



## Chapter 10

# Special Study Areas Plan

**D**etailed Special Study Area Plans for the Martin Drive and Crosstown Industrial areas have been developed in conjunction with the key elements of *Aspire Eden Prairie 2040*. These plans provide detailed concepts and strategies for land use, development, transportation, and other improvements to these crucial areas of Eden Prairie. The Special Study Area Plans are intended to provide clear direction for future development and reinvestment in these areas including site-specific application of various planning principles.



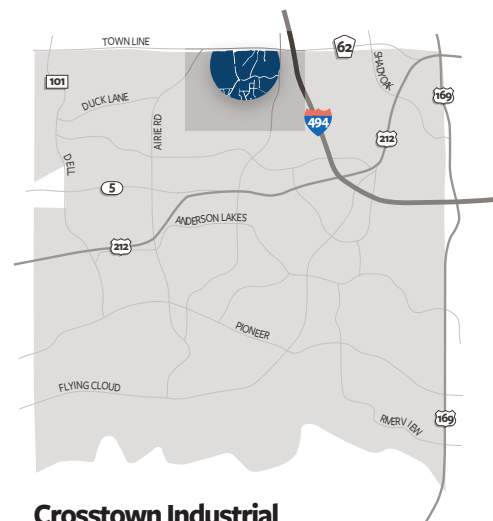


# Crosstown Industrial Special Study Area

Aspire Eden Prairie 2040

Located at the northern edge of Eden Prairie, the Crosstown Industrial Area provides a unique mix of industrial and business uses in a relatively isolated portion of the City. Heavier industrial uses on Industrial Drive are buffered by the Twin Cities & Western Railroad to the west and the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail to the east. The area also includes commercial service, industrial flex tech, and office uses that line W 62nd Street and Carlson Drive.

It is important the City and this Plan acknowledge the importance of the industrial uses in this area, and recognize that these uses are effectively screened and buffered from adjacent areas, providing a location that minimizes negative impacts on surrounding areas. No transformational change in land use is anticipated within the next ten years, as the uses are generally well located, effectively buffered, and sufficiently provide needed goods and services for the Eden Prairies community. Beyond the 10 to 20 year horizon, redevelopment may occur along Carlson Drive, but industrial uses will likely remain along Industrial Drive. The Plan identifies planning considerations that are influencing the area, and focuses on the key recommendations that will improve the success and character of the area over time. It also provides land use recommendations in the event that redevelopment occurs.



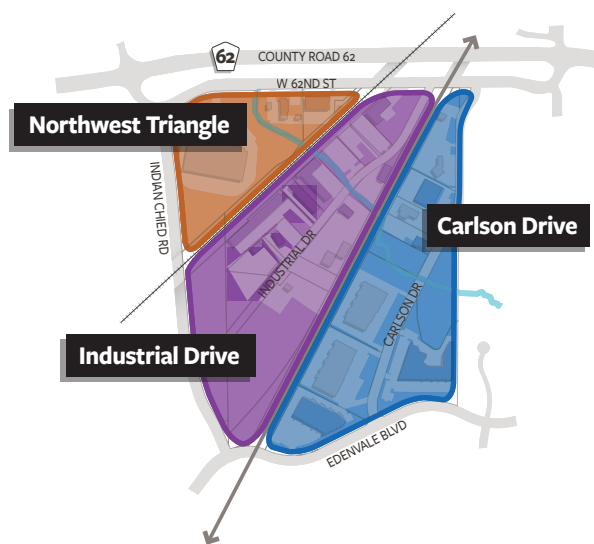
**Crosstown Industrial Location Map**

## Area Framework

The Crosstown Industrial Area can be easily broken down into three distinct functional areas—each adjacent to another, unique in its character, and requiring its own approach to improvement. The three unique areas include: 1) Northwest Triangle, 2) Industrial Drive, and 3) Carlson Drive.

### Northwest Triangle – Commercial Service and Transit

The Northwest Triangle area consists of three uses, all fronting W. 62nd Street—two of the uses are automobile service uses and the other is the Southwest Metro Transit facility. This area is not intensely developed and has an area that provides some topographic change south of the Transit facility, which may provide a development opportunity in the future. This Northwest Triangle area is not anticipated to see any major or transitional redevelopment in the next seven to 10 years, and only limited development in 10 to 20 years. The greatest redevelopment opportunity would happen if the transit facility relocated.



### Industrial Drive – Industrial

The heavier industrial uses along Industrial Drive are not found in other areas of the City, and availability of these types of sites are limited within the region. The industrial uses are well buffered from adjacent areas and pose minimal negative impact on adjacent properties. Although little to no landscaping or screening exists within the area, its isolated location limits visibility from adjacent properties of public rights-of-way. The primary objective for this area is to support its overall industrial characterization and mix of uses, evaluate the possibility of adjusting regulations to improve aesthetics, and for owners to adjust regulations to allow existing and future industrial uses to thrive in an appropriate manner.

### Carlson Drive – Business

Uses along Carlson Drive and W 62nd Street include several businesses that contribute to an overall business park-like setting. This includes larger well-maintained office buildings on well-landscaped sites, and some smaller sites with contractor services and limited outdoor storage. Land uses generally include office, light manufacturing, production, small-scale distribution, and commercial services. Based on existing market conditions and the level of improvement on existing parcels, short-term redevelopment potential within the area is essentially limited to the smaller commercial service parcels and the one smaller office use on the west side of Carlson Drive at the northern end near W 62nd Street. Over the seven to 10 year time frame, redevelopment of the smaller commercial service properties should reflect the use, intensity, and overall character of the existing development on the east side of Carlson Drive.

## Key Considerations

This section includes the key considerations that helped to shape the rationale and recommendations for the Crosstown Industrial Area. These considerations, provided in no particular order, reflect the foundational understanding of conditions and influences that drive short-, mid-, and long-term planning.

### Market Realities

There is a need for the types of industrial uses, commercial service uses, and business uses that exist in the Crosstown Industrial Area. Many of the industrial uses and commercial services uses are difficult to locate due to negative impacts on adjacent areas. This area accommodates these necessary and needed uses in a manner that eliminates incompatibility issues.

### Lack of Incremental Transition Opportunities – Lack of Room to Expand

Due to the small lots sizes leading to close proximity of one industrial use to another, natural barriers and the limited ability to expand to new areas, there is limited ability for the Industrial Drive area to transition to nonindustrial uses. As a result of these limitations, parcel-by-parcel/incremental transition from industrial to nonindustrial is challenging for the area.

### Necessity & Desirability For Industrial Uses

Industrial uses are important and can provide needed goods and services to a community. Recognizing the value of the industrial uses along Industrial Drive, this Plan seeks to reinforce Industrial Drive for industrial uses and prioritizes actions to further improve the area as industrial.

### Limited Redevelopment Opportunities

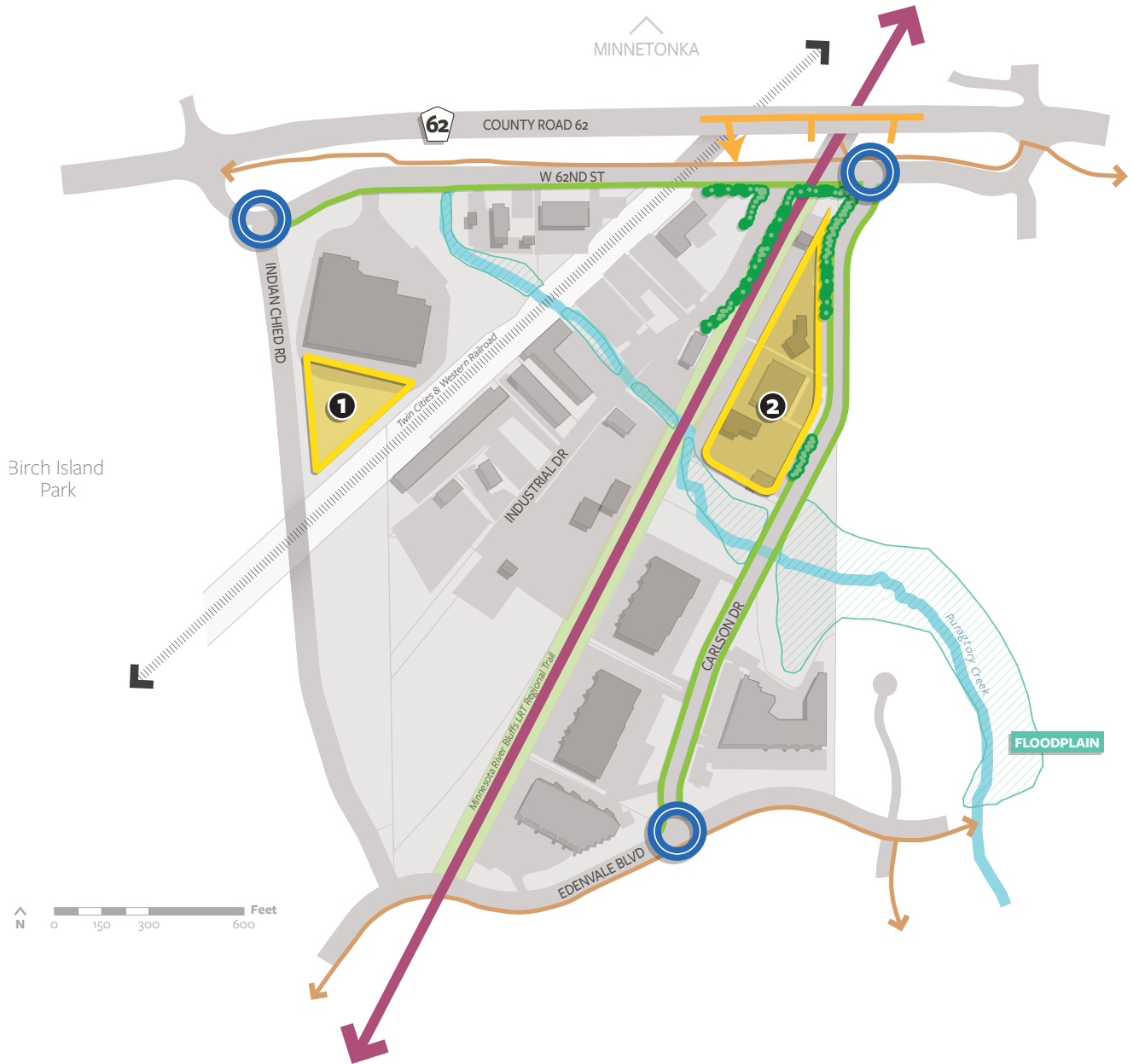
Through the entire Crosstown Industrial Area, there are limited redevelopment opportunities. These limitations are due to longer-term redevelopment that likely requires assembly of properties and redevelopment for the commercial service properties at the north end of Carlson Drive, and possible development of the vacant land south of the transit facility.

### Industrial Use Buffering / Isolation

The industrial uses along Industrial Drive are buffered extremely well from surrounding areas, essentially isolating any incompatibility uses from surrounding development. With its isolation and buffering, this location is ideal for a concentration of industrial uses.

# Improvement Plan

## Crosstown Industrial Special Study Area



### Study Area Improvements

-  Opportunity Site
-  Existing Regional Trail
-  Existing Local Trail
-  Proposed Pedestrian Crossing Improvement
-  Proposed Sidewalk
-  Improve Appearance from CR 62
-  Install Landscape Screening

# Special Study Area Improvement Recommendations

Identified below are the improvement recommendations for the Crosstown Industrial Special Study Area. The improvement recommendations cover a wide range of topics and are intended to collectively improve the area over the near and long-term.

## Outdoor Storage

Currently, outdoor storage is not permitted in the I-2 Industrial Park District. Some of the existing commercial service uses located on the smaller properties along the north end of Carlson Drive have unscreened outdoor storage as part of the business operations. As an alternative, the City could consider addressing this situation through zoning to provide design standards for outdoor storage, including screening, thereby accommodating existing successful businesses and improving the overall character and appearance of the area.

## Sidewalks

Through redevelopment efforts or as consistent with the 2014 Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan, the City should review the possibility of constructing sidewalks on both sides of Carlson Drive to increase pedestrian safety and promote connectivity. With the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail and the SW Regional Trail running through and near the area, pedestrian and bicycle safety and mobility are essential. Sidewalks along Industrial Drive are not necessary.

## Enhance Trail Connections

Given the presence of the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail and the SW Regional Trail, opportunities should be explored to further enhance connections to the trails from surrounding areas.



**Example:** Sidewalk (top photo) and an existing trailhead found along the LRT Regional Trail (bottom photo).



## Improve Appearance from CR 62

### Improve Pedestrian Crossings

Through redevelopment efforts or as consistent with the *2014 Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan*, the City should evaluate intersections of Carlson Drive and W 62nd Street as well as Carlson Drive and Edenvale Boulevard to include high-visibility crossings and appropriate signage. This Crosstown Industrial Area is an employment hub, therefore convenient and safe pedestrian access is important to better accommodate the adjacent residential areas and others who may be walking or biking through the area.

### Improve Appearance from CR 62

The City should work with property owners through a zoning or development review process to install significant landscaping at two primary locations in order to improve the appearance of the area as viewed from CR 62. This can be achieved by screening direct line of sight to unsightly industrial and commercial service areas. The first area in need of landscape screening is the area fronting W 62nd Street west of Carlson Drive, and the other at the point where Industrial Drive bends away from the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail. Both of these points are unattractive, and easily visible from CR 62.

### Carlson Drive Redevelopment Opportunity Site

The four northern most sites on the west side of Carlson Drive are home to well-established businesses, with some having made recent significant investments to their properties. There is the possible long-term opportunity for property assembly and redevelopment of the smaller sites along Carlson Drive. Should the opportunity arise in the future, consideration should be given to assembling all or a combination of these parcels to accommodate a larger industrial flex tech development similar to the development on the east side of Carlson Drive.





### MPCA Opportunity Site

The area south of the Southwest Transit Facility is a brownfield site as designated by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency. The site is an opportunity for new development or the expanded operations of Southwest Transit, which may require expanded operational space in the future. The City should work with the property owner and MPCA to remediate the site and make it available for redevelopment or expansion of the existing Southwest Metro facility.

### Industrial Drive Area Transformation

A transformational redevelopment of the properties along Industrial Drive may be a long-term possibility, given the right conditions. For such redevelopment to occur, parcel assembly, relocation or removal of existing businesses, and the remediation of any environmental issues would be required. Redevelopment to uses other than the existing heavier industrial uses would likely only happen if none of the “heavy” industrial uses remained. If such an opportunity presented itself in the future, the Industrial Drive Area should be developed as a business park/research park use in a campus-like setting. The size of the area, along with its more isolated location and setting, would make for an attractive business park location. Such a development could incorporate an attractive and heavily landscaped campus setting, with strong pedestrian orientation, and connections to the adjacent regional bike trail.

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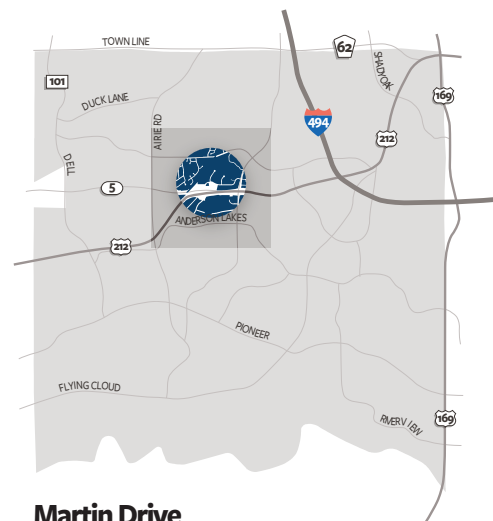


# Martin Drive Special Study Area

Aspire Eden Prairie 2040

Located north of US-212 and west of Mitchell Road, this area includes properties along Martin Drive, Corporate Way, Commerce Way, and a portion of Venture Lane, essentially forming a contained mixed business park setting. The area is bound by US-212 on the south, Mitchell Road to the east, Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail to the west, and Purgatory Creek and the Bent Creek Golf Club to the north. In its current state, the Martin Drive area includes a mix of business, office, light industrial, retail, personal service, fitness, and commercial service uses.

The areas north of Martin Drive will likely remain for the near to mid-term primarily a more typical business park, due to the viable existing businesses and lack of visibility and access necessary for commercial or retail activity. To accommodate the previously listed uses in this area, address the character of the area, and create opportunity sites for uses that may not be compatible with other land uses, the Flex Service land use designation was created. The overall objective is to further transform this area into one with a diverse and innovative mix of uses that are better suited in the Martin Drive area than in other parts of the City, such as Town Center, TOD, and GTA. The areas fronting Mitchell Road and those areas south of Martin Drive along US-212 have a greater opportunity to transition into uses other than traditional business park uses, possibly including residential, mixed use, retail, and services uses. In the near-term (7 to 10 years) major redevelopment may be unlikely, but in the long-term (10 to 20 years) significant redevelopment is likely due to multiple factors such as change in property ownership and parcel assemblage. The exception to near-term development is the vacant MnDOT property on the southwest corner of Venture Lane and Martin Drive. This property has the potential to develop on a more immediate timeline.



**Martin Drive  
Location Map**

# Area Framework

The Martin Drive Area can be broken down into three distinct functional areas that make it easier to define potential moving forward. Development opportunity, access and visibility, and stability of existing uses and character significantly influence the current and future functionality of the different areas. Essentially there are perimeter transition areas and an interior more stable area. The three unique areas include: 1) Mitchell Road Frontage, 2) US 212 Frontage, and 3) Martin Drive Northside.

## Mitchell Road Frontage

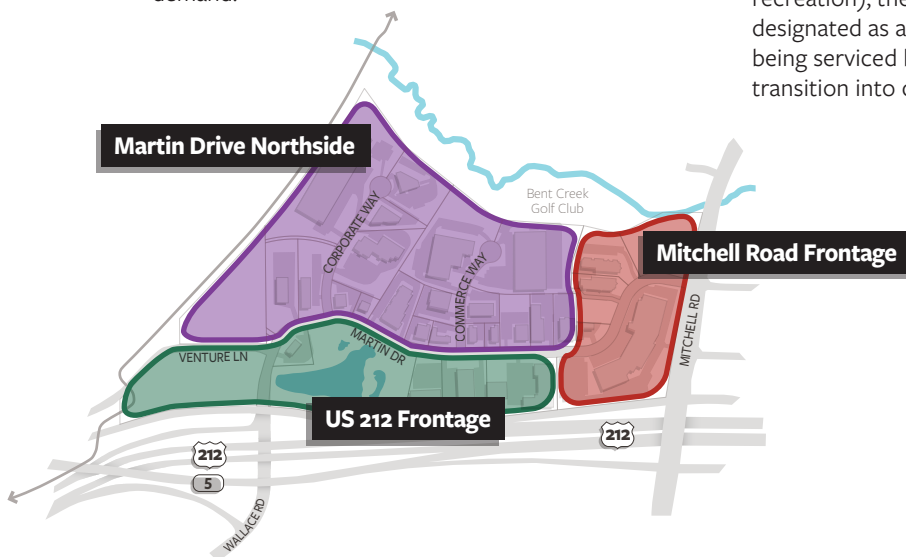
This portion of the Martin Drive Area has frontage directly on Mitchell Road, providing excellent visibility and access. The area north of Martin Drive contains properties that are considerably smaller in size than many of the properties to the west. The wooded nature of the site, the topography, and the proximity to the creek and golf course to the north make this area a prime candidate for multifamily residential development in the future. The area south of Martin Drive (Lund Food Property) has frontage and visibility from both Mitchell Road and US 212. This a unique advantage and positions the area for potential mixed-commercial or mixed-residential development in the future. As the existing Lund Food facility is important, and Lund Food a key business and employer in the region, redevelopment of this type will likely occur long-term, but the timetable could be accelerated under the right market conditions. These conditions could include Lund Food moving to a different property in the City or closing, assemblage of it and adjacent properties, or a large-scale change in market demand.

## US 212 Frontage

The properties that run along the south side of the area, fronting US 212 and Highway 5 provide a range of opportunity and conditions, including a vacant site south of Venture Lane ready for development, a large open space/detention site that will remain open space, and a run of four adjacent existing businesses. The five lots south of Martin Drive consist of commercial/retail uses with approximately 236,000 square feet of building space, of which only 100,000 square feet is currently occupied. Due to its location, this area has the long-term potential to capitalize on the excellent visibility and access from US 212. This US 212 visibility distinguishes this area from other properties. The vacant MnDOT site located between Venture Lane and Highway 5 presents a current opportunity for development, while other frontage properties with existing businesses have the possibility for redevelopment over the long-term. Buildings on these frontage properties should be located close to US 212 with parking along Martin Drive, ensuring that it is appropriately screened. Collectively, over time, this area could transition into a mix of uses taking better advantage of frontage and visibility from US 212.

## Martin Drive Northside

As an established and stable business park, the more central area north of Martin Drive is poised to remain as such. Lacking any visibility or frontage along a major roadway, and with the challenge of multiple property ownership, the likelihood of the area transitioning into another type of land use is remote. While the area should continue to provide a wide range of compatible uses (office, light industry, commercial service, auto service, and indoor recreation), the area should continue to be designated as a mixed-business-park setting, ideally being serviced by the perimeter areas as they transition into commercial and/or residential uses.



# Key Considerations

This section includes the key considerations that helped to shape the rationale and recommendations for the Martin Drive Area. These considerations reflect the foundational understanding of conditions and influences that drive short-, mid-, and long-term planning.

## Market Realities

There is a current and projected market demand for the types of business park uses that currently exist, and also projected market demand within the City for commercial, retail, residential, and other uses discussed and recommended for this area. The Mitchell Road Frontage area identified for multifamily residential uses are appropriate and will help the City meet the housing needs of current and future populations. And while there is a need for additional commercial development (goods and services), the City should prioritize the retail components primarily in concentrated areas already designated for such uses, such as the Town Center area, rather than establishing new concentrations of retail. That said, some commercial development should be considered as part of larger redevelopment efforts in the long-term for the Mitchell Road Frontage areas, and in the short-term for the MnDOT property at Martin Drive and Venture Lane.

## Land Use Compatibility and Development Flexibility

In general, the existing land use characterization of the area is primarily business park, consisting of commercial service and light industrial uses. For the most part, this flex service land use mix is very compatible with other nearby or adjacent uses, including residential. Therefore, the range of development and redevelopment uses are largely driven by market capacity, site capacity, and the desirability of various uses. It is this general compatibility that can accommodate almost equally the development of business, commercial, retail, office, and residential uses, giving the area greater flexibility in development potential.

## Limited Development/Redevelopment Opportunities

The opportunity site for near-term development opportunity is the MnDOT property at Martin Drive and Venture Lane. As noted previously, the general compatibility of the area allows for greater flexibility in accommodating a range of appropriate uses and development types in the future. Redevelopment in the area is expected to be a long-range proposition (10 to 20 years), due market conditions, usability of structures and redevelopment that may include parcel assembly. While any site is a potential candidate for redevelopment, the eastern portions of the area along Mitchell Road (and to a lesser degree the properties facing US 212) are considered candidates for redevelopment of uses not reflective of the current business park character.

## Capitalizing on Visibility and Access

Although many business park uses do not need or even desire visibility on a major roadway, it is the convenient, direct access, and high visibility that provides increased development potential to sites along the perimeter of the area, particularly those sites fronting on Mitchell Road, but also improving redevelopment potential for properties facing US 212. With high visibility and convenient easy, direct access, sites can better accommodate market viable uses such as retail, personal service, and convenience commercial, taking full advantage of higher traffic volumes as a potential customer base.

## Recognizing the Difference between Retail Centers and Serving Neighborhoods

Although the plan acknowledges the long-term and near-term potential of sites to possibly accommodate commercial, retail, and service use, it is important to recognize that this area is not intended to become a new commercial-area concentration within the community. This plan does not recommend spreading retail out of the designated and existing retail centers, but instead seeks to establish smaller neighborhood goods/service areas, serving local neighborhoods, and providing locations for uses not compatible for other areas of the community.

# Improvement Plan

## Martin Drive Special Study Area



### Study Area Improvements

-  Opportunity Site
-  Encourage Traffic Calming
-  Existing Regional Trail
-  Potential Trailhead Location
-  Existing Local Trail
-  Proposed Sidewalk
-  Proposed Pedestrian Intersection Improvement

# Special Study Area Improvement Recommendations

Identified below are the improvement recommendations for the Martin Drive Special Study Area. The improvement recommendations cover a wide range of topics and are intended to collectively improve the area over the near and long-term.

## Increase Zoning Flexibility

The majority of the Martin Drive Area is currently zoned I-2 Industrial Park. The City should consider allowing flexibility in terms of the uses and/or performance standards allowed through zoning in order to accommodate a wider range of compatible uses and performance standards.

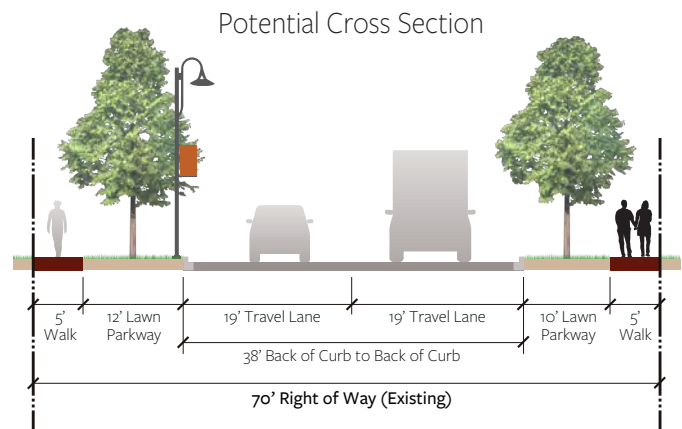
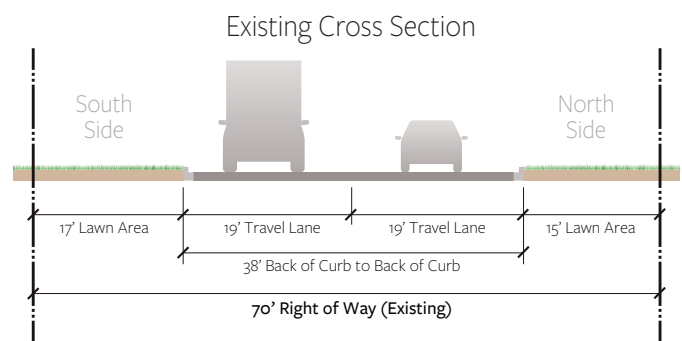
## Install Sidewalks and Improved Crosswalks

Consistent with the 2014 *Pedestrian and Bicycle Plan* and as redevelopment occurs, the City should strive to improve walkability within the area by installing sidewalks along both sides of Martin Drive, Corporate Way, and Commerce Way, and improve the pedestrian crossings at key intersections.

## Reconfigure Martin Drive Cross Section

As the City moves forward with sidewalk and trail improvements along Martin Drive consideration shall be given to reallocating some of the Martin Drive pavement space. The width of the road is currently 38 feet and that space could potentially be utilized to provide room for sidewalk and trail improvements or for one-street bike lane(s).

### Martin Drive Cross Section





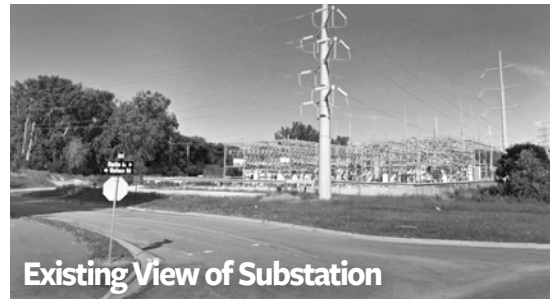
**View of Substation After Installing Landscape Screen**

### Improved Transit Service and Bus Stops

The City will continue to monitor and coordinate with SW Transit to determine the service needs of the Martin Drive Area. SW Transit Route 698 travels near the area, but does not include any stops. Bus stops and shelters could be considered for appropriate locations within the area.

### Screen the Northern States Power Company Substation

The substation is a necessary and vital infrastructure component and it is not likely to be relocated. Screening of this facility is important to mitigate the negative visual impact on surrounding properties. Of particular importance is the need to screen the southern edge of the facility along Venture Lane in anticipation of redevelopment of the vacant MnDOT property.



**Existing View of Substation**





### **Building Location**

As redevelopment occurs and uses transition, buildings should be located up to the street with parking behind the buildings. Streetscaping should also be incorporated to improve the aesthetics of the area and a provide cohesive character.

### **Establish Outdoor Gathering Place**

As part of development and trail improvements, small outdoor seating area should be evaluated for construction along Martin Drive at the north end of the MnDOT open space/detention site. The area could be improved with benches, a walking path, lighting, and other amenities to create a small seating and gathering area for employees and visitors to the area.

### **Intersection Improvement at Martin Drive and Venture Land**

This intersection should be reviewed for possible modifications to improve safety. Northbound and southbound traffic on Martin Drive are through movements not required to stop, causing safety concerns for pedestrians and motorists. The need to review the intersection becomes more pertinent with redevelopment and development of the MnDOT property.

### **Trail Connectivity**

Stronger connections to the existing Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail should be considered, possibly including a trailhead on the north side of Venture Lane west of the Northern States Power Company substation. The trail could also include an additional connection to the area via Corporate Way. Improved connectivity should also be provided to the local trail that runs along the north side of US 212, along the southern edge of the area, by providing a direct connection to Martin Drive.



## MnDOT Property Development Opportunity Site

This vacant, five-acre MnDOT property is a priority development opportunity for the area. Located between Venture Land and W 78th Street, this large site is heavily wooded and provides a desirable setting for new development. The site can appropriately accommodate a range of uses including residential, mixed use, commercial, and business. Specific opportunities include a brewery with a taproom and a co-working space for startups. Given the size of the site, multiple uses could be accommodated. Any development should be oriented toward Venture Lane and provide a connection to the Minnesota River Bluffs LRT Regional Trail.



## Mitchell Road Frontage Redevelopment Opportunity Site

Parcels located in the eastern portion of the area along Mitchell Road should be explored for long-term development opportunity that can transition from light industrial to other land uses. The nearly four-acre area north of Martin Drive provides mature trees and a nice tree canopy, and is well suited for multifamily residential development adjacent to the golf course and Purgatory Creek ravine to the north. A floodplain covers part of the property, which may impact redevelopment opportunities. The area south of Martin Drive is currently home to a highly valued corporate entity, but if relocation of the facility occurs in the future, the area could be redeveloped with a mix of commercial, service, residential, and more. Desired uses include vertical mixed use with ground-floor retail and upper-floor residential. Such a development would complement the Martin Blu development across Mitchell Road and provide additional commercial uses to area employees and residents.

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