



Chapter 5

Economic Competitiveness

Recruiting and retaining a range of businesses, supporting quality workforce training and education, and cultivating entrepreneurship are crucial components of promoting a diverse economy and strengthening Eden Prairie’s economic competitiveness. This chapter will review goals, economic drivers, opportunity markets, and business development strategies to strengthen Eden Prairie’s economic competitiveness. It is meant to guide the City’s economic growth through reinvestment in the community’s established commercial and industrial areas while improving the business climate.

“[Economic Competitiveness is important to Eden Prairie] to maintain a city that attracts businesses, provides quality services, and an environment where people want to work, live, and play.”

*Participant, Aspire Eden Prairie
2040 Focus Group*

Goals, Objectives & Strategies

As noted in Chapter 1, the City engaged residents, businesses and stakeholders throughout the comprehensive planning process. The goals and objectives outlined below were developed based on the City's robust community engagement and goals from other documents, such as the 2008 *Comprehensive Plan* and *Strategic Plan for Housing & Economic Development*. The City's primary goal is to address economic competitiveness comprehensively by focusing and prioritizing the goals and objectives listed below.

Goal 1: *Maintain and Grow Eden Prairie's Diverse Economy by Retaining and Attracting Businesses.*

Objective 1a

Facilitate Business Growth and Attract New Businesses.

Strategies

1. Review procedures and regulations to ensure a timely and responsive review process.
2. Partner with local and state agencies to provide financing for business growth and expansion.
3. Help keep property taxes reasonable .
4. Provide co-location or co-working spaces to promote entrepreneurs and start-ups.
5. Promote a mix of land uses that provide different space opportunities for businesses.

Objective 1b:

Ensure Adequate Workforce Housing.

Strategies:

1. Implement strategies identified in Housing Chapter.

Objective 1c

Support Business Efforts to Find and Retain Qualified Workers.

Strategies:

1. Establish and maintain regular lines of communication with local businesses to stay informed about expansion plans and service needs.
2. Partner with Chamber of Commerce, local and state agencies, and education institutions on workforce development initiatives.

Goal 2: *Maintain and Increase Eden Prairie’s Competitive Advantage in the Region.*

Objective 2a

Provide Adequate Transportation Infrastructure to Increase Mobility.

Strategies

1. Support Construction of the METRO Green Line Extension.
2. Work with Transportation Providers for Last Mile Service from transit stops.
3. Work with property owners to provide comprehensive trail and walk system and safe crossings.

Objective 2b

Encourage Unique, Attractive Destinations.

Strategies

1. Facilitate approval of taprooms and tasting rooms in commercial areas.
2. Facilitate development of a full-service hotel with meeting space and entertainment uses on key redevelopment/infill sites.
3. Facilitate walkable, mixed use development with shops and restaurants in Town Center, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), and Mixed-Use areas.
4. Ensure industrial, office, and commercial properties exhibit the character of Eden Prairie through appropriate site design, building design and landscaping.

Goal 3: *Promote a Sense of Community.*

Objective 3a

Improve Awareness of Eden Prairie’s Locale and Attractions.

Strategies

1. Create unique City entry monument signs at key locations.
2. Continue branding bridges and water towers.
3. Support and expand the notion of Eden Prairie as a destination through strategic investment and promotion of the City’s numerous recreation and open space amenities.
4. Keep marketing and improve exposure of the strong Eden Prairie brand.
5. Facilitate community events.

Goal 4: *Maintain high-quality, healthy living and working environments in all residential and commercial areas of the City.*

Objective 4a

Encourage sustainable practices among existing and new businesses as they grow and develop.

Strategies

1. Reach out to existing commercial and industrial businesses to discuss their sustainability practices and additional opportunities.
2. Develop a technical toolkit for businesses to use as an index of easy sustainable practices.

Economic Drivers

It is important to understand what a community's economic drivers are – understanding what fuels and grows a community's economy helps prioritize and leverage resources appropriately. In 2017, according to the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), the top two industry categories and economic drivers in Eden Prairie were retail and wholesale trade, and professional and business services, representing 50 percent of all businesses. Other large industry categories include financial activities, education and health services, and leisure and hospitality, which together represent about 30 percent of all businesses.

Retail

Eden Prairie has a very large, diverse, and robust retail marketplace. Based on 2018 City assessing data, Eden Prairie has a total of 4.3 million square feet of retail space that includes a broad variety of general merchandise, grocery, restaurants, home improvement, apparel, sporting goods, electronics, and many other related stores. At 1.3 million square feet, Eden Prairie Center represents about one-third of all retail within Eden Prairie. The remainder of Eden Prairie's retail includes a variety of stand-alone retail stores and malls, including a large cluster of small to mid-sized strip malls located in close proximity to Eden Prairie Center.

Like all real estate markets, the retail market is dynamic and fluctuates with the national economy, but overall Eden Prairie's diverse retail market remains vibrant with relatively low vacancy rates. Eden Prairie's strong demographics and purchasing power continue to attract retailers and restaurants, and when retail spaces turnover, the spaces typically do not remain vacant long. The City of Eden Prairie should continue to support its diverse retail and restaurant marketplace, and encourage the development of new stores and restaurants in the Town Center, Transit-Oriented Development (TOD), and Mixed-Use areas to promote unique, attractive destinations.

Corporate Headquarters

Numerous major offices and corporate headquarters call Eden Prairie home including: Optum, a health services and innovation company; Starkey Hearing Technologies, an advanced hearing technology company; and Supervalu, Inc., a grocery and supply chain services company. Having a large number of corporate headquarters in a community not only helps bolster the reputation and brand of the City, but also brings in a large number of jobs that can fuel other markets, such as retail, restaurant, and housing. While Colliers International data indicates a weakening suburban office market over the coming years, the METRO Green Line Extension and TOD related development position Eden Prairie to capture businesses that may otherwise relocate to central business districts in St. Paul and Minneapolis due the increased density and activity presented by these opportunities.

Strong Industrial Base

Eden Prairie's traditionally low industrial vacancy rate indicates that the City has a healthy industrial market as compared to Minneapolis and St. Paul which are experiencing a regional vacancy rate of 7.5 percent. The City's industrial flex tech uses predominantly exist within the Golden Triangle Area (GTA), around Martin Drive, and southwest of Flying Cloud Airport. Heavy industry is concentrated in the Crosstown Industrial Area, primarily along Industrial Drive. Continued demand for office and distribution spaces is reflected by recent development and reinvestment within the GTA, with recent development providing increasing floor area devoted to office use. Given the continued regional demand for industrial space, it is important that the City plan for areas designated for specific types of industrial intensity, including traditional industrial uses, outdoor storage and industrial flex tech/business park uses, to preserve this important market segment.

Opportunity Markets

The following sections identify opportunity markets for the City of Eden Prairie—areas where the City can invest and grow its existing economic advantage. Looking to 2040, the City of Eden Prairie sees these areas and associated land uses supporting economic growth and getting the City closer to achieving the goals and objectives discussed earlier in the chapter.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

Eden Prairie is undergoing an exciting change with the development of the METRO Green Line Extension. The light rail, which is expected to be operational in 2023, will connect Eden Prairie with Minnetonka, Hopkins, St. Louis Park, Downtown Minneapolis, St. Paul, and with a transfer, the Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport. Eden Prairie will be served by four stations, which include Southwest Station, Town Center, Golden Triangle, and City West Stations. Future development in station areas will be focused on Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) – increased walkability, higher densities, mixed uses, and increased transit access. Through the City’s community engagement process, stations areas were identified as opportunity areas for creating a more walkable community, developing workforce housing, and zoning for a mix of land uses to facilitate diverse business growth.

To make TOD areas unique destinations for the community, Eden Prairie should capitalize on TOD zoning by:

- Creating public spaces with amenities, such as public art, benches, bollards, trees, lighting, and landscaped streetscapes.
- Orienting buildings and site design to public spaces and public transportation to create pedestrian-friendly areas that generate foot traffic for ground floor businesses.
- Promoting inclusion of workforce housing in future housing and mixed use developments.
- Establishing a multimodal transportation hub by connecting transit with bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure (bicycle lanes, bike sharing, and racks) along with sidewalks, trails, and paths.
- Ensuring each TOD area provides a unique sense of place through branding and gateway signage, streetscape design, architectural design, and integration of public art.

Sustainable Resilience

Energy Efficiency

MVEC, Xcel Energy, and CenterPoint Energy, who services all of Eden Prairie with natural gas, provides both residents and businesses incentives to purchase energy conserving appliances and technologies. In addition, Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy have energy auditing programs for customers to evaluate energy efficiency in businesses and homes, and install energy conserving products like LED lighting.

Major Center Area (MCA)

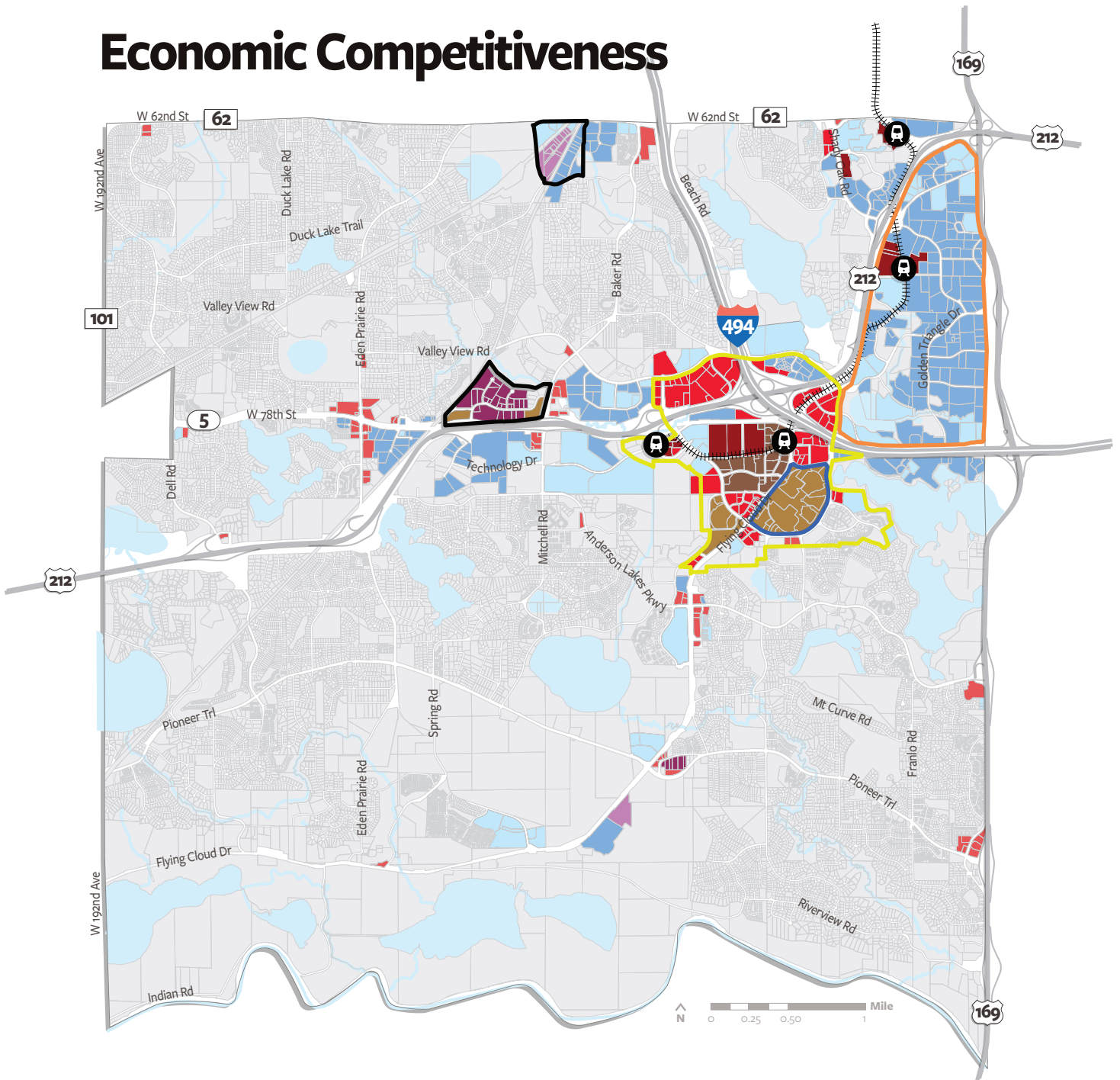
Currently, the Major Center Area (MCA) is an auto-centric commercial mixed use center. Although a significant network of multi-use trails and sidewalks exist throughout, challenges for pedestrians remain primarily at crossings of four-lane roadways. The MCA is divided into 10 subareas, the majority of which exist south of the I-494 and US-212 interchange. As noted in the 2006 *MCA Final Report* and the 2009 *Streetscape Plan*, the City's vision is to transform the center of the MCA into a walkable, compact Town Center, and will pursue public and private funding for redevelopment projects. Community outreach identified short- and long-term development opportunities within the MCA and a desire for the area to be transformed into a walkable Town Center with unique and attractive destinations. Potential development should be prioritized on parcels that surround Lake Idlewild, Singletree Lane, and Eden Prairie Center.

Town Center

Creating a walkable Town Center within MCA will require land assembly and business relocation. The City should support and promote the development of entertainment and restaurant services within the Town Center. Relocation assistance for large-parcel holders can help spur mixed use community retail opportunities in this area and reinvestment in other areas.

As Town Center redevelopment occurs, commercial businesses should be enhanced with pedestrian-friendly amenities, such as outdoor seating, benches, bicycle parking, sidewalks, and attractive landscaping, to help create a walkable area. Access improvements and enhanced amenities will also help the Town Center capitalize in its proximity to Lake Idlewild. Public-private partnerships can also play a role in promoting mixed use redevelopment by assisting with land assembly and requiring developers provide public infrastructure. Key land assembly sites include parcels north and south of Singletree Lane and east of Walmart.

Economic Competitiveness



Economic Areas

- Eden Prairie Center
- Golden Triangle Area
- Major Centers Area
- Subareas

Land Use Classifications

- Mixed-Use
- Town Center
- Transit-Oriented Development
- Regional Commercial
- Commercial
- Office
- Industrial Flex Tech
- Flex Service
- Industrial

Sustainable Resilience

INVEST

Eden Prairie's ability to be economically competitive with the region, state, and nation, is due in part to its system of highways. The Federal Highway Administration's Infrastructure Voluntary Evaluation Sustainability Tool (INVEST) program helps transportation agencies to assess and enhance the sustainability of their projects and programs. The program offers best practices that cover the full transportation lifecycle including, project development, and operations and maintenance. By encouraging regional transportation agencies to employ these techniques as well as applying them to major local roads, the community's largest economic driver will be streamlined and sustainable.

A continuation of streetscape improvements and branding along Singletree Lane will help establish the street as an important multimodal corridor. Funding mechanisms such as special assessments and Capital Improvement Plan funding may further support the development of an attractive Town Center.

Eden Prairie Center

Eden Prairie Center is one of the City's major community amenities. However, map.social participants noted that they would like to see the mall's appearance, pedestrian access, and internal walkability improved. To better capitalize on its local and regional draw, the City should help maximize its development potential through zoning and encourage the owners to diversify uses at the mall.

Development Potential

Community outreach identified Eden Prairie Center as an opportunity site for mixed use destinations. Stakeholders proposed non-retail ideas such as housing and a sports-activity center as potential uses for vacant retail spaces, excess parking spaces and outlots. The 2006 MCA Final Report recommends regional retail and mixed use at Eden Prairie Center. To further increase activity in the area, uses should not be limited to commercial/retail. Hotels, housing, professional offices, and entertainment destinations would increase both the daytime and nighttime populations, benefitting nearby retail businesses and help further diversify Eden Prairie's economy. The City should coordinate with mall representatives and business owners to add these uses to Eden Prairie Center when large vacancies occur. To assist with future development, the City should consider amending its zoning ordinance to permit for areas of mixed use, including retail, office and residential, on the mall's parcels. To help create a sense of place and ensure users do not feel isolated in a parking lot, mall owners and developers should utilize quality landscaping and create safe pedestrian and bike connections for outlot developments. Turning the mall into a pedestrian-friendly environment by including non-retail uses, outdoor amenities, greenspace, and activating spaces will strengthen Eden Prairie Center's appeal as a local and regional destination.

Sustainable Resilience

Pedestrian Infrastructure

Presently, Eden Prairie Center and surrounding outlots contain a limited internal sidewalk system and predominantly accommodate automobiles. Community engagement through map.social indicated that participants would like to see better infrastructure within the ring road for pedestrians and bicyclists to safely access the mall once inside the ring road.

Given its location within the MCA and adjacency to the Town Center, Eden Prairie Center can create easy and safe access as an extension of proposed pedestrian improvements throughout the MCA. For example, as Regional Center Road becomes the mall entrance east of Flying Cloud Drive, there is a lack of pedestrian infrastructure to safely access businesses within the mall. The City should coordinate with property owners to ensure that the mall's existing and future development is enhanced with sidewalks, crosswalks, bike paths, and bicycle parking. Adequate wayfinding directing customers to parking and shopping should be installed along pedestrian routes to Eden Prairie Center.

To improve pedestrian navigability and provide a sense of place, directional signage should be installed within the Town Center as part of a wayfinding program to inform the public of the mall's location, particularly along Singletree Lane, Regional Center Road, Eden Road, and Glen Lane. Because Singletree Lane is expected to serve as one of the Town Center's primary corridors, the intersection with Flying Cloud Drive should be enhanced with bumpouts, landscaped crosswalk islands, and paved crosswalks to create continuity and connect with the mall's future sidewalks and pedestrian-friendly areas.

Encourage Alternative Energy

The Minnesota Valley Electric Cooperative (MVEC) and Xcel Energy both provide Eden Prairie residents and businesses electricity. MVEC and Xcel Energy offer residents and businesses low cost alternative energy opportunities for solar and wind to reduce dependency on non-renewable energy sources, such as fossil fuels.





General Commercial Areas

General commercial nodes are also an important component of Eden Prairie's economy – at the end of 2017, Eden Prairie had just over 3 million square feet of retail uses (excluding Eden Prairie Center). These nodes exist throughout the City, with fewer existing in the northwest and southwest portions of the community. Larger clusters of general commercial uses exist outside the MCA at the intersections of Anderson Lakes Parkway and Flying Cloud Drive, Highway 5 and Eden Prairie Road, and US-212 and Mitchell Road, as well as along I-169 in the southeast portion of Eden Prairie. Most of these general commercial nodes cater to residents' day-to-day and convenience shopping needs.

To enhance general commercial areas and promote further economic growth and investment, the City should:

- Encourage property owners to enhance their storefronts with façade upgrades, installation of planters and native landscaping, and pedestrian amenities such as benches and decorative lighting.
- Work with developers and owners to ensure that properties are enhanced with sidewalks and bicycle parking, providing pedestrian and bicycle access to adjacent residential areas.
- Ensure parking is efficiently provided to these businesses and facilitate shared parking agreements wherever possible.
- Continue doing meet and greet type events and working with the Chamber of Commerce to ensure the success of businesses.

Full-Service Hotel

Beginning in the early 1980's, Eden Prairie's rapid business and employment growth helped stimulate the development of a variety of hotels aimed largely at accommodating business travel. From 1985 to 1999 eleven hotels with a total of 1,196 rooms were developed around Eden Prairie's Major Center Area (MCA). The variety of hotel brands built during this period fit within one of three categories: limited-service, select-service, or extended-stay hotels. Limited-service hotels typically offer lower room rates, cater to budget-conscious travelers, and generally offer fewer services. Select-service hotels are typically a hybrid between limited-service and full-service hotels and can include extended stays, but unlike full-service hotels, they do not offer restaurants or space for larger meetings and conferences. The most recent hotel proposal is again a similar product, a six-story Hampton Inn select service hotel located on Lake Idlewild on the former IHOP restaurant site and is expected to be open in late 2018.

Absent from the current inventory of hotels is a full-service or hybrid hotel with a large meeting space, and attracting this type of a facility is a high priority for Eden Prairie. Without this type of hotel provided in Eden Prairie, any banquets, gala's, conferences, or special meeting gatherings with seating requirements above 300 people must utilize full-service hotels and conference facilities located outside of Eden Prairie. Organizations such as the Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce and Community Foundation routinely hold events in neighboring communities and for years have expressed frustration at that lack of larger meeting space options in Eden Prairie.



In 2014, the City retained HVS Global Hospitality consultants to evaluate the market feasibility for a full-service hotel with a meeting space in Eden Prairie. Based on market conditions in early 2014, the principle recommendation to emerge from the study was for the City to pursue a 120-room upscale, full-service or hybrid select-service hotel with meeting space for up to 600 people. Certain areas in the City that offer high visibility, good access, and a location along major thoroughfares were also recognized as potential sites for a full-service conference hotel, including:

- The Eden Prairie Center
- Viking's Winter Park
- Elements Fleet Services Campus
- City West near the Optum-UHG Campus
- Golden Triangle LRT Station Area

The City should pursue every opportunity to support the development of a full-service hotel or full-service/select-service hybrid hotel with meeting space as part of any redevelopment proposal in these areas.

Industrial Flex Tech Areas

Eden Prairie is home to several corporate headquarters, such as Supervalu, C.H. Robinson, and Starkey Hearing Technologies, as well as industrial flex tech businesses, such as Bluestem Brands and WhiteBoard Product Solutions. These businesses provide a variety of employment opportunities, especially in the professional, scientific, and tech services industries, and are an important contributor to the local economy. The City's industrial flex tech areas are largely clustered in the Golden Triangle Area (GTA), and along Fuller Road, Martin Drive and Technology Drive. To enhance industrial flex tech areas and capitalize on their proximity to transit areas, the City should:

- Ensure that new industrial flex tech developments have appropriate access to major highways and transit routes for the shipping and receiving of goods.
- Protect key industrial areas from the infiltration of incompatible uses that will dilute the attractiveness of the area for industrial investment over time, such as residential or certain commercial uses.
- Encourage property owners to enhance industrial flex tech areas with foundation landscaping, bioswales, and other forms of green infrastructure to beautify the area and mitigate flooding, pollution, and stormwater runoff.
- Encourage industrial flex tech uses to enhance their facilities and increase building resiliency with sustainable elements and upgraded equipment by improving awareness of any tax breaks, public and private financing opportunities and other available programs, and through public recognition as incentives, such as the City's Sustainable Eden Prairie Awards.



Golden Triangle Area (GTA)

The Golden Triangle Area (GTA) is located in northeast Eden Prairie and is bounded by US-212, US-169, and I-494. The area is comprised of a mix of industrial flex tech, office, residential, and commercial uses. The GTA also includes significant natural amenities including Lake Smetana, Lake Smetana Park, and Nine Mile Creek. There is also a 1.6 mile multi-use trail loop around Lake Smetana, as well as the Flying Cloud Drive Dog Park. With the incoming development of the Golden Triangle LRT Station, plans for future development of adjacent areas include high-density housing, retail and office development, as well as the preservation of Nine Mile Creek.

Public outreach noted the desire for high-density development with direct access to the METRO Green Line Extension, which will capitalize on the significant amount of square footage of adjacent industrial and office space. Office and industrial flex tech uses should complement the future high-density development of this area. Future investment should also include branding to help identify the GTA as a regional asset and upgrades to existing building façades and landscaping in conjunction with Eden Prairie's Design Guidelines.



Martin Drive Area

The Martin Drive area includes a mix of business, office, industrial flex tech, retail, personal service, fitness, auto service, and general commercial service uses. The areas north of Martin Drive will likely remain primarily a more typical mix of office and industrial flex tech, due to the viable existing businesses and limited visibility and access necessary for commercial or retail activity. 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, such as residential, mixed use, retail, and services uses. In the near-term (seven to 10 years) major redevelopment may be unlikely, but in the long-term (10 to 20 years) significant redevelopment is likely.

The exception to near-term development is the vacant property on the southwest corner of Venture Lane and Martin Drive which is envisioned by the City as a mixed use development with potential for housing, office, co-location space, and taproom or tasting room. To generally improve the area the City should consider increasing zoning flexibility. Additional improvements, such as installing sidewalks and multiuse trails, improving crosswalks and reconfiguring the Martin Drive cross section, should occur with redevelopment. In-depth analyses and recommendations for Martin Drive are located in Chapter 10: Subarea Plan.



General Industrial Areas

General Industrial uses are found in the Crosstown Industrial Area, along Fuller Road, and southeast of the Flying Cloud Airport. As future uses develop in and around industrial areas, careful consideration should be given to the impact of existing industrial uses on adjacent uses. The City should ensure industrial uses are well-buffered from adjacent residential neighborhoods, and office and commercial uses. In addition, industrial areas should be protected from the encroachment of businesses or land uses that could impact their long-term viability.

To ensure general industry areas maintain their long-term viability, the City should:

- Maintain communication with existing industrial companies to understand the needs of industrial businesses.
- Maintain and improve infrastructure access for industrial businesses and where possible, encourage enhancement of facilities and sites with energy-efficient and environmentally friendly elements by using upgraded equipment and storm water best management practices (BMPs).
- Incentivize industrial businesses that pursue sustainable initiatives.

Crosstown Industrial Area

The Crosstown Industrial Area has two potential trajectories: 1) Remain an Industrial Hub, or 2) Transform into a new business park area. In-depth analyses and recommendations for Crosstown Industrial Area are located in **Chapter 10: Subarea Plan**.

Remain Industrial Hub – Industrial uses are critical to the daily and long-term function and success of this area and to Eden Prairie’s overall economy. The City must 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 provide needed goods and services for Eden Prairie’s community. Beyond the 10 to 20 to year horizon, redevelopment may occur along Carlson Drive, but industrial uses will likely remain along Industrial Drive. To generally improve the area, redevelopment should prioritize installing sidewalks, improving crosswalks, enhance trail connections, and updating trailheads.

Business Park Transformation – If parcels can be assembled in the Crosstown Industrial Area, more transformative development may be possible. This would also require significant site mitigation to make some of the industrial sites redevelopable. The area’s proximity to residential neighborhoods to the east and south, and connection to State Highway 62 could draw commuters to commercial businesses and office uses.

Community Health

Office

Eden Prairie's office uses are largely clustered in the GTA and along Fuller Road, Martin Drive, Technology Drive, and near I-494 and Flying Cloud Drive. Many of these areas are surrounded by lightly wooded areas and contain opportunities for expansion and future development. As future development and redevelopment occurs, it is important that these areas include sufficient amenities, such as proximity to retail, dining and communal park space, and multimodal transportation options that provide greater flexibility for employees. These amenities will contribute to marketability and appeal, making Eden Prairie's office uses more competitive regionally. In addition, the incoming METRO Green Line Extension will increase transit access for office users in the GTA, the City West area and along Technology Drive, creating a unique opportunity to further enhance these office areas.

To enhance Eden Prairie's office market and capitalize on proximity to transit services, the City should:

- Target identified office areas for greater flexibility, accommodating the inclusion of compatible uses such as limited commercial, recreational, or institutional uses.
- Incentivize new office-type business to locate in vacant office buildings that are already served by existing infrastructure and services.
- Assist with grants or other funding opportunities to help existing office buildings add amenities to common areas to stay competitive in the market.
- As TOD areas are developed, expand existing and develop new high-employment office uses around them to ensure employees have multi-modal access to their jobs.
- Encourage office uses to enhance their facilities and increase building resiliency with sustainable elements and upgraded equipment, such as LED lighting, water-saving equipment and appliances, and solar panels, by improving awareness of any tax breaks, public and private financing opportunities, other available programs, and through public recognition as incentives, such as the City's Sustainable Eden Prairie Awards.

Healthy Workforce

In order to attract and retain a competent and professional workforce, it is important to support the overall health of the employees and offer health related benefits. Office and industrial developments should include sidewalks, trails, and open space so employees can walk to work or exercise at lunch. Employers can provide showers for employees that commute to work by bicycle, provide opportunities for physical activity and learning about healthy living, such as healthy living classes, yoga classes, and a fitness center, or provide incentives for actively improving one's health.

Business Development

Strengthening local businesses through retention and expansion, and encouraging new business to locate to Eden Prairie is important to securing a strong, diverse tax base. To maintain Eden Prairie as a City that attracts businesses, provides quality services, and is an environment where people want to live, work, and play, the City must regularly communicate and engage with the local business community through outreach, funding opportunities, and workforce development.

Engagement & Outreach

The City of Eden Prairie's Economic Development Division uses many outreach strategies to engage with local businesses. The City should continue the Business Meet & Greet Program, which allows the City to meet with local businesses to help understand their needs and experiences working in Eden Prairie, allowing the City to better assist them in the future.

The City should also continue to work closely with the Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce to promote business development and retention within the community through outreach programs, joint-marketing efforts, and funding opportunity information. The Eden Prairie Chamber of Commerce serves as an advocate for businesses and aims to enhance member businesses' success through leadership, advocacy, and growth opportunities. They are an important connection to local businesses and entrepreneurs.

Funding

The City supports stable and fiscally balanced development that enhances the City's role as a regional business center and grow its economic base for the future. The following list includes existing funding resources that support business retention and expansion throughout the community. A detailed overview can be found in **Chapter 11: Implementation.**

- Tax Increment Financing (TIF)
- Economic Development Fund
- Minnesota Investment Fund (MIF)
- Minnesota Job Creation Fund (JCF)
- Open to Business Initiative
- PACE Financing
- Economic Development Infrastructure Fund

In addition to assisting businesses in accessing the resources listed above, the City should could explore providing loans and grants to local businesses to rehabilitate and improve storefronts in accordance with the City's Design Guidelines and Architectural Ordinance Amendments.

Workforce Development

Routine communication with local employers through partnerships with Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), Greater MSP, and the Chamber of Commerce will help the City understand skill gaps that may or may not exist. As the City identifies improvement areas, it should continue pursuing efforts to enhance Eden Prairie's workforce through job training programs and partnerships with local schools. Attracting and retaining educated youth and young professionals can help bolster economic growth and development by increasing the City's skilled workforce to create and fill innovative and high-paying jobs. The City should continue to develop and foster relationships between educational institutions and local businesses, such as Hennepin Technical College (HTC), to support and grow the community's employment base. Additional information about HTC can be found in **Chapter 7: Community Facilities Plan.**

Planning for Employment Intensity

As new development is established, it is important to identify locations of planned employment intensity—increased employment impacts infrastructure, and can increase congestion and demand for retail and restaurant markets. In addition to growing traditionally higher employment markets such as general commercial, industrial flex tech, and office, the City anticipates additional growth and redevelopment opportunities in station areas because of the METRO Green Line Extension. With increased transit and service access, the City expects TOD areas to see new development of high-employment businesses. To avoid straining existing infrastructure and services, the City should prioritize appropriate infrastructure improvements and additional services to serve these new businesses.

Per Metropolitan Council requirements, calculations have been made to identify areas of the City that will experience this planned growth in employment. This Plan acknowledges that these calculations were made using one of many methods and recognize that the projections for each area could increase or decrease depending on several external factors. The table to the left shows the employment growth projections in the nine key areas based on employment density. As general land uses of higher employment the Commercial, Light Industrial, and Regional Commercial areas are projected to experience the greatest employment growth through 2040. Each of these nine areas is critical to Eden Prairie’s employment base and economic growth. The City should prioritize development of future high-employment businesses in these areas along with the appropriate infrastructure and additional services to support them. For example, the TOD area should have high-density multifamily residential and local commercial uses to support the internal workforce.

Planned Employment Growth 2020

Area	Acres	2020 Industrial Jobs	2020 Retail Jobs	2020 Office Jobs	2020 Total Jobs
Office (O)	653	0	0	25,292	25,292
Industrial Flex Tech (IFT)	783	4,747	0	21,229	25,976
Flex Service (FS)	7	71	35	68	174
Industrial (IND)	23	465	0	0	465
Mixed Use (MU)	38	0	153	220	373
Commercial (C)	441	0	8,919	0	8,919
Regional Commercial (RC)	44	0	889	0	889
Town Center (TC)	11	0	250	288	538
Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)	44	0	667	767	1,434
Total	2,044	5,282	10,913	47,863	64,059

Planned Employment Growth 2030

Area	Acres	2030 Industrial Jobs	2030 Retail Jobs	2030 Office Jobs	2030 Total Jobs
Office (O)	627	0	0	22,760	22,760
Industrial Flex Tech (IFT)	923	5,244	0	23,453	28,698
Flex Service (FS)	38	360	180	345	885
Industrial (IND)	42	795	0	0	795
Mixed Use (MU)	101	0	382	549	931
Commercial (C)	312	0	5,909	0	5,909
Regional Commercial (RC)	156	0	2,955	0	2,955
Town Center (TC)	45	0	959	1,103	2,061
Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)	101	0	1,435	1,650	3,084
Total	2,345	6,400	11,819	49,860	68,078

Planned Employment Growth 2040

Area	Acres	2040 Industrial Jobs	2040 Retail Jobs	2040 Office Jobs	2040 Total Jobs
Office (O)	589	0	0	21,984	21,984
Industrial Flex Tech (IFT)	1,033	5,871	0	26,977	32,848
Flex Service (FS)	78	742	371	730	1,843
Industrial (IND)	39	742	0	0	742
Mixed Use (MU)	156	0	590	872	1,462
Commercial (C)	124	0	2,354	0	2,354
Regional Commercial (RC)	232	0	4,388	0	4,388
Town Center (TC)	78	0	1,657	1,957	3,614
Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)	108	0	1,537	1,816	3,353
Total	2,438	7,355	10,896	54,336	72,587

