

## Section 2: Land Use Element



Credit: united properties

### 2.1 Summary

**A**s a developed community with little remaining vacant land, Bloomington's land use focus over the next twenty years will be on managing redevelopment. In response to Bloomington's easy access to major employment centers such as the 494 Strip, Mall of America, and International Airport and metropolitan objectives to concentrate growth within and along the 494/694 ring, continued market pressure for both commercial and residential

redevelopment is anticipated. Employment levels and, to a lesser extent, population is forecast to increase as redevelopment occurs.

Within the twenty year planning horizon of the comprehensive plan, several planned projects are expected to have a major impact on Bloomington, including:

- Significant development and redevelopment in the Airport South District;
- The construction of a new

north-south runway at the airport which will project limiting state and federal runway safety zones into the Airport South District and redistribute airplane noise impacts within the city;

- The construction of a light rail transit line linking the Airport South District with the airport and downtown Minneapolis;
- The expansion and interchange reconfiguration of Interstate 494;



- The expansion and interchange reconfiguration of Interstate 35W; and,
- The construction of a Bloomington “Ring Route” paralleling Interstate 494 along the 79th and 80th Street corridor.

A primary purpose of the Land Use Element is to guide the redevelopment generated by these projects. The Element also describes existing land utilization; forecasts growth in households, population, and employment; establishes and

describes land use categories used in the future land use map; and identifies strategies to guide redevelopment and land use decisions.

### Intent

It is Bloomington’s intention to:

- Capitalize on regional infrastructure improvements while minimizing their negative impacts;
- Promote continued economic development for the City and the region.

- Maintain and enhance property values;
- Encourage the redevelopment of outdated or incompatible land uses;
- Mitigate existing land use conflicts and avoid future land use conflicts;
- Preserve sensitive environmental areas; and,
- Meet the needs of residents for services and recreation near their places of residence.

## 2.2 Land Use Inventory



### Historic Land Use Trends

Before World War II, Bloomington was predominantly rural and agricultural. Homes and businesses were concentrated along main transportation corridors. Fueled by an economic expansion in the post war years, Bloomington began its transformation into a large suburb and major employment center. As is common with suburban communities, the City grew at a very rapid rate. Population soared from 9,902 in 1950 to 50,498 in 1960.

Large scale residential development began in northeast Bloomington and generally spread to the south and west. Early residential development occurred almost exclusively as single family detached housing. In 1960, U.S. Census Bureau records show a total of 12,281 single unit dwellings versus only 77 multiple unit dwellings. After 1960, residential development diversified to include apartments, condominiums, and townhomes. Today, single family detached dwelling

units comprise only 58% of total units. Vacant residential land has been virtually exhausted and construction of new dwelling units has slowed considerably. Future residential growth will be a function of infill on the few remaining vacant parcels or redevelopment of underutilized parcels.

Commercial development first occurred in Bloomington along major transportation corridors particularly at crossroads such as Lyndale Avenue and 98th Street. To take advantage of excellent access to the metropolitan area, both commercial and industrial land uses developed along the Highway 5 corridor, later expanded as Interstate 494. Commercial development generally occurs in strips along principle streets in eastern Bloomington but is concentrated in commercial nodes in western Bloomington.

While light industrial/warehouse land uses developed within the I-494 corridor, heavier industry concentrated in central Bloomington.



ton where railway access was available. Industrial land uses were later promoted in the Western Industrial Area, which is largely developed today.

Almost one third of the City has been set aside for public and quasi-public land uses. The bulk of that land is preserved in its natural state as conservation areas, including the Minnesota River Valley, Hyland Park Reserve, and large wetlands along Nine Mile Creek. Churches and other quasi-public uses are scattered throughout the City. Schools are also dispersed throughout the City, with the exception of far western Bloomington. As this portion of Bloomington was developed, the school district was experiencing a rapid decline in enrollment which halted the construction of new schools and led to the closure of several existing schools.

### Current Land Use

Today, less than two percent of Bloomington's 24,540 acres (38.3 square miles) are vacant and developable. A comparison of historic land utilization is shown in *Table 2.1*. Current distribution of land uses is summarized in *Table 2.2* and depicted on *Figure 2.1*.

**Table 2.1 Land Utilization**

Land Use Category	Acres			
	1959	1969	1979	2000
Residential	4,380	6,480	7,880	8,975
Commercial	200	680	930	1,606
Industrial	220	600	800	846
Public/Quasi-Public	1,300	4,150	5,590	8,044
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,100</b>	<b>11,910</b>	<b>15,200</b>	<b>19,471</b>

Source: Bloomington Planning Division

**Table 2.2 Land Use Distribution, 2000**

Land Use Category	Acres	Percent	
<b>Residential</b>	Single Family Detached	7,493	30.5%
	Mobile Homes	14	0.1%
	Two Family	107	0.4%
	Townhouses	254	1.0%
	Condominiums	243	1.0%
	Apartments	554	2.3%
	Other	310	1.3%
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>8,975</b>	<b>36.6%</b>
<b>Public/Quasi Public</b>	Schools	416	1.7%
	Churches	237	1.0%
	Government Facilities	106	0.4%
	Parks	2,202	9.0%
	Golf Courses	293	1.2%
	Conservation Areas	4,410	18.0%
	Other	380	1.5%
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>8,044</b>	<b>32.8%</b>
<b>Road Right-of-Way</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>4,587</b>	<b>18.7%</b>
<b>Commercial</b>	Retail	428	1.7%
	Vehicle Oriented	148	0.6%
	Restaurants	93	0.4%
	Hotels	173	0.7%
	Service Oriented	301	1.2%
	Office	463	1.9%
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>1,606</b>	<b>6.5%</b>
<b>Industrial</b>	Manufacturing	372	1.5%
	Warehousing	356	1.5%
	Other	118	0.5%
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>846</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
<b>Vacant/Agricultural</b>	Vacant	384	1.6%
	Agricultural	98	0.4%
	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>482</b>	<b>2.0%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>24,540</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Bloomington Planning Division

Figure 2.1  
11" by 17" map of current land use

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**Table 2.3**  
**Privately Owned Undeveloped Sites, 10 Acres or Greater, 2000**

Address	Common Name	Acres
2701 and 2901 East Old Shakopee Road	Kelley Farm	58.1
7901 Old Cedar Avenue South, 2000 East 81st Street	Met Center Site	52.6
8201 24th Avenue South, 8200 28th Avenue South	Adjoining Lands Mall Overflow Parking	31.4
6820 Auto Club Road	Bethany Fellowship	21.8
1701, 2101, 2201 West 94th Street, 9545 Penn Avenue South	John Deere Expansion Area	15.3

Source: *Bloomington Planning Division*

### Undeveloped Sites

Although rapidly diminishing in number, a few large, undeveloped sites remain in Bloomington, notably in the Airport South District (see *Table 2.3*). The majority of new development is currently occurring as redevelopment. For economic reasons, redevelopment tends to occur on sites that 1) are underutilized, outdated, and therefore relatively inexpensive and 2) meet the access needs of the replacement land use. The most favorable areas for redevelopment lie in eastern Bloomington along the I-494 corri-

dor or within the Lyndale commercial and industrial corridor.

### Previous Land Use Planning Efforts

The City of Bloomington has a long history of land use planning both citywide and at the area or district level. Bloomington's land use has been significantly influenced over the years by several guiding principles shared by these historic plans, including:

- Taking advantage of the freeways by locating high-value commercial and service uses along freeways and at interchanges.
- Locating housing farther away from the freeways than commercial land uses to minimize land use conflicts and commercial traffic through residential areas.
- Preserving natural drainage systems for their flood mitigating ability, their habitat, and environmental benefit.
- Preserving open space and conservation areas as an amenity and community hallmark.
- Achieving a 50/50 balance of residential and non-residential property tax base.



## 2.3 Influencing Factors

### Households and Population

The number of households (occupied housing units) in Bloomington has increased consistently over the past several decades and will continue to increase in the future, but at a much slower rate due to the lack of vacant land. Future growth in households will be largely a function of increased density through redevelopment. Household forecasts, which assume an average vacancy rate of 3%, appear in Figure 2.2.

Population is a function of both the number of households and the number of residents per household. As of July 1998, there were an estimated 35,700 households and 88,200 residents in Bloomington. While the number of households has increased over time, the number of residents per household has decreased (from 4.2 in 1960 to 2.47 in 1990). Future household sizes will be affected by opposing

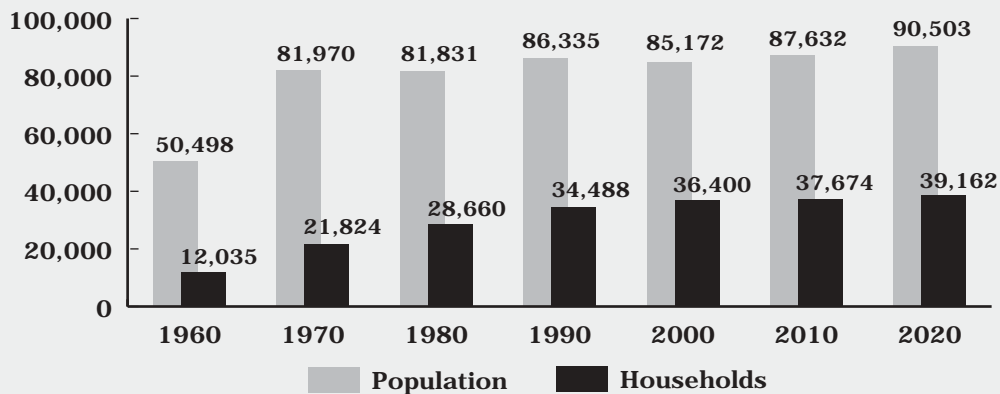


trends. On one hand, the growing senior population in Bloomington would tend to lower overall average household size. On the other hand, as seniors move from large single family detached housing to smaller, low maintenance units, younger families with small children may move in to take advantage of Bloomington's quality schools. This trend would tend to increase average household sizes. Population levels are expected to rise slowly over the next 20 years as the number of households slowly increases and the average number of residents per household remains relatively stable.

### Employment

The number of people employed in Bloomington has risen consistently over time, even as vacant land has become increasingly scarce. Employment levels will continue to rise in the future as 1) Bloomington's excellent location along major freeway corridors and adjacent to the region's international airport continues to generate demand for commercial redevelopment, 2) spin-off development from the Mall of America continues, and 3) Phase II of Mall of America materializes. Current and forecasted employment levels are shown in Table 2.4.

Figure 2.2 Population and Households: Historic Data and Forecasts



Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Bloomington Planning Division, 2004

### Land Use

**Table 2.4 Current and Forecasted Employment**

	1997 (third quarter)	2000	2010	2020
Employment	99,320	101,930	118,606	126,195

Source: Bloomington Planning Division, 2004

## Environmental Factors

Land use patterns are heavily influenced by environmental factors such as wetlands, flood zones, steep slopes, and adverse soil conditions. Land impacted by these environmental factors is generally unsuitable for development and should be set aside for use as nature preserves, open spaces, or storm water management areas. As a developed community, the vast majority of these areas have already been set aside. Around 27% of the city's land is currently preserved as conservation areas or parkland, including the Minnesota River Valley and large wetlands areas along Nine Mile Creek.

In 1982, Bloomington City staff prepared an Environmental Protection Element that includes a thorough analysis of environmental factors plus environmental goals and policies. The Environmental Protection Element also includes "an element for the protection and development of access to direct sunlight for solar energy systems" as required by Minnesota Statutes, Section 473.859, Subdivision 2. This Environmental Protection Element is included within the *Comprehensive Plan 2000* by reference. Staff hopes to update the Environmental Protection Element as staff resources become available after the completion of the 2000 Comprehensive Plan update.

## Historic Resources

Cultural and historical resources shape development and give a community tradition and distinctiveness. As Bloomington developed from a prairie, marsh, and forest to a farming-oriented community and now to a city of 85,000 people, remnants of prehistoric and historical settlements and structures of architectural significance have become increasingly important and rare resources. The purpose of this section is to identify significant cultural and historical resources and recommend appropriate measures for their preservation.

The city of Bloomington has a rich historical inheritance as a result of the cultural backgrounds of the first settlers. Research and evaluation of Bloomington's prehistoric and historic periods establish a well documented record of influence of human activity on the development of the city.

The prehistoric period in Bloomington extends from the retreat of the Wisconsin glaciers from southern Minnesota approximately 10,000 years ago to the explorations of Groseillers and Radisson on the lower Minnesota River in 1660. Bloomington was a part of a transition zone from the Paleo-Indian, Eastern Archaic, Woodland, and Late Mississippian prehistoric cultures as a result of being almost too far north for the

cultivation of corn, and almost too far south for a reliance on wild rice as a major food source.

The existence of numerous burial mounds and earthworks in the Minnesota River Valley and the adjoining bluff area of Bloomington are primary evidence of prehistoric peoples and cultures. The report, *Bloomington: A Community Survey of Historic Sites*, identifies five existing mound groups and lists eleven destroyed or unlocated mound groups within Bloomington.<sup>1</sup>

There are numerous people, events, and activities that have influenced Bloomington history and provide for local and regional significance: Fort Snelling; Peter Quinn; the Pond family; Joseph Dean; the Bloomington Ferry; Colonel Savage; and the Dan Patch Line are but a few of the historical forces that shaped the growth and development of Bloomington. An extensive history of the city is provided in *Bloomington on the Minnesota*, a project of the Bloomington Bicentennial Committee.<sup>2</sup>

Every building does not become architecturally or historically significant simply because it is timeworn or old. Every home or barn that dates back to the previous century should not be preserved simply because of nostalgia. An important aspect in historic preservation is a comprehensive evaluation of historic sites. Given Bloomington's growth and development, it is important that sites be evaluated not in isolation, but as part of an urban setting, giving full consideration to factors that influence the context of historic sites.

<sup>1</sup> Miller-Dunwiddie Architects, Inc., *Bloomington: A Community Survey of Historic Sites*, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 1977.

<sup>2</sup> Judith A. Hendricks, *Bloomington on the Minnesota*, T.S. Denison and Company, Inc., May, 1976.



**Table 2.5 Register of Prehistoric and Historic Sites**

Type	Site	Address
Existing Prehistoric	Findlay Mounds	Sec. 14, T.27, R.24
	Mounds	W 1/2 of SE 1/4. Sec. 5, T.115, R.21
	Cunningham Group	W 1/2 of SW 1/4 Sec 5, T.115, R.21
	Mound	SE 1/4 of NE 1/4, Sec. 6, T.115, R.21
	Bloomington Ferry Mounds	SW 1/4, Sec. 31, T.116, R.21
Class I	Gideon Pond House	401 East 104th Street
	William Chambers House	7648 Auto Club Road
	Brousseau/Reed House	1629 E. Old Shakopee Road
	Rene L. A. Ballif House	10624 Humboldt Avenue
	Joseph Lorence House	7335 Marth Road
	John Brown House	6630 Auto Club Road
	Bloomington Town Hall	10200 Penn Avenue
Class II	Robert "Doc" Oxborough House	1724 West 90th Street
	John Logan House	8940 W. Bush Lake Road
	Joseph Linke House	1516 East 86th Street
	J.H. Bradbury House	8701 3rd Avenue
	Sever G. St. Martin House	125 E. Old Shakopee Road
General Interest	Jeremiah Scott House	9347 Cedar Avenue
	John T. Palmer House	801 East 86th Street
	Mary Christian House	8428 Portland Avenue
	William Davis House	10225 Lyndale Avenue
	2nd Thomas Oxborough House	9440 Penn Avenue
	Elmer Scott Ford Agency	9133 Cedar Avenue
	Florentine Standish House	1311 West 98th Street
	James Palmer House	4304 W. Old Shakopee Road
Robert Kelly House	6211 Auto Club Road	

Source: Heritage Preservation Commission, City of Bloomington, Minnesota, 1997

The report *Bloomington: A Community Survey of Historic Sites* provides a preliminary survey and an initial compilation of architectural and historical information on a number of sites. The report classified sites into categories for preservation activities; however, a further examination of sites in relationship to Bloomington’s historic preservation situation was warranted. An evaluation methodology was developed that allowed the City of Bloomington Heritage Preservation Commis-

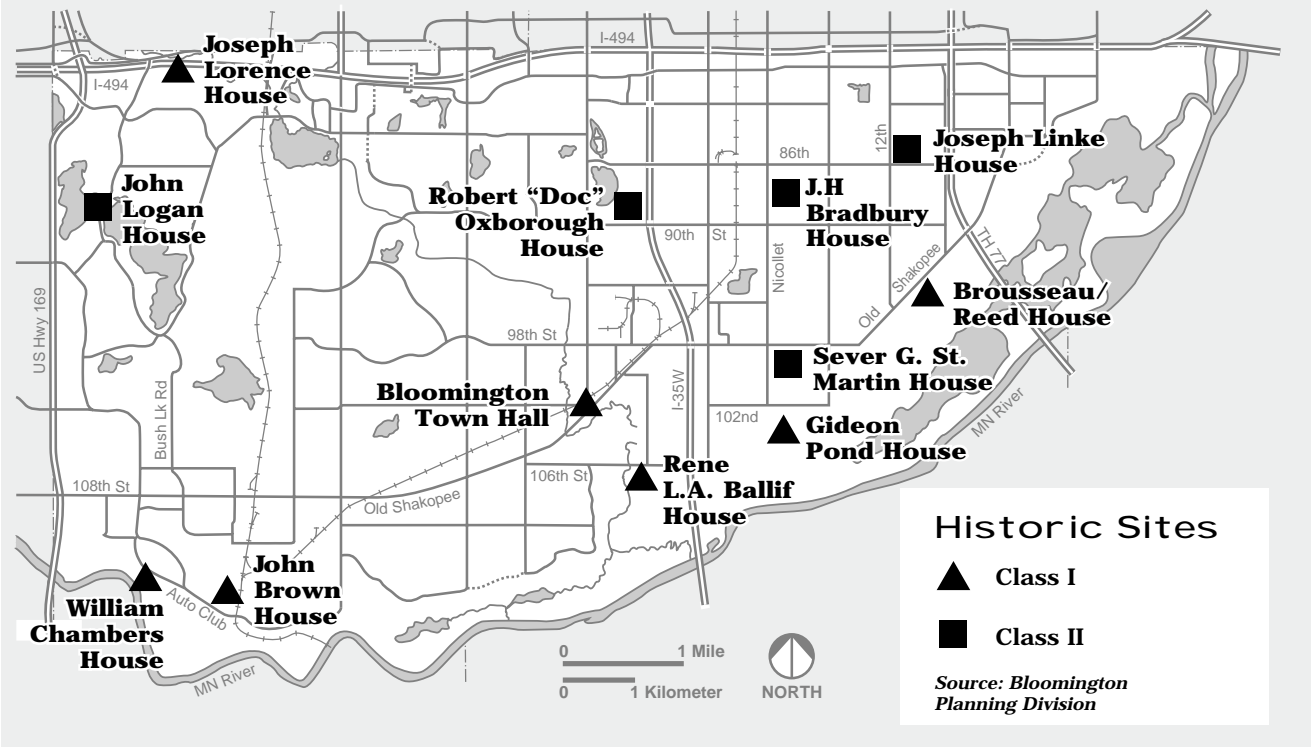
sion to assess and measure the relative architectural, historical, and community development value or significance of existing sites. The methodology allowed for distinctions to be made between sites given the important distinction between “historic sites” per se and “sites of general interest.”

The Heritage Preservation Commission and the staff utilized this evaluation methodology to individually assess each existing site listed in the community survey. The results of the evalua-

tion were used to prepare a Bloomington Historical Register that was adopted by the City Council in 1979. The Register consisted of four categories of historic sites and the existing prehistoric sites. Class I sites were those properties that scored or rated the highest, followed by Class II, III, and IV.

In 1997, a revision of the Register combined the Class III and Class IV sites into a single category as “sites of general interest”. The Bloomington Historical Register is used as the base for historic site

**Figure 2.3 Historic Sites**



regulations and control. A register of prehistoric and historic sites is shown in *Table 2.5* and the Class I and II site locations are shown in *Figure 2.3*.

Bloomington’s existing architectural and historical resources, community development program, and the growth and development of Bloomington form the basis for historic preservation planning and programming. To date, the City has completed two preservation studies which formed the Historic Preservation Task Force and created the Bloomington Heritage Preservation Commission. The City adopted the Bloomington Historical Register and regulatory controls and acquired the Gideon Pond site where restoration is nearly completed.

The Heritage Preservation Commission prepared a workable historic preservation plan. It is not the aim of the plan to necessarily create museums or simply

preserve old structures, but to integrate the preservation of prehistoric and historic into the daily lives of residents in a meaningful manner. The result of the plan provides techniques and standards for the evaluation, design, and implementation of a feasible and practical historical preservation program which emphasizes both public and private alternatives.

### Airport Impacts

The proximity of Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport creates a variety of impacts on Bloomington’s land use through aircraft noise exposure, spin-off development, runway protection and safety zones, and runway related height limits. A complete discussion of airport impacts is included in Chapter 5, the Airport Impact Element.

### Roadway Improvements

Through recently adopted plans, both the Metropolitan Council and the Minnesota Department of Transportation have challenged the region to concentrate anticipated growth within and along the I-494/694 Loop rather than on the urban fringe. While Bloomington applauds this coordinated approach for promoting efficient regional land use, realistically, it will require major state and regional investments in the public infrastructure, most notably in our transportation systems.

The Minnesota Department of Transportation and City of Bloomington have developed plans for roadway improvements along Interstates 494 and 35W and along the 79th/80th Street “Ring Route” corridor. Although not fully funded at this point, good land use planning demands that the effects of the improvements be taken into



consideration in the development of long range plans. These projects will impact land use through removal of existing homes and businesses, reconfiguration of property lines, and redevelopment generated from changing traffic flows and accessibility levels. Planned transportation improvements are discussed in detail in the Transportation Element.

### Transit Service

Access to public transit plays a role in the desirable distribution of land uses. Certain land uses, notably assisted living facilities and group homes, often require locations with easy access to public transit due to their resident's lack of access to personal motorized vehicles. Commercial and industrial land uses benefit as well from proximity to transit lines as it increases their accessibility to both customers and employees. Further discussion of transit service appears in the Transportation Element.

### Land Use Compatibility

As redevelopment occurs within Bloomington, the City will need to ensure that it is compatible with surrounding land uses. Land use incompatibility can arise if impacts generated by one land use negatively impact upon an adjacent land use. Examples of impacts capable of creating land use incompatibility include: high levels of traffic (noise, congestion, and air pollution), a high percentage of lot coverage by structures and paved surfaces (dust, glare, noise, excessive heat, high rates of storm water runoff, and loss of vegetation), and large building size (blocking of views, disruption of aesthetic scale and reduced access to light, air, and open

**Table 2.6 Generalized Land Use Compatibility**

		Residential			Commercial/Industrial						Public/Quasi-Public		
		Low-Density	Medium-Density	High-Density	Office	Neighborhood Commercial	Community Commercial	Regional Commercial	High Intensity Mixed Use	Industrial	Public	Quasi-Public	Conservation
Residential	Low-Density												
	Medium-Density												
	High-Density												
Commercial/Industrial	Office												
	Neighborhood Commercial												
	Community Commercial												
	Regional Commercial												
	High Intensity Mixed Use												
	Industrial												
Public/Quasi-Public	Public												
	Quasi-Public												
	Conservation												

Source: Bloomington Planning Division

space). These impacts do not stop at property lines, and where commercial or industrial uses border residential uses, they can contribute to residential deterioration. However, side-effects can be reduced or eliminated by using various buffering techniques.

Table 2.6 is illustrative of the extent to which land uses are considered compatible with one another. Actual land use compatibility naturally depends upon the particular uses and the extent to which the uses are buffered from one another. Generally, conflicts between uses considered generally compatible can be addressed through careful site planning. Conflicts between uses considered generally incompatible are more severe and should be

avoided unless they can be successfully mitigated through not only careful site planning but appropriate buffering and separation.

## 2.4 Future Land Use

### Land Use Guide Plan Designations

To guide land use and development, a Land Use Guide Plan (attached as a fold out colored map) has been prepared that depicts designated future land uses for all parcels within the city. The future land use designations work hand in hand with the zoning designations to further the City's land use plans. While the zoning designations operate on the micro level with detailed development limitations and performance standards, the future land use designations operate on the macro level and deal solely with broad land use issues. Zoning designations may allow specific uses that are not allowed under the future land use designations, and vice versa. For a development proposal to be approved, however, the proposed land use must comply with both the applicable zoning and future land use designation.

The City strives to maintain consistency between zoning and future land use designations. For the purposes of this plan, zoning designations are interpreted to be consistent with future land use designations if there is at least one common land use allowed in both.



The following text explains what range of land uses are allowed in each future land use designation.

#### **Low Density Residential**

This category allows residential development between 0 and 5 dwelling units per acre. Typical development includes detached single family homes, although cluster housing and scattered two family units are also appropriate provided the density limit is observed. Access requirements in this category are low compared to other uses and this designation should generally not be applied in areas with high access to transportation facilities. In areas of steep slope or other natural features worthy of protection, clustered housing design or very large lots are appropriate to protect natural resources.

#### **Medium Density Residential**

This category allows residential development between 5 and 10 dwelling units per acre. Typical development includes townhomes, patio homes, two family dwellings, condominiums, and garden apartments. Access requirements in this category are moderate, therefore locations with access to nearby arterial and collector streets are most appropriate.

#### **High Density Residential**

This category allows residential development greater than 10 dwelling units per acre. Typical development includes multiple story apartments and condominiums. Given that access requirements for uses in this category are high, this category should be located only in areas adjacent to arterial and collector streets, and transit service should be available.

#### **Public**

This category designates areas set aside for public uses. Typical uses include parks, schools, fire stations, municipal buildings, libraries, and open spaces. Access requirements of public uses vary widely and must be evaluated according to the nature of the particular use.



**Quasi-Public**

This category when combined with the proper zoning provides areas throughout the community for privately owned uses that resemble public uses such as churches, private schools, private country clubs, nursing homes, funeral homes, day care, and private cemeteries. Certain open spaces used for utility transmission lines by Northern States Power Company are also included. Access requirements of quasi-public uses vary widely and must be evaluated according to the nature of the particular use.

**Conservation**

This category designates areas to be preserved in their natural condition for the protection of habitat, wildlife, and surface water drainage. Typical uses include natural areas, park reserves, wildlife conservation areas, and storm water storage. Access to conservation areas should be restricted and roadways which border or cross conservation areas require special design consideration.

**Water**

This category designates medium and large bodies of water. Typical water bodies receiving this designation include rivers and open water lakes as classified by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.

**Right of Way**

This category designates existing public rights of way and large areas that are clearly reserved for future right of way needs. The category is not meant to delineate every future right of way need and is not a substitute for a master right of way plan. As portions of parcels are dedicated or otherwise acquired for right of way purposes, their designation is automatically changed to the Right of Way category without formal amendment.

**Office**

This category allows professional and business offices and related accessory retail uses serving the needs of office building tenants. Access requirements for office uses are high, so land should only be designated for this category when adjacent to arterial and collector streets. Non-accessory commercial uses are not allowed within this designation based on the desire to establish areas free from the intrusion of more intensive commercial enterprises. Residential uses are allowed within this designation when fully integrated with an office land use and allowed in the underlying zoning district. Due to compatible land use characteristics, hotels are allowed on sites guided Office, provided the site is appropriately zoned for a hotel and within one mile of a freeway interchange.

**General Business**

This category allows a wide range of commercial uses that are suitable for the relatively small, shallow parcels of the City's neighborhood commercial nodes. Typical development includes retail and service uses such as neighborhood supermarkets (20,000 sq. ft. and below), small shopping centers (100,000 sq. ft. and below), drug stores, restaurants (10,000 sq. ft. and below), and gas stations. Office uses are allowed within this designation when integrated with a commercial use or as a stand alone use. Residential uses are allowed within this designation

only when fully integrated with a general business land use and allowed in the underlying zoning district. Access requirements for this category are moderate to high, so land should only be designated for this category when in close proximity to arterial or collector streets. This category excludes larger scale retail and service uses that require larger parcel sizes or freeway visibility, such as hotels and motels, “big box” retail, medium and large shopping centers, hospitals, automobile rental, and automobile sales.

### **Community Commercial**

This category allows all “General Business” activities plus additional, larger scale service and retail uses that require larger parcel sizes such as supermarkets and restaurants of any size, medium sized shopping centers (up to 250,000 sq. ft.), and theaters. Hotels and motels are allowed within the Community Commercial designation only within one mile of a freeway interchange. Office uses are allowed within this designation when integrated with a commercial use or as a stand alone use. Residential uses are allowed within this designation only when fully integrated with a commercial land use and allowed in the underlying zoning district. Access requirements for this category are high, so land should only be designated for this category when adjacent to arterial or collector streets. This category excludes regionally oriented retail and service uses that demand easy access from the freeway system such as large shopping centers, “big box” retail, hospitals, or automobile sales.

### **Regional Commercial**

This category allows all “General Business” and “Community Commercial” activities plus additional service and retail uses such as hotels and motels, “big box” retail, large shopping centers, hospitals, and automobile sales that demand easy access from the freeway system. Office uses are allowed within this designation when integrated with a commercial use or as a stand alone use. Residential uses are allowed within this designation only when fully integrated with a commercial land use and allowed in the underlying zoning district. Access requirements of regional commercial uses are very high, so land should only be designated for this category when it is in close proximity to freeways and adjacent to arterial or collector streets.

### **Industrial**

This category allows industrial uses including manufacturing and warehousing. Industrial uses are heavy generators of employment and truck traffic and should have locations that are served by arterial and collector streets and close to freeways. Office uses play an important support role in industrial areas and are allowed within this designation when integrated with an industrial use or as a stand alone use. Unrelated commercial and residential uses should be discouraged in industrial areas so that they do not interfere with industrial activities.

### **High Intensity Mixed Use**

This category works together with the HX-2 and CX-2 Mixed Use Zoning Districts to allow only master-planned, high intensity uses that are physically integrated with one another, that will attract visitors from within and beyond the region, and will achieve a magnitude of economic activity sufficient to generate significant additional development outside the category.



**Airport South Mixed Use**

This category is meant to foster a mixture of intense, employment oriented, tourist oriented, residential and support uses in Bloomington’s Airport South District as a way to:

- Provide increased employment opportunities and services for residents;
- Maintain community and school vitality;
- Provide increased housing choices;
- Increase and diversify the City’s tax base;
- Encourage the redevelopment of outdated uses and structures;
- Support existing businesses;
- Satisfy market demands; and
- Reduce the need to locate development in other areas of the region less suited for high intensity development, where such development may create greater impacts on the regional highway system, require consumption of farmland or open space, be incompatible with surrounding uses, and/or require costly extensions of public infrastructure.

**Intensity Levels**

Bloomington seeks high intensity development and prohibits new, permanent, low intensity development within this designation. Given the immediate proximity of high quality, frequent transit service and the relative lack of conflicts with adjacent low density residential uses, this portion of the Airport South District is particularly well suited for high intensity development. Bloomington will require high intensity development in the area through provisions within the Zoning Ordinance, which may include alternative requirements consistent with the objectives set forth in this Comprehensive Plan for special situations.

**Use Mixture**

Bloomington seeks the inclusion of high density residential uses within the area in order to:

- Create a live-work environment;
- Meet City objectives to site housing near employment and transit opportunities;
- Reduce the number of vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled (relative to the same level of unmixed development) by encouraging linked trips, walking trips, carpool trips and transit trips;
- Reduce the overall costs and impacts of parking by making feasible shared parking where peak parking demand times vary among uses; and
- More efficiently use public and private infrastructure. Peak demand times for infrastructure (roads, transit, sewer, water, electricity, phone) generally vary among uses. A mixture of uses allows infrastructure to be used more efficiently. A mixture of residential and employment uses will also allow for the bi-directional use of roadway and transit infrastructure as the area becomes a source of trip origins in addition to trip destinations.

Bloomington will require the inclusion of high density residential uses within the area through provisions in the Zoning Ordinance, which may include alternative requirements consistent with the objectives set forth in this Comprehensive Plan for special situations.

### **Use Limitations**

Bloomington seeks uses within the designation that meet the objectives discussed above, are compatible with future aircraft noise levels, and State runway safety zone limitations.

#### *Requirements*

- The following new, permanent uses are prohibited within this designation: industrial, warehouse, storage, automotive, motor-vehicle sales, remote airport parking, and similar low intensity, low employment uses.
- Support retail and service uses (including but not limited to restaurants, drug stores, bakeries, day care centers, dry cleaners, travel agencies, convenience stores, fuel sales and similar uses) are allowed when accessory to and integrated with an allowed residential, employment oriented, or tourist oriented use. Other types of destination oriented retail and service uses are better suited for the adjacent High Intensity Mixed Use Designation and are prohibited within the Airport South Mixed Use Designation.
- Residential uses are prohibited in incompatible aircraft noise areas. Areas are considered incompatible for residential uses if the 2007 noise map average mitigated aircraft noise levels are forecast by the Metropolitan Airports Commission to be at or above 70 DNL.

### **Pedestrian Support**

Bloomington seeks to foster transit and non-vehicular travel modes within this designation.

#### *Requirements*

- New development shall include infrastructure to accommodate pedestrian movement between building entrances and existing pedestrian infrastructure and between uses on adjacent sites.
- New development shall include pedestrian infrastructure along public streets, private drives, and in other areas necessary to support districtwide pedestrian movement.
- Site design (including but not limited to the location of building entrances and ground floor fenestration) for new development shall promote pedestrian circulation.



## Land Use Guide Plan Narrative

This section of the Land Use Element adds detail to the Land Use Guide Plan. While the Land Use Guide Plan map provides a delineation of the location of desired land use types within Bloomington, explanation of the special considerations used in preparing the plan is essential to appropriate interpretation and implementation.

In addition to this narrative, the Land Use Guide Plan is supplemented by the Bluff Report District Plan which is incorporated as a part of this comprehensive plan by reference. This district plan offers detail and attention beyond the scope of a citywide plan. In the event of a conflict between the citywide comprehensive plan and the Bluff Report District Plan, the comprehensive plan shall supercede.

### **Residential Areas**

In addition to discussion here, Bloomington's residential areas and housing needs are further discussed within the Housing Element. The Housing Element focuses on two major issues: 1) the need to keep the existing housing stock vital through maintenance, rehabilitation, and code enforcement, and 2) the need to address the City's changing housing needs, notably the need for additional senior oriented housing, through appropriately sited redevelopment.

### **Redevelopment Opportunities**

Residentially, Bloomington is close to entirely built out and residential land use patterns have been set. For the most part, the guide plan's residential land use designations reflect existing land uses and density levels, which is to say that the City anticipates no significant change in land use type or density in these areas. This fact does not imply that these areas will remain static. Properties will be improved and updated and spot redevelopment may well occur. Still, as discussed in the Housing Element, there are pressing needs for additional housing types within the City. The strongest current demand is for senior oriented housing. Many of the same residents who came to Bloomington with their young families in the boom of the 1950s and 1960s are today entering their senior years. Some of the seniors desire low maintenance housing alternatives or simply do not need the space or cannot afford the expense of a large single family home. Others may require a form of assisted care. Having lived in the community for many years they often wish to remain here, close to friends and neighbors, churches and familiar services. Unfortunately, Bloomington does not have enough senior oriented housing to meet the demands of its residents. Since very little vacant residential land remains, the only way in which the City can add additional senior housing is through redevelopment.

To provide areas for potential future residential redevelopment, the land use guide plan designates numerous areas throughout the City for development at greater than existing densities. This practice began with the 1980 comprehensive plan update and continues today. Selected areas are considered to be conducive to redevelopment and higher densities based on criteria such as proximity to commercial services, proximity to transit, relatively large parcel sizes, age and quality of existing structures, and surrounding land uses. Over time, housing and redevelopment needs will continue to evolve. As the comprehensive plan is updated in ten year increments in the future, housing priorities will need to be reassessed and areas guided for redevelopment will need to be reanalyzed in light of changing housing needs.

A priority must also be placed upon the incorporation of housing within commercial areas through mixed use development projects. This method brings residents close to commercial services and transit and reduces the need to travel. In addition to meeting housing needs, this method has the added benefit of revitalizing commercial areas, a benefit that can

increase overall neighborhood confidence. Adding housing in commercial areas typically generates much less neighborhood opposition than does redevelopment within single family residential areas. Each of the guide plan's commercial designation categories allow the inclusion of housing within a mixed use project. The City has also adopted redevelopment plans that call for the mixed use redevelopment of certain areas. These redevelopment plans are implemented by the Bloomington Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

While selected residential areas are guided to allow redevelopment at higher densities than currently exist or to other land uses altogether, the zoning in these areas generally conforms to the existing uses rather than to anticipated future uses. To rezone these properties to multiple family residential, commercial, or industrial zoning districts before redevelopment occurs would present a hardship upon the existing uses by making them nonconforming and by creating unreasonable zoning standards for routine home expansions. Given that redevelopment of these properties may actually be decades away or may never occur, the City wishes to avoid placing these properties in a zoning district that does not conform with the existing uses. Therefore, for the purposes of this Plan, single family residential zoning districts shall be considered consistent with commercial, industrial, or medium and high density residential land use guide plan designations in cases where a single family residential area is proposed for potential future redevelopment. However, no redevelopment shall occur in those areas which is inconsistent with the future designations of this Plan.

An appropriate land use guide plan designation is simply one of several required elements in the process of residential redevelopment. Residential redevelopment often requires rezoning and plan approval. As discussed in the goals and policy objectives section of this element, any request for rezoning will be reviewed to ensure that the proposed redevelopment package is of a viable size, does not leave behind orphan parcels, and sufficiently mitigates conflicts with existing land uses. A redevelopment rezoning proposal which the Issuing Authority finds does not satisfy these requirements is in conflict with this comprehensive plan.

### **Land Use Conflicts**

There are areas within the City in which existing residential areas are negatively impacted by proximity to incompatible land uses. Examples of this phenomenon include portions of Pillsbury Avenue, with residential uses abutting and adjacent to industrial uses, and portions of Aldrich Avenue, with residential uses adjacent to commercial uses. In these areas, a more defined transition is needed to minimize impacts on the residential uses. Significant study has been performed on these areas to identify ways in which land use transitions can be improved, including an adopted Northeast Bloomington Study Report and a Pillsbury/Lyndale Neighborhood Plan which is currently in draft form.



### **Aircraft Noise**

Bloomington's residential neighborhoods, particularly in eastern Bloomington, are impacted by aircraft noise from Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport. The construction of a new north/south runway at the airport, while reducing the overall number of Bloomington dwellings exposed to high noise levels, will expose residential areas east of Highway 77 to increased aircraft noise. The environmental impact statement that includes the new runway recommends acquisition of 27 single family and 131 multiple family units within the Airport South District. Other affected units may be eligible for federal noise insulation funding. Further discussion on the impacts of aircraft noise on residential land uses is included within the Airport Impact Element.

### **Commercial Areas**

Bloomington's commercial areas are close to entirely built out. Still, some key commercial sites remain undeveloped, including the 52 acre Met Center site, 58 acre Kelley Farm site, and 31 acre "Adjoining Lands" site each in the Airport South District. Market pressure for commercial redevelopment also remains strong. In recent years, high demand for hotel, office, and retail land uses have led to numerous redevelopments, primarily along the Interstate 494/Ring Route corridor. Future redevelopment levels will likely fluctuate with economic cycles but demand for commercial redevelopment in Bloomington is expected to remain strong as businesses take advantage of the city's excellent location within the region and several infrastructure improvement projects occur, including the introduction of LRT, the completion of the Ring Route, and improvement projects to I-494 and I-35W.

### **Range of Intensities**

Bloomington's land use guide plan includes five commercial designations: Office/Hotel, General Business, Community Commercial, Regional Commercial, and High Intensity Mixed Use. The scope of each designation is discussed in the previous section. High Intensity Mixed Use is assigned only to the Mall of America and adjacent areas appropriate for high intensity, tourist-oriented uses. Generally, Regional Commercial is assigned only to select areas with excellent accessibility that are adjacent to a freeway. Community Commercial applies both to lower intensity freeway commercial areas and to the larger non-freeway commercial nodes. General Business is reserved for commercial areas scattered throughout the city that focus primarily on providing goods and services to the surrounding neighborhoods. The Office designation, which encompasses hotels as well, is applied both in high intensity office/hotel areas and as a transitional use between commercial and residential areas.

### **494/Ring Route Corridor**

For many years, Bloomington's land use plans have encouraged the development of intense commercial uses along the Interstate 494 corridor. This commercial corridor has helped to create a strong and diverse tax and employment base for the City and its residents. The Comprehensive Plan 2000's land use guide plan carries on this vision. In many cases, the plan encourages nodes of land uses which benefit from proximity to one another, such as tourist-oriented land uses in the Airport South District, auto dealers near the I-494/I-35W intersection, and office uses

near France and I-494 or north of Normandale Lake. Location of these uses along the I-494 corridor also serves to buffer residential uses from the freeway and concentrates commercial traffic in non-residential areas. The linear nature of the corridor is also conducive to transit service, although major transit improvements are needed for the corridor to reach its transit potential. One effect of intensification of commercial uses within the corridor has been increased congestion. To maintain continued growth within the corridor, both public and private infrastructure improvements will be needed. Review and approval of development proposals within the corridor will need to closely examine infrastructure capacity.

### **Airport South District**

City land use and capital improvement plans have long steered the commercial portions of the Airport South District (all Bloomington land east of TH 77) toward a role as a high intensity regional center. Given those past plans, the mix of existing land uses, an excellent location adjacent to both an international airport and major regional freeways, the untapped capacity of existing public infrastructure, a high level of planned transit service, and the availability of sites for additional development and redevelopment, Bloomington's Airport South District has the potential to become a third "downtown" for the region.

Airport South land use plans are intended to:

- Avoid under-utilization of land and low intensity uses;
- Require high intensity, employment and tourist oriented land uses;
- Require the creation of a new, high-density residential node in the northeastern corner of the Airport South District;
- Avoid freestanding, non-integrated retail and service uses;
- Promote alternative forms of transportation;
- Recognize the noise, height and safety constraints of a location adjacent to an international airport; and
- Preserve existing single-family residential areas south of 86th Street.

### **Lyndale Corridor**

Bloomington's second commercial corridor runs along Lyndale Avenue from the Richfield boundary to 100th Street. This corridor is less intense than the I-494 corridor and has not seen the same level of recent market driven redevelopment demand. The corridor is a mix of retail, service, industrial, office, and residential uses. A major issue with the corridor is how land uses will evolve in the future. At the same time that some existing retail areas within the corridor struggle with high vacancy and turnover rates, new retail uses are proposed to replace non-retail land uses. For several years, some residential properties within the corridor have been guided for redevelopment to office uses while being zoned residential, with no actual redevelopment occurring. Other residential areas are guided industrial in anticipation of industrial expansion. Future land use plans within the corridor need to be reevaluated to produce a cohesive long term vision. The draft Pillsbury Lyndale Neighborhood Plan serves this purpose and should be brought to completion.



## **Commercial Nodes**

In addition to these two commercial corridors, Bloomington also has numerous commercial nodes scattered throughout the city which focus on providing goods and services to the surrounding neighborhoods. These nodes include neighborhood commercial areas such as 90th and Penn, Old Shakopee and Old Cedar, Bloomington Ferry and Ensign, and community commercial areas such as France and Old Shakopee or 98th and Normandale. These scattered nodes are generally in good condition and vacancies are minimal, although several gas station sites have been vacated in recent years. Their small site sizes and the difficulty of converting them to other land uses have made redevelopment difficult. Several of these sites have become eyesores that negatively impact the image of the surrounding neighborhood. The City will need to create new land use tools to encourage the redevelopment of these uses.

## **Redevelopment**

Wherever commercial redevelopment occurs, the City will need to closely consider infrastructure capacity, impact on surrounding land uses, and site suitability in its approval or denial decision. Proposed developments must not overtax the infrastructure and utilities. Redevelopment should reduce impacts on incompatible adjacent land uses through improved buffering and site design. Redevelopment must also not leave behind difficult to develop orphan parcels. The reuse of an existing structure for a new land use (for example, converting an industrial structure to a retail use), requires that the site be updated and reconfigured to meet all code requirements in the same manner as a new structure.

## **Industrial Areas**

Bloomington industrial uses are concentrated within the Central and Western Industrial Areas although additional warehouse and high tech manufacturing uses are scattered throughout the city. Bloomington's Central Industrial Area has long been built out and is now entering a phase of redevelopment. Redevelopment in these areas is made more difficult by the abundance of inexpensive industrial land on the fringe of the metropolitan area. Most redevelopment within the Central Industrial Area has been generated through the expansion of existing industrial uses rather than through the entrance of new industry.

The Western Industrial Area, developed primarily in the 1980s and 90s, is approaching build out with many of the still vacant sites being held by their owners for planned expansions. In addition to the build out of the few remaining vacant sites, some expansion of existing uses is anticipated. Minimal redevelopment is anticipated in this area.

## **Public/Quasi-Public/Conservation Areas**

With the Minnesota River Valley, Nine Mile Creek wetlands, and Hyland Park, Bloomington has a much higher percentage of its land set aside as natural areas than most communities. The guide plan endeavors to preserve these natural amenities. The city's parks, churches, schools, and public buildings are well established. Still, changes will occur and the City will need to ensure that improvements to public and quasi-public facilities work well with their surrounding neighborhoods.

2.5 Goals,  
Policy  
Objectives,  
Implementation  
Actions



**B**loomington is many things to many people: a great place to raise a family, with quality schools, safe neighborhoods, low taxes, and rising property values; a good place to grow old, with excellent senior services and activities and diverse housing opportunities; a center of commerce; a great business address for small and large companies; a workplace for employees living throughout the region; a major tourist destination and shopping Mecca; and a nature preserve with vegetated river valleys and bluffs, numerous lakes and wetlands, and regional park reserves.

Bloomington's land use challenge over the next twenty years and beyond is to preserve all of the features that make Bloomington a great place to live and work while accommodating market demands for additional development and addressing the land use problems of today. The following goals and policies outline the City's land use values and strategies.

**Land Use  
Goal 1**

**Encourage an efficient arrangement and distribution of land uses.**

**Policy Objective 1.1**

**Avoid future land use conflicts and mitigate existing land use conflicts.**

**IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS**

- Encourage an arrangement of land uses that groups uses of compatible characteristics and requirements near one another (*see Table 2.6, Land Use Compatibility*). *Development proposals and requests to change zoning or guide plan classifications will be evaluated based on the surrounding land uses and the compatibility of the proposed land use. The location of incompatible land uses adjacent to one another will be strongly discouraged.*
- In instances where it is desirable, or unavoidable, to have incompatible land uses adjacent to one another, require the more intensive land use to provide an appropriate transition or buffer.
- Where land use conflicts currently exist, identify mitigation measures



such as the retrofit of screening or the redevelopment of one of the incompatible land uses.

### Policy Objective 1.2

**Craft the Zoning Ordinance to work hand in hand with the Comprehensive Plan to achieve the City’s development vision.**

#### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Evaluate the existing zoning districts and make changes as necessary. *The City currently has a complex system of 29 base zoning districts plus overlay districts which have been developed over the last forty years. A comprehensive review and revision of the City’s zoning districts will ensure that they correspond to the City’s current development goals and will simplify the development process by reducing the overall number of districts.*
- Perform a consistency study. *State law requires that zoning be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Once the City’s geographic information system is available, a study should be performed to ensure that all zoning designations within the city are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. To facilitate this study, the preparation of geographic overlays for property lines, land use, zoning, and guide plan designation should be made a priority.*

### Policy Objective 1.3

**Coordinate transportation and land use decisions to reduce peak period travel demand by reducing automobile use and trip.**

#### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Promote high density and senior housing redevelopment in mixed use areas near employment opportunities, commercial services, and transit to reduce travel demand.
- Review the City’s official controls to ensure that mixed use development is strongly encouraged in appropriate areas.

### Policy Objective 1.4

**Retain and use existing linear rights of way (e.g. railroad and utility rights of way) for public use.**

#### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Support the acquisition of use of linear rights of way for recreational or other public use. *The existence of linear rights of way such as the Canadian Pacific Railroad Spur and the Northern States Power Corridor present unique opportunities for public uses that require a continuous corridor, including dedicated transit ways and recreational trails.*

### Policy Objective 1.5

**Promote aesthetically attractive development and good urban design.**

## Land Use Goal 2

Ensure that redevelopment improves local conditions.

### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Require utility systems to be placed underground when feasible.
- Require parking lots to be screened through berms or vegetation.
- Evaluate the use of neighborhood identification features to foster neighborhood identity and pride.

### Policy Objective 2.1

**Avoid redevelopment that overtaxes existing infrastructure.**

### Policy Objective 2.2

**Require that redevelopment mitigate negative impacts on adjacent property.**

### Policy Objective 2.3

**Oppose the conversion of an existing structure to a use for which it was not intended (for example, conversion of an industrial building to a retail use) unless the site can be renovated and reconfigured to fully meet Code requirements and the needs of the new land use.**

### Policy Objective 2.4

**Ensure that redevelopment sites are suitably sized for the proposed replacement land use.**

### Policy Objective 2.5

**Avoid redevelopment that leaves behind difficult to develop “orphan parcels”.** *“Orphan parcels” are parcels that are unlikely to be redeveloped unless they are combined with an adjoining parcel. These parcels are not conducive to redevelopment by themselves due to their small size, lack of access, or inability to meet the performance standards of the underlying zoning district. Redevelopment proposals will be strongly encouraged not to create or leave behind orphan parcels.*

### Policy Objective 2.6

**Promote redevelopment of outdated or incompatible land uses and abandoned buildings. Examples of possible redevelopment implementation actions include the following:**

### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Develop a redevelopment fund and land banking policy. *To be in a position to quickly address priority redevelopment needs, special funds for that purpose should be set aside. To address long term redevelopment goals, critical parcels should be acquired as they come on the market, thereby reducing acquisition costs. Both the redevelopment fund and land banking policy should be directed towards only those sites which would not otherwise be redeveloped by the private market.*



- Evaluate available techniques for requiring the reuse, removal, or maintenance of vacated buildings. *Buildings, notably former service stations, have been vacated in some of the city’s neighborhood commercial centers. To the extent that these buildings are not maintained to area standards (for example, broken or boarded windows) they have a significant detrimental affect on neighborhood confidence and impede further reinvestment by neighboring property owners. Staff will evaluate techniques such as anti-blight requirements and receivership to require either the reuse, removal, or maintenance of abandoned buildings.*

## Land Use Goal 3

**Promote continued economic development for the City and the region.**

### Policy Objective 3.1

**Promote and facilitate the completion of planned expansions to Interstates 494 and 35W through Bloomington.** *The Minnesota Department of Transportation has prepared plans to widen and improve I-494 and I-35W through Bloomington but the plans have not been fully funded due to a lack of state transportation resources. These projects would greatly improve access to Bloomington and would likely spur additional redevelopment.*

#### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- As development proposals within the expansion area are received, the City will use available techniques to preserve as much of the needed highway expansion area as possible, thereby lowering the ultimate costs of the project and improving its chances for being funded.

### Policy Objective 3.2

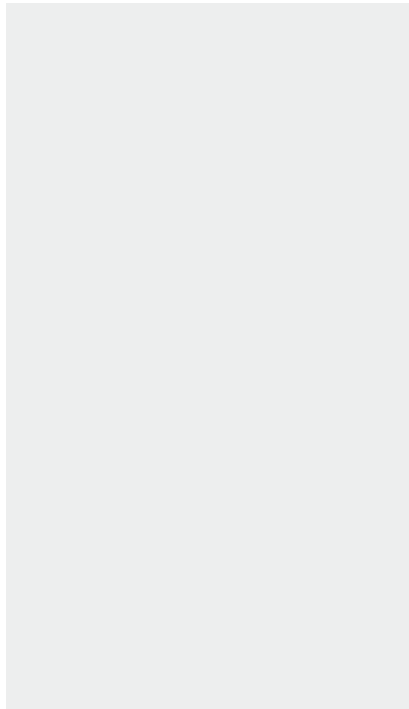
**Promote the completion of planned light rail and transit improvements within Bloomington.** *The Minnesota Department of Transportation and Metro Transit have plans to add light rail transit in the Airport South District and high speed bus service with a Bloomington transfer station along I-35W. Both of these projects will improve transit access to and from Bloomington and will facilitate transit oriented development.*

### Policy Objective 3.3

**Encourage the International Airport to remain at its present site.** *Although the airport brings with it noise impacts and restrictive runway safety zones and height limits, having the airport adjacent to Bloomington is a net positive for the city due to its great economic impact. Bloomington’s largest employers rely heavily on the close proximity of the airport. While recent legislative actions have determined that the airport will remain in its present location for the foreseeable future, there are continued calls from various groups to relocate the airport.*

#### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Lobby for retaining the airport at its present location if airport relocation is considered in the future.



**Land Use  
Goal 4**

**Preserve environmental and historic resources.**

**Policy Objective 3.4**

**Preserve a diverse work force by providing a mix of housing at all price levels.** *Since Bloomington's strong economy offers employment opportunities with wage levels at all points in the income spectrum, the city requires a corresponding diversity of housing types and price levels. While encouraging a mix of housing, the City must also ensure that new and existing housing meet high quality housing standards and conform to the goals and policies outlined in the Housing Element.*

**Policy Objective 3.5**

**Promote and facilitate additional high quality redevelopment at appropriate locations throughout the city.**

**Policy Objective 3.6**

**Prepare an annual land use report.**

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Utilize the City's geographic information system to prepare an annual report summarizing land use, vacant land, and development over the last year.

**Policy Objective 4.1**

**Limit development in environmentally sensitive areas, such as floodplains, bluffs, steep slopes, and wetlands.** *Additional environmental goals, policy objectives, and implementation actions appear in the Environmental Protection Element included in the Technical Appendix.*

**Policy Objective 4.2**

**Promote the identification, preservation, and maintenance of sites with historic, architectural, archeological, and cultural value or significance, including those properties which may be technically ineligible for historic registration.**

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Integrate historic, architectural, archeological, and cultural preservation in the routine activities of the City, such as zoning, code enforcement, public works, and economic development.
- Applications for permits in relation to a Class I or Class II historic or identified prehistoric site shall be reviewed by City staff. If a Certificate of Appropriateness is required, staff will prepare a recommendation to the City Council for final action.



## Land Use Goal 5

**Address the neighborhood specific needs of the city’s commercial, industrial, and residential areas.**

*While a full discussion of neighborhood level land use conflicts, opportunities, and strategies is beyond the scope of a citywide Comprehensive Plan and should be reserved for a more detailed analysis within neighborhood or area plans, the most pressing neighborhood specific policy objectives and implementation actions are included below.*

### Policy Objective 5.1

**Facilitate continued redevelopment in the Airport South District.**

*Including all lands in Bloomington east of Highway 77, the Airport South District plays a regional role as a major employment center, host to the nation’s largest shopping mall, gateway to the Twin Cities and Minnesota for most air travelers, and anchor for the largest concentration of hotel rooms in the Upper Midwest. This diverse, mixed use district is also home to office towers, high-tech manufacturing, and residential areas of both high and low density. The district contains many of Bloomington’s largest vacant parcels, including the Met Center site, Mall of America “Adjoining Lands” (currently used as overflow parking), Kelley Farm, and Ceridian Ballfields. The proximity of the region’s international airport has had a major influence on land use within the district in the past and will continue to do so in the future.*

#### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- *Work with the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge to make the refuge more accessible to residents, visitors and employees. As growth occurs in the Airport South District, especially residential growth, the wildlife refuge and river valley will be a much-treasured resource. Public access should be improved through the creation of new access points. To facilitate improved access to the Wildlife Refuge facilities, the City will work with Three Rivers Park District to promote a trail connection from the Refuge visitor’s center and headquarters building to the proposed regional trail linking MSP Airport, Richfield and Edina to the South Hennepin Regional Trail.*
- *Work with the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge in the provision of stormwater management utilizing a range of alternatives and techniques above and below the bluff.*
- *Improve pedestrian infrastructure to reduce the need for vehicle trips and to improve access to transit. Pedestrian infrastructure should be provided between entrances and streetside sidewalks, between adjacent uses, along public streets, along private drives, and in other areas necessary to support districtwide pedestrian movement.*
- *Collaborate with the Metropolitan Airports Commission to ensure that residential areas acquired for noise mitigation purposes are redeveloped in a manner that does not detract from surrounding land uses.*
- *Use official controls to require the creation of a high-density housing and mixed use node in the northeastern portion of the Airport South District.*
- *Work toward the creation of a fourth Bloomington light rail transit station at American Boulevard and 34th Avenue. Adding an LRT station at American Boulevard and 34th Avenue is an integral component of the City’s vision to create a high-density housing and mixed use node in the northeastern portion of the Airport South District. Bloomington’s goal is to have plans in place by December 31, 2007. If plans are not in place by the end of 2007 to create this station, the City will reevaluate*

*land use controls in the immediate vicinity as part of its required 2008 Comprehensive Plan Update.*

- Amend official controls as necessary to support and implement the land use vision of this plan for the Airport South District.

## Policy Objective 5.2

**Mitigate the negative impacts of aircraft noise on the city’s residential areas.** *The addition of the new north-south runway will redistribute aircraft takeoffs and landings over Bloomington. Traffic on the existing 4-22 crosswind runway will decrease as the planes begin to use the new north-south runway, thereby decreasing noise exposure in most areas west of Highway 77. Areas east of Highway 77 that were previously exposed to little aircraft noise, however, will receive noise levels higher than anywhere else in the city (Figure 5.4 details anticipated aircraft noise levels).*

### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- The City’s aircraft noise policies and noise level maps are included in Chapter 5, the Airport Impact Element.

## Policy Objective 5.3

**Encourage the continued redevelopment of land along the Ring Route and I-494 as a high density, mixed use corridor.** *The so called “Bloomington Strip”, which runs along I-494 and the 79th/80th Street Ring Route from Highway 77 to Eden Prairie, is one of the most densely developed and defined linear corridors in the Twin Cities region. The corridor can be viewed as two segments, divided at I-35W, each with its own character. The eastern portion of the corridor is and has been a jumbled mix of industrial, retail, service, office, and residential land uses. Much of the eastern portion has already been redeveloped with recent market pressures favoring retail establishments and hotels although sites have also been redeveloped to industrial, warehouse, and office uses. The western portion of the corridor is predominantly focused on office and retail uses including numerous high rise office buildings and the Southtown Shopping Center. Continued redevelopment pressures are anticipated throughout the corridor, especially as major roadway improvement projects for I-494 and the Ring Route are completed.*

### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Integrate I-494/Ring Route Corridor land use plans with planned roadway improvements. *The City is currently in the process of upgrading 79th and 80th Street to create a continuous, high quality, four lane “Ring Route” paralleling I-494 on its south side. The improvements will include a bridge over I-35W, linking the eastern and western segments of the corridor. Traffic flows will increase along the Ring Route as short length, intra-city trips shift from a congested I-494. The Minnesota Department of Transportation has also drafted plans to make substantial improvements to Interstate 494. While only a small portion of the proposed improvements currently have funding, the entire project could materialize if transportation funding levels increase in the future. These roadway improvement projects will have a major impact on the corridor through increased highway capacity and improved access, the acquisi-*



tion or reconfiguration of numerous parcels, and the closing and reconfiguration of several interchanges.

- Develop a master plan for gateway entrance features and landscaping along Lyndale, Nicollet, Portland, 12th, 24th, and 34th Avenues between I-494 and 79th/80th Street Ring Route.
- Encourage the provision of regular transit service running the length of the Ring Route. *While portions of the corridor are currently served by bus routes, no route follows the corridor for its entire length. With the completion of a Ring Route bridge over I-35W, a continuous route serving the corridor will be possible and the City will encourage transit agencies to establish a continuous bus route linking the corridor from the international airport to the office towers west of Normandale Blvd.*

### Policy Objective 5.4

**Address neighborhood or area specific land use conflicts by implementing existing neighborhood and area plans and preparing new area and neighborhood plans as the need arises.**

#### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Adopt and implement a neighborhood plan which addresses the many land use conflicts in north central Bloomington. At several locations in north central Bloomington, residential areas directly abut industrial or intense commercial development with little to no screening, notably along Lyndale and Pillsbury Avenues. This land use relationship has had a detrimental impact on the affected residential areas. Staff has been working on potential long term solutions to these land use conflicts within the Pillsbury/Lyndale Avenue Neighborhood Plan.
- Continue implementation of the Oxboro Redevelopment Plan.

### Policy Objective 5.5

**Inspire continued consumer confidence in the future of Bloomington’s residential neighborhoods. *When deciding on a neighborhood or community, a potential buyer looks at many factors in addition to the house itself. A buyer will look at the quality of schools; accessibility to employment and amenities such as shopping and recreation; the level of reinvestment within the area; how neighbors maintain their properties; the quality of services and infrastructure; and perceived levels of crime among other factors. To keep Bloomington’s residential neighborhoods vital, the City will undertake the following actions which are further described in the Housing Element.***

#### IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Continue the City’s Community Enhancement Program of targeted neighborhood revitalization and intensive code enforcement.
- Increase housing rehabilitation.
- Remove substandard homes.
- Improve marketing efforts to promote community commitment to neighborhood vitality. Coordinate efforts with the Bloomington School District.
- Develop and link information sources for neighborhood analysis.
- Support anti-crime initiatives.