR for neighborhood office (including a potential office at Valley View and Prairie Center Drive)



Office building

Neighborhood Retail

0.14 to 0.15 FAR

Big Box Retail

0.35 FAR

Subarea #2

Future Land Use

This is the largest subarea in the MCA. It is located south of TH 5 and is bounded by TH 212 on the east and Prairie Center Drive on the west. A high concentration of potential redevelopment opportunities makes the area an appropriate location for a pedestrian-scale, mixed-use Town Center area. The MCA land use plan calls for creating a Town Center with a retail and housing core and a walkable main street in the north and central part of the area. Uses in the Town Center area should meet the MCA planning principles that apply to the Town Center area (see Appendix A).

The larger parcels in the area (Emerson-Rosemount and Wal-Mart) have great redevelopment potential if the existing uses relocate elsewhere. There is also an opportunity for assembly of some smaller parcels south of Singletree Lane and east of Wal-Mart for mixed-use redevelopment and circulation/access improvements due to current market availability of certain parcels and potential development interest. The southern retail area is expected to evolve at a similar density as today.

Lake Idlewild is an amenity for future urban park space. A community park is recommended west and south of the lake, and a potential park/greenway connection between the Anderson and Purgatory Creek Conservation Areas and around Lake Idlewild could be a catalyst for private investment.



Mixed-use retail on the ground floor and residential above in Shakopee, Minnesota.

6.0 – Land Use



Pocket parks should be part of the Town Center development.



An example of mid-rise high-density housing (three to six stories)

Land Use Designations & Density Assumptions: Town Center

Office

Medium-density residential
45 dwellings per acre
Ground floor retail
0.35 FAR
Building height range: three to six stories

Mid-Rise High-Density Residential

40-60 dwelling per acre
Building height range: three to six stories

High-Rise High-Density Residential

60-75 dwellings per acre
Building height range: seven to 10 stories

Community Retail (with service/office)

0.50 FAR
Building height range: two to three stories

Entertainment/Restaurant/Services

0.11-0.18 FAR
Building height range: one to two stories

Hospitality/Lodging

0.17 FAR
Building height range: two to six stories

Park/Open Space

No development
Park buildings/structures only

Land Use Designations & Density Assumptions: Outside of Town Center

Office

0.37 FAR
Building height range: two to six stories

Big Box Retail

0.16 to 0.19 FAR
Building height range: one to two stories

Medical

0.21 FAR
Building height range: one to three stories

Community Retail (with service/office)

0.15 to 0.17 FAR
Building height range: one to two stories

Mid-Rise High Density Residential

40 to 60 dwellings per acre
Building height range: three to six stories

Subarea #3

Future Land Use

The Southwest Station area (south of TH 5 and west of Prairie Center Drive) was developed in 2001 to 2005 and is a mixed-use area of restaurants, housing and park/open space surrounding a regional bus transit hub. It serves as a good model for other areas of the MCA. Land use changes are not envisioned for this area.

Two of the LRT alternatives currently under study would use the Southwest Station as a major park-and-ride location. If so, the area is envisioned as a major drive-to transit destination. Some densification of uses could occur if LRT access is designed to facilitate Transit Oriented Development (TOD) patterns.

Land Use Designations & Density Assumptions

Entertainment/Restaurant/Services
0.10 FAR

Mid-Rise High-Density Residential
27 dwellings per acre

Subarea #4

Future Land Use

The land use in this area located along the east edge of Purgatory Creek Conservation Area is not expected to change significantly. However, the existing senior housing is likely to redevelop at a higher density and with taller buildings to take advantage of views of the Purgatory Creek Conservation Area. The vacant city-owned parcel is recommended for high-rise, high-density residential. The area west of Columbine Road should be a park and open space use. The Flagship Athletic Club could redevelop to an office or

residential use, but it is not anticipated to change during the time frame of this study.

Land Use Designations & Density Assumptions

Office
0.43 FAR

Entertainment/Restaurant/Services
0.35 FAR

Mid-Rise High Density Residential
40 to 60 dwellings per acre
Building height range: three to six stories



An example of high-rise, high-density housing (seven to 10 stories)

High-Rise High-Density Residential

60 to 75 dwellings per acre
Building height range: seven to 10 stories

Neighborhood Retail

.17 FAR

Park and Open Space

No development
Park buildings/structures only

Subarea #5

Future Land Use: The current mix of retail, civic, medical and residential uses in the area east of TH 212 and south of Prairie Center Drive will remain. No significant increases in density or intensity are forecast. It is likely that nonresidential redevelopment will occur at the southwest corner of Prairie Center Drive and Franlo Road.

Land Use Designations & Density Assumptions

Multi-Family Residential
5-28 dwellings per acre

Community Retail
0.13 FAR

Medical
0.13 FAR

6.0 – Land Use

Civic

0.19 FAR

Park and Open Space

No development



Community retail uses and pedestrian-oriented design

Subarea #6

Future Land Use

Eden Prairie Center and the development surrounding the mall is forecast to continue to evolve as a regional retail destination. The area is forecast to add development that is equivalent to a 15 percent increase in trip generation by 2030. That new development and redevelopment is to be regional retail/mixed use, which would continue to include predominantly retail and may include office, housing and service uses.

Land Use Designations & Density Assumptions

Regional Retail/Mixed Use

Existing intensity and an additional 15 percent increase in trip making

Subarea #7

Future Land Use

No significant change is foreseen in this area of multi-family residences, office and neighborhood commercial uses located southeast of Eden Prairie Mall.

Land Use Designations & Density Assumptions

Multi-Family Residential

4-21 dwellings per acre

Office

0.42 FAR

Neighborhood Commercial

0.15 FAR

Subarea #8

Future Land Use

This area located north of Eden Prairie Center is forecast to see continued redevelopment of primarily big box retail uses. Future redevelopment is anticipated to be more intense than current retail uses (i.e., use of two to three story buildings and structured or underground parking). No significant changes are anticipated in the office sites located east of Prairie Center Drive.

Land Use Designations & Density Assumptions

Big Box Retail

0.35 FAR

Office

Existing FAR



An example of big box, multi-story community retail

Subarea #9

Future Land Use

The northern part of this subarea (northeast of I-494 along TH 212) is forecast to redevelop to office use. No significant change is foreseen for the remaining lodging and restaurant/service uses.

Land Use Designations & Density Assumptions

Office

0.5 FAR

Hospitality/Lodging

0.40 to 0.43 FAR

Subarea #10

Future Land Use

No significant changes in intensity are forecast for this area of office park uses located north of TH 5 and east of I-494.

Land Use Designations & Density Assumptions:

Office

0.29 FAR



Neighborhood retail example

6.0 – Land Use

Key Land Use Elements

Figure 6.6 shows the recommended land uses as described previously with key elements featured. The letter sequence below details these elements.

- A. Establish a focal element north of the Town Center, such as a mid-rise office or mixed-use development.
- B. Loop trail and green space around Lake Idlewild and a new Town Center Park.
- C. Develop pedestrian-focused shopping and entertainment streets, including ground floor shops, restaurants and services with housing above.
- D. Create a Town Center with a compact mix of uses, walkable streets, convenient structured parking and short-term street parking. Establish a mix of housing, retail, entertainment, service and hospitality/ lodging uses.
- E. Pursue development of three to six story buildings except for designated high-rise residential areas (seven to 10 stories) on the northwest edge of the Town Center and an area along Purgatory Creek Conservation Area.
- F. Create a focal development element, possible amenity open space, which will act as a visual terminus for the south end of Town Center’s “Main Street.” Reduce access points to Prairie Center Drive and TH 212 in this area where and whenever possible. Improve pedestrian connections to the Eden Prairie Center.

6.6 – Land Use Plan with Key Elements



- G. The Eden Prairie Center should continue to evolve and add other regionally significant uses (such as additional retail, service, entertainment, lodging and senior housing). Add pedestrian connections from the south, east and west. Consider potential development bridging over TH 212 connecting to the Town Center to the west.
- H. Concentrate civic service uses near the Hennepin County Library.
- I. Consider additional medical uses in this retail area.
- J. Locate taller high-rise buildings (seven to 10 stories) to take advantage of views of the Purgatory Creek Conservation Area.
- K. Create a continuous trail and green space along the Purgatory Creek Conservation Area.
- L. Establish transit circulator service (shown as a dashed blue line) around the mall ring road and around the Town Center.
- M. Plan for future LRT access (station site) at the Town Center "Main Street" crossroads and a major park-and-ride at the Southwest Station.
- N. Locate new regional retail uses, such as big box stores, in a compact and efficient manner through the use of structured parking, shared access and circulation and a mix of complementary uses.

Future Regional Uses

The MCA is the primary hub of Eden Prairie and functions as a regional destination for shopping and restaurants. The Eden Prairie Library also draws visitors from outside of the city. There is a desire to expand the scope of the regional draw to the area. Adding a regional scale cultural or performing arts facility, a regional medical facility, significant civic uses, such as an urban park or plazas, public art and markets, would expand the area's regional significance, visitation and economic health. These uses would also add vitality and activity.

Land Use – Transportation Balance

The MCA is currently a thriving retail area with some traffic, access and circulation issues. Given the trend toward increased traffic congestion regionally and locally, it is likely that people will want to live closer to work, goods and services. It is also reasonable to expect that transit will be a more important option for many people in the future. These trends should be considered when making decisions about land use, transportation and transit. Balancing transportation supply and the traffic generated from area land uses is necessary to maintain favorable conditions for moving around the area. The preferred land

use plan is based on encouraging a sustainable amount of redevelopment in key locations, in terms of impact on the transportation system's current and future capacity. Forecasted redevelopment is designed not to exceed area transportation capacities. The land use plan also assumes that many areas in the MCA will not expand significantly or will not increase in intensity within the 2005 to 2030 planning horizon.

The existing MCA land use is weighted toward retail, service and restaurant uses. These uses are typically heavy daily traffic generators. The preferred land use plan anticipates a modest increase in retail development in the MCA and a significant increase in residential growth in the central portion of the MCA. The retail growth in the Town Center area is designed to be a "park once" type of use, where visitors and shoppers would generally park once and walk between various shops, services and entertainment. This will require a convenient supply of structured parking and on-street parking located close to, but at the perimeter of, the heart of the Town Center. Parking once reduces trips that would otherwise be made on local and regional roads between closely spaced uses.

Other new development outside of the Town Center should be designed to encourage the park once strategy as well by providing



6.0 – Land Use

pedestrian and off-street automobile connections between uses and by locating uses more efficiently and compactly on the site. This may mean that new uses will also use more structured parking to increase efficiency and improve walkability.

The traffic study analyzed existing and future 2030 conditions based on the densities shown in Figure 6.5. The forecast densities are assertive and may not be realized during the study timeframe, depending on market-based demand and the timing of redevelopment and proposed public infrastructure improvements. However, the forecasts (Table 6-1) should cover a “worst-case scenario” from a traffic perspective.

Table 6.1 – Existing & Forecast MCA Development

| | Existing | Forecast 2030 | Increase |
|------------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------|
| Residential (dwelling units) | 2,057 | 5,740 | 3,683 |
| Non-residential | 5,548,816 | 6,307,493 | 758,677 |

Town Center Area

The creation of a compact, walkable and lively Town Center is a cornerstone of the MCA land use plan. The Town Center is to complement the Eden Prairie Center and act as an alternative to the

indoor regional shopping mall. A goal is to create a lively mix of uses that have a live-work-play “downtown” activity pattern.

The MCA land use plan envisions creating a 120-acre Town Center near the central portion of Subarea #2. Figure 6.7 presents an aerial view of this location. The identified Town Center area contains an existing mix of industrial, retail and residential uses. The area was selected for several key reasons:

- Proximity to Lake Idlewild
- Ability to create a grid street pattern to enhance auto and pedestrian movement

- Existence of some newer high-density residential with restaurant/service in a compact form
- Presence of large retail and industrial parcels that have future redevelopment potential
- Presence of an existing partial north-south road right of way south of Technology Drive
- Potential to serve the area with LRT in the future.

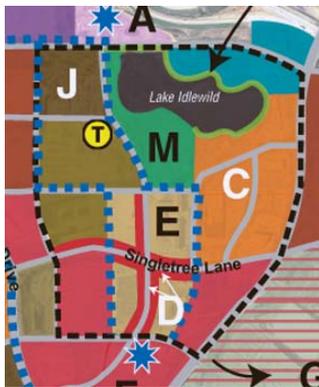
6.7 – Aerial View of Town Center Looking North



Town Center Land Use

The Town Center is envisioned as a mixed-use area of retail, residential, civic and entertainment uses. The mix of uses is designed to foster walking and transit through a compact development pattern. Figure 6.8 shows these features in greater detail.

6.8 – Town Center area



New uses and redevelopment in the Town Center Area should:

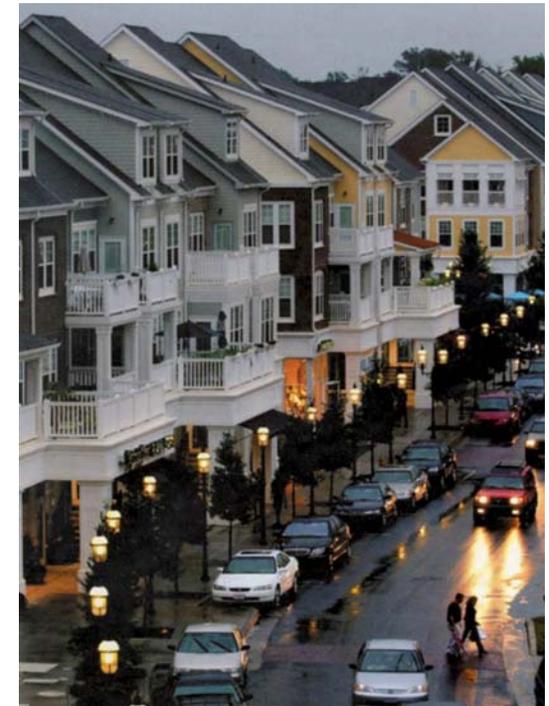
- Be pedestrian-friendly (buildings close to the street, ground level activity, parking to the side or rear and in structures, wide front sidewalks and streetscaping).
- Meet the Planning Principles (Appendix A).



Drive-throughs should not be located in the Town Center, but they may be acceptable at other MCA locations.



Mixed-use retail on the ground floor and residential above.



An example of mixed-use development with retail on the ground floor and residential above.

6.0 – Land Use

- Include mixed-uses in multi-story buildings where feasible.
- Not include auto-dependent uses, such as drive-up or drive-through facilities, uses with extensive outdoor storage or display needs and uses with heavy truck traffic use, to avoid safety conflicts and other negative impacts on the walkable, aesthetic environment.



An example of mid-rise high density housing (three to six stories)



An example of mid-rise high density housing (three to six stories)

A focal point of the Town Center area is the intersection of Singletree Lane with a new north-south street located just west of Eden Road. Most of Singletree Lane and the new north-south road are proposed to be pedestrian-friendly main streets. The “Main Street” area is envisioned to consist of retail shops, services and restaurants on the ground level topped with two to three floors of residences above the ground floor businesses.

The northwest quadrant of the Town Center will have a significant residential focus with rental and for-sale dwellings. Most new buildings are assumed to be three to six stories, and residential densities are likely to be 30 to 45 units per acre. Some residential densities along the north edge of the Town

Center are forecast to be 60 to 75 dwelling units per acre in seven to 10 story buildings.

Nonresidential densities are envisioned to range from 0.35 to 0.50 FAR covering approximately 35 to 50 percent of the ground floor of the lot area.

A public park is planned along Lake Idlewild. The park will be an amenity to the residential, retail and restaurant uses and is envisioned as a significant civic space.

Streets, Trails and Walks

The land use and transportation plans for the Town Center area are based on creating a grid street pattern in Subarea #2 and creating a pedestrian friendly environment.

Main Streets. Wide sidewalks, on-street parking, streetscaping and businesses located next to or near the sidewalks and frequent pedestrian crossing opportunities.

Grid Street Pattern. Add new north-south roads and east-west connections wherever feasible to create a more efficient and logical grid street pattern and to provide circulation alternatives to Prairie Center Drive and TH 212 for local trips.

New North/South Streets. Create new north-south streets between Technology Drive and Regional Center Road. The new streets would run parallel to the Xcel Energy power line. The new north-south main street is shown to the east of the power line and within an existing road right-of-way along the east side of the Rosemount-Emerson property. The visual effect of the power line and the power line easement will influence the ultimate location and character of the street. There are three alternatives for the north-south main street, as shown on Figure 6.9.

1. East of the power line corridor (as shown on the land use and transportation plans).
2. Within the current power line easement (power line to be relocated or buffered)
3. West of the power line corridor.

6.9 – Future North-South Roadway Alignment Options



Trails and Sidewalks

Sidewalks, tree-lined streets with wide pedestrian spaces, greenways and loop trails would criss-cross the Town Center. An extensive network of sidewalks would connect uses in the Town Center and the Town Center to adjoining areas. A greenway loop would connect Town Center and Lake Idlewild to the Purgatory Creek Conservation Area. There would be a loop trail around Lake

Idlewild. Pedestrian connections from the Town Center to the Eden Prairie Center would also be enhanced.

Transit

The Town Center has the potential to be served by the future Southwest Corridor LRT line. Two LRT alignment options are shown in the Town Center area (see Figure 7.4). The Alignment A runs from the Southwest Station east to TH 212 between Singletree Lane and Lake Idlewild. This would include a walk-to LRT station in the heart of the Town Center. An LRT station located in the Town Center area would greatly enhance access and marketability of the area. Therefore, this is the preferred alternative.

If this does not prove feasible, Alignment B would run along Technology Drive and may not include a walk-to LRT station. The Southwest Station is shown as an LRT station site in both alternatives. It would function as a drive-to station for commuters. The Southwest Station can offer regular route or circulator transit service within the Town Center if ridership levels are sufficient.

6.0 – Land Use

Park and Civic Space

A Town Center Park is proposed along the south side and west of Lake Idlewild. The Town Center Park is envisioned as an urban park with preserved mature trees and a trail around the lake. In addition, plazas and space for programmed activities (such as performing arts, public markets, and community gatherings) could be included as amenities.

In addition, private open spaces, plazas, outdoor dining areas and courtyards will be integrated into the Town Center redevelopment to connect with public parks and greenways. The combination of public and private open space can create a rich and seamless open space experience for residents, employees and visitors.

Parking

Parking in the Town Center is envisioned to occur primarily in parking ramps and in on-street spaces. The “park once” strategy will enable people to park in parking ramps/structures conveniently located at the perimeter of the Town Center area within easy walking distances of shops, residences and attractions. This reduces reliance on the automobile and reduces traffic congestion.

Parking located in structures to the side and behind shops and residences should avoid fronting directly on street and should include “liner” housing and shops between the street and the parking structure.

Mixed land uses allow more efficient use of parking. Weekend and evening peak parking users, such as housing, can share parking with weekday peak users, such as offices. Shared parking allows more efficient land use and less surface area devoted to low value parking.

Phasing

Creating a Town Center area depends on a public-private partnership between the City, area landowners and Xcel Energy. The Town Center is envisioned as a long-term phased redevelopment. Existing residential uses are envisioned as remaining, while less compact uses such as larger retail and industrial uses (Wal-Mart, Emerson-Rosemount and Brunswick Bowl) are anticipated to relocate out of the Town Center area or redevelop in a more compact format within the 25 year planning timetable.

Other likely redevelopment areas include groups of independent uses on smaller parcels. The Town Center planning principles call for these uses to be combined into coordinated mixed-use redevelopment projects where feasible.

The Town Center area contains an Xcel Energy easement running north-south from Technology Drive (Figure 6-9). Use of that easement and/or relocation or renovation of that power line will influence development and design decisions within the Town Center.

7.0 – Transportation

Current Conditions

The economic viability of the MCA over time has given the area prominence and high attractiveness for development. The traditional development and roadway model of accommodating single-use developments with highly convenient vehicular access resulted in transportation and public realm decisions that were based first and foremost on accommodating the automobile.

The land use plan and transportation recommendations of this study are based on the goal of maintaining TH 212 and Prairie Center Drive as four-lane roadways. This plan recommends a number of key transportation initiatives. Broadly speaking, they can be described as:

- Focusing effort on improving the functionality of the current street network.
- Relieving operational problems in the network for key intersections or segments.
- Balancing the vehicle accommodation in the existing system with transit, pedestrian and bicycle alternatives.

Some of these recommended initiatives will be short-term projects and can be assumed uniquely by the City of Eden Prairie or in conjunction with private development. Other initiatives are long-term and contingent on changes in overall development and traffic conditions. A summary table (Table 7.1) presents the transportation improvements by timeframe and preliminary cost

estimates. The Technical Memorandum in Appendix B provides more extensive detail on all of the improvements.

Near-Term Transportation Improvements (Present to Seven Years)

The following statements summarize the primary near-term efforts associated with managing traffic congestion and improving vehicle circulation in the MCA:

Implement Intersection Improvement Projects

The city should begin implementing the intersection improvement projects identified as near-term. Implementing individual projects will be dictated by a number of factors, including development and redevelopment projects, growth in traffic levels, other transportation projects and safety and geometric needs.

For instance, installing a Prairie Center Drive/Franlo Road traffic signal is dependent on the extension of Medcom Boulevard and development of the adjacent land. Also, the installation of the West 78th Street/Den Road traffic signal should be coordinated with the realignment of Singletree Lane and West 78th Street and their upgrade to a four-lane roadway.

The city should initiate the design phase of the Anderson Lakes Parkway/Preserve Boulevard intersection improvements, including extending the four-lane section of Preserve Boulevard.

Develop and Implement Signal Timing Coordination Plans

The city should develop and implement signal timing coordination plans for TH 212 and the Ring Road System of Prairie Center Drive and Valley View Road. This effort is needed to improve efficiency and overall transportation system performance.

Modify the Internal Mall Ring Road

This can be achieved by constructing traffic islands (Figure 7.1) at all of the internal mall ring road entry intersections. By reducing the width of the entry intersections and better defining the turn lanes, the traffic islands will

7.1 – Short-Term Mall Ring Road Improvements



7.0 – Transportation

Table 7-1 Near Term Preliminary Cost Estimates for Recommended Improvements

| Location | Improvements | Implementation | Costs |
|--|---|----------------|---------------------------|
| Prairie Center Drive/Regional Center Road/ Columbine Road | Dual eastbound left-turn lanes | Near-Term | \$50,000 |
| Anderson Lakes Parkway/Preserve Boulevard | Extend of Preserve Blvd from Westwind to Anderson Lakes Pkwy; extend eastbound left-turn lane and westbound right-turn lane. | Near-Term | \$1,100,000 |
| Singletree Lane/W. 78th Street realignment | Combine roads into one intersection at TH 212. Includes reconstructing Singletree and W 78th Street to a full four-lane width with left-turn lanes from Prairie Center Drive on the west to Prairie Center Drive on the east. | Near-Term | \$3,500,000 |
| Prairie Center Drive/Franlo Road * | Install a traffic signal and minor intersection improvements | Near-Term | \$300,000 |
| West 78th Street/Den Road * | Install a traffic signal and right-turn lanes on all approaches, in conjunction with Singletree/W. 78th St. Realignment | Near-Term | \$335,000 |
| Mall Internal Drive at Franlo Road * | Move stop bar closer to center of intersection for all approaches to reduce the size of the intersection; includes restriping of lanes, construction of turn channelization islands and possible curb/sidewalk realignments | Near-Term | \$35,000 |
| Mall Internal Drive at Preserve Boulevard * | Move stop bar closer to center of intersection for all approaches to reduce the size of the intersection; includes restriping of lanes, construction of turn channelization islands and possible curb/sidewalk realignments | Near-Term | \$35,000 |
| Mall Internal Drive at Northeast Corner * | Move stop bar closer to center of intersection for all approaches to reduce the size of the intersection; includes restriping of lanes, construction of turn channelization islands and possible curb/sidewalk realignments | Near-Term | \$35,000 |
| Mall Internal Drive at Den Road * | Move stop bar closer to center of intersection for all approaches to reduce the size of the intersection; includes restriping of lanes, construction of turn channelization islands and possible curb/sidewalk realignments | Near-Term | \$35,000 |
| Mall Internal Drive at Singletree Drive * | Move stop bar closer to center of intersection for all approaches to reduce the size of the intersection; includes restriping of lanes, construction of turn channelization islands and possible curb/sidewalk realignments | Near-Term | \$35,000 |
| Mall Internal Drive at Regional Center Road * | Move stop bar closer to center of intersection for all approaches to reduce the size of the intersection; includes restriping of lanes, construction of turn channelization islands and possible curb/sidewalk realignments | Near-Term | \$35,000 |
| Signal timing coordination plan | Develop and implement signal timing coordination plan for TH212 and the Ring road system of Prairie Center Drive and Valley View Road | Near-Term | \$100,000 |
| Extension of Medcom Boulevard to Franlo Road | Construct roadway to connect Medcom Boulevard to Franlo Road | Near-Term | Further Analysis Required |

* Indicates an unsignalized intersection

Note: All costs are from year 2005 and are construction costs only



Table 7-1 Long Term Preliminary Cost Estimates for Recommended Improvements

| Location | Improvements | Implementation | Costs |
|--|---|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| TH 212/Valley View Road Interchange Ramps (Concept A or B) | Realignment of interchange ramps | Long-Term | Further Analysis Required |
| Prairie Center Drive/I-494 North Ramp | Extend westbound left and right-turn lanes to 350 feet | Long-Term | \$52,000 |
| Prairie Center Drive/Prairie Lakes Drive | Construct a fourth leg to mall to west | Long-Term | \$350,000 |
| Prairie Center Drive/Preserve Boulevard | Construct westbound dual left-turn lanes and improve side-street geometry and signal phasing | Long-Term | \$500,000 |
| TH 212/Prairie Center Drive | Construct a grade-separated interchange | Long-Term | \$8,000,000 |
| Prairie Center Drive/Singletree Lane | Construct a full-length westbound right-turn lane and extend southbound left-turn lane | Long-Term | \$200,000 |
| Prairie Center Drive/Rolling Hills Road * | Restrict to a right-in/right-out access only | Long-Term | \$30,000 |
| Prairie Center Drive/Mall Northeast Entrance* | Closure of this access when new access is built at Prairie Lakes Drive | Long-Term | \$40,000 |
| TH 212/Viking Drive * | Restrict to a right-in/right-out access only | Long-Term | \$30,000 |
| Prairie Center Drive/Commonwealth Drive * | Restrict to a 3/4 access (right-in/right-out/left-in) | Long-Term | \$30,000 |
| Prairie Center Drive/Rainbow Entrance * | Restrict to a 3/4 access (right-in/right-out/left-in) | Long-Term | \$30,000 |
| TH 212/Medcom Boulevard * | Restrict to a right-in/right-out access only | Long-Term | \$30,000 |
| Prairie Center Drive/Joiner Way Entrance * | Restrict to a right-in/right-out access only | Long-Term | \$30,000 |
| Additional I-494 regional access (Concept A or B) | Construct direct access to/from I-494 | Long-Term | Further Analysis Required |
| Convert mall ring road to a one-way system | Modify Geometrics, signing and striping changes | Long-Term | Further Analysis Required |
| Valley View Road/Topview Road | Construct a second lane on Topview, and right turn lane on Valley View road and a new traffic signal (improvements are from a previous traffic study) | Long-Term | \$300,000 |
| Prairie Center Drive/ Valley View Road (East Junction) | Construct a second left-turn lane on the east approach and two lanes on the west approach | Long-Term | \$300,000 |
| TH 212/Regional Center Drive | Construct an eastbound right-turn lane | Long-Term | \$70,000 |
| TH 212/I-494 North Ramp | Construct a third westbound lane | Long-Term | \$100,000 |
| New north-south roadway in Town Center | Construct a main north-south roadway in the proposed town center | Near-Term and Long-Term | Further Analysis Required |
| Grid roadway system in Town Center | Construct the grid roadway system in the town center | Near-Term and Long-Term | Further Analysis Required |
| Valley View Road/Prairie Center Drive | Construct a second left-turn lane on the east approach, and extend northbound left-turn lane | Long-Term | \$300,000 |



7.0 – Transportation

improve operation and safety (vehicular and pedestrian) and reduce motorist confusion.

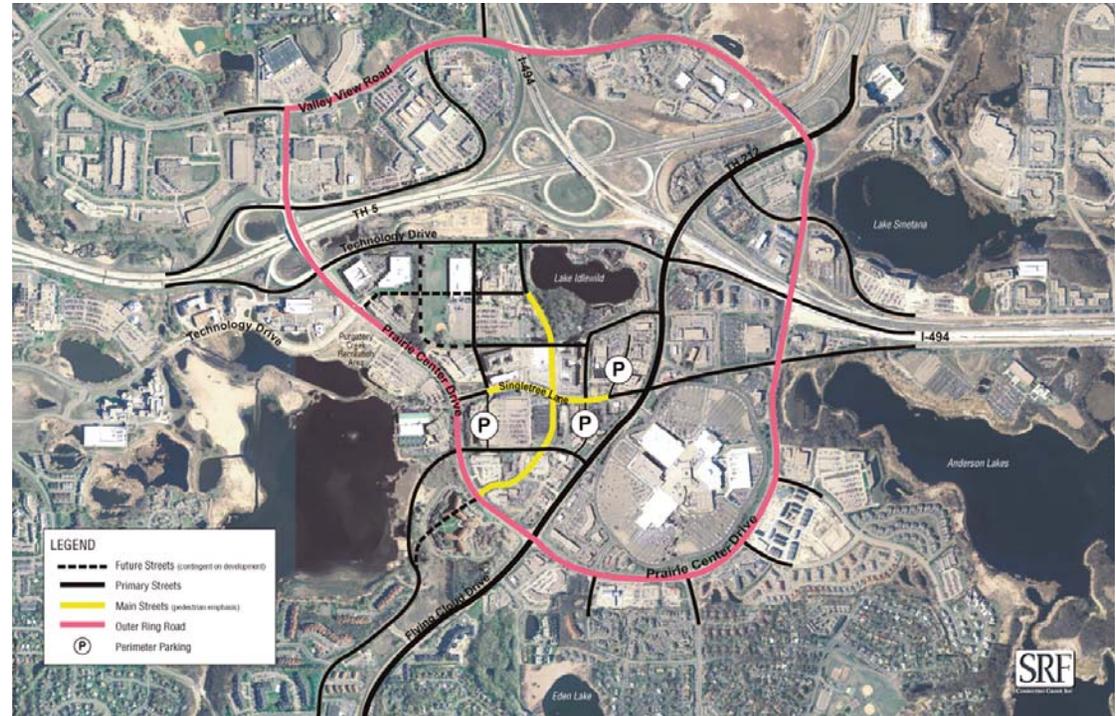
Manage Land Use

A constraining element of the land use plan is a strong desire to maintain TH 212 and Prairie Center Drive as four-lane roadways. In order to achieve this goal, it will be necessary to adhere to the traffic generation assumptions of this report. Any additional intensification of land use will need to be closely evaluated for its impacts on the transportation system. Compact, walkable mixed-use development near transit has the potential to reduce trips via shared trips and increased use of transit, bicycles and walking. Trip reduction achieved by greater use of these modes could potentially allow for greater land use density than was assumed for this report. These potential reductions were not factored into the traffic study.

Develop New Roadway System

The city should work to obtain necessary right-of-way for proposed roadways, such as Medcom Boulevard, the new north/south roadway and other roadways in the Town Center. In addition, the City should work with developers to construct new roadway segments and close unnecessary roadway segments as part of development and redevelopment projects (Figure 7.2).

7.2 – Base Street Network



Implement Access Management Plan

Figure 7.3 details the Access Management Plan for the MCA. The plan is an integral part of the transportation improvements and guides the design and location of access points. It will improve the operation and safety of the transportation system as well as improve vehicle circulation through the MCA. It is anticipated that this plan will be implemented over a number of years as part of development and redevelopment projects and major transportation improvement projects.

Implement Wayfinding Improvements

Wayfinding is a key element of the transportation plan. By implementing wayfinding, drivers can use the system to efficiently find their destination. A wayfinding implementation plan should be developed, and near-term initiatives should be implemented.

Realign Singletree Lane and West 78th Street at TH 212

The realignment of Singletree Lane and West 78th Street would provide a strong east-west roadway through the MCA and is a primary component of the proposed street network. In order to achieve acceptable operations at the realigned intersection, Singletree Lane and West 78th Street will need to be reconstructed to a continuous four-lane roadway with turn lanes.

7.3 – Access Management Plan



7.0 – Transportation

Vehicle Transportation Network - Long-Term Improvements (Eight to 25 Years)

A number of long-term transportation initiatives have been identified as a result of the study. They are described in detail below and shown in Figure 7.4.

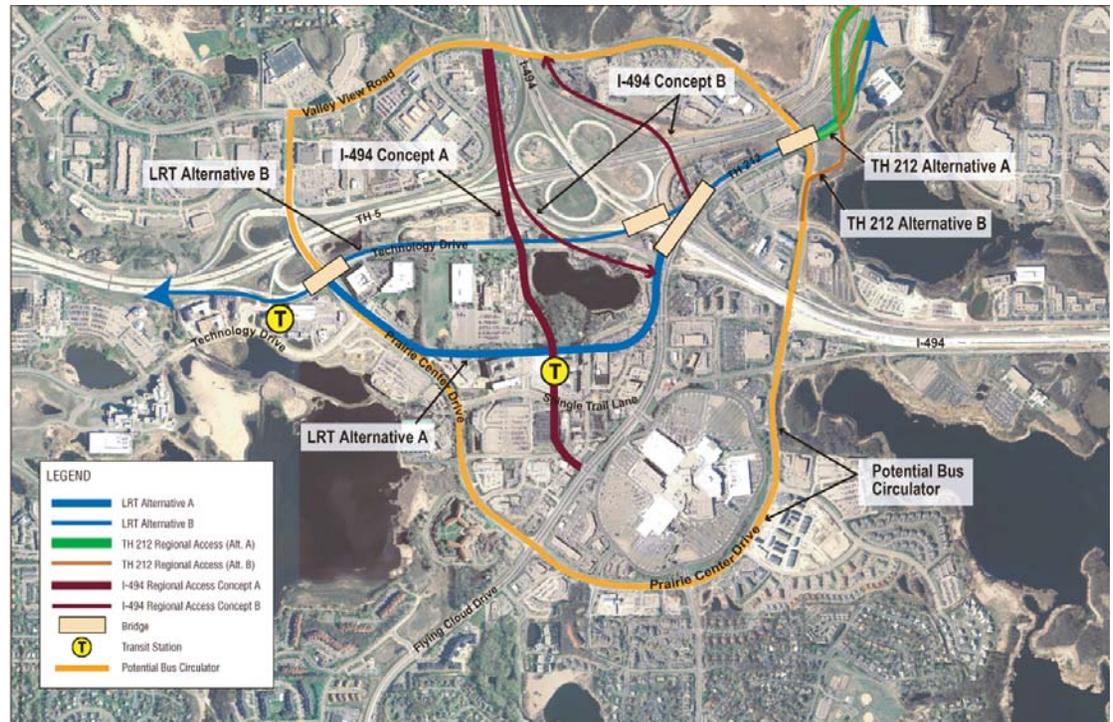
TH 212 / Prairie Center Drive Grade Separation

It is anticipated that, in the long term, the TH 212/Prairie Center Drive intersection will exceed its current capacity. The intersection is a main component of the transportation system, as it significantly impacts adjacent intersections. Depending on development timing, safety conditions and policy-making timelines, it is likely that this project will be required to maintain adequate transportation circulation in the future. As a result, a grade separated intersection at TH 212/Prairie Center Drive is recommended as a long-term improvement. A concept sketch is presented in Figure 7.5.

Converting the Internal Mall Ring Road to a One-Way System

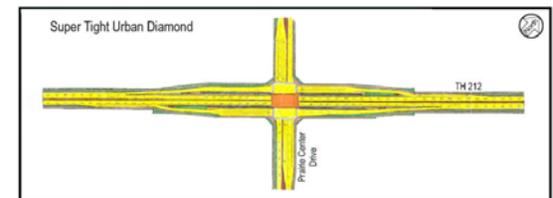
In order to reduce queuing impacts and improve pedestrian access and safety, converting the internal mall ring road to a one-way system is recommended for future implementation. Converting the mall ring road to a one-way system

7.4 – Long-Term Transportation Improvements



will reduce and limit the queuing impacts from adjacent signalized intersections and improve operation of the mall ring road. Although the near-term roadway improvements are expected to improve the operation and safety of the mall ring road, the conversion to a one-way system is expected to be necessary at some point in the future.

7.5 – Grade-Separated Intersection Concept for TH 212 and Prairie Center Drive



Converting the mall ring road to one-way circulation (counter clockwise movement with right-turn movements onto the adjacent streets) significantly improves pedestrian safety over the existing two-way operations scenario. This is considered an asset given the heightened interest in more comfortable, safer pedestrian access to the shopping center. Figure 7.6 shows one- and two-way operations with potential pedestrian conflicts.

As opposed to converting the mall ring road to a one-way system, a second option is to realign the mall ring road to provide additional queuing space for the adjacent traffic signals. However this option is costly, will significantly impact existing parking areas and does not have a pedestrian benefit. As a result, it is not recommended.

Additional I-494 Regional Access

Improved I-494 access is considered a strong component of the recommendations and should be pursued. Due to the cost, timing and complexity in obtaining additional access to I-494, this is considered a long-term improvement (Figure 7.4). In the interim, wayfinding and other intersection improvements should be implemented.

TH 212 / Valley View Road Interchange Ramps

The current configuration of the interchange requires a weaving movement for the high volume of southbound TH 212 traffic entering the MCA. Improvements to the interchange are limited

7.6 One-way versus Two-way Mall Ring Road Operations



fly-over ramp, which could also provide more convenient access to Prairie Center Drive (Figure 7.4). Due to the cost, timing and complexity of this project, it is also considered a long-term improvement.

Continue Development of New Roadway System

The development of the new north/south roadway and the grid roadway system in the Town Center is expected to take a number of years to complete. It is anticipated that the roadways will be constructed in segments as development and redevelopment projects permit.

Continue Implementation of Access Management Plan

The implementation of the access management plan is anticipated to take place over a number of years. Most of the access modifications are dependent on and can be coordinated with future redevelopment.

without reconstructing the Valley View Road bridge. Over time, the continued growth in traffic is expected to require a direct connection from southbound TH 212 via a

7.0 – Transportation

Bus and Light Rail Transit

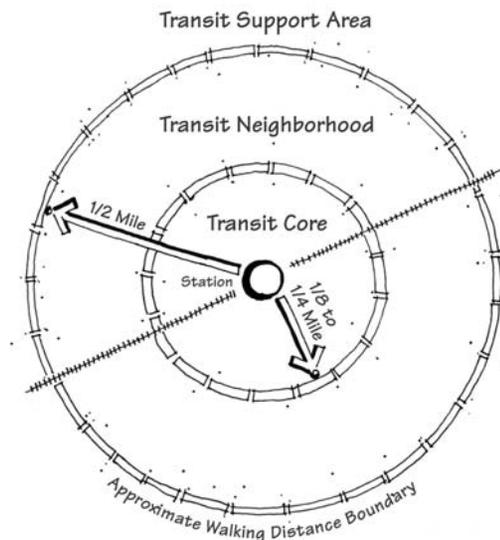
In the near term, bus transit service at the Southwest Station will continue to be a viable transportation alternative to specific destinations such as downtown Minneapolis, the Normandale office area (Highway 100 and I-494) as well as the University of Minnesota.



Bus transit service will continue to be a transportation alternative for the near and far future.

As residential density, job development and retail uses continue to concentrate in the MCA, transit circulator service may become a more viable option for residents, workers and visitors. Bus service will benefit from improvements in vehicular capacity in the short and long term.

When LRT or BRT regional service arrives at the MCA, circulator service will be further enhanced by these transit riders, as long as the circulator trip is efficient and there is a reasonably succinct transfer time between transit modes. Specific routes and service plans will be developed by Southwest Transit in partnership with businesses and residents.



Transit-oriented development patterns would locate the highest density and active uses in the transit core, closest to a proposed transit station in the Town Center.



Attractive, functional LRT stations can be integrated into the MCA.

LRT service is highly recommended in the future MCA plan. The preferred alternative would bring LRT into the MCA from the northeast and the Golden Triangle area and pass it through the Town Center on the south side of Lake Idlewild. This alignment would permit a station to be located in the heart of the Town Center. Station-related development, including jobs, housing and supportive retail and services could be co-located in an easy walking distance (10 minutes or approximately one-half mile) of the station site. An additional park-and-ride commuter station would be located in proximity of the current Southwest Station (Figure 7.4).

If the preferred alternative is determined to add too much time to the regional system or otherwise proves infeasible, an alternative alignment is recommended that would enter the MCA from the northeast and Golden Triangle area, traverse across the north edge of Town Center and connect to a station located in proximity of the current Southwest Station. (Figure 7.4) This station would function primarily as a park-and-ride commuter station.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Networks

One of the primary needs expressed by community members who participated in the study was additional facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists. Sidewalks and trails are highly valued as there is growing community interest in traveling by alternative options and for recreation and health benefits. The automobile's dominance in the MCA landscape should be counterbalanced by improving the pedestrian environment through the following efforts:

1. Construction of missing trail and sidewalk segments
2. Site design that creates safe and attractive spaces for pedestrian and bicyclists
3. Roadway design and enhancement that creates a safe and attractive environment for pedestrians and bicyclists



Pleasant pedestrian connections are important to making the Town Center area successful.



Missing trail segments should be constructed to link the MCA with city-wide systems.

Walking as a mode of getting around in the MCA should become more attractive and comfortable over time. Highly valued destinations, such as housing, jobs, shopping, services and entertainment, will increasingly be connected by trails and sidewalks as the MCA continues to evolve.



Missing trail segments should be constructed to link the MCA with city-wide systems.



Pedestrian crossings can be improved by using medians, striping and signal timing adjustments.

Additional detail on trails and sidewalks can be found in Chapter 8.0 Parks, Trails and Open Space.

8.0 – Parks, Trails and Open Space

Eden Prairie's MCA will continue to be the community's "people space" with exciting activities, civic events and an urban experience. As land use intensifies, the number of residents and workers will increase, in turn suggesting the need for urban amenities and an increased quality of life. Parks, trails and streetscape elements will provide the foundation for this experience.

Parks

Parks provide opportunities for recreation, reflection and interaction. They contribute to the area's image, identity and distinction. These qualities will be key to the MCA as land use intensifies and development takes place.

The demand for parks will present new needs currently unmet in the area. New residents to the area are likely to be young, single, seniors or empty-nesters. Children and families will occur to a lesser extent but may well be visitors on a regular basis.

Increased commercial uses will also produce new workers and employees. Parks can serve as noon-time destinations or provide relief from the business day.

As the community's commercial core, the MCA will likely host civic events, festivals and celebrations. Eden Prairie residents and visitors alike will be attracted to seasonal gatherings and holiday events.

Park facilities are currently lacking in the MCA. According to the city's current park and open space plan, neighborhood park service areas do not adequately cover future planned residential areas. The recently developed Purgatory Creek Recreation Area will serve as an anchor for special events. However, its location and size should be augmented with additional park facilities. Demands placed by future residents and employees should be accommodated with three park and recreation components.

Recommendations

A new civic park, Town Center Park, should be developed in the southwest corner of Lake Idlewild capitalizing on existing open space and mature vegetation. This future park should host both active and passive experiences. A public trail encircling Lake Idlewild can broaden the open space experience interconnecting adjacent entertainment areas and proposed residential development. Town Center Park should provide flexible spaces that can be easily programmed for festivals, concerts and civic events. It should contain urban elements whose hard surface areas can accommodate large crowds and special festivities, but it must also provide a passive experience providing a quiet respite for relaxation or

meditation. Convenient walking and bicycle connections should link both residential and commercial areas in the park. However, opportunities for parking in or adjacent to Town Center Park must be provided.

Town Center Park should focus on Lake Idlewild. Mature trees found in the area currently should be preserved wherever possible, contrasting with more dense residential or commercial development proposed for the adjacent area. Increased maintenance should be anticipated to maintain the parks integrity and its ability to withstand heavy use.



Stormwater treatment areas can be designed to be educational, beautiful open space that draws residents, workers and visitors.

8.0 – Parks, Trails and Open Space

A small civic plaza should be located in the core of the Town Center area, the compact walkable district. This hardscape area should focus on seating and flexible performance space. Vertical monumentation, such as a bell tower, clock or banner element, should provide a focal point. A higher level of design and material finish should be sought and complemented by public art and landscaping.

Although this space should be recognized as a civic plaza, public and private funds should be sought and derived, in part, from a common association of adjacent businesses.



Civic plaza spaces should attract people with seating, art and water elements.

Pocket parks or private open space should be interwoven with mixed-use development in the Town Center area. These small identifiable areas should be located convenient to restaurants, entertainment or boutique retail areas. Outdoor eating areas should be provided on a seasonal basis. Art, water features and seasonal landscaping should present a distinct identity for each space.

Pocket parks should be encouraged by the city but owned and maintained by the private sector.

Trails and Greenways

Existing Conditions

The original 1973 Public Planned Unit Development concept for the area emphasized providing interconnected paths and travel routes for nonmotorized traffic expected as the area grew. However, the dominance of automobile travel and the expansion of roads to manage traffic volumes have made crossing these streets on foot or by bike increasingly difficult.

The recent construction of the Purgatory Creek Recreation Area links the fringe of the MCA with the existing park and trail system. The city has progressively developed a strong bike/trail network with a few missing links. As indicated by trail use elsewhere in the city,

there has been an increasing interest in walking and biking as form of exercise/recreation. Providing a comfortable, direct pedestrian and cyclist network is one of the primary investments that can be made in the MCA's continued livability.

Future Goals

To advance the goal of improving pedestrian and bicycling alternatives, new trails and sidewalks in the MCA will act as the connective tissue that balances the traditional automobile-oriented landscape and links the area's diverse destinations. The connectivity of the system is key to making the system accessible and highly valued to residents, workers and visitors alike. Important new additions, specifically for the Town Center area, over a 25-year timeframe are the construction of trail or greenway segments that would integrate the area with other recreational destinations.

An increasing population base and workforce will pose additional demands for trail and sidewalk accommodations. Commuters will desire connections to transit facilities including future LRT stations and bus circulator facilities. Residents of the area, both young and old, will seek sidewalk and trails for both leisure and fitness. Mixed land use will also promote a compact, walkable core, with a greater reliance on pedestrian

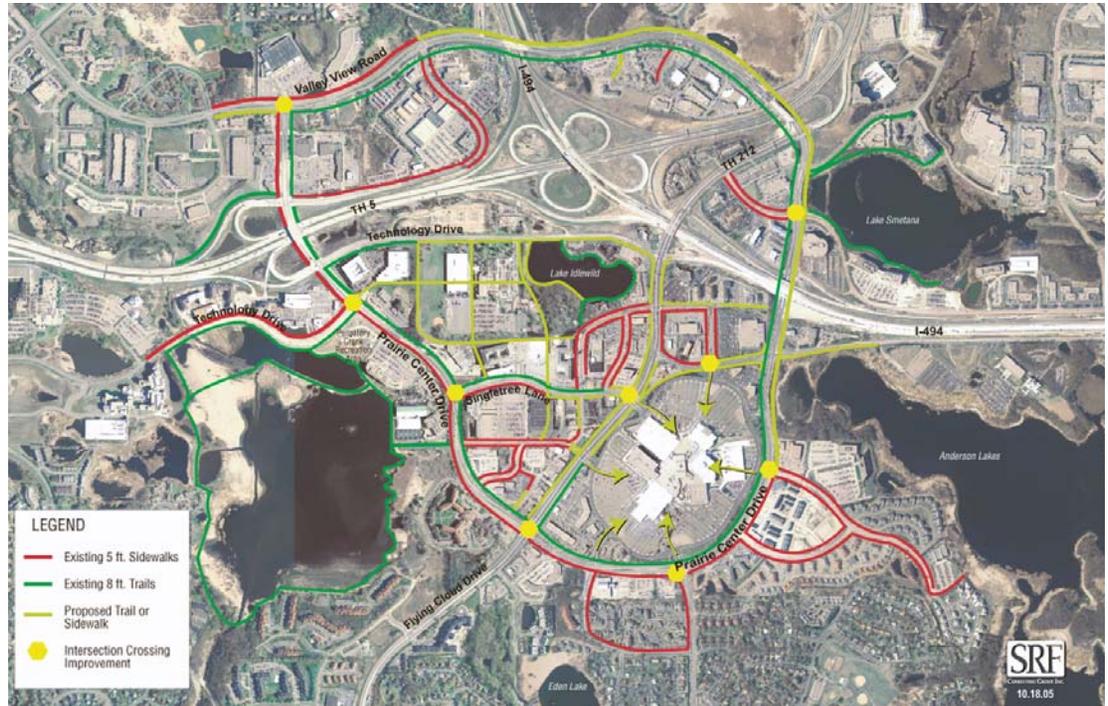
movement and, in turn, reduce vehicle trips. Walking to restaurants, entertainment, shopping and other commercial venues should be promoted. Common, managed parking reservoirs should also be conveniently linked by pedestrian connections to retail and entertainment destinations.

Eden Prairie has been acclaimed for its pedestrian and bicycle facilities criss-crossing the community. The MCA, however, poses distinct needs reflective of the more urbanized condition and land use intensification.

Recommendations

1. **Missing segments** exist for both sidewalk and trail facilities. Planned street improvements provide additional opportunities for convenient connections. Figure 8.1 identifies both existing and proposed sidewalks and trails. The net result should be a network that conveniently interconnects residential and working areas with leisure, transit and retail destinations.
2. **Looping trails**, both short and long, should provide leisure and fitness activities. Choice and flexibility are key to accommodating a variety of age groups and fitness levels. Loops should range from one mile to five miles in length.
3. **Concise trail connections** with high-volume destinations such as the LRT station and town center area should be constructed. Corridors of least resistance should encourage transit with pedestrian connections and related park amenities.

8.1 – Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan



8.0 – Parks, Trails and Open Space

4. A **predictable grid of sidewalk and trails** should follow revised street layout. Traditional sidewalk layout adjacent each street frontage will provide pedestrian access to most parcels and land uses.
5. **Safe roadway and street crossings** should be accommodated. Key intersections should include traffic signals that provide safe crossings of high volume, high speed roadways. Safety crossings should be sought at each important crossing incorporating safety, surface paint, pedestrian warning signs, safety islands and lighting. Other measures may be considered such as pedestrian countdown signing or actuated signals. In select circumstances, grade-separated crossings employing bridges or underpasses may also be advisable, especially where ground topography and development patterns reinforce convenience and logical connections.
6. **Mall connections** should be provided to the Eden Prairie Center from the surrounding sidewalk and bicycle trail network. This public/private initiative will require participation from mall properties. Corridors must safely cross the mall ring road and parking areas, directing pedestrians to primary business or mall entrances. Lighting, landscaping and other urban design measures should augment and reinforce these corridors.
7. **A greenway loop** would provide an enhanced pedestrian and bicycle linkage between the key park and open space elements, namely the Purgatory Creek Recreation Area, Town Center Park and Purgatory Creek trail system. This network would also connect with the walkable core area and retail/entertainment uses. Widened, landscaped right-of-way should accommodate both pedestrian and bicycle trails providing a safe, attractive connection. A variety of environments may comprise the greenway ranging from a widened boulevard to an independent open space corridor. Greenway width could range from 20 to 100 feet.
8. **User amenities** should be incorporated into successful pedestrian and bicycle systems and must be accommodated with support systems to provide user comfort and convenience. Benches, trash receptacles, information mapping or kiosks, public art and interpretive facilities reinforce the experience. These amenities should be dispersed throughout the MCA pedestrian and bicycle network.
9. **Security measures** for pedestrian and bicycle accommodations in the MCA should accommodate an active lifestyle and will likely be used 24 hours a day, seven days a week. As a result, attractive pedestrian-level lighting should be integral to sidewalk and trail development. In remote areas, emergency blue phones or other security provisions should be considered.



Greenways should link primary park areas.

Streetscapes and Boulevards

Urban design strategies guide investment in the public realm and suggest how private development can complement and enhance the value of public and open spaces. Taken together, these strategies will reinforce the area's future as a great livable and memorable place.

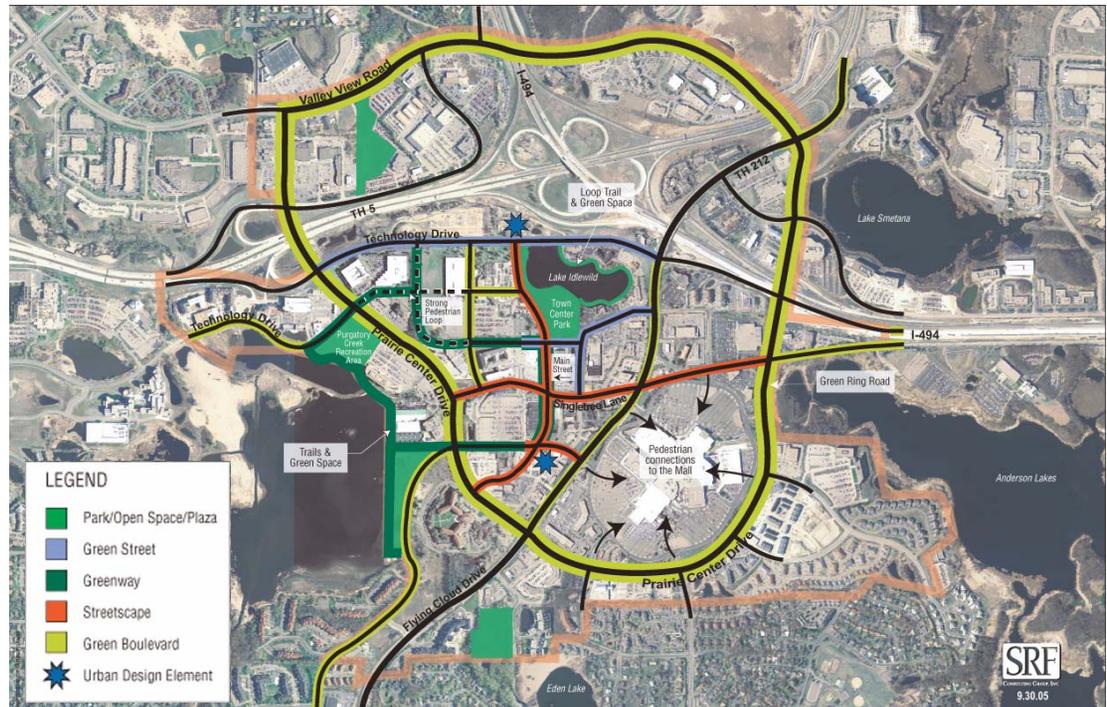
Over time, the economic viability of the MCA has given the area prominence and high attractiveness for development. The current day landscape evolved as a concentration of regionally scaled, single-use developments that were built over time. Typically, each of these developments was supported by regionally scaled, highly convenient vehicular access so that transportation and public realm decisions were based first and foremost on accommodating the automobile.

The core objective of the plan's urban design strategies is to balance the physical environment by turning attention to the relationship between buildings and publicly held space to create a pedestrian scale landscape in the MCA. These efforts are concentrated on the compact Town Center area, where the development density, land use mix, street function and design profile were carefully chosen to transform the area in the near-term future.

Appearance, Identity and Recognition

Street and roadway corridors contribute to the overall visual quality and image of the MCA. Visitors frequently draw their initial impressions when traveling on transportation corridors. Workers and residents alike seek a commercial core identity that contributes to the area's livability and attractive appearance. Treatment of the corridor's can also reinforce wayfinding initiatives, pedestrian and bicycle experience and provide a setting for private sector development.

8.2 – Parks, Open Space and Amenities Plan



8.0 – Parks, Trails and Open Space

A hierarchy of street and roadway treatment for streetscape and boulevards is shown on Figure 8.2 This hierarchy represents street and roadway design recommendations corresponding with traffic volume, nonmotorized connections and community importance.

Recommendations

A hierarchy of three key urban design treatments emphasizes streetscape treatments in the MCA.

Green boulevards are primary street corridors, such as the Outer Ring Road, Prairie Center Drive and Valley View Road. TH 212 between Technology Drive and Prairie Center Drive should have a similar treatment. The design intent is to reinforce the important functions and visual continuity of the streets. Key characteristics of these corridor’s

improvements should include accommodations for pedestrians and bicycles, distinctive lighting, boulevard landscaping, wayfinding signage and support amenities.

Streetscapes should be built on the primary cross streets located in the Town Center area. Streetscape treatment should reinforce the pedestrian environment with a distinct identity reflective of adjacent retail and entertainment uses. Decorative lighting, trees in grates or planters, seasonal plantings, street furniture, public art and other amenities should be used. Seasonal elements, festivals and civic celebrations could be reinforced

through banners, signage and graphic elements.

Green streets are intended to build character for traditional street corridors. Boulevard plantings and theme lighting should create a strong sense of boulevard or traditional street character.

Additional maintenance should be anticipated for the corridors noted. Regular mowing, tree and shrub trimming, flower planting and hard surface sweeping should occur. Maintenance districts for assessing costs could be considered to offset city expenses.



Green boulevards use planting to emphasize important streets.



Streetscape accent plantings provide charm and character.



Green streets rely on boulevard plantings.

framework plan

Eden Prairie Major Center Area Study

9.0 – Wayfinding

Two of the MCA's most commonly named challenges are navigating and wayfinding. Several features contribute to directional confusion in the MCA:

- Access from regional roads is unclear to many drivers, and signage directing motorists into the larger area is found in scattered rather than strategic locations.
- The outer ring road of Valley View and Prairie Center Drive is not immediately understood.
- Local streets lack a recognizable grid and hierarchy.
- Building numbers are difficult to read, so destinations are not always easily found.
- Access back to regional roads from the MCA is often different from incoming routes, so many visitors experience wayfinding difficulty leaving the Major Center Area.
- Although other geographic landmarks are evident, the MCA core is a large area characterized by complex roadways, including overhead streets and freeway bridges, junctions, entrance and egress ramps.

Wayfinding recommendations focus on creating distinct subareas or neighborhoods and a hierarchy of signage.



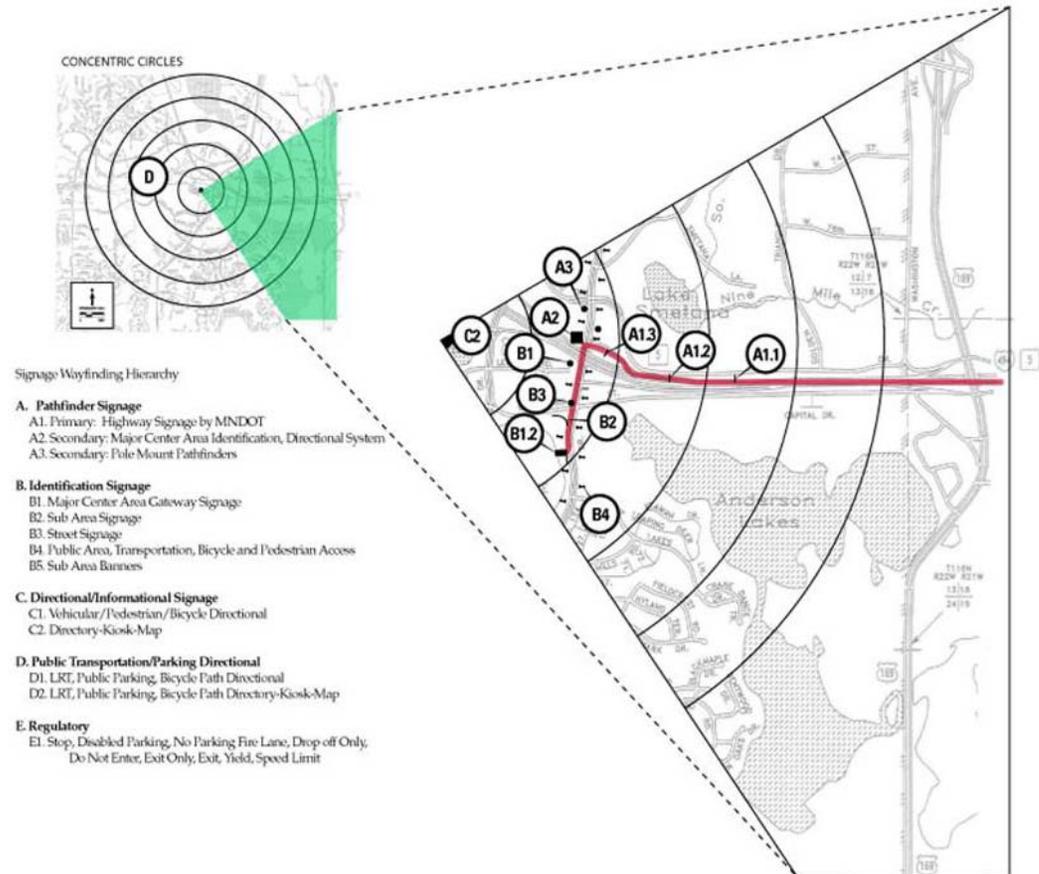
Organizing the MCA into subareas will assist in wayfinding.

9.0 – Wayfinding

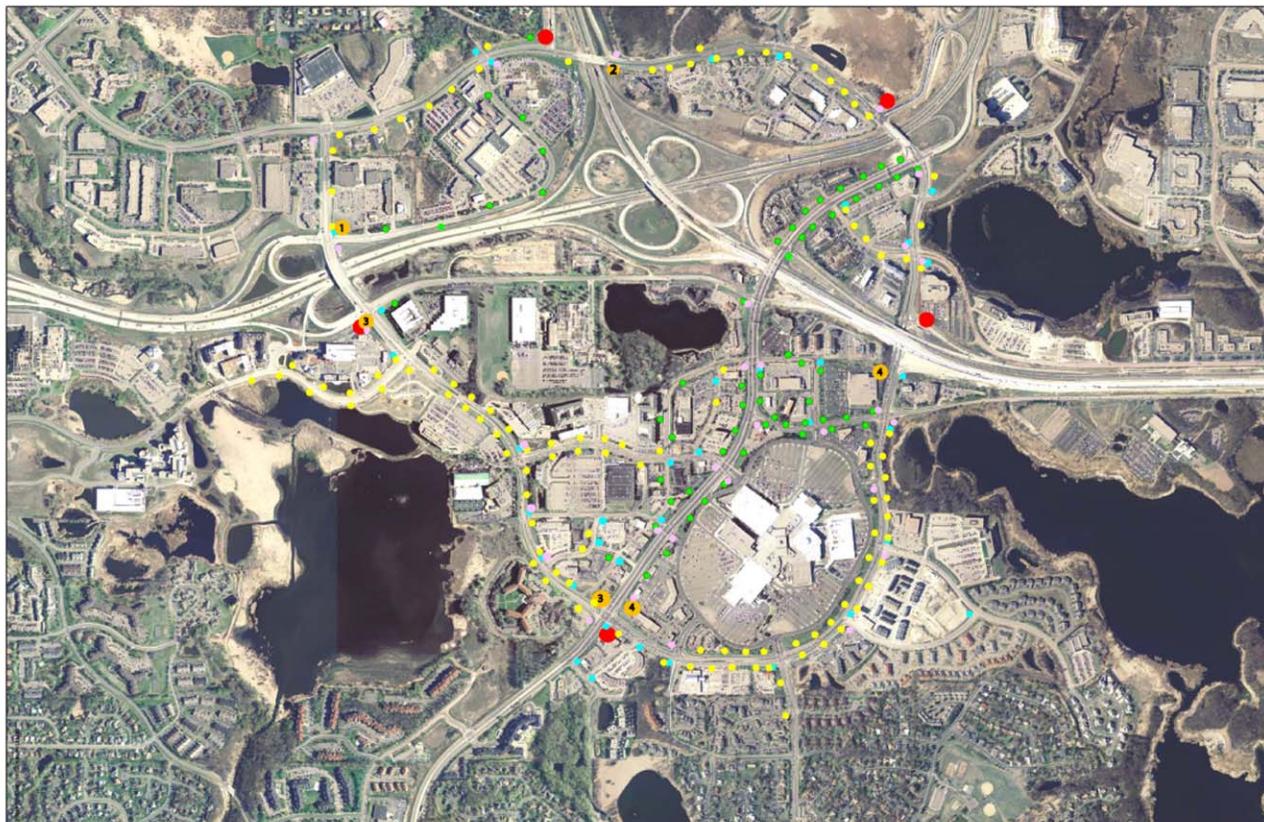
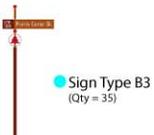
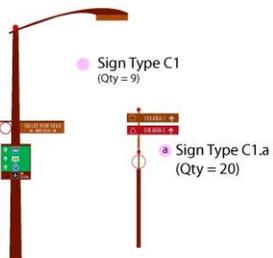
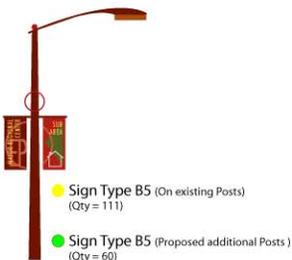
Figure 9.1 shows a series of concentric circles that illustrate the types of signage necessary to reach the MCA as a destination. There should be a series of understandable informational pieces that converge on the final destination. All of the signs that provide guidance to the destination are part of a hierarchy. Signs are designed in a hierarchy to help the driver understand how to find a destination by providing streamlined, basic direction at decision points.

Signage is defined by its shape, color, letter style, placement and mounting. Figure 9.2 shows placement locations for signs according to the hierarchy outlined on the following pages.

9.1 – Concentric Circles Wayfinding Plan



9.2 – Wayfinding signage location



9.0 – Wayfinding

A.1 Primary Pathfinder Signs

- Directs drivers from freeways to circulation roads.
- They are typically located farthest from the prime destination (in this case, the Eden Prairie Center and future Town Center area).

A.2 Secondary Pathfinder Signs

- Assists drivers in identifying perimeter of area, announces identity of area and provides overview of major destinations.
- The MCA is proposed to be subdivided into four specific areas based on access and existing land usage. At the present time, these areas are identified with numbers (Figure 9.3), but ultimately they should have descriptive names.
- There are six recommended sign locations proposed.

A.3 Pole Mount Pathfinder Signs

- These signs provide directional information and assure drivers that they have reached the circulation road and are proceeding in the right direction.
- There are 20 locations proposed for this sign type.

B.1 Project Identification Signage

- These provide project identification in areas that are not driver decision points but are highly visible.
- The current plan does not propose gateway signage locations.

B.2 Subarea Signage

- These identify subareas or neighborhoods.
- Two signs are generally proposed per subarea and should be placed adjacent to the ring roads.
- There are seven locations proposed for this sign type in the plan.

B.3 Street Signage

- These differ from traditional street signs because they include area pictograms (part of the subarea descriptive name effort) and colors.
- Including street numerals helps reinforce route finding by providing drivers with reference data.
- There are 35 locations proposed.

B.4 Public Area, Transportation, Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Identification Signage

- Freestanding or supplemental signs indicating access to these transportation modes and public areas such as parks are proposed at approximately 50 locations in the MCA.

B.5 Subarea Banner Identification Signage

- Provides identification and recognition along the ring road and internal circulation streets.
- Brings a scale that fosters a pedestrian place in the streetscape.
- Changes in banner graphics and noticeable changes in the ring road landscape reinforce subarea identity.
- There are 171 locations proposed at this time.



C.1 Vehicular/Pedestrian/ Bicycle Directional Signage

- Provides key movement direction to motorists, pedestrians and cyclists.
- This signage is essential to direct occasional visitors back to the major highways and freeways.
- Nine locations for this sign type are recommended.

C.2 Directional Kiosk/ Map

- Provides overall area information, depicting walkways, specialty paths, trails and sidewalk systems.
- Kiosks would include color coded and map-referenced information, and could also include help phones as desired.
- One location for this sign type is currently recommended. Additional locations should be considered as public spaces are added.

D.1 Public Parking

- Includes identification of various transportation elements with directional signs to appropriate parking.
- No specific locations are recommended but would be identified based on future transit or public parking facilities

E.1 Regulatory signage

- Includes all ADA, stop, parking, speed signs.
- Freestanding poles and the back of the typically unfinished metal signs should be painted to match the tone and color of the sign hierarchy.
- There are 200 locations for signs of this type estimated in the plan.

Figure 9.3 on the following page, shows a graphic representation of each sign type described here.



9.0 – Wayfinding

9.3 – Hierarchy of signage types



10.0 – Implementation

Implementation activities described in this chapter support the city's priorities for public infrastructure investment. The intent of the chapter is to identify potential strategies and tools and describe a common understanding of investment priorities. It also describes how the City of Eden Prairie will focus their financial and staff resources to achieve the goals associated with the vision for the MCA.

Development Role: Public, Private or Joint Effort

The definition of public role, private market actions and joint efforts between public and private entities is critical to the MCA's success over the next decades.

The public sector's role can be categorized into three distinct areas. First, the city and other agencies have a role to play in changing and administering regulations that affect land development, business activity and use of public rights of way such as streets and utility corridors. Second, public agencies have a direct impact on the physical environment through design and construction of physical elements such as streets and highways, streetscapes and parks and other publicly-held property. Actions such as these are usually found within capital programming and budget plans for respective agencies at the city, county and state level. Finally, public agencies can play a role in influencing private actions if they adopt an active role in real estate transactions,

purchasing or selling land or helping finance projects that are seen to reinforce a public good.

Private market actions include reinvestment or land sales by current property owners and entry of other stakeholders into the market through land purchases. Larger market area dynamics, changing demographics and consumer preferences have a great influence over private market actions as does the cyclical effect of national macro economic trends.

Joint enterprises take many forms, but typically consist of a formal agreement between private and public entities as to the role, responsibility and risk associated with bringing a development project to reality. In some cases, the public role may be limited to making regulatory changes or allowing use of a portion of taxes generated by the new development to pay for desired improvements. In other cases, the public entity may take a more proactive and potentially risky role, such as committing public dollars to a project's gap financing before the new taxes have been generated or providing unique public realm features such as streetscape or public park improvements to help stimulate new development.

The MCA framework document recognizes the role of public infrastructure investments in supporting and enhancing the private development climate. However, one of the study's key assumptions has been that private sector land and development transactions will be the primary engine of change. A limited number of joint public-private efforts are further anticipated in order to realize the vision articulated in this document.

Public Funding Sources and Tools

The most likely funding tools that could be used to support public investment and otherwise stimulate private activity are listed below.

Proceeds from Sale of Surplus Municipal Property

The city currently owns developable property at Dell Road and Linwood Avenue, Mitchell Road and TH 5, and Columbine Road and Prairie Center Drive. Depending on real estate market conditions and specific details of sale transactions, the city will realize varying degrees of return on investments made in these properties. Proceeds from these sales are anticipated to be used for economic development activities with priority given to the MCA.

10.0 – Implementation

Housing Redevelopment Authority Levy

Eden Prairie’s Housing and Redevelopment Authority (HRA) has the authority to levy a limited percentage of property taxes. Currently, there is the potential to increase the levy to generate revenue to help fulfill the HRA’s goals. The counterbalancing effect on overall property tax burden should be evaluated by city officials.

Special Service District

Once established, a special service district allows cities to collect monies from commercial properties that support delivery of services and improvements in a targeted area. Eden Prairie has general statutory authority to create a special service district, as defined in Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 428A. Improvements that are not generally provided by the city can be financially supported by special service district monies. Typically, special service districts include physical investments in streetscapes and open spaces, and can also include maintenance (such as a higher level of snow removal) or other operations services (such as seasonal plantings).

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

This mechanism allows municipalities to capture tax dollars based on the additional value of new development to pay for certain public improvements and authorized development activities (land transactions, etc). The crucial element needed to establish a redevelopment TIF

district is structurally substandard buildings that meet a strictly interpreted definition of “blight.” Other types of TIF districts, such as renewal and economic development, different qualifying standards and timeframes. Housing TIF districts are intended to improve availability of affordable housing. All are potential tools for the city’s use.

Tax Abatement

Tax abatement functions somewhat differently than TIF in that it permits one of the tax-levying public entities, such as the City of Eden Prairie, to capture its own portion of taxes generated on a parcel (broadly defined as land and existing building value as well as the assessed value of the future use). Taxes that are levied by other public jurisdictions (county, school district) may also be captured with that entity’s approval. However, cities must work in partnership with other levy authorities to agree on the portion of taxes abated and the timeframe that the abatement district will exist. Taxes imposed by special taxing districts (e.g., watersheds or regional agencies) cannot be abated. Similarly, the state general property tax (on commercial/industrial and seasonal or recreational properties) cannot be abated.

Dedication of Right-of-Way and Open Space Corresponding to Private Development

The City may require dedication of street right-of-way and public parks or cash-in-lieu of park land in association with development and in accordance with state laws. Effectively such an arrangement would be equivalent to a land transaction.

Official documentation of any land dedicated to these purposes should be included with preliminary and final plats or registered land surveys filed with development applications submitted to the city.

Special Assessment

According to state law, cities may use ‘special assessments’ to levy additional fees against specific parcels to fund improvements that result in direct benefit to the parcels affected. “Benefit” is interpreted to mean “the increase in market value of the property.” Otherwise, there are no restrictions on what types of activities can be supported by special assessment funding. Special assessments may be structured so that property owners are paying all or a portion of the total project costs and the public entity involved assumes any remainder.

Grants from Regional, State or Federal sources

Grant programs offer funds to qualifying projects on a yearly basis. Dollars are competitively awarded for development and redevelopment projects throughout the seven county area from the Metropolitan Council's Livable Communities fund.

Other grant programs, such as Hennepin County's Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Bond Funds, provide support to projects meeting key criteria associated with increasing development density and transit ridership on designated Transit Corridors.

Federal Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds typically favor projects that improve transportation for nonmotorized traffic, such as pedestrians and bicyclist travelers. Local dollar match (local is defined as any source other than federal) is required. Projects are ranked at the regional level through the metropolitan planning organization (Metropolitan Council) and awards are made for future year implementation.

Leveraging Other Agency Funds

The need to assign local matching funds to many state and federal spending suggests that available funding from Municipal State Aid (MSA) or other state sources should be strategically managed to coordinate programmed infrastructure investments.

This can be achieved by sorting likely implementation actions that would draw on these funds according to timeframes described below and referencing this to capital programming and budget planning in Eden Prairie to complement private development activity and investment.

Timeframe

The indication of timelines, in a near- and long-term timeframe, has been considered in light of likely private actions. Near-term has been defined as within seven years of adoption of the plan (up to 2013); long-term is consequently understood to mean eight years or longer (2014 onwards).

Near-Term Initiatives: Public Sector

The most important near-term actions from the public sector revolve around better defining the community's objectives for specific redevelopment sites and implementing transportation infrastructure projects that respond to locations where traffic (vehicular, pedestrian and bicycles) is operating poorly.

1.0 Land Use/ Community Development Studies and Regulatory Changes

1.1 Town Center Market Study

Market feasibility of the Town Center concept should be investigated in greater detail. A market research firm with residential, commercial and mixed-use expertise should undertake an assessment to understand development factors, such as market area, land cost, demand and supportable square footage.

1.2 Detailed Physical Redevelopment Study

The physical feasibility of redevelopment on a number of catalyst sites has not been studied within this planning effort. Additional effort is needed to understand potential development character and capacity of these sites measured in terms of gross square footage, parking provision, access from existing or planned roadways and consistency with existing or recommended zoning regulations. City staff will determine which sites should be studied and should contract with a site planning/land use/parking consultant team to assess potential at these locations.



10.0 – Implementation

1.3 Financial Feasibility Analysis & Strategy

Specific parcels as defined by city staff for physical redevelopment feasibility should be further considered for financial feasibility. This would require assumptions about market conditions (demand); city contributions or available funding tools. The result would be a description of sources, uses and any identifiable gap for a limited number of potential redevelopment projects and sites.

1.4 Regulatory Changes

The concept plans and principles included in the MCA framework plan should be incorporated officially into a new Comprehensive Plan chapter that addresses redevelopment. This will require action by the City Council.

Land use and zoning designations within the Town Center area should be changed, if warranted and contingent on the results of the above-noted market study and other feasibility analysis.

1.5 Wayfinding Ad-Hoc Committee

A number of interest groups, including business owners, public agencies and residents, should serve as an ad-hoc committee to direct general implementation of the wayfinding strategy identified in the plan Naming, branding or design identity and sequence of projects should be among the foremost priorities of this group.

1.6 Streetscape/Urban Design Framework

A concise effort will provide the city with needed information about how to implement streetscapes or urban design measures that are cost-effective, sensitive to operations and maintenance concerns and provide distinct design identity to the MCA. The streetscape/urban design framework would be structured around three main tasks:

- a) Identifying any past problems with existing streetscape materials or designs based on conversation with city crews who maintain them.
- b) Identifying issues identification to match the stated goals of the streetscape to design efforts.
- c) Designing streetscapes that identify physical elements, themes, materials and cost estimates.

2.0 Transportation/ Public Realm Projects

2.1 Pedestrian/Bicycle Trail Segments and Intersection Improvements

Analysis of the existing trails system is underway, led by city Public Works and Parks and Recreation staff. The intent is to assess which trails are effective and highly used, which connect prime destinations and where there are gaps or inadequacies in the system

beyond what has been identified in this document. The recently approved bond referendum has specific reference to a trails component, and it is anticipated that trail system improvements could be underway within the near-term horizon.

2.2 Realignment of Singletree Lane/ West 78th Street

Planning and design of the realigned Singletree Lane/ West 78th Street intersection is recommended to commence as soon as possible. Access to driveways is likely to change in the vicinity, and some land acquisition may be necessary to achieve this goal. Construction should take place as soon as funding is secured.

2.3 Outer Ring Road Streetscape and Landscape Improvements

These projects would be undertaken in coordination with work completed by the Wayfinding Ad-Hoc Committee as well as the Streetscape/ Urban Design Framework plan. This is critical given the central role the Outer Ring Road has in wayfinding and access to major MCA destinations.

2.4 TH 212 Aesthetic Treatment (Streetscape and Landscape)

Access to property, a high degree of variation in signage and grade differentials along Flying

Cloud Drive (TH 212) fuel the need for streetscape and landscape treatment. Again, the streetscape should be undertaken in view of the recommendations of the Ad-Hoc Wayfinding Committee and the streetscape/urban design framework plan.

2.5 Intersection Geometric/Signal Improvements

Some intersections are functioning at less than desirable levels due to the need to make adjustments to geometrics and signal timing. These relatively limited cost adjustments can be made to realize better performance for traffic flow in key areas, such as simultaneously timing the signal cycles on TH 212 between Technology Drive and Prairie Center Drive. Improvements to the Preserve Boulevard and Anderson Lakes Parkway intersection are also recommended in the near term.

Near-Term Initiatives – Joint Public and Private Sectors

1.0 Initial Wayfinding Signage

As mentioned previously, the Ad Hoc Wayfinding Committee will be charged with determining additional detail and timeframe for implementation of the signage systems and orientation tools called for as part of this plan. Due to the fact that businesses are key stakeholders whose patrons, suppliers and visitors rely on the wayfinding system, their involvement is essential in the design, accessibility and use of the icons and other

directional elements that will eventually be used in the MCA. Cost-sharing of improvements, perhaps utilizing a special services district is anticipated.

2.0 Mall Ring Road Initial Improvements

In the near term, adjustments to the intersections of the internal mall road with access drives from Prairie Center Drive or TH 212 will assist with congestion and driver confusion at these entry points. This work would be undertaken by the Mall's management as the intersections are located on private property. However, signal timing coordination on the principal public approach routes may be required, involving the participation of City staff. The City may also help with other design considerations.

2.1 Catalyst Redevelopment Sites

Town Center Mixed Use – Some redevelopment is expected in the Town Center in the near-term due to current availability of some properties. The density will be determined pending the results of a market feasibility study funded by the City. The financial analysis will help determine potential need for gap financing to help achieve the City's goals. Town Center Park - Negotiations with current owners (Rosemount Technologies and Emerson) to secure future purchase options (right of first refusal, etc) should be welcomed.

Additional Housing – Marketing of additional housing could commence, once regulatory and policy approval accepting higher density housing was obtained.

2.2 New Street Network in Town Center

In cases where new development occurs, street corridors should be developed to improve connectivity and overall traffic flow. These projects include a continuous north-south route, as well as one-block connections for east-west movement. New streets should be dedicated as part of development approvals.

2.3 Other Traffic and Roadway Improvements

Some improvements outside the town center are recommended in the near-term as development occurs in the vicinity. Examples include the extension of Medcom Boulevard and a signal at Franlo Road and Prairie Center Drive.

Long-Term Initiatives – Public Sector

The initiatives described below are noted as crucial to implementing the vision described in the Framework Plan. Some of these activities are contingent on other achievements, such as increased population and job density and continued retail vitality. They are listed not in order of priority but by issue area.

10.0 – Implementation

LRT Station Specific Development and Infrastructure

The extent of possible transit oriented development within the Town Center will rely principally on obtaining commitments to build a LRT station at the site. This process is linked to the Southwest LRT corridor project timeline and achieving consensus about station location and role among City decision makers.

District Parking (Ramps, Surface and On-Street Management)

Parking is likely to be an essential supporting function of all development within the MCA in the near term. In the long term, providing parking at current day ratios may not hold the same relevance and contribution to overall economic vitality in the MCA as other transit modes (LRT, a shuttle circulator service) become increasingly successful.

In the near term, greater efficiencies and savings could be gained by organizing district parking that serves the general population interested in shopping, visiting or working in the MCA, through renewed management of existing facilities or constructing new. This initiative may become more appealing in the short term as land costs continue to rise. Public involvement may be desired to design and construct the project, maintain physical accessibility and manage costs.

Grade-Separated Pedestrian Crossings

As traffic volumes continue to grow, design considerations will steadily expand the size of key intersections. An example is along TH 212, in the vicinity of the Eden Prairie Center. It may become more advantageous to construct grade separated crossings that make the pedestrian connection between prime destinations more convenient, comfortable and safer than traversing multi-lane intersections at grade level.

Ultimate Mall Ring Road Design

As the mall expands and traffic increases a one-way directional flow, on the mall ring road should be seriously considered. Access should be designed at signalized intersections which should also include safe pedestrian crossings. Signing for wayfinding should continue to be evaluated and implemented.

TH 212//Prairie Center Drive Grade Separation

Unless there is a significant shift to other transportation modes, Prairie Center Drive and TH 212 is likely in the long term to need to be physically separated in order for traffic flow to remain acceptable. A project such as this would spur changes to parcel access and potentially land uses in the immediate vicinity. Aesthetics would be an additional concern, as would the need to minimize

additional right-of-way acquisition as land values continue to climb in the MCA.

Resolution of Regional Access (I-494 and TH 212)

- As the Framework Plan's Transportation chapter (Chapter 7) describes, the assumption is that minor improvements to signal timing and intersection geometrics on the outer ring road as well as implementation of the wayfinding system identified in Chapter Nine would result in significant benefits and address many of the concerns related to improved access from regional roads.
- In coordination with Mn/DOT and Hennepin County, the long-term horizon foresees new ramps providing access to north and southbound I-494 as well as TH 212. This is shown in Figure 7.4 of the document.

Ultimate Wayfinding Design

As new roads are constructed and access changes are made, wayfinding signage will need to be reevaluated. Final implementation of wayfinding signing and monumentation should be implemented as improvements are completed.



framework plan

Eden Prairie Major Center Area Study

Appendix A Planning Principles

Appendix B Traffic Analysis Technical Memorandum

Copies of both Appendices are available upon request. Contact the City of Eden Prairie's Community Development Department at 952.949.8413



