



METRO Blue Line Extension (Bottineau LRT) Phase 1: Station Area Planning

Plymouth Avenue and
Golden Valley Road Stations

Minneapolis and Golden Valley, MN
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METRO BLUE LINE EXTENSION (BOTTINEAU LRT) PHASE 1: STATION AREA PLANNING *PLYMOUTH AVENUE AND GOLDEN VALLEY ROAD STATIONS*

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INTRODUCTION

Project Definition and Context

The METRO Blue Line Extension (Bottineau Light Rail Transit (LRT)) project is a proposed 13-mile addition to the existing METRO Blue Line and will extend from downtown Minneapolis through north Minneapolis, Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park, serving the northwest Twin Cities metro area as shown in **Figure 1.1**. The METRO Blue Line Extension will link to local and express bus routes at its planned stations, and seamlessly connect to the region's system of transitways at Target Field Station in downtown Minneapolis.

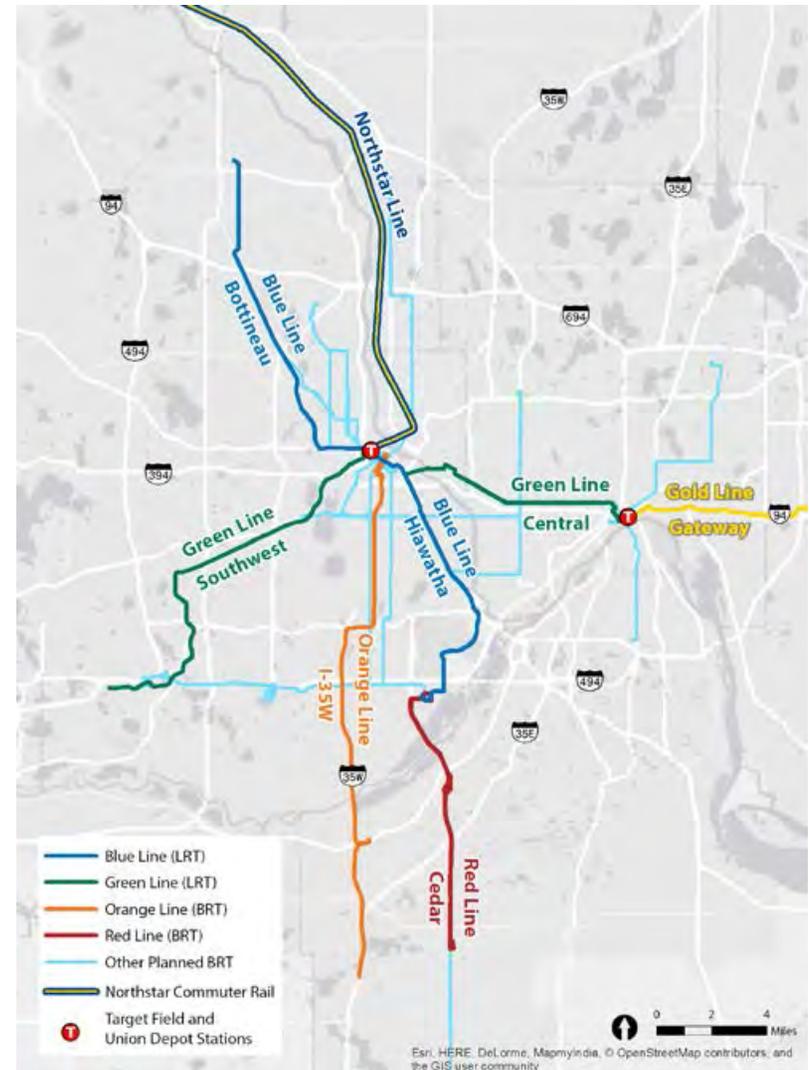
As currently proposed, the METRO Blue Line Extension will build up to 11 new stations:

- Two stations in Minneapolis: Van White Boulevard and Penn Avenue
- One or two stations in Golden Valley: Plymouth Avenue and/or Golden Valley Road
- One station in Robbinsdale: Robbinsdale (at 42nd Avenue)
- One station in Crystal: Bass Lake Road
- Five stations in Brooklyn Park: 63rd Avenue, Brooklyn Boulevard, 85th Avenue, 93rd Avenue, and Oak Grove Parkway

In an effort to use project resources effectively, Hennepin County divided the METRO Blue Line Extension station area planning process into two phases. Phase One is the subject of these plans and covers the four stations in Minneapolis and Golden Valley. Phase One station area plans are presented in two documents. One report addresses the Van White Boulevard and Penn Avenue

Figure 1.1: Regional Transitways

This map shows the extension of the Blue Line through North Minneapolis, Golden Valley, Robbinsdale, Crystal and Brooklyn Park.



station areas in Minneapolis. This report addresses the Plymouth Avenue and Golden Valley Road station areas, each of which falls partially in the cities of Golden Valley and Minneapolis. Phase Two is underway and will cover the balance of the stations in Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park. Phase Two station area plans will be available at a later date.

As noted above and in **Figure 1.2**, Metro Transit plans to build either the Plymouth Avenue or the Golden Valley Road Station or both stations. Selection of a station will occur during the Blue Line Extension Project Development phase. To inform this selection, and to keep the decision unbiased, Hennepin County and the Cities of Minneapolis and Golden Valley elected to prepare full station area plans for both stations.

Definition of Station Area Planning

Station area planning is a process by which county and city staff work together with community members to establish a plan for the area surrounding a proposed transit station. Station area plans typically cover the area within a 1/2 mile radius or a ten minute walk of the station. During the station area planning process community members discuss issues, needs, desires, and priorities, and set a vision for the future look and feel of the area that creates a context for the station in the community. Station area planning results in a list of recommended actions for agencies and local communities that contribute toward realization of the vision.

Figure 1.2: METRO Blue Line Extension

This map shows which station area planning phase the various METRO Blue Line Extension stations are addressed in.

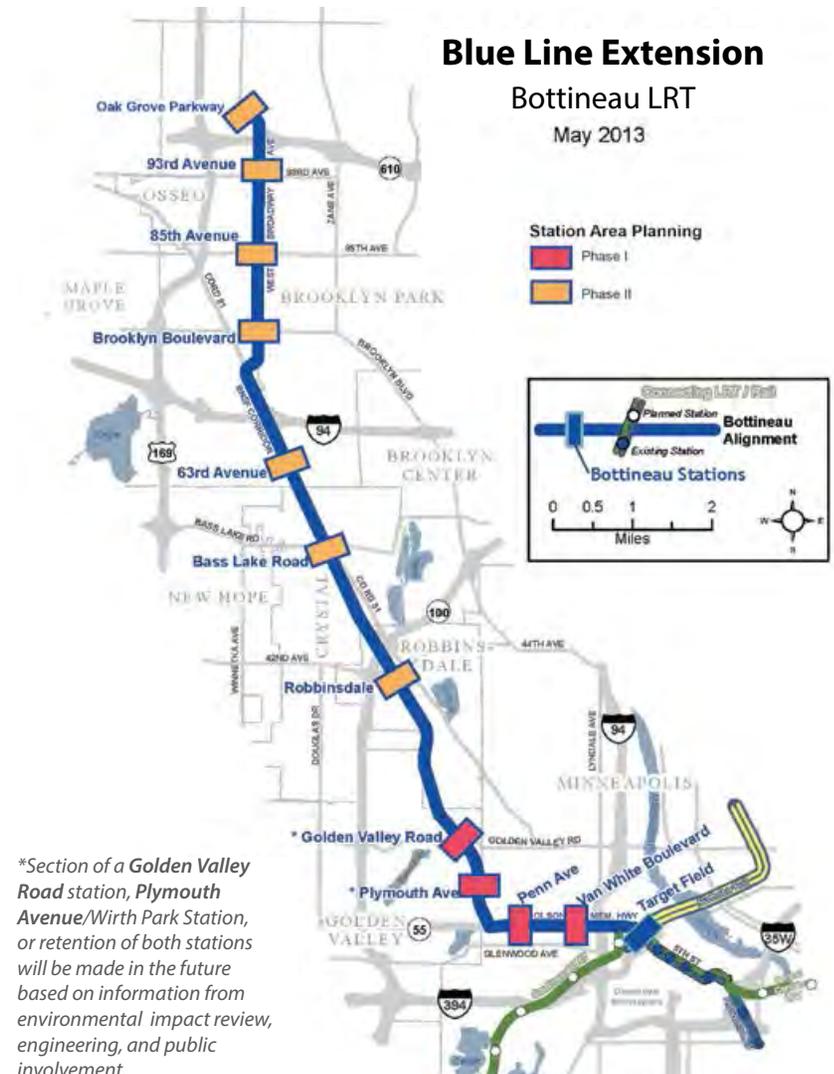
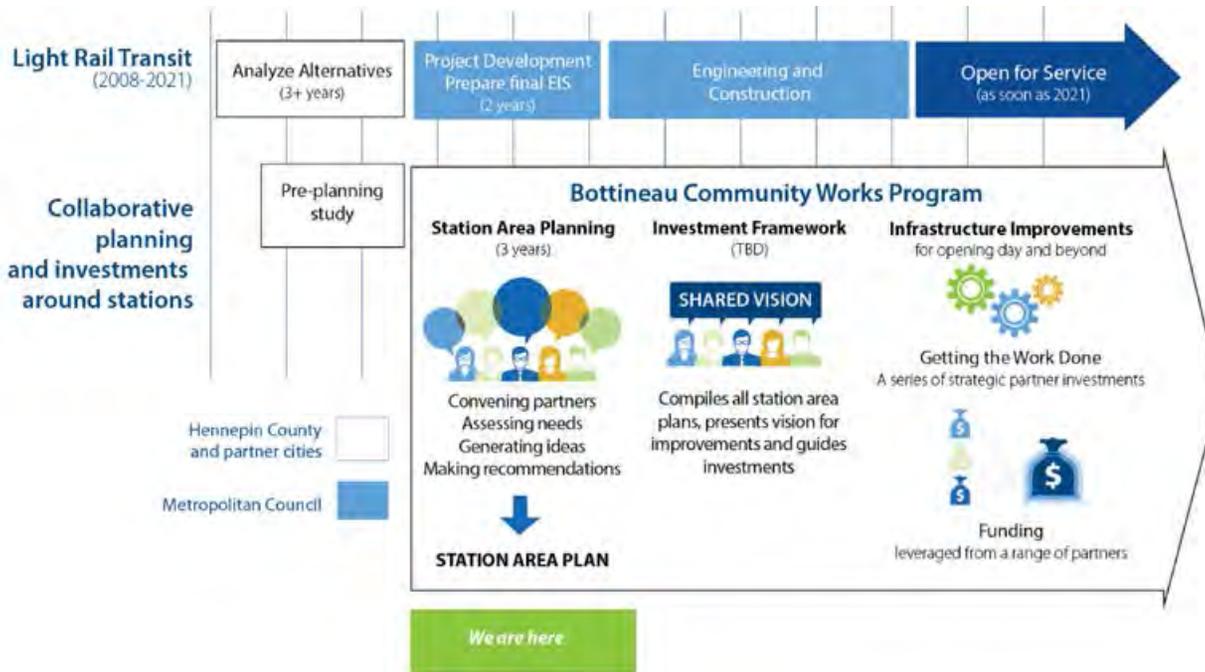


Figure 1.3: METRO Blue Line Extension Development Process



Recognizing that transportation systems and the characteristics of our neighborhoods have a substantial impact on community health and that populations within the Bottineau corridor experience significant disparities in health outcomes, Hennepin County incorporated health considerations as a special area of focus in station area planning.

Purpose of Station Area Planning

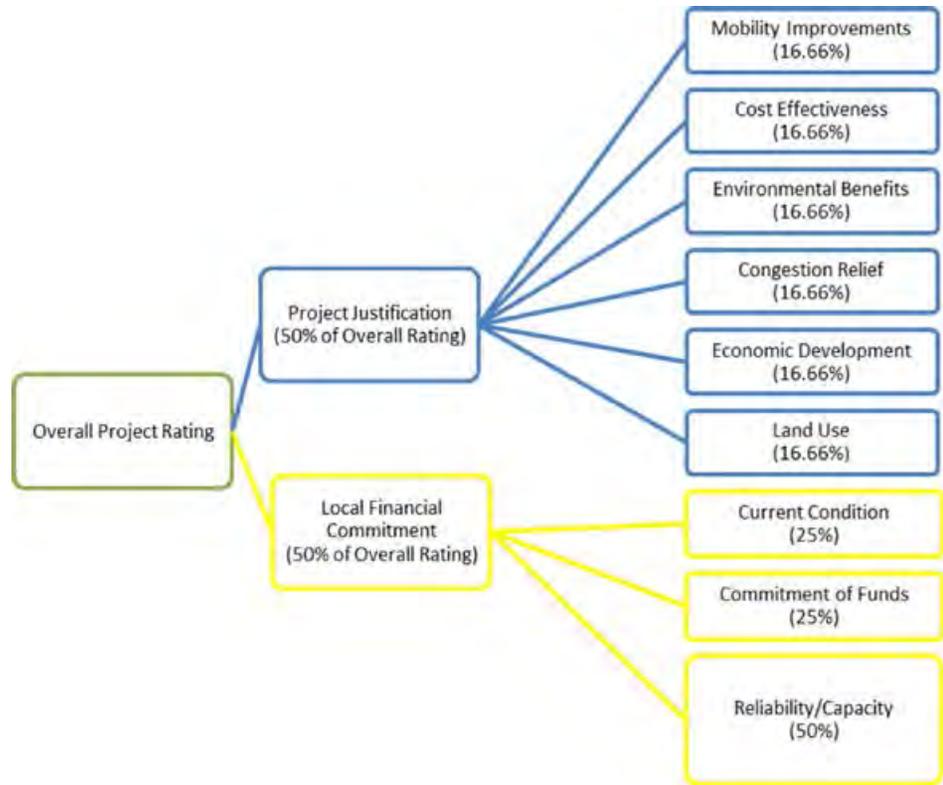
Station area planning is one step in a larger transportation development project, as depicted in **Figure 1.3**. The Phase One Station Area Planning process is a joint effort of Hennepin County Bottineau LRT Community Works, Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority, and the Cities of Minneapolis and Golden Valley. The purpose of Station Area Planning is to create land use and transitway supportive plans centered on the proposed Bottineau LRT transit

stations. These plans examine transportation and circulation issues, urban design and placemaking, and public realm infrastructure so as to help maintain and create healthy, great neighborhoods and high quality transit-oriented development. These plans cover the area within a half mile of a transit station, but concentrate on the area within a 10 minute walk. The purpose of the Station Area Planning process is threefold:

First: To provide an opportunity for dialogue with station area residents, members of the business community, agency staff, and elected and appointed officials regarding land use concepts and ideas, infrastructure improvements, and whether changes are recommended to city, county, and regional plans, policies, and ordinances. The station area plans will be adopted as part of the comprehensive plans of the partner cities. The station area plans provide guidance for the cities in designating land uses, making infrastructure investments, and developing and providing community services. The maps, goals, and policies of the plan provide the framework for adoption of regulations, programs, and services to implement the plan and help prepare for the METRO Blue Line Extension as a major infrastructure investment.

Second: To improve the METRO Blue Line Extension project’s likelihood of receiving federal funding. The METRO Blue Line Extension project is competing with transitway projects across the country for Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Starts funds, which could pay for up to 50 percent of the capital costs of the project. Proposed New Starts projects are evaluated and rated according to local financial commitment and project justification criteria set forth in the federal

Figure 1.4: FTA New Starts Rating System



transportation bill, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) and are shown in **Figure 1.4**¹.

¹As of August 2013, FTA's interim policy is to assign 50 percent weight to the summary project justification rating and 50 percent weight to the summary local financial commitment rating to arrive at an overall rating for the project. FTA requires at least a medium rating on both measures to obtain a medium or better rating overall.

Of the six project justification criteria, two criteria, economic development effects and land use, are based almost entirely on local plans and policies, as well as the physical character of station areas. Station area planning therefore has the potential to increase the project's rating and its likelihood of funding and implementation. Ratings on additional criteria (mobility and cost) can also benefit from station area planning,

as these ratings are affected by the number of people who will be served by and ride the LRT line. Planning around stations is the first step in allocating growth to station areas, eventually increasing the population near stations and in turn increasing ridership on the LRT line.

Finally, the station area planning process builds capacity within community members and agency staff to fully participate in the Hennepin County Bottineau LRT Community Works program, as well as the project development process for the LRT line. Bottineau LRT Community Works is a partnership of Hennepin County, the corridor cities, and Metropolitan Council/Metro Transit to coordinate planning and make effective investments in the station areas that foster transit-oriented development, pedestrian and bicycle accessibility, job growth, neighborhood vitality, and unique places in the corridor.

Station Area Planning Process and Approach

Process

The station area planning process proceeded in five phases: pre-planning; inventory and analysis; concept alternatives; preferred alternative and implementation recommendations and development of the final station area plans.

Pre-Planning

To provide Bottineau Corridor stakeholders with a foundation of objective information for future station area planning efforts, two planning efforts were undertaken prior to actively working on station area plans. A pre-planning study documented some best

practices for transit-oriented development (TOD) and community engagement, established a corridor-wide vision and suggested station typologies.

In recognition of the relationship between transportation decision making and health outcomes, Hennepin County undertook a health impact assessment (HIA) of the transitway. This effort is similar to an environmental impact assessment, but considers the impact of a project on community health. The HIA found that:

- The Bottineau Transitway has the potential to improve health in the region by influencing multiple factors that shape health.
- Enhancements to land uses surrounding the station areas could greatly advance the LRT line's impact on health.
- The degree to which these health promoting benefits reach communities experiencing health disparities, such as minority and low-income populations, will depend on measures to ensure their access to the LRT.

HIA recommendations for station area planning included:

- Engage populations living in the Bottineau Corridor during station area planning and incorporating engagement strategies to reach traditionally underrepresented groups such as low-income, minority, immigrant, and non-English speaking populations.

- Focus Bottineau Corridor cities' residential and commercial growth to the station areas and implement zoning, parking requirements, and building codes that encourage higher density, mixed-use development that will benefit current and future communities.
- Incorporate pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvements into station area plans to improve traffic safety and facilitate access to the transit stations by foot and bike.
- Preserve existing affordable housing and support the development of affordable and mixed-income housing near transit locations using strategies that have been successful for other transit-related investments throughout the U.S.

Inventory and Analysis – Spring and Summer 2014

This phase included collection of data and an in-depth analysis of several topics. Results of the following inventory and analysis can be found in Chapter 2, Part 1: Existing Conditions Analysis unless otherwise noted.

Access and Circulation

- An analysis of the connections between modes at each station; bus, bicycle, and pedestrian access to the station; and missing links in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure
- High-level consideration of traffic-related issues and traffic generating locations

- An in-depth look at the pedestrian environment on Olson Memorial Highway, including the possibility for a parallel trail, north-south pedestrian connections across the highway, exploration of crossing scenarios, as well as pedestrian and bicycle crossings above-, below-, and at-grade with the highway
- Examination of on and off-street parking options and parameters near the stations

Existing and Future Land Use

- Mapping of existing land use in each of the station areas

Amenities and Destinations

- Inventory and mapping of local amenities and destinations, including major developments, healthcare, civic, and educational destinations, as well as parks and historic properties and districts

Economic Development

Results of the economic development inventory and analysis can be found at the station area market analysis link on page 1-10.

- A quantitative and qualitative evaluation of development capacity in each of the station areas including large sites and those in public ownership
- In-person interviews with local developers, community members, business owners, and organizational leaders regarding current real estate dynamics and opportunities

Figure 1.5: Station Area Planning Schedule



- An evaluation of opportunities for retail, general commercial, and office development at the neighborhood, community, and sub-region scale, as well as potential opportunities for civic, educational, and healthcare uses
- Gathering of baseline demographic information, with metrics such as household size, incomes, age, and educational attainment

Housing Markets

Results of the housing inventory and analysis can be found at the station area market analysis link on page 1-10.

- Documentation of the market dynamics driving residential development (achievable price points, land values, density, and absorption), and links between current and future housing typologies and developable land, in order to generate a picture of the station area in the short and long terms
- An inventory of existing housing conditions, including the scale of existing development, and affordability mix
- Use of housing-related data as well as the reports and perceptions of community residents and other stakeholders to outline the housing needs of communities near the stations
- An evaluation of current and projected market conditions for housing development to estimate the rents that would be achievable in new developments by housing type, and the populations and households that might be target markets for new housing development

Future Character

- Statements shaped through the community engagement process that communicate each station's assets and values and set the vision that will guide future development in the station area

Concept Alternatives – Fall and Winter 2014

The concept alternatives encompass the information gathered during the inventory and analysis phase and illustrate a range of development options for each station, as well as potential infrastructure improvements.

Preferred Alternative and Implementation Recommendations – Winter 2015

Each station's preferred alternative concept is consistent with its station area character statement and incorporates recommended circulation and public realm enhancements. To facilitate adoption into each city's comprehensive plan, the preferred concept alternative is presented as a future land use plan.

Recommendations are based on the results of the analysis, conceptual station area layouts, assessment of development financial feasibility, and extensive community engagement. Recommendations are presented for each station in phases: pre-transitway (2013 - 2020), and post-transitway (2020 - 2030).

The implementation plan includes mutually agreed-on roles and responsibilities for both public agencies and community stakeholders.

Final Station Area Plans – Spring 2015

This document is a record of the community engagement process, along with the results of technical analyses, as well as the final station concept, future land use plan maps, and corresponding recommendations and implementation plan. For the station area planning timeline, please see **Figure 1.5**.

Public Engagement throughout the Station Area Planning Process

Robust public engagement was central to development of the station area plans, and the plans reflect input from a wide variety of residents, business community members, community organizations, and government agencies. A variety of methods were used to engage people throughout the project; detail is provided in the sections below.

Community Engagement

The METRO Blue Line Extension Station Area Planning process began with a concerted effort to identify and invite people who live, work, or are otherwise interested in the station areas to join a Community Working Group, a group of community members that met monthly throughout the planning process to generate ideas, review drawings, maps, and documents, and provide direction on broader station area planning outreach efforts.

Seven Community Working Group meetings were held over the course of the planning process, while three open houses were held at critical junctures to share information and gather input from a broader group of people. Community Working Group meetings

were open to the public and were well attended by members. Open houses were thoroughly advertised on the Bottineau LRT Community Works email list, website, and noticed in public places and via community and neighborhood organizations. Open houses were very well attended, with more than 150 participants at each event.

In addition, city, county, and consultant staff met with many other stakeholders in small-group and one-on-one topical meetings, and conducted interviews with a broad cross-section of key stakeholders, as well as developers in the corridor and region.

Health Equity and Engagement Cohort

In 2013, Hennepin County published the Bottineau Health Impact Assessment (HIA), which documented dramatic economic, environmental, and social inequalities in the Bottineau Corridor compared to the rest of the region. These inequalities result in lower life expectancy, poor health outcomes, and more traffic fatalities in the corridor. The METRO Blue Line Extension project offers an opportunity to begin improving health in nearby communities. As follow up to the HIA and in parallel to the station area planning process, Hennepin County initiated an engagement process specifically aimed at integrating health equity principles into Bottineau Station Area Planning. The Health Equity and Engagement Cohort formed in 2014 and is comprised of representatives from Northside Residents Redevelopment Council, Harrison Neighborhood Association, Heritage Park Neighborhood Association, Comunidades Latinas Unidas en Servicio (CLUES), CAPI USA (formerly Center for Asian and Pacific Islanders), Lao Assistance Center

of Minnesota, Redeemer Center for Life, and Masjid An-Nur. The cohort has provided input to the station area planning process, and many individual members of the organizations listed above have participated in the process, as well.

Agency Engagement

A Technical Advisory Committee comprised of representatives from each of the affected agencies met eight times throughout the project to review and provide comment and direction on both technical information and community engagement methods. TAC members engaged in difficult conversations to reconcile the differing priorities of their agencies, all of which retain an interest in the success of the METRO Blue Line Extension and its stations. TAC members also participated in a design charrette, an intense all-day meeting with the purpose of identifying preferred land uses, solidifying preferred alternatives, and discussing potential implementation strategies.

For a timeline of community and agency engagement efforts, please see **Figure 1.5**.

Related Documents

Previous Studies

As part of the station area planning process, plans that provided city-wide policy guidance, such as Comprehensive Plans, were consulted. In addition, policy documents developed by the Metropolitan Council and Hennepin County were also consulted for applicable policy direction.

The studies referenced below each informed the station area planning process. A short description of each is provided, along with a brief synopsis of the information the study provided to the METRO Blue Line Extension Station Area Planning process.

Bottineau Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement

Published in April 2014, the [Bottineau Transitway Draft Environmental Impact Statement](#) describes the transportation and environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of an LRT project to improve transit service in the northwest part of the region. The Bottineau Draft EIS provided information about LRT design, placement of LRT components and potential impacts of the line that was used to inform the station area plans.

Theodore Wirth Regional Park Bottineau Transitway Design Forum

In February 2013, the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board sponsored the [Theodore Wirth Regional Park Bottineau Transitway Design Forum](#) to explore the relationship between the LRT project and the park. The outcome of the forum is a series of concepts that illustrate potential solutions to the issues and opportunities presented by LRT adjacent to the east side of the park. The station area planning process further explored many of the ideas raised during the Design Forum.

Bottineau Transitway Station Area Pre-Planning Study

Published in February 2013, the purpose of the [Bottineau Transitway Station Area Pre-Planning Study](#) is to provide Bottineau Corridor stakeholders with a foundation of objective information for future station area planning efforts. As a pre-planning study, it does not describe where and how change should occur. Rather, it establishes some best practices for TOD, establishes a corridor-wide vision, and suggests station typologies. The vision and station typologies proposed in the Pre-Planning Study were used to arrive at the character statements for each station.

Bassett Creek Regional Trail CSAH 66/Golden Valley Road Segment Feasibility Study

The City of Golden Valley initiated the [Bassett Creek Regional Trail CSAH 66/Golden Valley Road Segment Feasibility Study](#) to understand the opportunities and impacts that developing the Bassett Creek Regional Trail along the CSAH 66 corridor through Golden Valley might have on the property owners and resources of the City. The Feasibility Study was used as a reference for understanding of the location and potential for the Regional Trail.

Bottineau Transitway Health Impact Assessment

In recognition of the relationship between transportation decision making and health outcomes, Hennepin County published the [Bottineau Transitway Health Impact Assessment](#) (HIA) in December 2013. The HIA provides recommendations for advancing the transitway's positive health impacts and is intended

to help stakeholders consider health as they make decisions and participate in the next phases of the Bottineau Transitway project. The HIA informed community engagement efforts and to consideration of health outcomes throughout the station area planning process.

Concurrent Studies

Several studies were underway at the same time at METRO Blue Line Extension Station Area Planning. Information from these efforts was coordinated as needed.

Theodore Wirth Regional Park Master Plan

Published in February 2015, the [Theodore Wirth Regional Park Master Plan](#) documents current park data and analysis, communicates a plan for the park's future, and guides strategic implementation of the plan over the next 20 years. It serves as a "memory" for decision-making, by reminding future residents, park visitors, and staff of the rationale behind the vision for the park and the recommended improvements. The Master Plan was used as a reference document for understanding of the Park's future and its facilities as they relate to the Penn, Plymouth and Golden Valley Road Stations.

Conceptual Sochaki Park, Mary Hills, and Rice Lake Nature Area Planning

Three Rivers Park District is collaborating with the Cities of Robbinsdale and Golden Valley to identify potential capital projects and natural resource and programming initiatives in [Sochacki Park and the Mary Hills and Rice Lake Nature Areas](#). This planning process highlighted the need for a new trail connection between Mary Hills

Nature Area and Bassett Creek Regional Trail/Theodore Wirth Park, which is reiterated in the Golden Valley Station Area Plan.

Penn Avenue Vision and Implementation Framework

The [Penn Avenue Community Works Corridor Vision and Implementation Framework](#) is a Hennepin County-led effort to develop an integrated community-based vision and a coordinated, long-term implementation framework to guide future inter-agency efforts and investments in multimodal transportation, land use, economic development, housing, and placemaking along Penn Avenue North between the METRO Green Line Extension station just south of I-394, to 44th Avenue North. Information gathered as part of the Penn Avenue Community Works research and community engagement informed the development potential, community character, and circulation aspects of the Penn Avenue and Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station Area Plans.

North Minneapolis Greenway: Technical Investigation Progress Report

Prepared in June 2014 by the City of Minneapolis, the [North Minneapolis Greenway: Technical Investigation Progress Report](#) documents a proposed 3.5-mile greenway route extending from the intersection of Humboldt Avenue N and 47th Avenue N to the intersection of Irving Avenue N and 16th Avenue N. Several alternative routes were identified between 16th Avenue N and Glenwood Avenue that were taken into consideration during station area planning.

METRO Blue Line Extension Project Development

In August 2014, the Federal Transit Administration approved the [METRO Blue Line Extension](#) for entry into the Project Development (also referred to as the Project Development) phase of the project. Metro Transit is currently leading design of the LRT project, in partnership with FTA, Hennepin County, and the corridor cities.

Supporting Reports/Memoranda

Over the course of the project, supporting reports and technical memoranda were developed on specific topics. These documents can be accessed as separate Appendices.

Station Area Market Analysis

The Station Area Market Analysis report titled, *Place Based Economic Development and Market Analysis*, provides a realistic understanding of the types of real estate (housing, retail, offices, and employment) that are likely to be feasible within the four station areas over the coming two decades, and to identify key “development opportunity sites” within each of the four station areas.

Stakeholder Engagement Memorandum

The Stakeholder Engagement Memorandum describes community engagement efforts throughout the station area planning process, outlines issues and themes expressed, and documents how the planning documents and overall process were shaped by community input.

Golden Valley Road Parking Management Strategy Assessment

The Golden Valley Road Parking Management Strategy Assessment synthesizes parking discussions held throughout the station area planning process and provides a tool for City of Golden Valley staff and policy-makers to engage in education and discussion regarding parking strategies at the Golden Valley Road Station.

Estimated Infrastructure Construction Costs

Estimated construction costs were prepared for infrastructure improvement projects recommended in the final station area plans.

2 PLYMOUTH AVENUE/WIRTH PARK STATION AREA

- 1. Existing Conditions Analysis**
- 2. Station Area Vision**
- 3. Implementation Framework**

PLYMOUTH AVENUE/WIRTH PARK STATION AREA

The proposed Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station is located on the east side of Theodore Wirth Regional Park, at the intersection of Plymouth Avenue and the BNSF Railway. The station area extends one-half mile around each proposed light rail transit (LRT) station, or the distance the average person can walk to/from the station in ten minutes. One-half mile is the transit industry standard for the maximum length that people are willing to walk to reach a transitway station. While a one-half mile is equated with a ten-minute walk, in reality this does not always hold true on the ground as factors such as terrain and the transportation network affects how people move through the station area. Please see **Figure 2.1** for a map of the station location, half-mile radius, and ten-minute walk extent.

Relationship to Community Health

The Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station Area is shared by residents in Minneapolis and Golden Valley. Minneapolis residents in this station area experience disparities in health outcomes such as chronic disease and life expectancy, as is evident from **Figure 2.2**. Additionally, **Table 2.1** demonstrates that 27 percent of residents in this station area are living below the federal poverty level² and that there is a concentration of youth and of senior citizens. These vulnerable populations are less likely to be able to drive cars and often experience disparities in access to healthy foods, education, and jobs, compared to the rest of the region.

²Living in poverty is defined as populations living in households whose income is at or below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services poverty thresholds. As a reference, this threshold was \$22,300 in 2010 for a family of four. Minority is defined as non-white.

The Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station Area Plan recommends filling in sidewalk and trail gaps to increase access for people walking and biking to the station. Some limited small-scale commercial development as mentioned in the plans at the intersection of Penn and Plymouth Avenues which could result in walkable destinations for residents.

Additionally, the METRO Blue Line Extension and Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station have the potential to positively impact health all along the line by providing convenient access to Theodore Wirth Park. Increased access to outdoor space and extensive programming that takes place in this large park provides opportunities for transit-dependent populations to be physically active.

Existing Conditions Analysis

Roadways

As shown in **Figure 2.3**, Plymouth Avenue is a low-volume, two-lane, local street owned and maintained by the City of Minneapolis. Approximately 4,800 vehicles used Plymouth Avenue near the station on a daily basis in 2012 and parking is allowed on both sides of the street. Plymouth Avenue spans the BNSF Railway and is a major entrance point to Theodore Wirth Regional Park, connecting to the Theodore Wirth Parkway, and the Wirth Chalet.

Primary Community Input

Several community members expressed concern about increased street parking due to transit riders driving to the station area and parking on neighborhood streets.

Table 2.1: Plymouth Avenue Community Profile

	Half-Mile Station Area	Minneapolis	Golden Valley	Hennepin County
Population (2010)	3,382	382,578	20,371	1,152,388
Persons under 18 years	31%	20.2%	19.9%	22.4%
Persons over 65 years	10%	8.0%	20.3%	12.2%
Minority	80%	36.2%	14.6%	23.6%
Zero car households	14%	19%	5.7%	10.5%
Living in poverty	27%	22.5%	6.8%	12.8%

Data sources: U.S. Census (2010); American Community Survey 2007-2011 5-year summary file

Figure 2.1: Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station Area

This map shows the half mile buffer and 10 minute walking extent for the station area.

-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Adjacent Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Plymouth Ave. Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Railroad



Transit

Local Routes 7 and 32 operate on Plymouth Avenue in the station area. Both routes terminate at the Theodore Wirth Regional Park Chalet just west of the station. The Route 7 is regular local bus route, providing all day service to the station location, as shown in **Figure 2.4**. Local Route 32 also serves the station but operates just once in the morning and once in the afternoon, on weekdays while school is session, as this branch of Route 32 operates to serve students bound for Edison High School. Due to the very limited service this route offers, it is not included in **Figure 2.4**. The proposed C Line Arterial Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service will operate on Penn Avenue just outside the station area; a station is planned at the intersection of Penn and Plymouth Avenues.

Primary Community Input

Bus service along Plymouth Avenue is not high-frequency and operates every 30 minutes throughout the day, making convenient transfers to or from LRT more difficult.

Bikeways and Sidewalks

Sidewalk infrastructure in the station area is consistent with the regular urban street grid, with sidewalks on both sides of local and arterial streets. Sidewalks along local streets are separated from the roadway by a planted boulevard with grass, street trees, or landscaping. Street lights along Plymouth and Theodore Wirth Parkway are oriented to automobiles only; no pedestrian-scale lighting is present.

Gaps in the sidewalk network are present in several of the residential blocks closest to Theodore

Figure 2.2: Average Life Expectancy at Birth by Census Tract in 2007

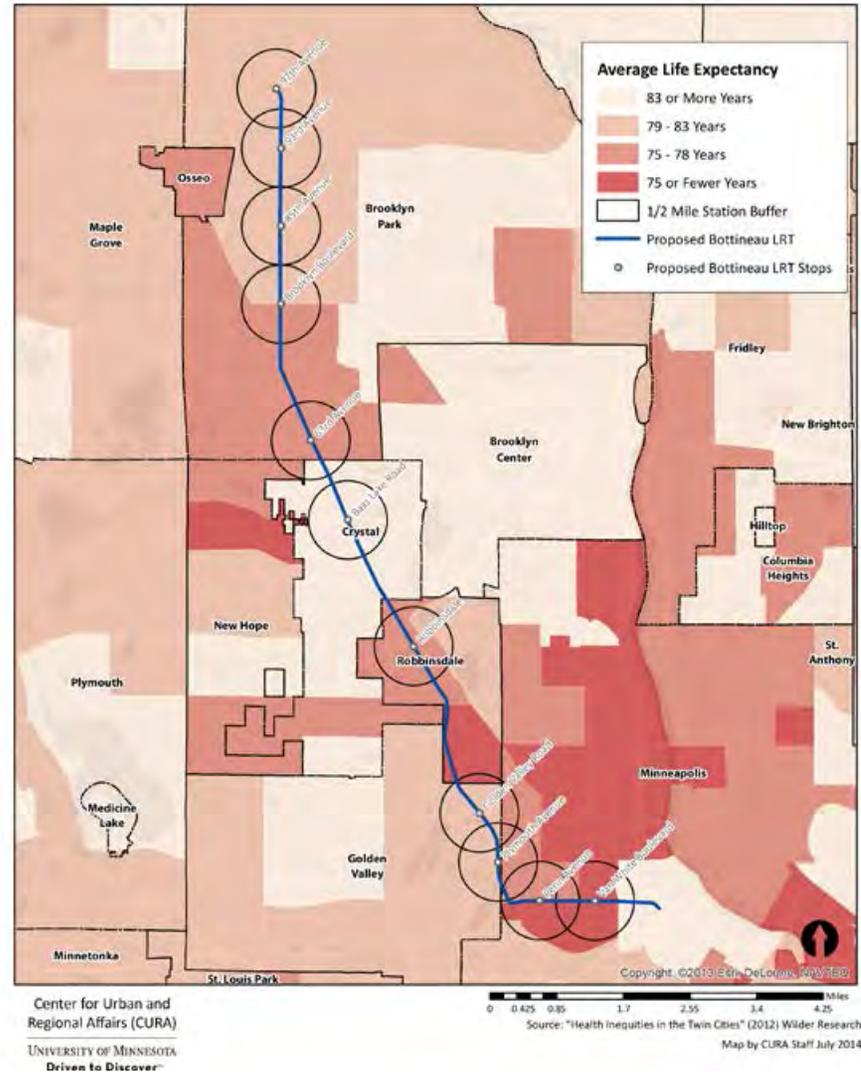


Figure 2.3: Existing Streets and Highways

This map depicts roadway jurisdictions, roadway classifications, and existing and forecasted traffic volumes.

Note: The City of Minneapolis defines a Community Corridor as primarily residential with intermittent commercial uses clustered at intersection nodes.

-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  MnDOT Roads
-  City Roads
-  Hennepin County Roads
-  Signalized Intersection
-  Community Corridors
- xxxx (xxxx) MNDOT Traffic Volumes
Existing 2012 (Forecast 2030)
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Adjacent Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Plymouth Ave. Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Railroad

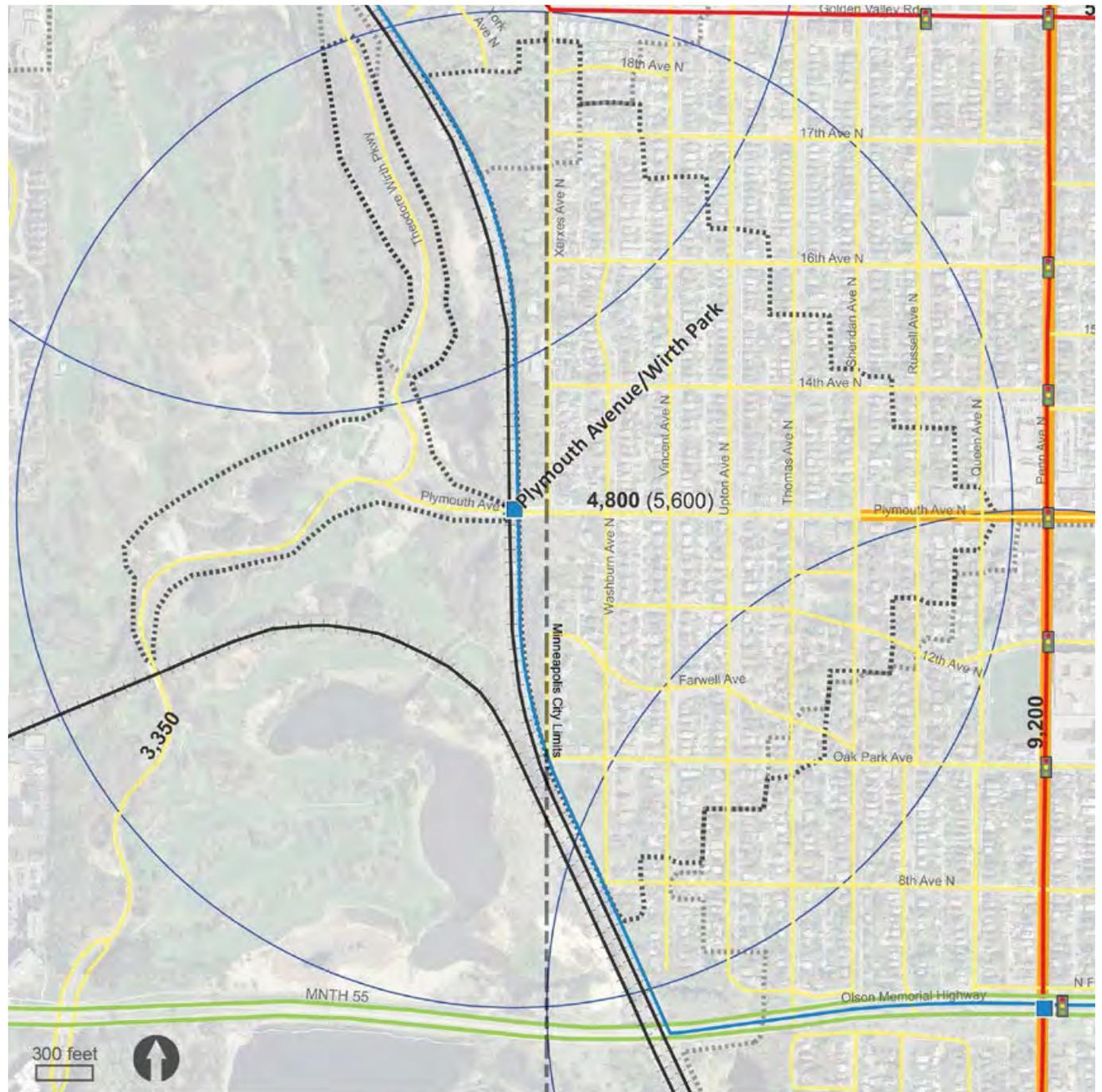
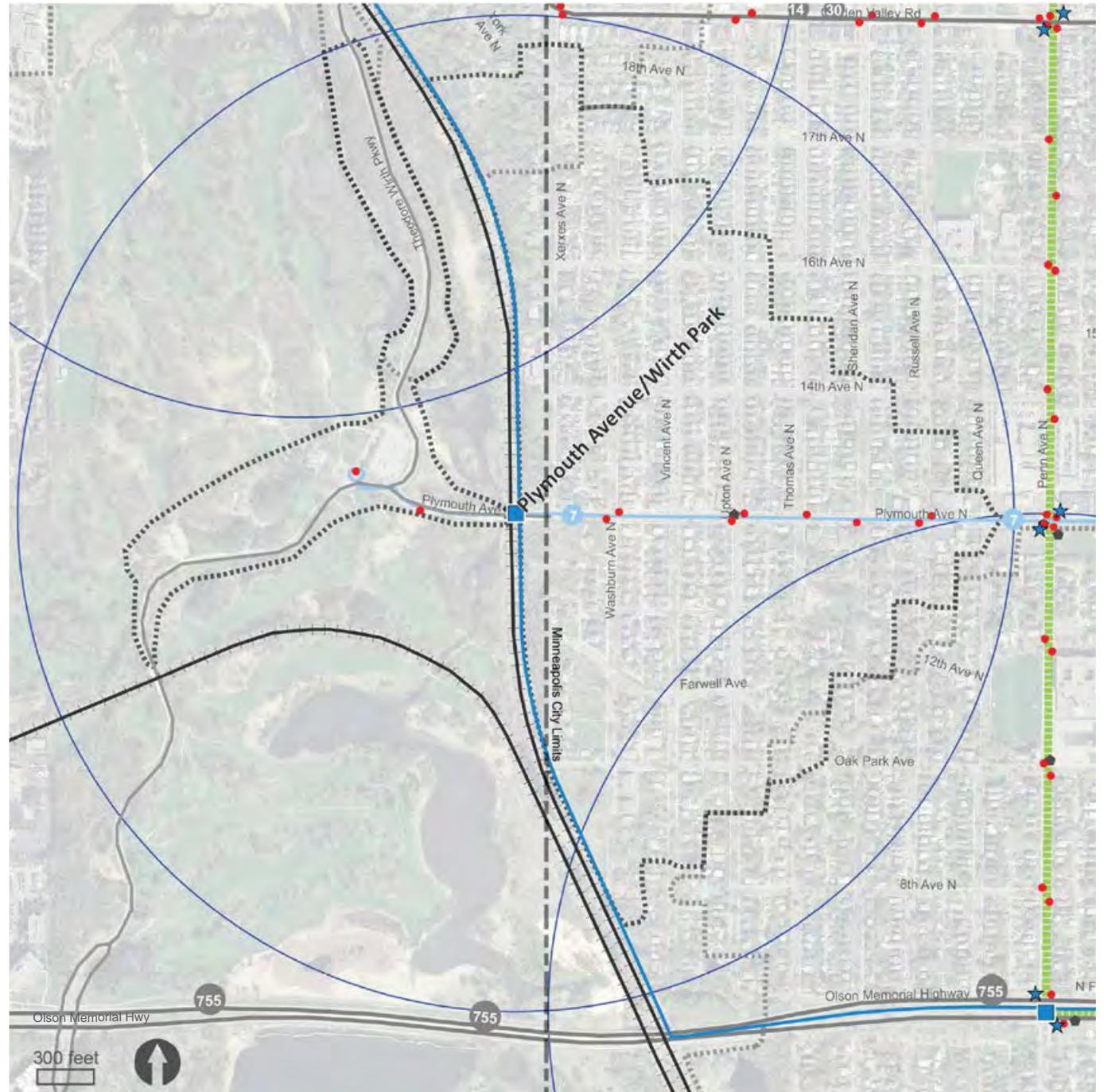


Figure 2.4: Existing Transit Routes

This map depicts existing bus routes and planned arterial BRT routes.

-  Planned C Line (Arterial BRT)
-  Planned C Line Station
-  Route 7
-  Route 4, 30, 755
-  Transit Stop
-  Transit Shelters
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Adjacent Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Plymouth Ave. Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Railroad



Wirth Regional Park, most critically on the south side of Plymouth Avenue between Xerxes and Washburn Avenues.

Bicycle infrastructure in the station area serves east-west users fairly well with on-street lanes on Plymouth Avenue. On-street bikeways are also planned for Oak Park Avenue. North-south users are served by trails in Theodore Wirth Regional Park that are in close proximity to the proposed station platform. However, these trails are located on the other side of the BNSF Railway tracks. Fencing planned between the LRT line and BNSF Railway will prohibit a direct pedestrian connection from the platform to these trails. Though there are no north-south on-street bike lanes in the station area, an on-street bikeway is planned on Thomas Avenue North. See **Figure 2.5** for existing and planned sidewalks and bikeways.

Primary Community Input

Community members who participated in engagement activities expressed a strong preference for the LRT platform to be located on the north side of Plymouth Avenue. Many of the transit users who use this station are expected to go to Theodore Wirth Regional Park. If the platform is located north of Plymouth Avenue, Xerxes Avenue would separate the proposed platform from residential housing that faces onto Xerxes Avenue. This enhances the public visibility to the station. In contrast, south of Plymouth Avenue, the platform would be located adjacent to a thickly wooded hillside behind residential back yards making the proposed platform area feel secluded. Some community members expressed safety concerns if the platform was located south of Plymouth Avenue. A safe and well-lit access

to the grade-separated platform is critical because of its location below street level. Accommodations for people with sporting equipment (bicycles, skis, golf clubs) should be incorporated into the design of the station so that it is useful as a park destination. Examples of this include an elevator sized large enough to accommodate bicycles, skis, and other recreation equipment and stairs with built in bicycle track.

Neighborhood residents east of Theodore Wirth Regional Park currently use many informal paths across the existing freight rail tracks into Wirth Park that will be no longer accessible when LRT is constructed. While done, these are not legal crossings of the railroad. Community members were not pleased about the prospect of losing these connections. See **Figure 2.5** for a map of informal routes used today and distances to existing grade-separated crossings.

Land Use

Land uses in the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park station area are depicted in **Figure 2.6**. The land use map was created from data received from the Metropolitan Council (2010). The land uses shown on this map represent a period in time and may not exactly match actual land uses or the Cities' existing land use maps. Please note that while it provides project context, it is not the official land use map for the cities of Minneapolis or Golden Valley.

The western half of the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station area is in the City of Golden Valley. Land uses in Golden Valley are predominantly single family, with a non profit organization and parkland located in close proximity to the station. The eastern half of the

station area is largely in the City of Minneapolis, in neighborhoods of older single family homes. Over half of these homes were built in the 1920s or earlier.

The blocks on the south side of Plymouth Avenue are considered to be in the potential Homewood Historic District, which has been determined to be potentially worthy of historic designation. The size of the lots in Homewood are atypically large by Minneapolis standards, and there are homes along the park perimeter that are truly grand. The vast majority of these homes are owner occupied.

The area to the north of Plymouth Avenue is a mix of owner occupied and rental housing. Lot sizes are more typical for Minneapolis. Single family homes still predominate, although some blocks have a duplex or two.

Apartments are scarce in the station area, with just three multifamily properties along Plymouth Avenue.

There is also little commercial development in the station area. The only exceptions are an institutional property on the park side of Xerxes Avenue, and some businesses and nonprofit offices along Plymouth Avenue in the few blocks closest to the Penn Avenue intersection. The Penn and Plymouth intersection is an important neighborhood commercial node at the eastern edge of the study area. It offers a major health care facility, NorthPoint Health and Wellness Center, owned and operated by Hennepin County in partnership with a community board of directors. The University of Minnesota's UROC (Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center) facility, and the Minneapolis Urban League are also important community-based institutions at Plymouth and Penn.

Figure 2.5: Existing / Planned Sidewalks and Bikeways

This map shows existing sidewalks and bikeways, along with identified sidewalk gaps, planned sidewalks and planned bikeways previously identified in city policy documents.

- Distance to Grade Separated Crossing
- Elimination of Informal Rail Crossing
- Existing Neighborhood Route (Informal)
- Planned LRT Station
- Bottineau LRT Alignment
- Railroad
- Bike/Ped and Vehicle Crash Incident 2009-2013
- Existing Sidewalks
- Sidewalk Gap
- Existing On-Street Bike Lane
- Planned On-Street Bike Lane in an Existing Policy Document
- Existing Paved Trail
- Planned Paved Trail
- Signalized Intersection
- Street Light
- LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
- Adjacent Station 10-minute Walking Extent
- Plymouth Ave. Station 10-minute Walking Extent

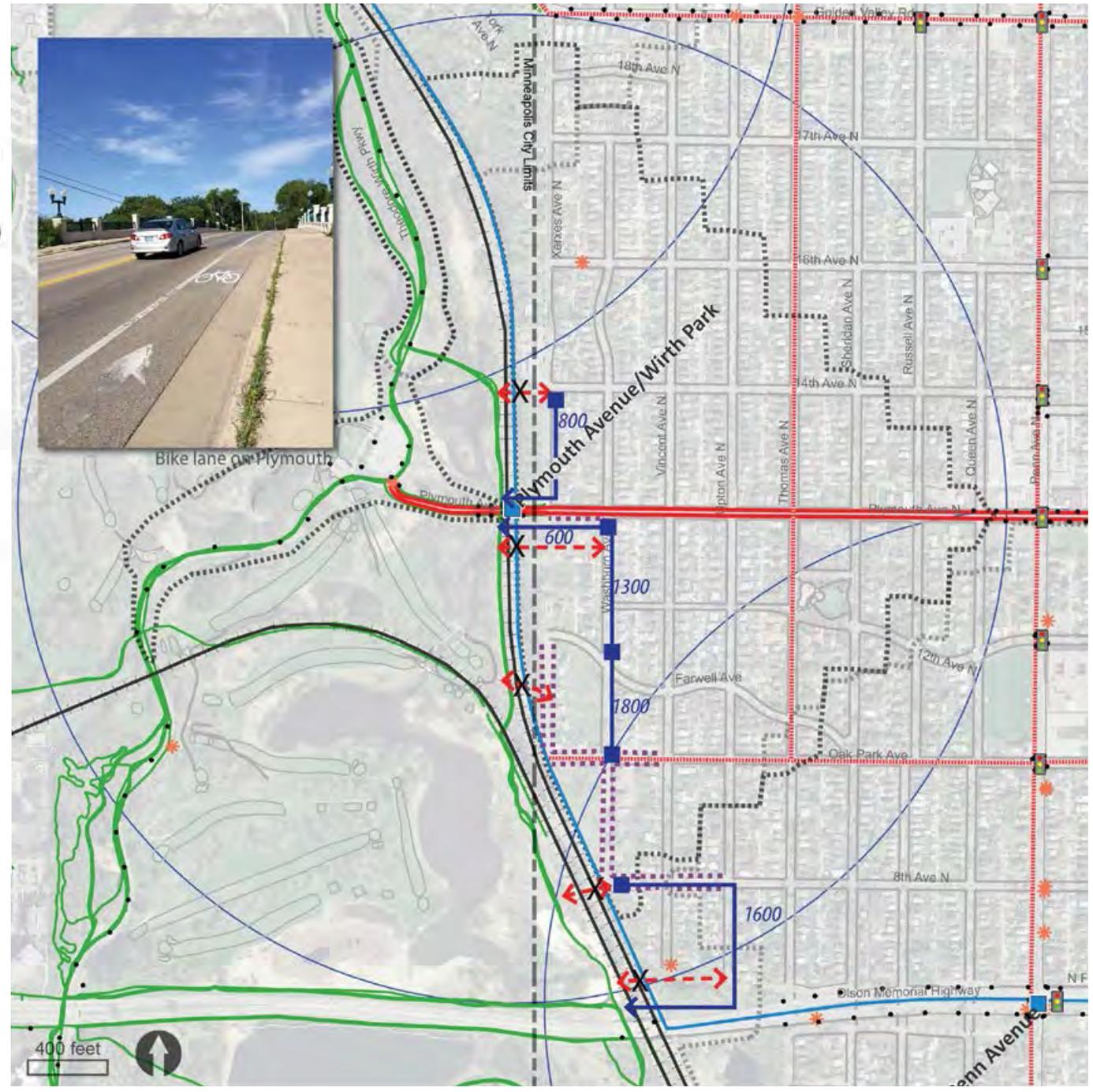
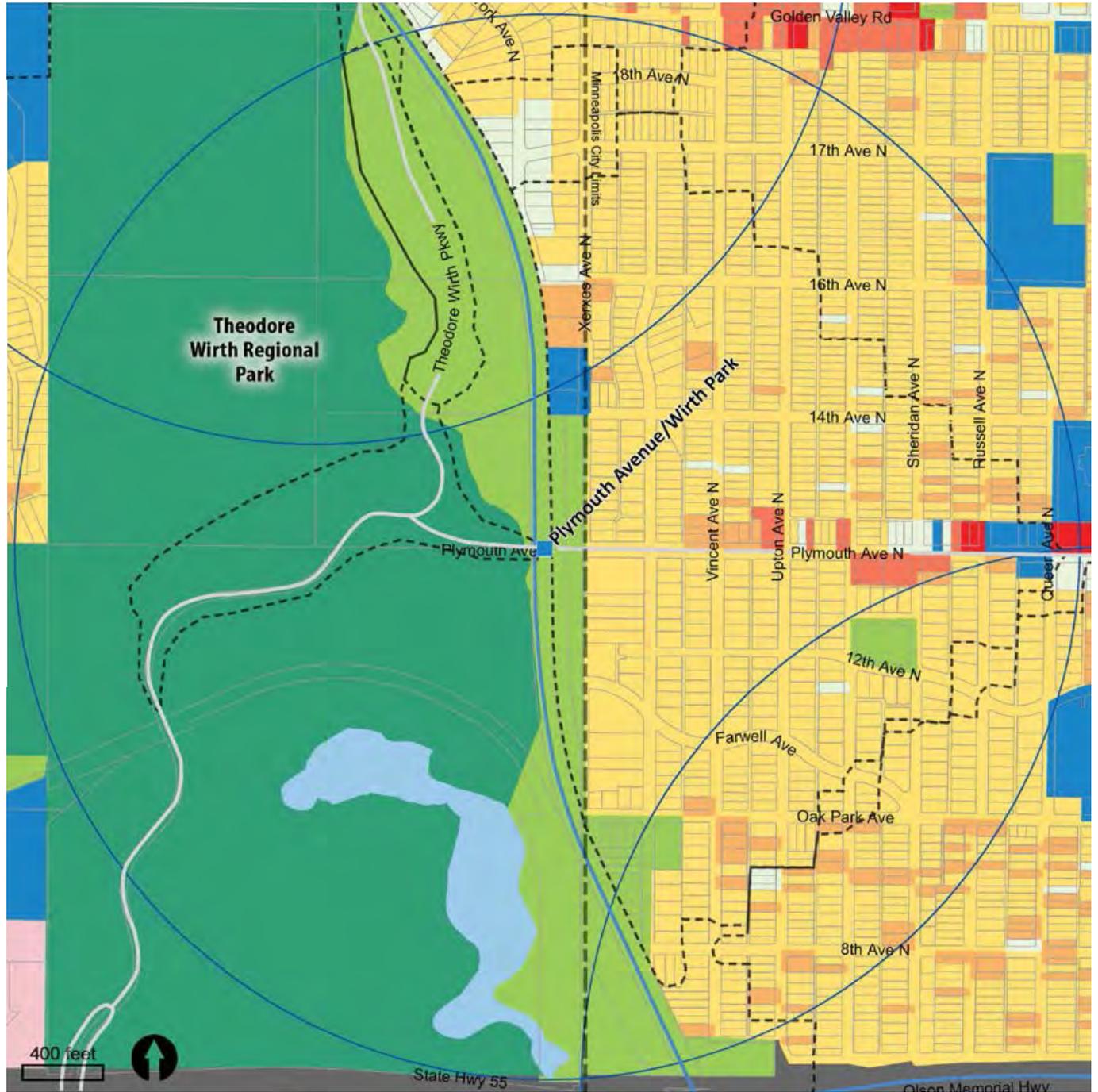


Figure 2.6: Existing Land Use

This map shows existing land uses with data received from the Metropolitan Council (2010).

- Single-Family Detached
- Two-Family
- Multifamily
- Retail and Other Commercial
- Office
- Institutional
- Park, Recreational or Preserve
- Golf Course
- Major Highway
- Undeveloped
- Water
- Parcels
- Planned LRT Station
- Bottineau LRT Alignment
- LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
- 10-minute Walking Extent



There is potential for additional development at the node, with 2.2 acres of City-owned property at the southeast and southwest corners of the Plymouth/Penn intersection. One of these sites is being pursued for the development of a grocery store (Praxis Grocery).

There are a few vacant properties in the blocks north of Plymouth Avenue. They are generally not in locations near or along the Plymouth Avenue corridor where City policy might be supportive of increased development density, but they would be suitable for the development of new single family homes.

Community Character

The Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station will serve the Willard Hay neighborhood, Theodore Wirth Regional Park users and nearby amenities and destinations as depicted on **Figure 2.7**.

The primary feature of the station area is Theodore Wirth Regional Park, just west of the station platform. The Theodore Wirth Chalet is within 1,000 feet of the proposed station and a planned Park Welcome Center will be approximately 2,000 feet from the station. Transit users exiting at the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station will have convenient access to numerous year-round activities, such as golfing, mountain biking, Nordic skiing, along with tubing, sledding and snowboarding.

The station area is an urban neighborhood with low potential for change given the presence of Theodore Wirth Regional Park and stable neighborhoods east of the station, including the potential Homewood Historic District. The station area is home to several religious, civic, and health organizations but is mostly a single-

family residential neighborhood. With an approximate station area population of 3,700, the station will be an origin for riders who will arrive on foot or by bus or bicycle, and a destination for many users bound for the multitude of recreational opportunities available at Theodore Wirth Regional Park.

Primary Community Input

Community members who participated in engagement activities are satisfied with the current character of the neighborhood and are generally not seeking new development or displacement of the stable housing in the neighborhood. To this end, neighborhood residents want the station to fit in with the existing neighborhood character and park setting and raised some concerns regarding increased street parking on the neighborhood streets.

Community members pointed out that the area near the station is on the edge of the park, gets very dark, and can feel unsafe, especially at night. Lighting and security cameras are necessary, as well as wayfinding. Finally, residents embrace the park as a major asset in their neighborhood, and felt that station design should be low-impact and done with respect to nearby wetlands and in coordination with the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.

Figure 2.7: Existing / Planned Amenities and Destinations

This map identifies amenities and destinations located in the station area.

-  Civic / Institutional
-  Religious
-  Health & Wellness
-  Retail / Restaurant / Grocery
-  Parks
-  Historic Property/District
-  Major Development / Destinations
-  Planned LRT Station
-  LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Adjacent Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Plymouth Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Park and Open Space
-  Potential Homewood Historic District
-  Railroad



Station Area Vision

Future Station Area Character

The Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station area is envisioned as:

- The METRO Blue Line’s recreation-oriented destination station that welcomes people to Theodore Wirth Regional Park;
- A walkable area with historic residential architecture nearby; and
- A community poised for future neighborhood-scale commercial activity at the intersection of Penn and Plymouth Avenues.

Because of the destination character of the station, community members have suggested that a more fitting name for the station may be the “Wirth Park Station”.

This vision statement can be used as a guide for city staff and community members as they evaluate future development proposals to ensure that new development is consistent with and supportive of the desired community character for this station area.

Circulation

Roadways

A location for vehicular drop-offs of transit riders should be provided at the Plymouth Station. Modifications of the street curb lines to create special bays or restrictions to on-street parking may be necessary to allow passenger drop-off near the intersection of Plymouth Avenue and Xerxes Avenue. This space is intended for

very short term use as LRT passengers exit or enter vehicles.

Buses making connections to the METRO Blue Line Extension Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station are envisioned to terminate at the Theodore Wirth Chalet, or possibly the proposed future Welcome Center. The Theodore Wirth Regional Park Master Plan includes a recommendation to rehabilitate the grounds in the foreground of the Wirth Chalet including redesigned parking, circulation, and landscaping. This may provide an opportunity to consider intersection modifications that can best meet park needs and circulation needs for all modes of transportation. See **Figure 2.8** for a map of roadway circulation enhancements.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Though the LRT platform will be close to a north-south trail in Theodore Wirth Regional Park, the station platform and park trail are separated by freight rail tracks that will not be crossable. Therefore, pedestrians and bicycles leaving the station are envisioned to cross over to the west side the LRT line and freight rail via the Plymouth Avenue bridge and then take a path down to a new pedestrian bridge over Bassett Creek to reach the park trail. See **Figure 2.9** and **Figure 2.10** for details. A Nice Ride station is proposed to provide connections to neighborhoods east and west of the station.

The station platform should be located north of Plymouth Avenue as this location will provide a location that enhances users’ sense of personal safety.

In addition to an elevator and stairs that will be incorporated into the station platform, a safe, well-lit, comfortable and convenient ground plane transition

from street level down to the LRT platform will be an important factor in the success of the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station. The area where the ground plane changes elevation should accommodate Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant movement for both pedestrians and bicyclists.

The following improvements should be considered at locations where pedestrians and bicyclists are expected to cross higher volume roadways, such as Plymouth Avenue, Penn Avenue and Olson Memorial Highway.

All Intersections

- Median island pedestrian refuges or curb extensions
- Improved intersection and pedestrian realm lighting
- Crossing signage
- ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps

Signalized Intersections

- High visibility crosswalk markings and signs
- Traffic signal timing modifications to provide adequate crossing time for pedestrians
- Countdown timers that allow pedestrians to make informed decisions whether there is adequate time to safely cross the roadway.
- ADA-compliant signals

Non-signalized Intersections

- Rapid flashing beacons

There are several critical gaps in the sidewalk network in the station area. Sidewalks should be added on the south side of Plymouth Avenue and Theodore

Figure 2.8: Roadway Circulation Enhancements

This map shows recommended roadway enhancements in the station area to better support station area livability and LRT station access.

-  Enhanced Intersection and Bus Turn-Around
 - ADA Compliant Pedestrian Ramps
 - Improve Pedestrian Crossing Signage
 - Investigate Reconfiguration to a Roundabout
-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Railroad

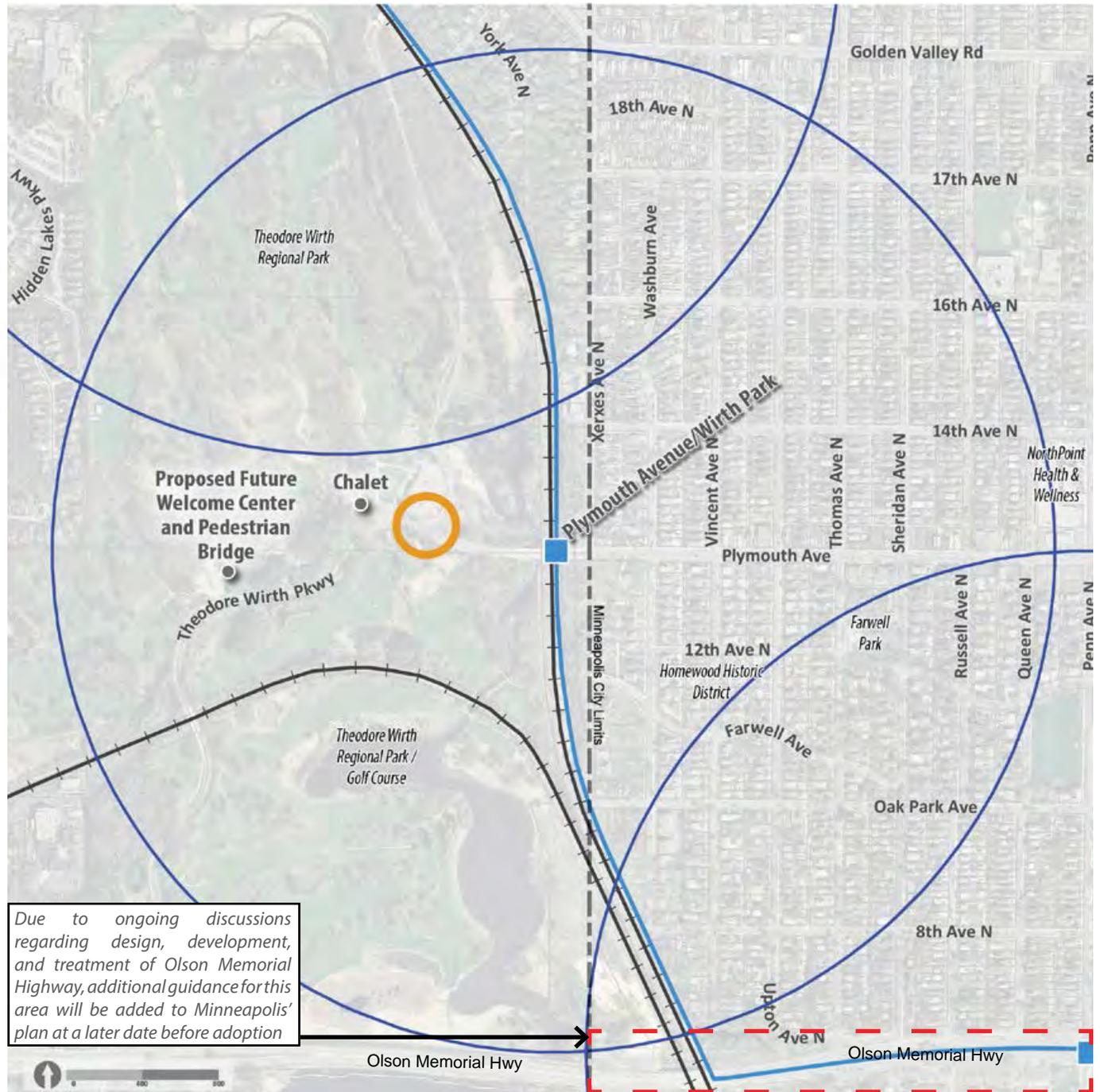


Figure 2.9: Pedestrian Circulation Enhancements

This map shows recommended pedestrian circulation enhancement to better support station area livability and LRT station access.

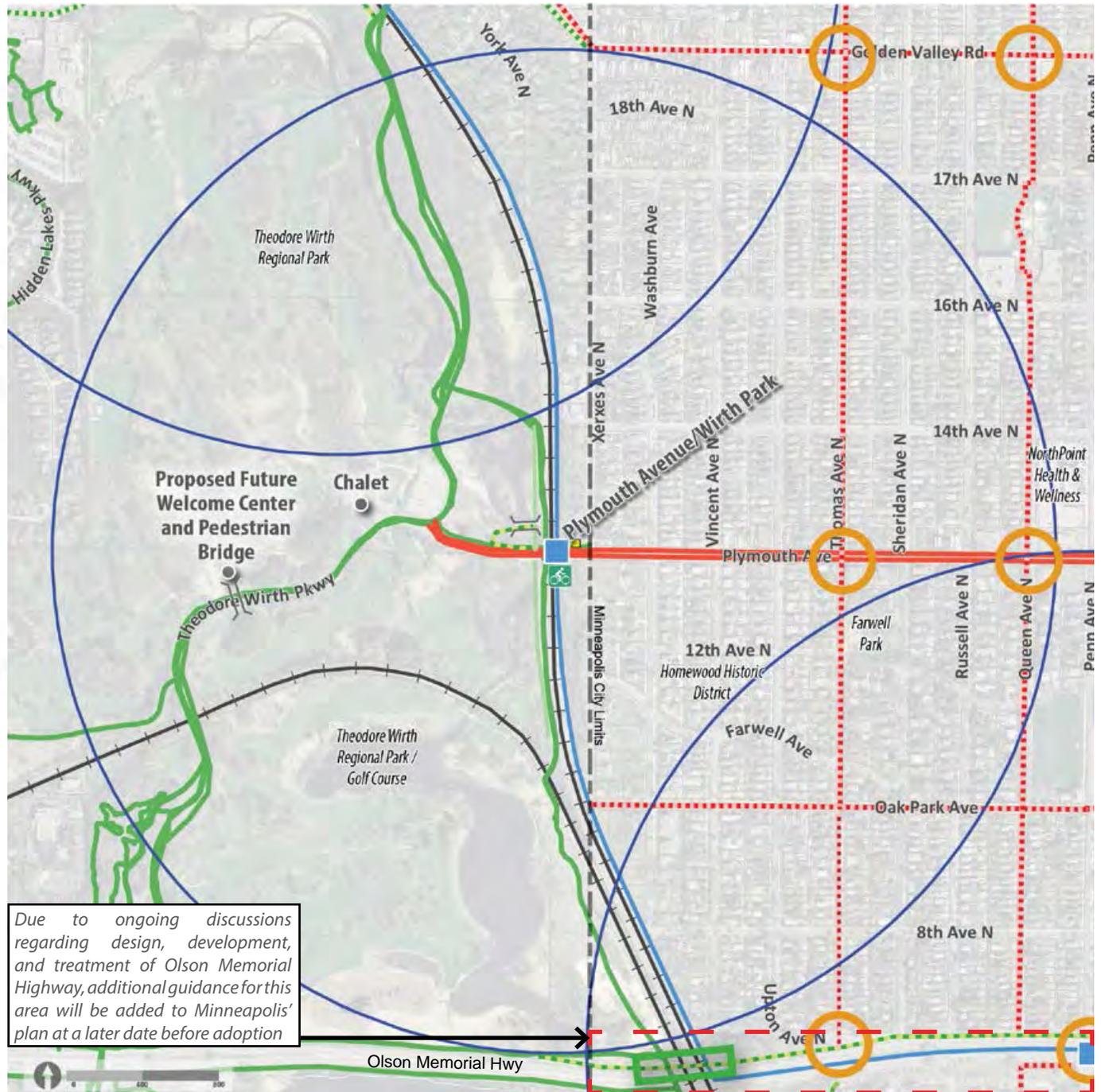
-  Incorporate Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities on New Olson Highway Bridge Over Railroad
-  Passenger Drop-off
-  Primary Bus Connection
-  Safe Intersection Crossing
-  Proposed Pedestrian Bridge
-  Proposed Sidewalks
-  Existing Sidewalks
-  Proposed Paved Trail
-  Existing Paved Trail
-  Planned LRT Station
-  LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Railroad



Figure 2.10: Bicycle Circulation Enhancements

This map shows recommended bicycle circulation enhancement to better support station area livability and LRT station access.

-  Incorporate Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities on New Olson Highway Bridge Over Railroad
-  Safe Intersection Crossing
-  Proposed Bicycle Parking
-  Proposed Nice Ride Station
-  Proposed Pedestrian Bridge
-  Proposed Paved Trail
-  Existing Paved Trail
-  Proposed On-Street Bike Facility
-  Existing On-Street Bike Facility
-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Railroad



Wirth Parkway from Washburn Avenue to a proposed future pedestrian bridge that will connect to the park's Welcome Center. Sidewalk gap closures are also proposed along the west side of Xerxes Avenue between Plymouth Avenue and Golden Valley Road, and along 8th Avenue and Oak Park Avenue near Vincent Avenue. For a map of envisioned pedestrian and bicycle circulation enhancements, see **Figure 2.9** and **Figure 2.10**.

Transit

Routes 7 and 32 will continue to serve the station. Stops may be shifted slightly to facilitate a more direct transfer from LRT to bus. Prior to LRT service starting operations, Metro Transit will evaluate the bus routes and make modifications as necessary to best support convenient transit connections.

As depicted in **Figure 2.9** and **Figure 2.10**, a short segment of curb-abutting street space will be reserved for bus stops near the intersection of Plymouth Avenue and Xerxes Avenue. The bus stops could be located within the existing street in an area of restricted parking or the street curb lines could be modified to create a special drop-off/pick-up bay.

Future Development

The Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station is in a park-like setting at the edge of a distinctive single family neighborhood, with the neighborhood areas on the south side of Plymouth Avenue being deemed potentially worthy of historic designation.

The transit station will bring transit connectivity to the nearby neighborhood, and to north Minneapolis

households to the east of the immediate area through a bus connection down Plymouth Avenue.

The proposed future development vision is a balance that weighs policies which support higher density development near transit stations areas, and policies which highlight the importance of retaining existing neighborhood character. New development at a higher density is supported along Plymouth Avenue between Penn Avenue and the transit station, with the exception of the few blocks nearest the station. The character of the development on these blocks is proposed to be retained because it reflects the proximity to the regional park, and in some cases reflects an important historic legacy.

In Golden Valley, no land use revisions are recommended within the station area.

Land Use

This plan supports the development vision by offering formal land use guidance for the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station Area by proposing changes to the Future Land Use map in *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* (the comprehensive plan for the entire City of Minneapolis), providing a more detailed Future Land Use map as part of this small area plan—which has policy effect upon adoption. **Figure 2.11** depicts the Future Land Use map adopted in *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*.

Important land use policy goals are represented by features on the Future Land Use map in the City of Minneapolis's comprehensive plan. To provide policy support for the development envisioned for the area, two changes are proposed to the features in this map as depicted in **Figure 2.12** and **Figure 2.13**.

1. The station location at Plymouth Avenue is designated a Transit Station.

A Transit Station designation on the Land Use Map establishes policy support for high-density development at transit stations in most cases. This is done to encourage transit use. However, this does not mean that high-density residential is appropriate on every parcel near a transit station. The comprehensive plan states that potential densities and/or redevelopment opportunities are generally highest within ¼ mile of the transit station, but are also dependent upon factors such as existing neighborhood character, and the availability and cost of land.

2. The Community Corridor designation of Plymouth Avenue is extended from Sheridan Avenue North, to the transit station.

A Community Corridor designation on the Future Land Use Map indicates a corridor that carries moderate traffic volumes, and makes important connections to other locations. "The development of low- to medium-density housing" is generally supported along the corridor "to serve as a transition to surrounding low-density residential areas." However, this does not mean that every parcel on a Community Corridor has to be medium-density and existing low-density residential is allowed.

The Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station is adjacent to the potential Homewood Historic District and has a strong single-family character.

Policy Excerpts from The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth

Policy 1.9: *Through attention to the mix and intensity of land uses and transit service, the City will support development along Community Corridors that enhances residential livability and pedestrian access.*

1.9.1 *Support the continued presence of existing small-scale retail sales and commercial services along Community Corridors.*

1.9.2 *Support new small-scale retail sales and services, commercial services, and mixed uses where Community Corridors intersect with Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.*

1.9.3 *Discourage uses that diminish the transit and pedestrian oriented character of Community Corridors, such as automobile services and drive-through facilities.*

1.9.4 *Discourage the conversion of existing residential uses to commercial uses outside of Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.*

1.9.5 *Encourage the development of low- to medium-density housing on Community Corridors to serve as a transition to surrounding low-density residential areas.*

1.9.6 *Promote more intensive residential development along Community Corridors near intersections with Neighborhood Commercial Nodes and other locations where it is compatible with existing character.*

Policy 1.13: *Support high density development near transit stations in ways that encourage transit use and contribute to interesting and vibrant places.*

1.13.1 *Encourage pedestrian-oriented services and retail uses as part of higher density development near transit stations.*

1.13.2 *Pursue opportunities to integrate existing and new development with transit stations through joint development.*

1.13.3 *Discourage uses that diminish the transit and pedestrian character of areas around transit stations, such as automobile services, surface parking lots, and drive-through facilities.*

1.13.4 *Encourage architectural design, building massing and site plans to create or improve public and semi-public spaces near the station.*

1.13.5 *Concentrate highest densities and mixed use development adjacent to the transit station and along connecting corridors served by bus.*

1.13.6 *Encourage investment and place making around transit stations through infrastructure changes and the planning and installation of streetscape, public art, and other public amenities.*

It is a destination for Wirth Park and a way to provide transit service to the residents of the north side more than a potential development area. For these reasons, the land use plan directs the new housing and commercial activity to the east end of the station area at the Penn-Plymouth Neighborhood Commercial Node and blocks adjacent to that node on Plymouth and Penn Avenues, rather than adjacent to the station.

The addition of the Transit Station and Community Corridor land use features are important additions to help prioritize infrastructure decisions and to support strong pedestrian, bike, and transit connections rather than to encourage the redevelopment of the entire area to medium and high-density housing.

The policy excerpts on the following page provide more detail about the policies that are supported at designated Transit Stations and Community Corridors.

Figure 2.14 is consistent with the Future Land Use map in the City's comprehensive plan, but it provides additional detail to it. Along the Plymouth Avenue corridor, for example, it puts residential development in one of two density categories—low density or medium density.

Although the colors on the future land use map seem to imply great precision, that is not their intent. For example, a medium density residential development that incorporates a “low-density” property or two may be deemed consistent with the policy intent of this plan without plan amendment.

Figure 2.11: Existing Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use

This map depicts the Future Land Use map in the adopted Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth.

-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Neighborhood Commercial Node
-  Community Corridor
-  Mixed Use
-  Parks and Open Space
-  Urban Neighborhood

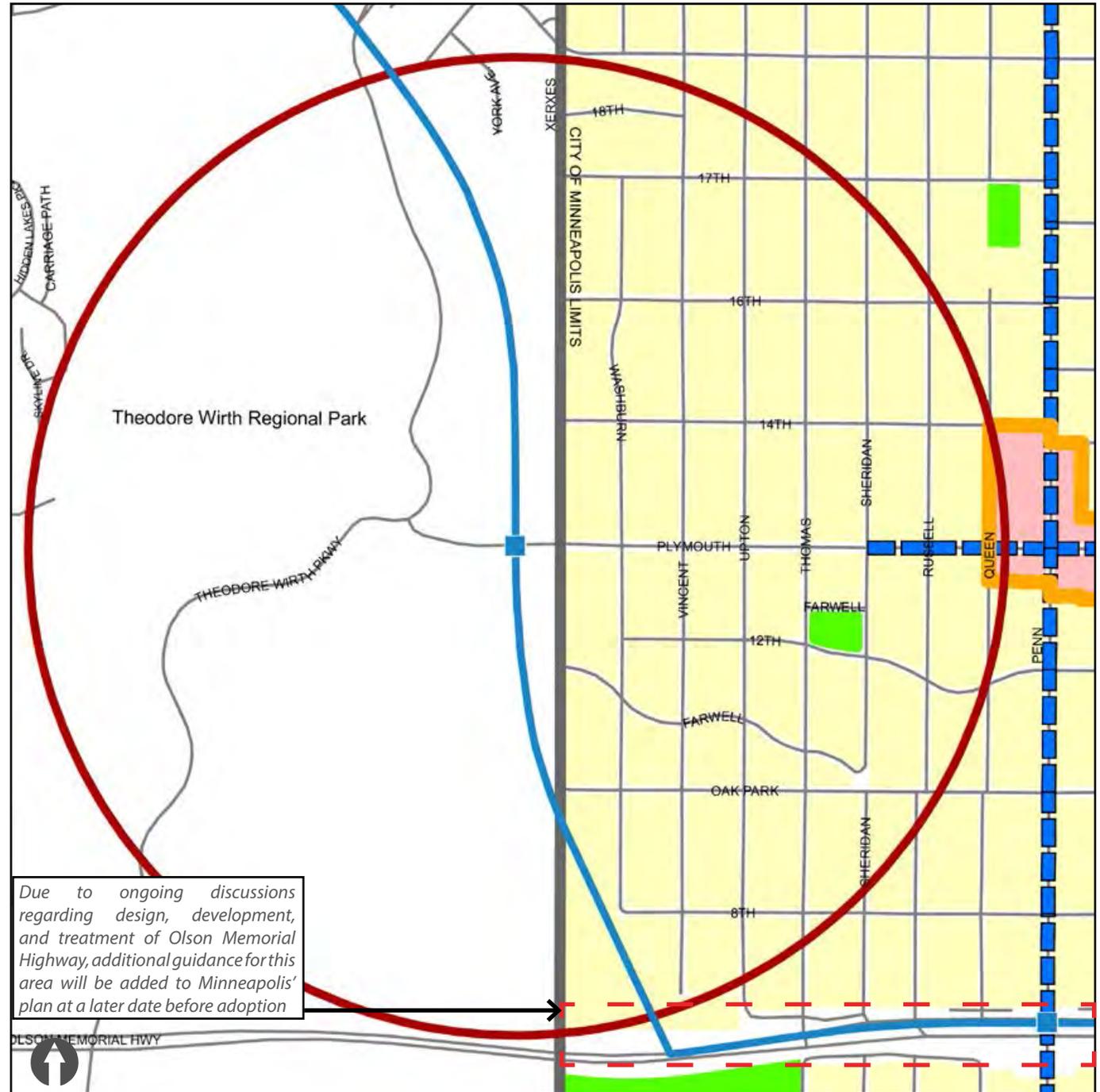
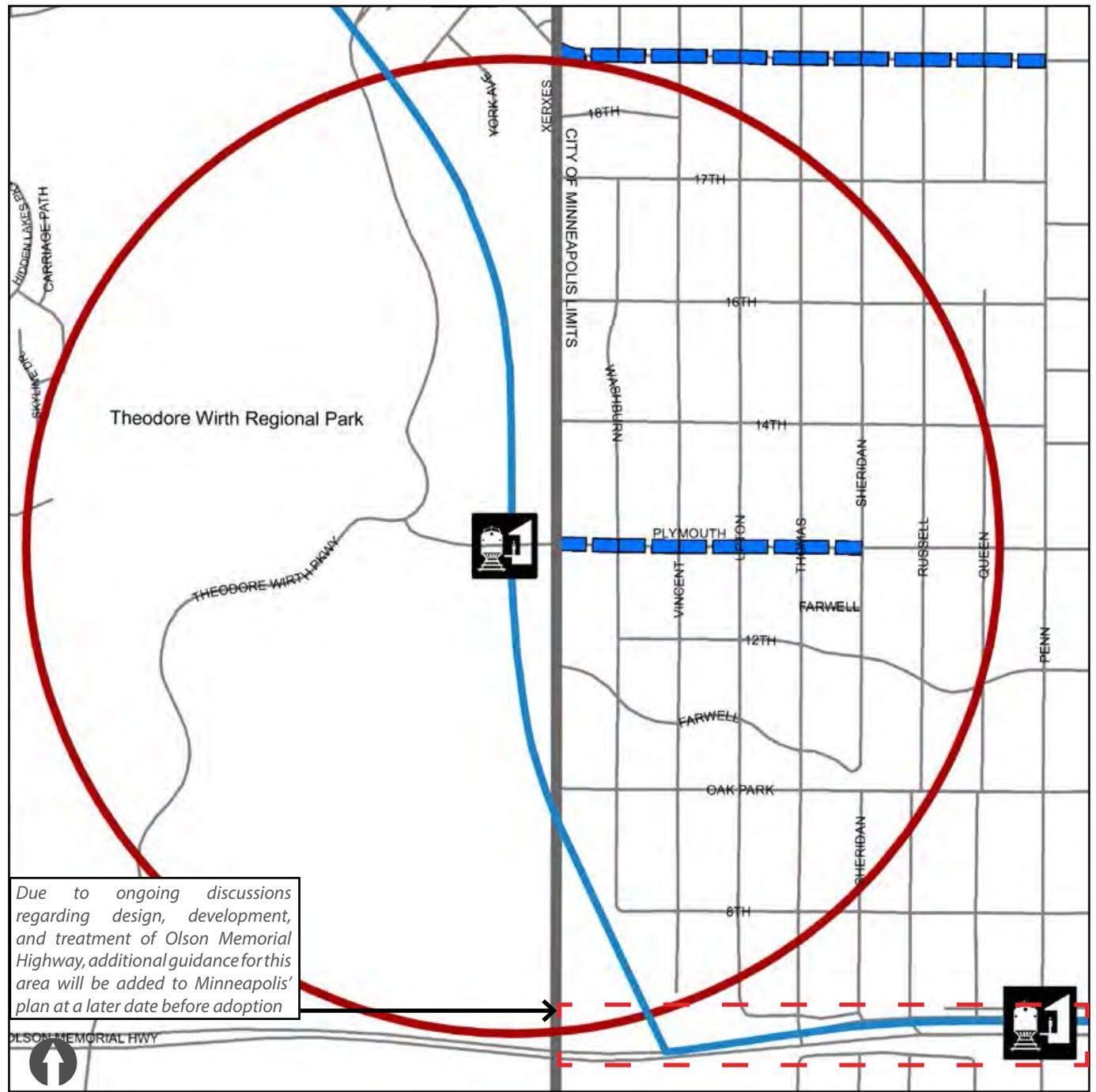


Figure 2.12: Future Land Use Modifications

This map highlights proposed modifications to the City of Minneapolis' future land use.

-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  Transit Station (shown in Golden Valley to provide context for Minneapolis land use modifications only)
-  LRT Half Mile Buffer
-  Community Corridor



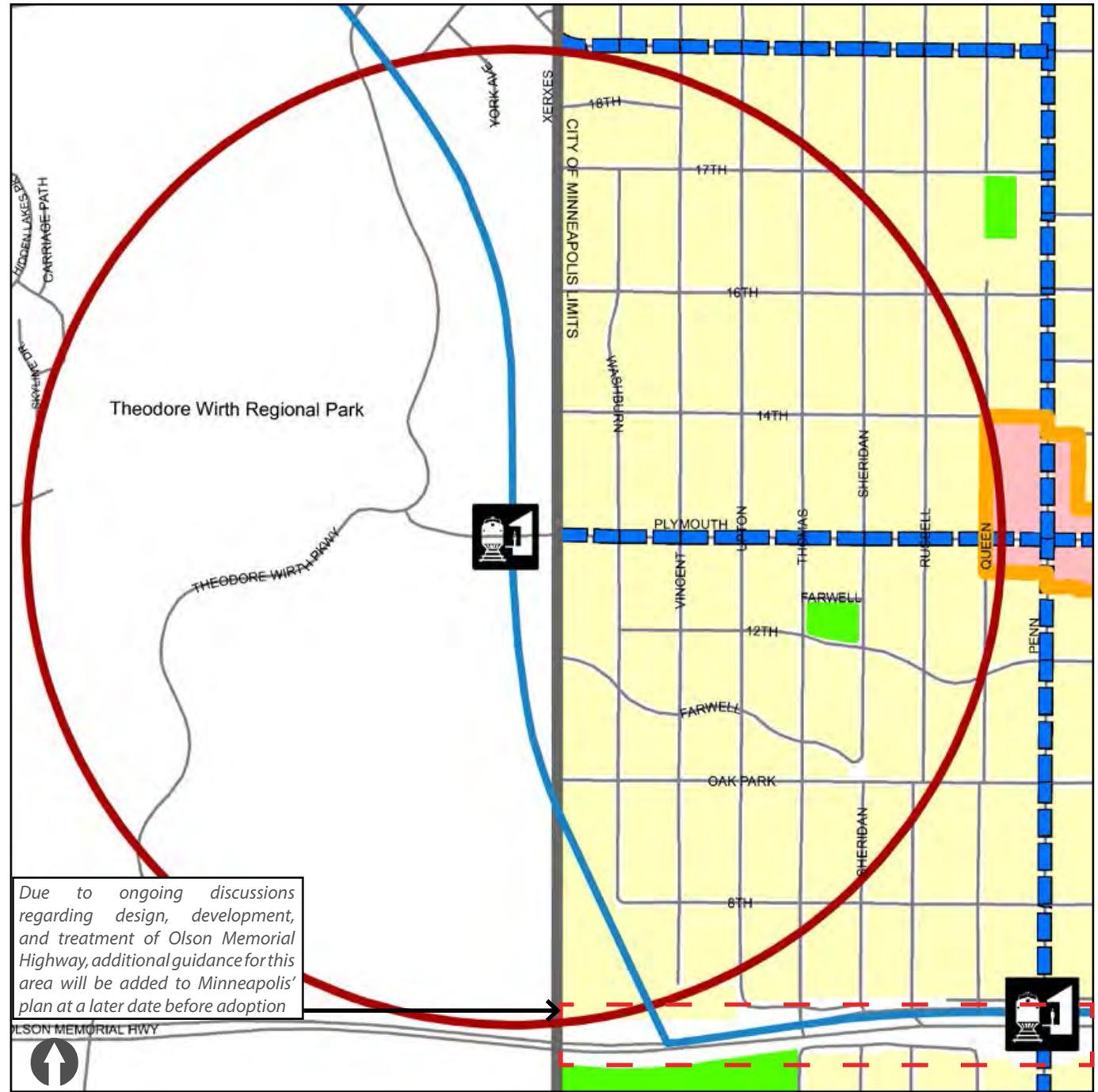
Due to ongoing discussions regarding design, development, and treatment of Olson Memorial Highway, additional guidance for this area will be added to Minneapolis' plan at a later date before adoption

Figure 2.13: Future Land Use

This map depicts proposed modifications to the City of Minneapolis' future land use in context with the City's adopted future land use map.

Note: The City of Minneapolis defines a Community Corridor as primarily residential with intermittent commercial uses clustered at intersection nodes.

-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  Transit Station (shown in Golden Valley to provide context for Minneapolis land use modifications only)
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Neighborhood Commercial Node
-  Community Corridor
-  Mixed Use
-  Parks and Open Space
-  Urban Neighborhood



Due to ongoing discussions regarding design, development, and treatment of Olson Memorial Highway, additional guidance for this area will be added to Minneapolis' plan at a later date before adoption

Figure 2.14: Future Land Use (Parcel Basis)

This map depicts recommended City of Minneapolis future land use on a parcel-specific basis.

-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Low Density Residential
-  Medium Density Residential
-  Parks and Open Space

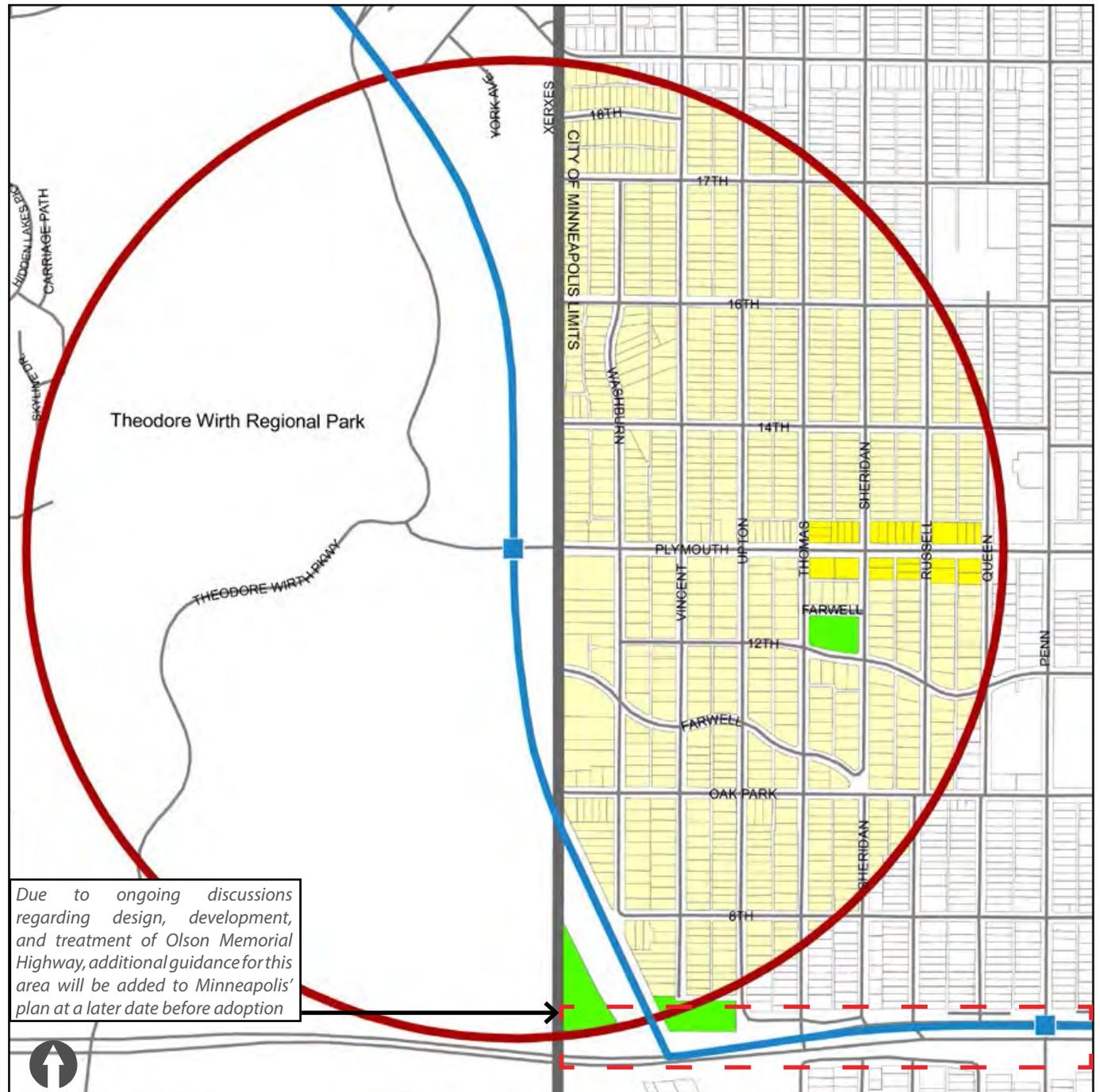


Figure 2.15 contributes additional clarity concerning the desired density of future development. The map is parcel-specific, similar to the plan's Future Land Use map (although as described above, that should not be taken to imply complete policy precision). Darker shades of blue indicate policy support for medium or higher density development. Light blue indicates policy support for lower density development.

The map assigns property in the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station area—whether residential or mixed use—to one of two development districts. The two development districts represent different acceptable density levels. The Urban Scale development district suggests a four-story upper limit on development and the Neighborhood Scale development district supports low to medium density development types that are more compatible with the character of the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Density is frequently measured using parameters like floor area ratio, or dwelling units per square foot of property area. Those density measures are not very intuitive, in part because they don't lend themselves to being depicted visually. The density scale employed in this plan attempts to make the proposed density levels more intuitive by correlating each district with a mix of compatible development types that are common in Minneapolis and will be easily recognized by most Minneapolis citizens.

Where commercial development occurs, it should be of a similar scale to the listed residential building types, or it may be situated on the ground level of an otherwise residential development.

Public Realm Improvements

Public realm improvements are critical components of the station area as they create a safe and comfortable environment that support walking and biking to the station. These improvements also provide economic, environmental and social benefits that are supportive of overall neighborhood livability. **Figure 2.16** shows recommended public realm improvements; **Figure 2.17** shows representative public realm improvement images.

Streetscaping

Enhancing the streetscape environment in the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station area will facilitate improved mobility to and from the station platform from nearby amenities, destinations, homes and businesses, and improve the character of the public realm. Streetscape enhancements may include improvements to pedestrian facilities, greening the streets, street and pedestrian lighting, street furnishings, signage and wayfinding elements. Specific streetscape improvements recommended near the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station area include the following:

Plymouth Avenue

Plymouth Avenue should be designed to include streetscape enhancements that create a pedestrian-friendly corridor. **Figure 2.18** depicts the desired character and streetscape features for Plymouth Avenue. Recommended improvements include:

- Upgrade any worn sidewalks
- Boulevard street trees where they don't currently exist

- Pedestrian lighting
- Site furnishings (benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks) at key intersections
- Signage and wayfinding
- Relocating overhead utilities underground

Xerxes Avenue

Xerxes is an important connector to the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station for residents located to the north of the station. The Xerxes Avenue streetscape currently lacks a sidewalk along the west side of the street and several large street trees were lost due to severe weather conditions. Streetscape improvements to Xerxes should include the following:

- Minimum 5-foot wide sidewalk detached from the curb on the west side of the street
- Minimum 5-foot wide turf boulevard on the west side of the street
- Boulevard street trees where they don't currently exist
- Pedestrian lighting
- Site furnishings (benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks) at the intersection of Xerxes Avenue and Plymouth Avenue
- Signage and wayfinding

Wayfinding

Wayfinding and signage is an important urban design element that orients and directs people to and from their destinations, and enhances the sense of character and identity of a place, neighborhood or community.

Figure 2.15: Development Intensity

This map provide guidance concerning desired density of future City of Minneapolis development.

-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Neighborhood Scale
Single family homes, townhomes, and two to three story small apartment/condominium buildings.
-  Urban Scale
Townhomes, and apartment/condominium buildings up to four stories.
-  Parks and Open Space

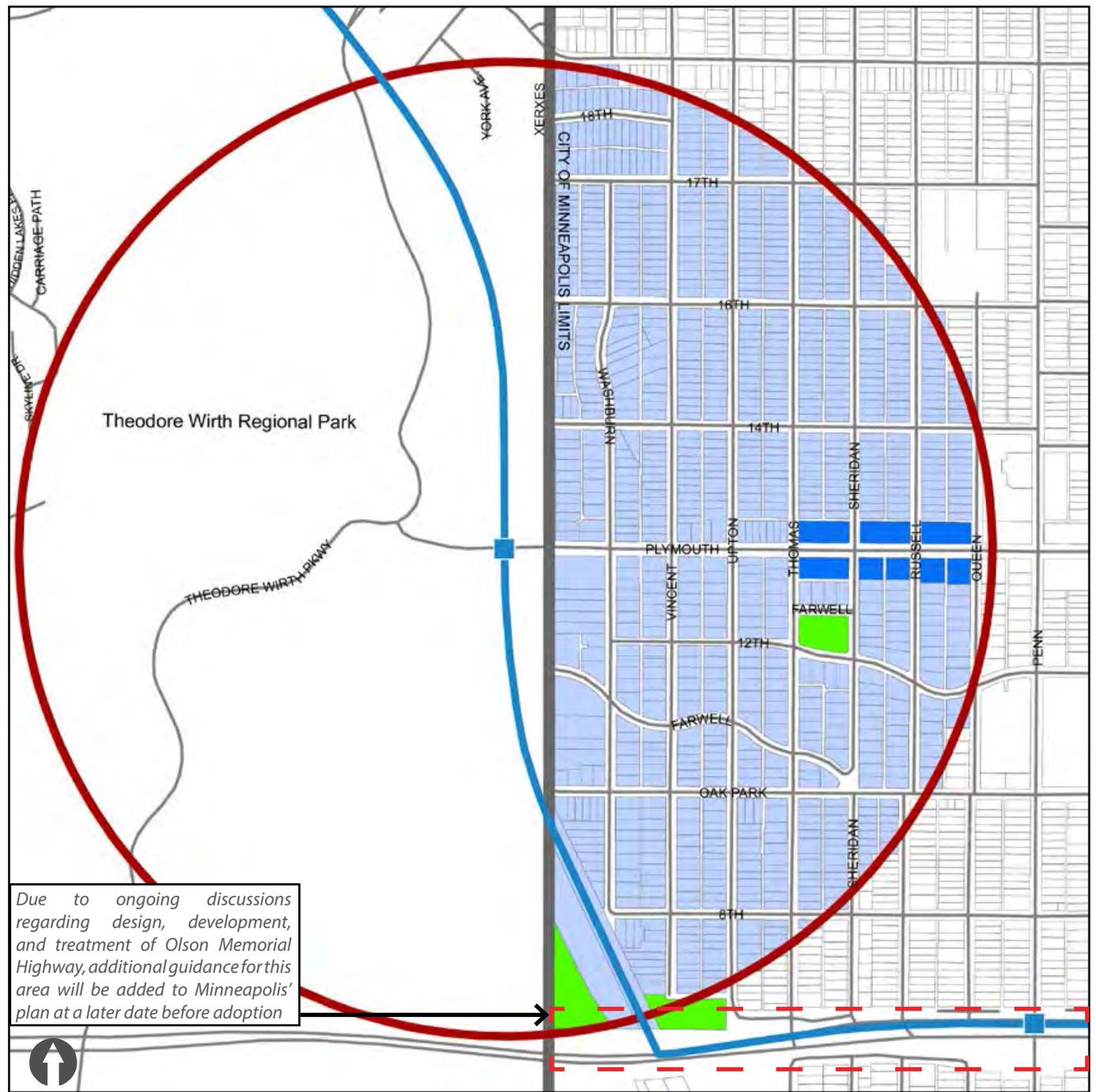


Figure 2.16: Public Realm Improvements

This map depicts public realm improvements that provide economic, environmental and social benefits that are supportive of station area livability.

-  Enhanced Streetscape
-  Trail Lighting / Roadway Lighting
-  Park
-  Wayfinding
-  Public Art
-  Vertical Circulation
-  Pedestrian Bridge
-  Redevelopment Opportunity Site
-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Railroad
-  Proposed Sidewalks
-  Existing Sidewalks
-  Proposed Paved Trail
-  Existing Paved Trail
-  Proposed On-Street Bike Facility
-  Existing On-Street Bike Facility



Figure 2.17: Representative Public Realm and Streetscape Improvements

●●● Enhanced Streetscape



Includes sidewalks, lighting, seating, and planting

●●●● Trail Lighting



■ Park



Maintain park-like feel near station

● Wayfinding



▲ Public Art



■ Bicycle Parking



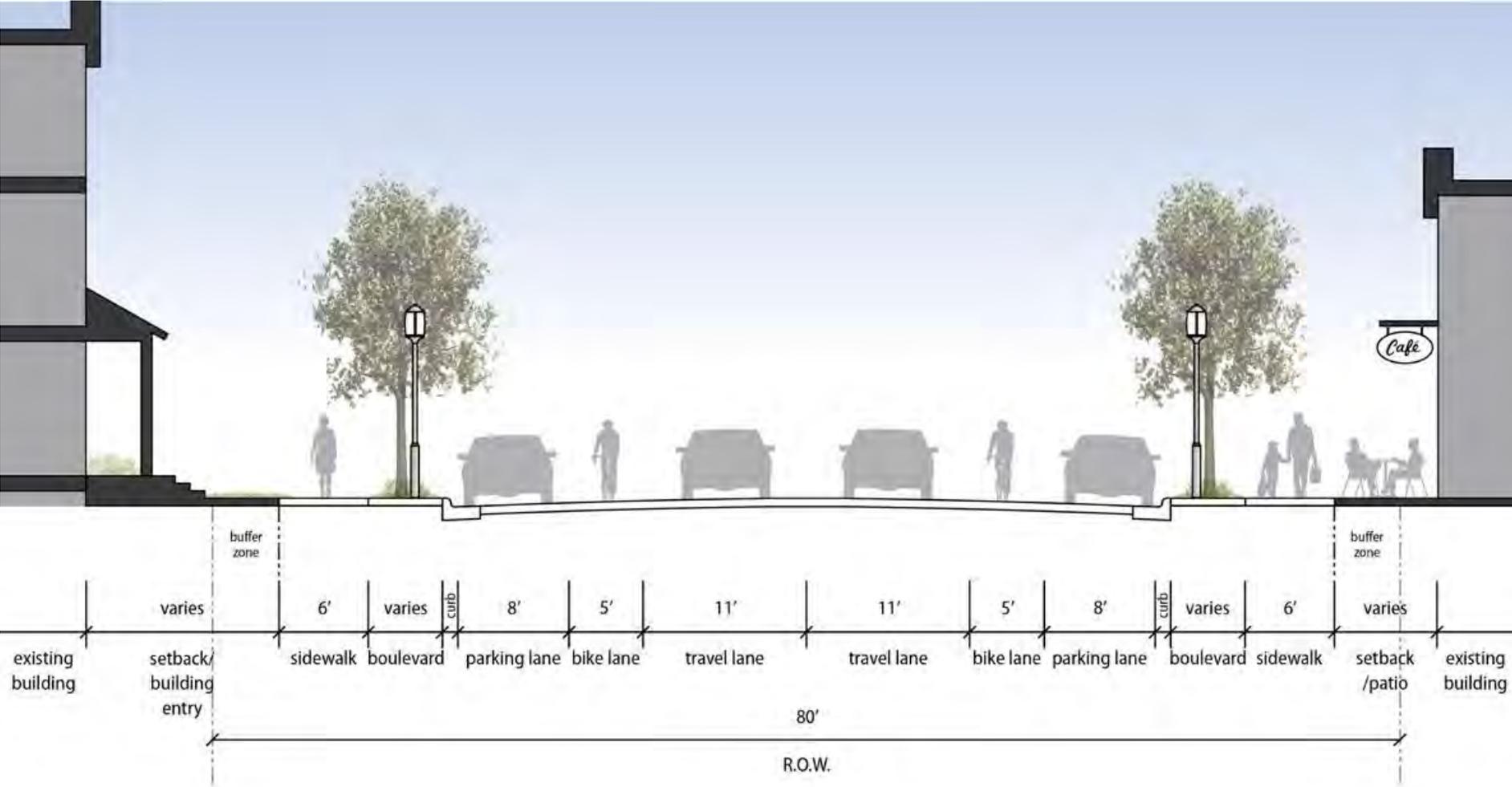
Short-term and long-term parking

☒ Vertical Circulation



Elevator, ramp, and stairs

Figure 2.18: Plymouth Avenue Street Section



Wayfinding is also an important element to delivering transit users to the station in a safe and convenient manner. Improved wayfinding can enhance mobility to and from the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station and increase transit ridership in the area. Since the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station platform will be located adjacent the depressed railroad corridor near the Plymouth Avenue bridge, an attractive and comprehensive signage and wayfinding system should be incorporated into streetscape improvements. These should be located along Plymouth Avenue, particularly at the bridge, along Theodore Wirth Parkway at key intersections, and within parks and open spaces.

Vertical Circulation

The station platform will be located adjacent the bridge where Plymouth Avenue crosses the rail line, requiring vertical circulation (i.e., elevator and stairs) at the station platform to move transit users safely and conveniently between Plymouth Avenue and the station platform.

The ground plane transition down from Plymouth Avenue to the LRT platform should be designed in a manner that reinforces community character and creates a welcoming community open space that incorporates site furnishings, lighting, wayfinding, public art, short and long-term bicycle parking options, and a Nice Ride station.

Public Art Opportunities

Public art is an important placemaking element in the public realm. It can communicate the history or character of a place, and draw connections to the larger community context. The integration of public art should be considered within the landscaped area between Plymouth Avenue and the station platform

and be sensitive to the residential neighborhood and the park setting.

Open Space and Parks

Trail lighting, wayfinding and signage improvements from the station platform to the Theodore Wirth Regional Park chalet and proposed future Welcome Center will enhance mobility to and from the station and significant park destinations near the station platform.

Heritage Preservation

Approximately half the station area falls within Theodore Wirth Regional Park and the Grand Rounds. The design of the LRT platform and track should minimize impacts to these valuable community resources.

The community has a rich history that is manifested in several select buildings, but also in the general neighborhood character, which includes the housing styles, street and block configurations, and existing or remnant commercial nodes. This is particularly true for the potential Homewood Historic District. While a small amount of new development is proposed near the Plymouth Avenue and Penn Avenue commercial node, community's rich character should be preserved and to make wise use of resources embedded in the existing housing stock.

Even though many of the community's historic resources are not officially designated, any proposed development in close proximity to them should be done in a manner that either avoids or sensitively incorporates these existing historic resources.

Environment and Stormwater Management

Many aspects of the station area plan are consistent with the City of Minneapolis' sustainable development goals, such as implementing the LRT system, improving nonmotorized access to the LRT stations, installing new street trees, and incorporating transit-oriented development.

Should any brownfield sites exist within the station area, the City should work with the property owners to facilitate environmental cleanup and site redevelopment. Any building demolition associated with redevelopment should be done in a manner that allows for salvaging and recycling of building materials to the extent possible.

Theodore Wirth Regional Park comprised approximately half the station area. The design of the LRT platform and track should be done in a manner to minimize impacts to the rich environmental resources found in the park. Installation of vegetative plantings should be considered to buffer adjacent parkland and residential areas from the LRT line. The situation differs at station platforms, where maintenance of clear sight lines is desired between adjacent land uses and the platform to enhance pedestrian safety.

New development should manage stormwater on site, using stormwater management techniques such as low impact development and green infrastructure. These stormwater management practices attempt to mimic natural hydrologic processes to promote stormwater infiltration and reduce the quantity of runoff entering the storm sewer system, while also meeting water quality, rate control, and volume control requirements.

Maintenance of Public Realm Improvements

Minneapolis

Many of the streetscape elements shown in the document will require further discussions between the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin, County, and adjacent property owners to identify operations and maintenance funding. Special Service Districts have been successfully implemented throughout the city in commercial areas, however current state statutes prevent special service districts in residential areas. Current policy states that street lighting on pedestrian priority corridors will be funded as part of reconstruction project budget. Banners, street benches, colored pavement, pavers, plantings, and trash receptacles may be funded through special service districts or by encroachment permit. Adjacent property owners in residential areas or in commercial areas without special service districts may work with the city to secure encroachment permits or may enter into agreements with the city to operate and maintain a streetscape element. Stormwater elements will also require discussions with the city so that property maintenance is performed.

Low impact development and green infrastructure often requires higher maintenance commitments, which requires additional resources and acceptance from the maintaining agency.

Golden Valley

Many of the streetscape elements shown in the document will require further discussions between the City of Golden Valley, Hennepin, County, and adjacent property owners to identify operations and maintenance funding. Stormwater elements will also

require discussions with the city so that property maintenance is performed. Low impact development and green infrastructure often requires higher maintenance commitments, which requires additional resources and acceptance from the maintaining agency

Community Health Benefits

The Plymouth Avenue Station Area Plan recommends filling in sidewalk and trail gaps to increase access for people walking and biking to the station. Some limited small-scale commercial development as mentioned in the plans at the intersection of Penn and Plymouth Avenues which could result in walkable destinations for residents, including vulnerable populations who are less likely to be able to drive cars.

Additionally, the METRO Blue Line Extension and Plymouth Avenue Station have the potential to positively impact health all along the line by providing convenient access to Theodore Wirth Regional Park. Increased access to outdoor space and extensive programming that takes place in this large park provides opportunities for transit-dependent populations to be physically active. **Table 2.2** summarizes healthy community design features that are incorporated into the station area plan.

Table 2.2: Healthy Community Design Features

Healthy Community Design Feature	How Station Area Planning Is Addressing Healthy Community Design
Socially equitable and accessible community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The METRO Blue Line Extension will bring light rail transit (LRT) to underserved communities. • Transit helps improve overall health in communities by improving physical activity levels, job access, housing and transportation costs, traffic safety, education access and access to healthy food.
Housing for different incomes and different stages of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development concepts show a variety of new housing types that could be either ownership or rental opportunities and show the preservation of a majority of existing housing.
Easy connections to the METRO Blue Line Extension and the regional transit system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps in sidewalk network are recommended to be filled in. • New bicycle facilities are recommended. • Metro Transit will be investigating potential bus service improvements.
Mixed land uses where homes, shops, schools and work sites are located close together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station area plans show a variety of land uses as appropriate to the station area contexts.
Jobs and education are accessible from/within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Van White Boulevard station area and Plymouth Avenue/Penn Avenue commercial node show new job/education land uses. • Station area plans maintain existing sources of jobs. • The METRO Blue Line Extension will improve access to jobs and education destinations.
Walking and biking are safe and comfortable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe crossings of Olson Memorial Highway are recommended. • Various options are recommended to safely reach the grade-separated Plymouth Avenue and Golden Valley Road stations. • Sidewalks are recommended to be buffered from the street by a planted boulevard. • New bicycle facilities are recommended. • Enhanced lighting is recommended. • Improved wayfinding signage is recommended to help direct people to the stations.
Public places for social interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development concepts provide community gathering spaces near the stations.
Parks and green spaces are easy to get to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New sidewalk and bicycle connections to parks are recommended.
Outlets for fresh, healthy food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mixed-use commercial nodes at the Van White Boulevard Station and at the intersection of Plymouth Avenue and Penn Avenue could accommodate small grocery service or a small farmers market. • Existing community gardens are maintained.

Implementation Framework

Adoption and Modification of Policy Guidance

City of Golden Valley

Implementing the development vision for the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station area will not require modifications to City of Golden Valley policy and regulatory documents. Yet, it is recommended that this plan be adopted by the City of Golden Valley as official City guidance for the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station area.

City of Minneapolis

Implementing the development vision for the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station area requires modifications to City of Minneapolis policy and regulatory documents.

- **METRO Blue Line Extension (Bottineau LRT) Phase 1: Station Area Planning.** This plan should be adopted by the City of Minneapolis as official City guidance for the four station areas. The plan should be referenced in the City's comprehensive plan in the list of adopted plans, and its area of impact denoted in the map that illustrates adopted plans.
- **The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth.** A modification to the City of Minneapolis comprehensive plan, and specifically to its Future Land Use map, should be adopted, so as to make it consistent with the land use policy guidance in this plan. Two modifications to land use features are required. A Transit Station feature should be

added to the map at the Plymouth Avenue/Wirth Park Station and the Community Corridor on Plymouth Avenue should be extended westward to the City Limits.

- **Rezoning of Property.** A rezoning study should follow adoption of this plan. Its purpose would be to propose changes in zoning that are consistent with the policy intent of this plan, as described in the narrative, and as illustrated in this plan's Future Land Use and Development Intensity maps.
- **Minneapolis Health Department Participation.** Because the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) completed in 2013 found that the LRT was likely to have a positive influence on health, and that the potential land use changes and investments that come with the LRT project present a valuable opportunity to address challenges in the corridor, it is recommended that the Minneapolis Health Department participate and provide input on implementation of these station area plans to ensure the integration of the HIA's findings. These include physical activity, housing + transportation costs, employment, education access, traffic safety, and healthy food access – all public health policy elements that would emphasize and promote health and health equity in the communities of North Minneapolis.

Development Vision Implementation

Infill housing. There is concern about the vacant properties that linger in the neighborhood. Attracting

new single family housing to these properties is important for stabilizing the blocks they are on, and stemming further disinvestment.

Given the stability of the neighborhood, and the large share of the housing that is owner occupied, the housing market may be strong enough in some instances to attract infill development without public intervention. In other instances the lot may be an appropriate target for an existing public subsidy program such as Green Homes North. The development of new transit service at Plymouth Avenue should bolster neighborhood values further, and attract additional development interest.

Physical Environment Improvements

Physical environment improvements have been broken into two phases.

- **Day of Opening Improvements.** These are improvements recommended to be constructed and functional on the first day that the LRT is operating. Day of opening improvements support safe and convenient access to the station platform for station area residents and visitors.
- **Future Improvements.** These are desired station area improvements that support enhanced livability within the station area and enhanced access, but do not significantly impact access to the station platform.

Day of Opening Improvements

Recommended day of opening improvements are listed in **Table 2.3** and depicted on **Figure 2.19 - Figure 2.21**. Agencies responsible for implementation of these improvements and the timing of implementation will be discussed and resolved as part of the preliminary engineering phase of the project.

Future Improvements

Table 2.4 suggests potential partners who may individually or jointly take on the responsibility for implementation of the future improvement. The list of potential partners does not imply a commitment by the listed agencies to implement the future improvements.

Implementation of the recommended policy, development and physical environment improvements, while not comprehensive, will support transit ridership through the provision of safe and convenient access to the transit stations. These improvements will also provide economic, social, and environmental benefits to the station area and broader community.

Table 2.3: Day of Opening Improvements

Improvements	Comments
A Roadway and wayfinding signage	Legible to people who speak multiple languages and located directly adjacent to platform
B Wayfinding signage at key decision points	Legible to people who speak multiple languages. Key decision points include: a. Plymouth Avenue and Theodore Wirth Parkway intersection b. Plymouth Avenue and Penn Avenue intersection c. Golden Valley Road and Xerxes Avenue intersection
C Vertical circulation between platform and street level	Assumes enclosed structure that includes elevator, stairs, good user visibility, and ADA compliant access Provide safe and comfortable access, including ADA compliant pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists, seating, lighting, and incorporation of short- and long-term bicycle parking
D Public Art	Located at Xerxes and Plymouth
E Bicycle parking near platform	See above
F Nice Ride station near platform	See above
G Bus drop-off area	May require curb line modifications
H Passenger drop-off area	May require parking restrictions
I Fill in sidewalk gap on south side of Plymouth between the Plymouth Avenue bridge and Washburn Avenue	
J Sidewalk connection to Wirth Chalet and Welcome Center	
K Pedestrian-scaled street lighting along Plymouth Avenue	Wirth Chalet to Penn Avenue.
L Additional lighting for safety around the station platform/under the bridge	Note: not depicted on Figure 2.19 - Figure 2.21 .
M Bus route modifications and bus stop improvements	Note: not depicted on Figure 2.19 - Figure 2.21 .

Figure 2.19: Day of Opening Pedestrian Circulation Improvements

This map identifies pedestrian circulation improvements that are recommended to be in place by the first day of LRT operations. Map elements not coded with a letter are intended to be future improvements.

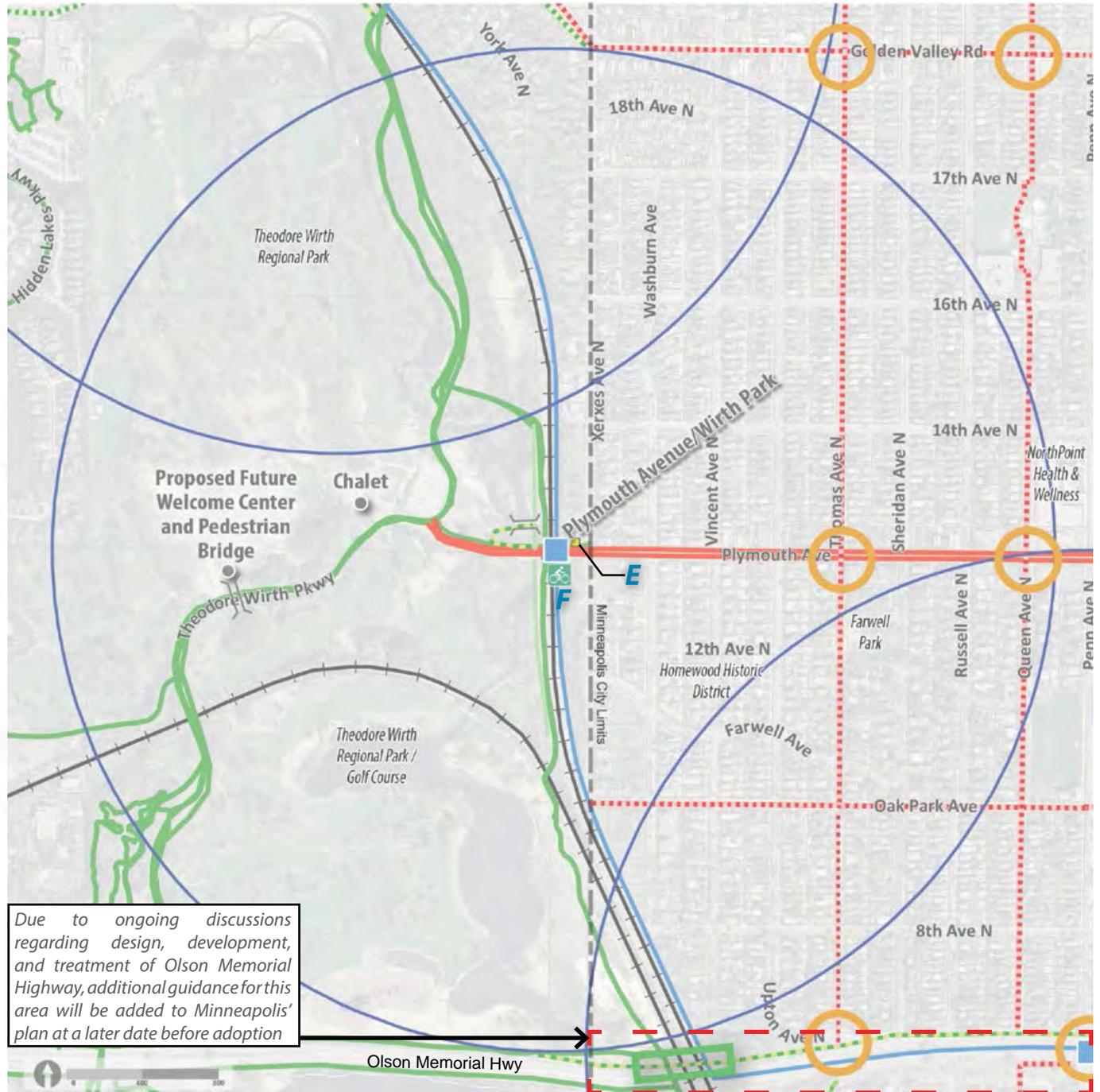
- X Day of Opening Improvements (see Table 2.1)
- Incorporate Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities on New Olson Highway Bridge Over Railroad
- PD Passenger Drop-off
- ★ Primary Bus Connection
- Safe Intersection Crossing
- { } Proposed Pedestrian Bridge
- Proposed Sidewalks
- Existing Sidewalks
- Proposed Paved Trail
- Existing Paved Trail
- Planned LRT Station
- LRT Alignment
- LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
- Railroad



Figure 2.20: Day of Opening Bicycle Circulation Improvements

This map identifies bicycle circulation improvements that are recommended to be in place by the first day of LRT operations. Map elements not coded with a letter are intended to be future improvements.

- X Day of Opening Improvements (see Table 2.1)
- Incorporate Pedestrian/Bicycle Facilities on New Olson Highway Bridge Over Railroad
- Safe Intersection Crossing
- Proposed Bicycle Parking
- Proposed Nice Ride Station
- Proposed Pedestrian Bridge
- Proposed Paved Trail
- Existing Paved Trail
- Proposed On-Street Bike Facility
- Existing On-Street Bike Facility
- Planned LRT Station
- Bottineau LRT Alignment
- LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
- Railroad



Due to ongoing discussions regarding design, development, and treatment of Olson Memorial Highway, additional guidance for this area will be added to Minneapolis' plan at a later date before adoption

Figure 2.21: Day of Opening Public Realm Improvements

This map identifies public realm improvements that are recommended to be in place by the first day of LRT operations. Map elements not coded with a letter are intended to be future improvements.

- X** Day of Opening Improvements (see Table 2.1)
- Enhanced Streetscape
- Trail Lighting / Roadway Lighting
- Park
- Wayfinding
- Public Art
- Vertical Circulation
- Pedestrian Bridge
- Redevelopment Opportunity Site
- Planned LRT Station
- Bottineau LRT Alignment
- LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
- Railroad
- Proposed Sidewalks
- Existing Sidewalks
- Proposed Paved Trail
- Existing Paved Trail
- Proposed On-Street Bike Facility
- Existing On-Street Bike Facility



Table 2.4: Future Improvements

Improvements	Potential Partners	Comments
Streetscape enhancements along Plymouth Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Minneapolis Xcel Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Upgrade worn sidewalks street trees (fill in gaps) Site furnishings at key intersections Relocate existing overhead utilities underground
Streetscape enhancements along Xerxes Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Minneapolis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum 5 foot wide sidewalk on west side of street Minimum 5 foot wide boulevard Street trees Pedestrian lighting Site furnishings at Xerxes and Plymouth
Complete remainder of wayfinding system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hennepin County City of Minneapolis 	Less critical, but important locations located along Penn Avenue, Golden Valley Road and Theodore Wirth Parkway
Enhance bus turn-around and intersection at Theodore Wirth Parkway and Plymouth Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Metro Transit 	
Improved pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Plymouth Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Minneapolis 	
Fill in remaining sidewalk gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Minneapolis 	
Complete bicycle network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Minneapolis 	
Trail and pedestrian bridge over Bassett Creek	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board 	Connection to existing trail network in Theodore Wirth Regional Park
Bicycle parking at key neighborhood destinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Minneapolis Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board Property Developers 	
Fill in remaining sidewalk gaps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Minneapolis Adjacent Property Developers 	
Complete bicycle network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Minneapolis 	
Bicycle parking at key neighborhood destinations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City of Minneapolis Property Developers Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board 	Includes plaza at intersection of Plymouth Avenue and Penn Avenue, and other neighborhood parks and schools as needed.
BRT station near the intersection of Penn Avenue and Plymouth Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metro Transit City of Minneapolis 	

3 GOLDEN VALLEY ROAD STATION AREA

- 1. Existing Conditions Analysis**
- 2. Station Area Vision**
- 3. Implementation Framework**

GOLDEN VALLEY ROAD STATION AREA

The proposed Golden Valley Road Station is located at the northwest corner of Theodore Wirth Regional Park, at the intersection of Golden Valley Road and the BNSF Railway. The station area extends one-half mile around each proposed light rail transit (LRT) station, or the distance the average person can walk to/from the station in ten minutes. One-half mile is the transit industry standard for the maximum length that people are willing to walk to reach a transitway station. While a one-half mile is equated with a ten-minute walk, in reality this does not always hold true on the ground as factors such as terrain and the transportation network affects how people move through the station area. Please see **Figure 3.1** for a map of the station location, half-mile radius, and ten-minute walk extent.

Relationship to Community Health

Residents in the Golden Valley station area do not currently experience the same level of health disparities as residents at other stations along the line. As **Table 3.1** shows, the poverty rate² is below the Hennepin County average, although it is almost twice the Golden Valley city average. However, the METRO Blue Line Extension and station area planning has the potential to improve health in the station area by increasing access to high quality, high frequency transit for area residents. Walking or biking to transit rather than driving increases the likelihood that people will achieve the recommended amount of daily physical activity.

²Living in poverty is defined as populations living in households whose income is at or below the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services poverty thresholds. As a reference, this threshold was \$22,300 in 2010 for a family of four. Minority is defined as non-white.

The station area plan recommends improvements to sidewalks and bikeways that could improve safety for people walking and biking to, though, and around the station area. Additionally, this station area provides access to physical activity opportunities including an extensive network of biking and walking trails including the Grand Rounds scenic byway, a bike route that circles Minneapolis.

Existing Conditions Analysis

Roadways

As shown in **Figure 3.2**, Golden Valley Road (Hennepin County Road 66) is a two-lane undivided minor arterial roadway that acts as an east-west connector between north Minneapolis and Golden Valley. Approximately 8,300 vehicles per day used Golden Valley Road on the west side of the station area in 2012; 5,100 vehicles per day used the roadway on the east side. Golden

Valley Road spans the BNSF corridor. The urban street grid becomes less regular in Golden Valley and local streets are spaced further apart creating longer blocks. Theodore Wirth Parkway serves north-south traffic through the park. It connects to Victory Memorial Parkway north of the station, along with Wirth Beach and the Minneapolis chain of lakes south of the station. Approximately 4,250 vehicles per day use the Parkway in the station area.

Primary Community Input

Several community members expressed concern about increased street parking due to transit riders driving to the station area and parking on neighborhood streets. Community members also expressed concerns with pedestrian and bicycle safety at the intersection of Golden Valley Road and Theodore Wirth Parkway.

Table 3.1: Golden Valley Road Community Profile

	Half-Mile Station Area	Minneapolis	Golden Valley	Hennepin County
Population (2010)	2,351	382,578	20,371	1,152,388
Persons under 18 years	23%	20.2%	19.9%	22.4%
Persons over 65 years	11%	8.0%	20.3%	12.2%
Minority	44%	36.2%	14.6%	23.6%
Zero car households	6%	19%	5.7%	10.5%
Living in poverty	11%	22.5%	6.8%	12.8%

Data sources: U.S. Census (2010); American Community Survey 2007-2011 5-year summary file

Figure 3.1: Golden Valley Road Station Area

This map shows the half mile buffer and 10 minute walking extent for the station area.

-  Modified Station Area
-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  Railroad
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Adjacent Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Golden Valley Station 10-minute Walking Extent



Figure 3.2: Existing Streets and Highways

This map depicts existing and forecasted traffic volumes and roadway jurisdictions.

-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  MnDOT Roads
-  City Roads
-  Hennepin County Roads
-  Signalized Intersection
- xxxx (xxxx) MnDOT Traffic Volumes Existing 2012 (Forecast 2030)
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Adjacent Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Golden Valley Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Railroad

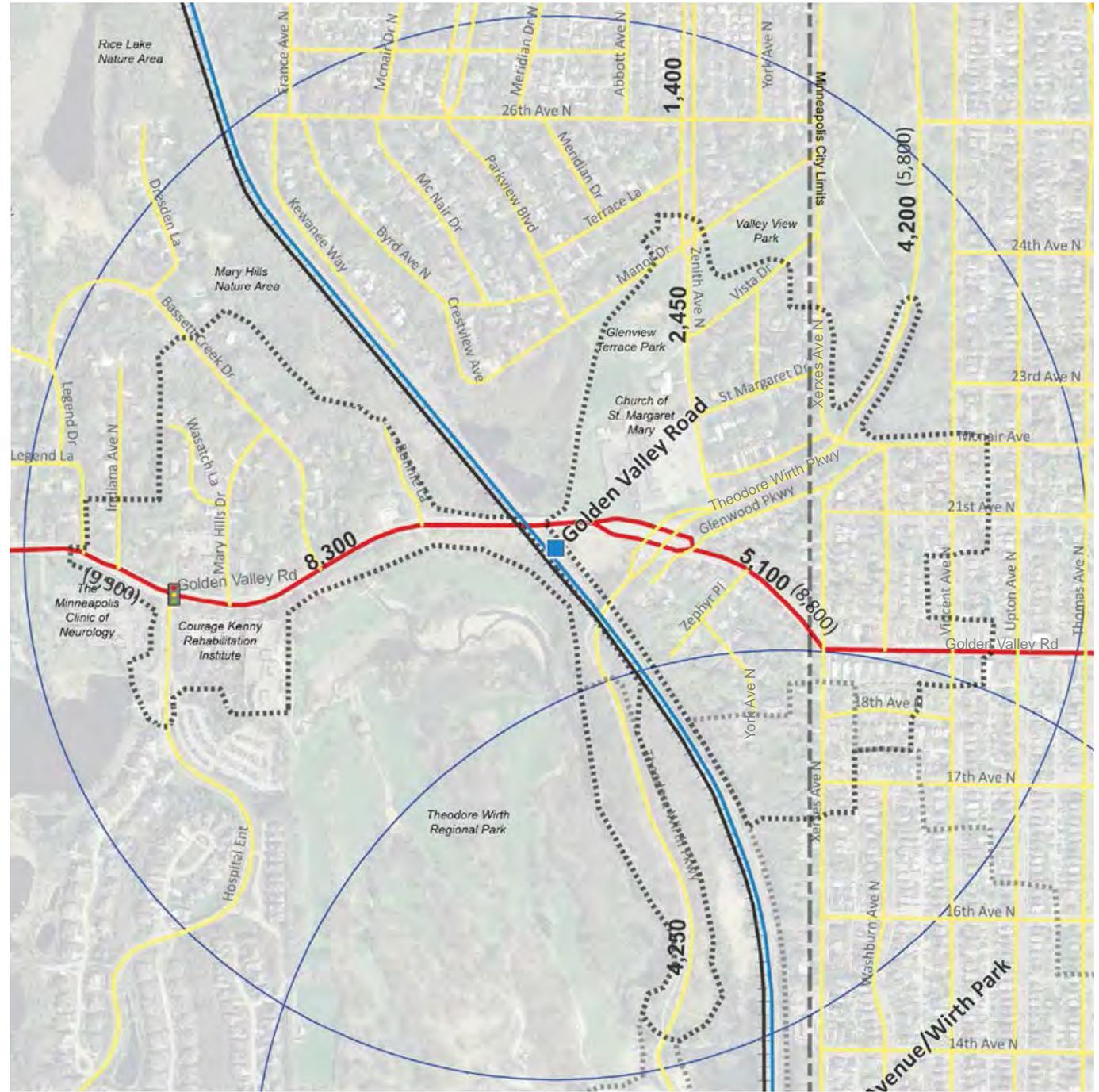
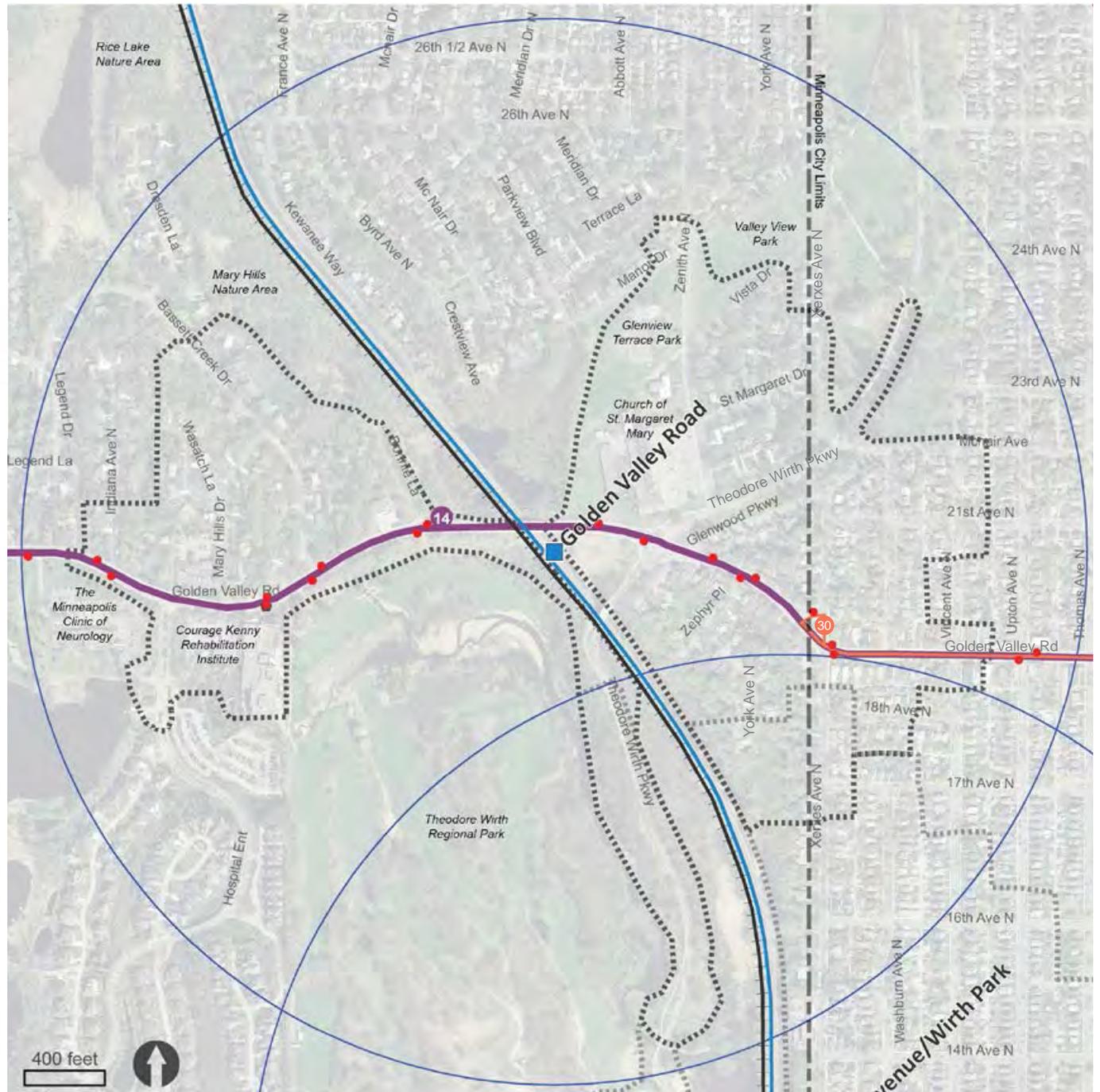


Figure 3.3: Existing Transit Routes

This map depicts existing bus routes.

-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  Route 14
-  Route 30
-  Transit Stops
-  Transit Shelters
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Adjacent Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Golden Valley Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Railroad



Transit

As shown in **Figure 3.3**, local Routes 14 and 30 operate on Golden Valley Road in the station area. Route 30 terminates at Xerxes Avenue before it reaches the station location; Route 14 currently serves the proposed station location. Transit connections are important in this area as Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute clients, residents and employees could utilize transit to access this destination.

Primary Community Input

Route 14 and Route 30 bus service along Golden Valley Road is not high-frequency, and the Route 30 does not extend to the station location. This could make transfers to or from LRT difficult.

Bikeways and Sidewalks

As shown in **Figure 3.5**, the Theodore Wirth segment of the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway, which passes through the station area, includes a trail that connects north to Victory Memorial Parkway and south to Cedar Lake. The Parkway and trail intersection with Golden Valley Road presents a safety issue for all users and has been the site of seven bicycle and pedestrian crashes since 2009. The intersection is segmented to allow drivers to make “free right” turns—drivers do not need to come to a full stop to make a right turn, they only need to yield. This configuration also requires that Theodore Wirth Trail users make three roadway crossings to cross from the north to south side of Golden Valley Road. Please see **Figure 3.4** for a picture of this intersection.

Immediately north of Golden Valley Road, in Mary Hills Nature Area, a non-paved trail winds northward and

connects with Rice Lake Nature Area in Golden Valley and Sochacki Park in Robbinsdale. Currently, the only connection between this trail and the Theodore Wirth Regional Park trail system is an informal foot path on the existing freight rail line that passes under Golden Valley Road. Many neighborhood residents also use informal paths across the existing freight rail tracks to access Mary Hills Nature Area. While done, these are not legal crossings of the railroad. These paths will no longer be accessible when LRT is constructed. See **Figure 3.5** for a map of informal routes used today and distances to existing grade-separated crossings. The City of Golden Valley and Three Rivers Park District plan to construct the Bassett Creek Regional Trail on the south side of Golden Valley Road, which will link to the Theodore Wirth Regional Park trail at the intersection of Golden



Figure 3.4: Golden Valley Road - Theodore Wirth Parkway Intersection

Legend:

 “Free right” turns

Valley Road and Theodore Wirth Parkway and then transition to an on-street bicycle lane in Minneapolis. Street lights along Golden Valley Road and Theodore Wirth Parkway are geared toward the roadway and not the sidewalks; there is no pedestrian-scale lighting in the station area.

The sidewalk network is fairly consistent on the east side of the station area in Minneapolis, but does not exist in Golden Valley. The exception is sidewalks along Golden Valley Road that are in poor condition and located at the back of the curb, with pedestrians walking immediately adjacent to roadway traffic. Construction of Bassett Creek Regional Trail will include improvements to the sidewalks on the north side of Golden Valley Road in the station area.

St. Margaret Mary Church occupies a large parcel on the north side of Golden Valley Road. The configuration of the parcel and the lack of connections across it makes pedestrian movement to the proposed station inconvenient from points north.

Primary Community Input

Community members who participated in engagement activities expressed a desire for several improvements to the sidewalk and trail network in the area:

- A grade-separated trail connection between Mary Hills Nature Center and Theodore Wirth Regional Park;
- Improved and well-lit pedestrian connections between the station and the residential neighborhoods north of St. Margaret Mary Church and Glenview Terrace Park;

Figure 3.5: Existing / Planned Sidewalks and Bikeways

This map shows existing sidewalks and bikeways, along with identified sidewalk gaps, planned sidewalks and planned bikeways previously identified in city policy documents.

-  Distance to Grade Separated Crossing
-  Elimination of Informal Rail Crossing
-  Existing Neighborhood Route (Informal)
-  Bike/Ped and Vehicle Crash Incident (2009-2013)
-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  Existing Sidewalks
-  Sidewalk Gap
-  Existing On-Street Bike Lane
-  Planned On-Street Bike Lane in an Existing Policy Document
-  Existing Paved Trail
-  Planned Paved Trail in an Existing Policy Document
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Railroad
-  Street Light
-  Adjacent Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Golden Valley Station 10-minute Walking Extent

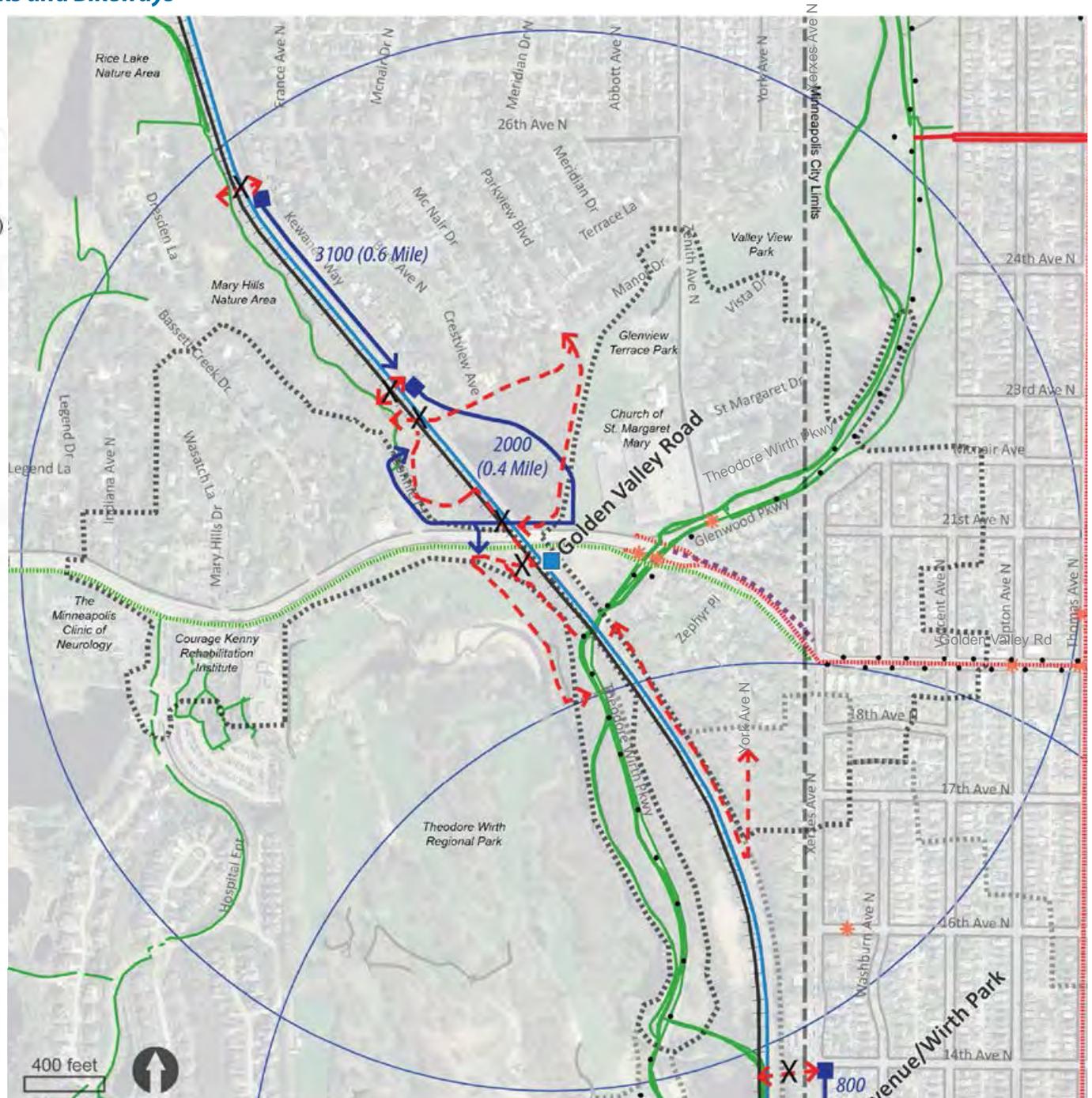
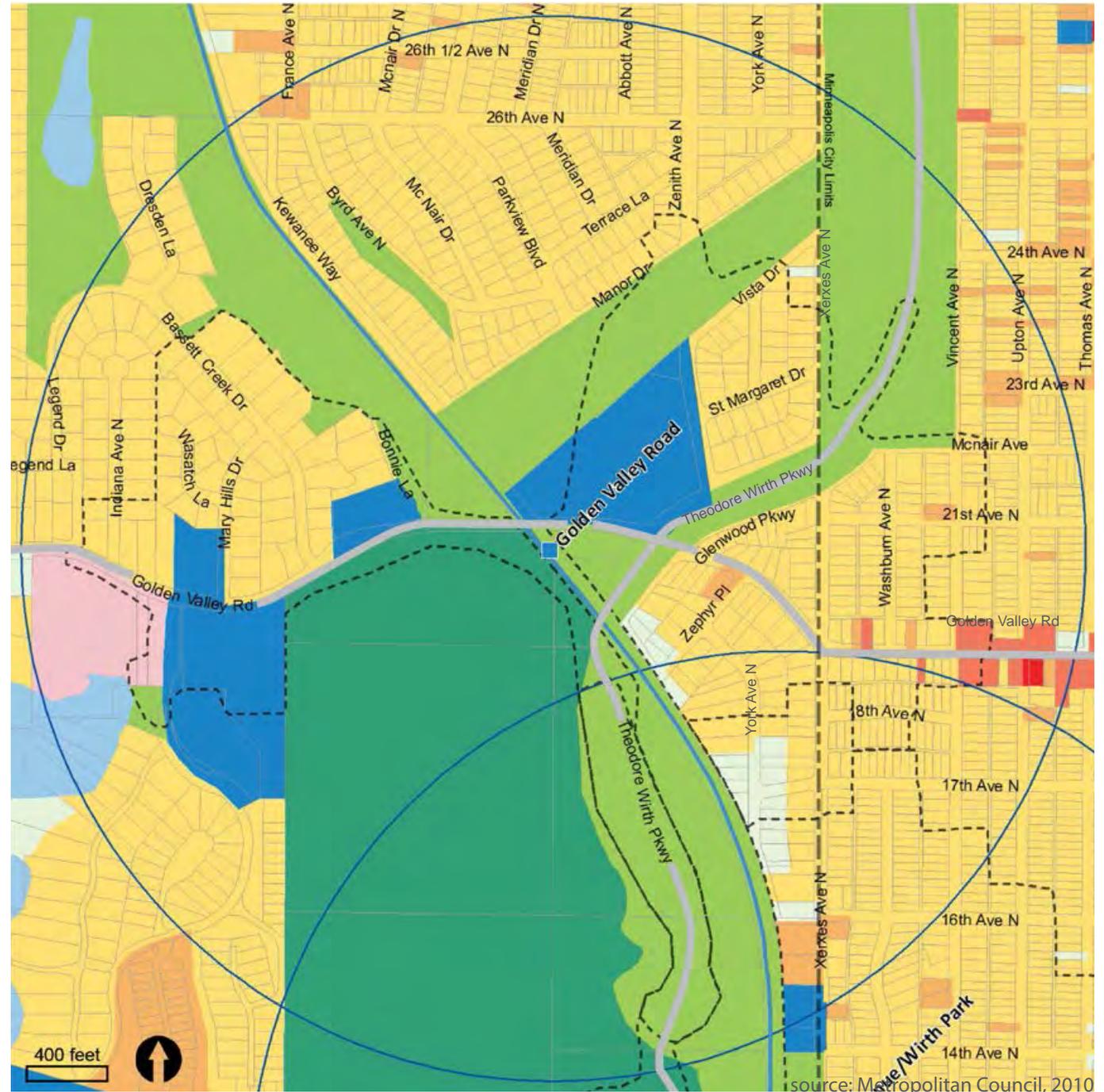


Figure 3.6: Existing Land Use

This map shows existing land uses with data received from the Metropolitan Council (2010).

- Single-Family Detached
- Two-Family
- Multifamily
- Retail and Other Commercial
- Office
- Institutional
- Park, Recreational or Preserve
- Golf Course
- Undeveloped
- Water
- Parcels
- Planned LRT Station
- Bottineau LRT Alignment
- LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
- 10-minute Walking Extent



source: Metropolitan Council, 2010

- A pedestrian and bicycle connection between the station and Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute;
- Pedestrian-scale lighting along Golden Valley Road and Theodore Wirth Parkway;
- Changes to the configuration of the Golden Valley Road and Theodore Wirth Parkway intersection to improve bicycle and pedestrian safety and experience on the Grand Rounds; and
- Safe and well-lit access to the grade-separated platform.

Land Use

Land uses in the Golden Valley Road station area are depicted in **Figure 3.6**. The land use map was created from data received from the Metropolitan Council (2010). The land uses shown on this map represent a period in time and may not exactly match actual land uses or the Cities' existing land use maps. Please note that while it provides project context, it is not the official land use map for the cities of Minneapolis or Golden Valley.

The Golden Valley Road station area encompasses large areas of park and open space to the north and south. Developed areas exist to the east and west, as well as to the north beyond intervening woods and parkland.

Essentially all of the housing development to the west of the station is in the form of single family homes. Lot sizes are relatively large; most are between 10,000 and 25,000 square feet. The homes were largely built in the 1950s. Several are rented, but most are owner occupied. Terrain is hilly, which could present challenges for redevelopment.

Homes to the east of the proposed station are on more modest lots, from 5,000 to 15,000 square feet in size. Those that were built in the 1940s and 1950s are more common than those built in the 1920s. Many homes are rented, but the majority of them are owner occupied. There are apartment buildings on Golden Valley Road east of Xerxes Avenue that have been nominated as a historic district. This historic district nomination is currently under review by the City of Minneapolis. The single-family residential blocks to the north and south of Golden Valley Road in Minneapolis have some vacant lots, which provide an opportunity for lower density infill development. The topography is hilly in parts.

There are several prominent institutional and health care developments along Golden Valley Road in the station area. The Church of St Margaret Mary is on a large property on the north corner of Golden Valley Road and Theodore Wirth Parkway intersection. It provides space for a school and other programs, in addition to church facilities. Unity Christ Church fronts on Golden Valley Road a little under half a mile to the west of St Margaret Mary. Two large care facilities are established on the south side of Golden Valley Road— Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute, and the Minneapolis Clinic of Neurology. These large properties may be able to support expansion of the facilities, or other intensification of development. The City of Golden Valley has a fire station that fronts on Golden Valley Road, a thousand feet from the future transit station. The City is currently evaluating the need and locations of fire stations, the result of which may open up this 1.7 acre site for other development.

Community Character

The Golden Valley Road Station will serve the Willard Hay neighborhood in Minneapolis, neighborhoods and institutions in Golden Valley, Theodore Wirth Regional Park users, and nearby destinations and amenities, as depicted in **Figure 3.7**.

The primary feature of the station area is the abundance of adjacent parkland, including Theodore Wirth Regional Park and Parkway, Mary Hills and Rice Lake Nature Areas, Glenview Terrace Park and Valley View Park. The community values the parkland and states that it is a critical component of the station area character.

The station area is a single-family suburban neighborhood with low potential for change given the many parks and the stable neighborhoods surrounding the station. Major healthcare providers located to the west along Golden Valley Road may benefit greatly from the new LRT station. The station will be an origin for transit riders who arrive on foot, bus, and bicycle, or who are dropped off by car, as well as a destination for nearby healthcare providers and park users.

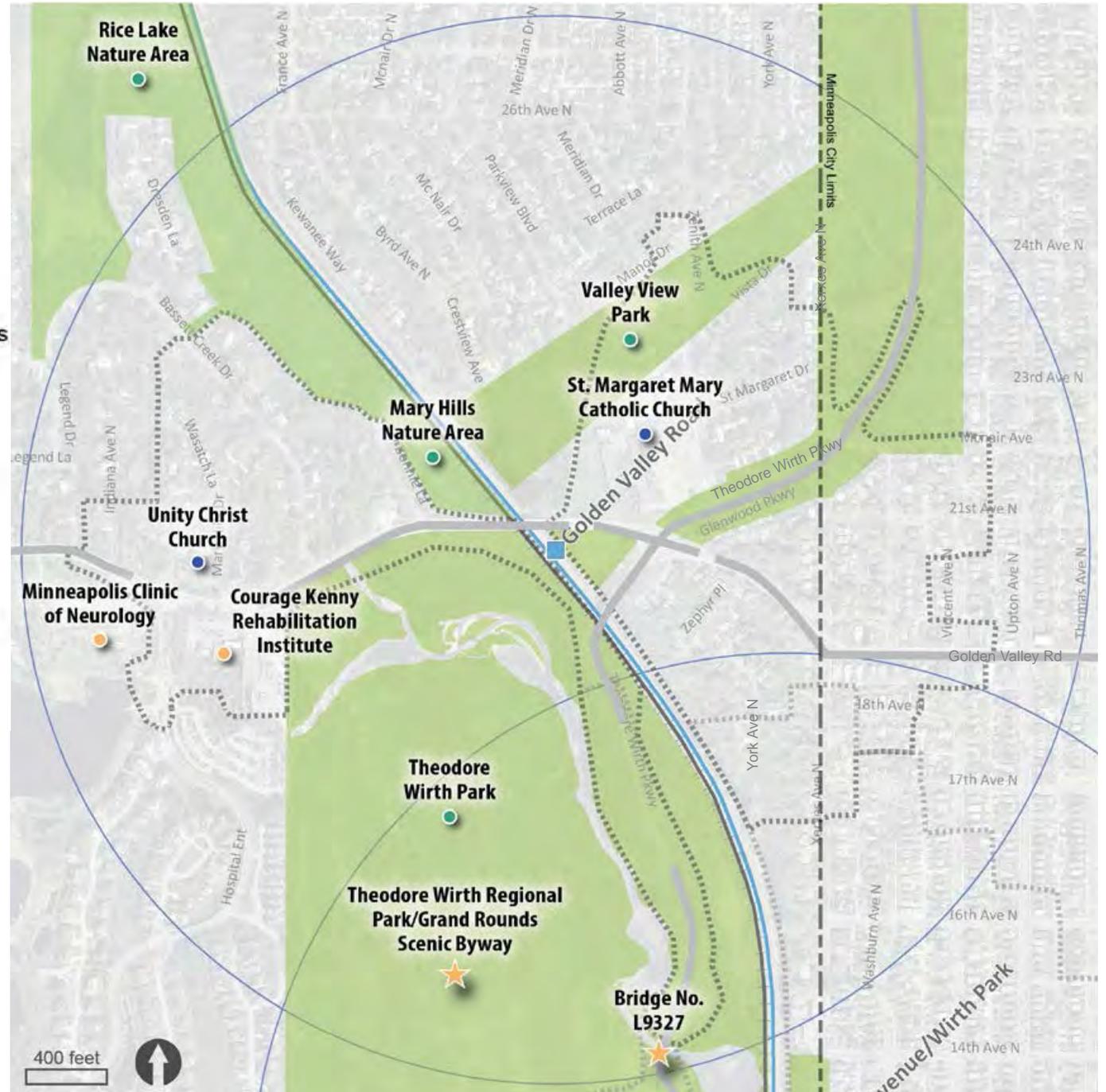
Primary Community Input

Community members who participated in engagement activities are satisfied with the current character of the neighborhood and are generally not seeking new residential, retail, or other development, or displacement of the stable housing in the neighborhood. Some community members also expressed concern regarding potential noise and vibration resulting from LRT operations. To this end, neighborhood residents want the station to fit in with the existing neighborhood character and park setting.

Figure 3.7: Existing / Planned Amenities and Destinations

This map identifies amenities and destinations located in the station area.

-  Religious
-  Health & Wellness
-  Retail / Restaurant / Grocery
-  Parks
-  Historic Property
-  Major Development / Destinations
-  Planned LRT Station
-  LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Adjacent Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Golden Valley Station 10-minute Walking Extent
-  Park and Open Space



Community members who participated in engagement activities pointed out that the area near the station is on the edge of the park, gets very dark, and can feel unsafe, especially at night. Lighting and security cameras are necessary, as well as wayfinding.

Finally, residents embrace the park as a major asset in their neighborhood, and were concerned about the impact of LRT on the natural environment. Therefore, residents desire a low-impact station design that respects the parkland.

Station Area Vision

Future Station Area Character

The Golden Valley Road Station area is envisioned as:

- A quiet residential neighborhood adjacent to natural areas and parklands;
- A place that provides sensitively designed recreation connections to regional trails, parkland, and natural resources; and
- A connection for LRT riders to regional employment, recreational, educational, and health care opportunities.

This vision statement can be used as a guide for city staff and community members as they evaluate future development proposals to ensure that new development is consistent with and supportive of the desired community character for this station area.

Circulation

Roadways

In order to facilitate vehicular drop offs of transit riders for neighborhood residents, modifications of the street curb lines may be necessary to create special bays on each side of the street for passenger drop-off on Golden Valley Road. This space is intended for very short term use as LRT passengers exit or enter vehicles.

Reconfiguring the intersection of Golden Valley Road and Theodore Wirth Parkway is envisioned to remove the free right turns, slow vehicular traffic, and make vehicular, pedestrian, and bicycle movements more

predictable. Pedestrian-scale lighting and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) - compliant pedestrian ramps are envisioned as part of the intersection improvements. An analysis of traffic movement may be needed to determine if a traffic signal will be necessary as part of the intersection reconfiguration. See **Figure 3.8** for proposed roadway enhancements.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

In addition to an elevator and stairs that will be incorporated into the station platform, a safe, well-lit, comfortable and convenient ground plane transition from street level down to the LRT platform will be an important factor in the success of the Golden Valley Road station. The area where the ground plane changes elevations should accommodate ADA compliant movement for both pedestrians and bicyclists.

The following improvements should be considered at locations where pedestrians and bicyclists are expected to cross higher volume roadways, such as Golden Valley Road.

All Intersections

- Median island pedestrian refuges or curb extensions
- Improved intersection and pedestrian realm lighting
- Crossing signage
- ADA-compliant pedestrian ramps

Signalized Intersections

- High visibility crosswalk markings and signs

- Traffic signal timing modifications to provide adequate crossing time for pedestrians
- Countdown timers that allow pedestrians to make informed decisions whether there is adequate time to safely cross the roadway.
- ADA-compliant signals

Non-signalized Intersections

- Rapid flashing beacons

There are several critical gaps in the sidewalk network in the station area. The sidewalk on the north side of Golden Valley Road should be reconstructed and new sidewalks constructed along Bassett Creek Drive and Legend Drive in Golden Valley. Sidewalk gap closures are also proposed along the west side of Xerxes Avenue between Plymouth Avenue and 26th Avenue North, along 26th Avenue North, and along Parkview Boulevard. For a map of envisioned pedestrian and bicycle circulation enhancements, see **Figure 3.9** and **Figure 3.10**.

Three Rivers Park District and the City of Golden Valley plan to construct the Bassett Creek Regional Trail along the south side of Golden Valley Road, which will facilitate walking and biking connections to the LRT station from areas west.

The cities of Golden Valley and Robbinsdale are also collaborating with Three Rivers Park District to pave an existing trail through Sochacki Park, Mary Hills Nature Area, and Rice Lake Nature Area that will facilitate walking and biking connections from the north. The station area plan envisions the extension of this trail from its current trailhead at the north end of Bonnie Lane south to Golden Valley Road and making a grade

Figure 3.8: Roadway Circulation Enhancements

This map shows recommended roadway enhancements in the station area to better support station area livability and LRT station access.

-  Enhanced Intersection Configuration
 - Remove or Reconfigure Right Turn Lanes
 - Improve Lighting
 - ADA Compliant Pedestrian Ramps
-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Railroad

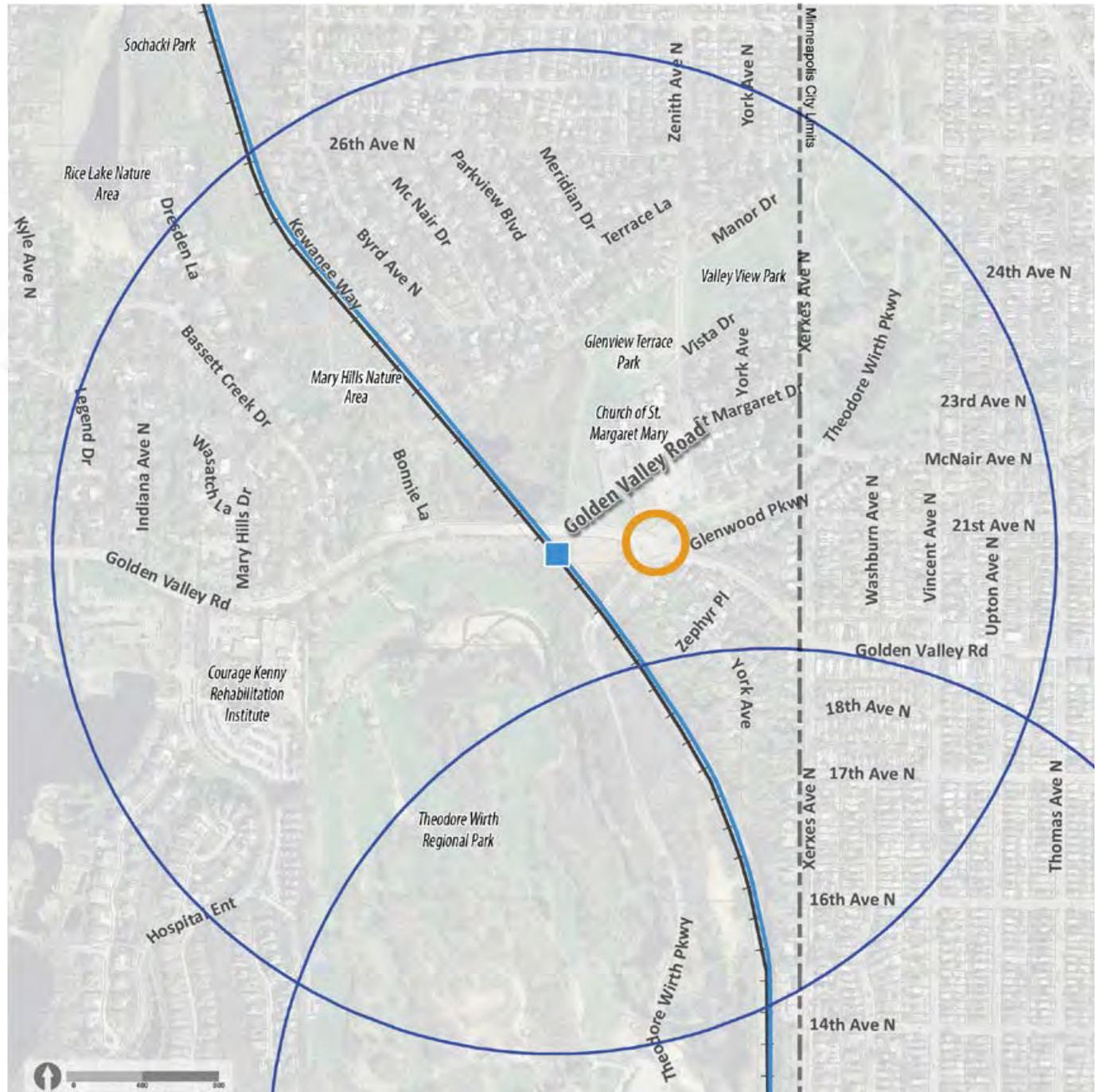


Figure 3.9: Pedestrian Circulation Enhancements

This map shows recommended pedestrian circulation enhancement to better support station area livability and LRT station access.

-  Safe Intersection Crossing
-  Primary Bus Connection
-  Passenger Drop-off
-  Trail Connection Under Golden Valley Road
-  Proposed Sidewalks
-  Existing Sidewalks
-  Proposed Paved Trail
-  Existing Paved Trail
-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Railroad

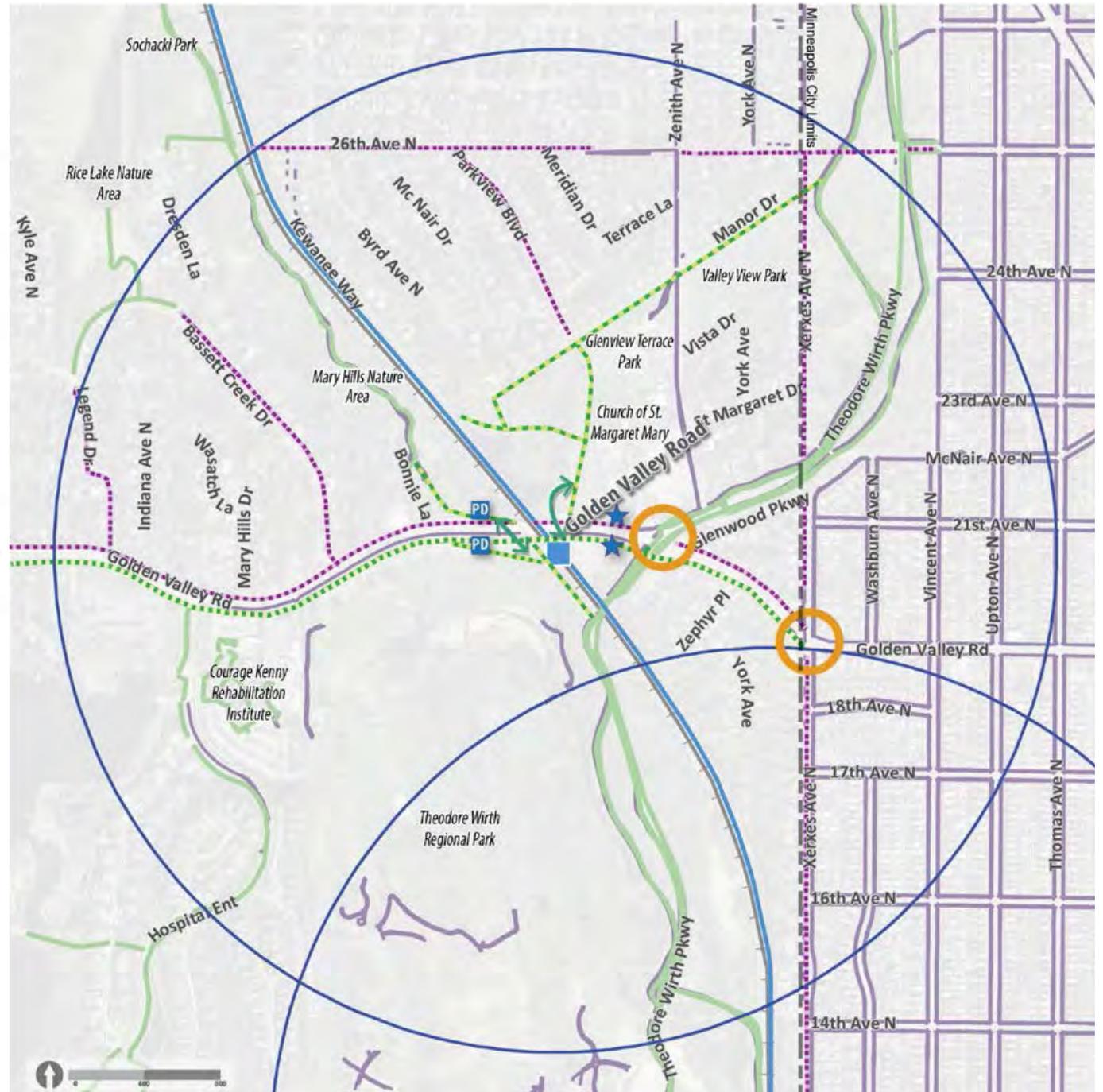
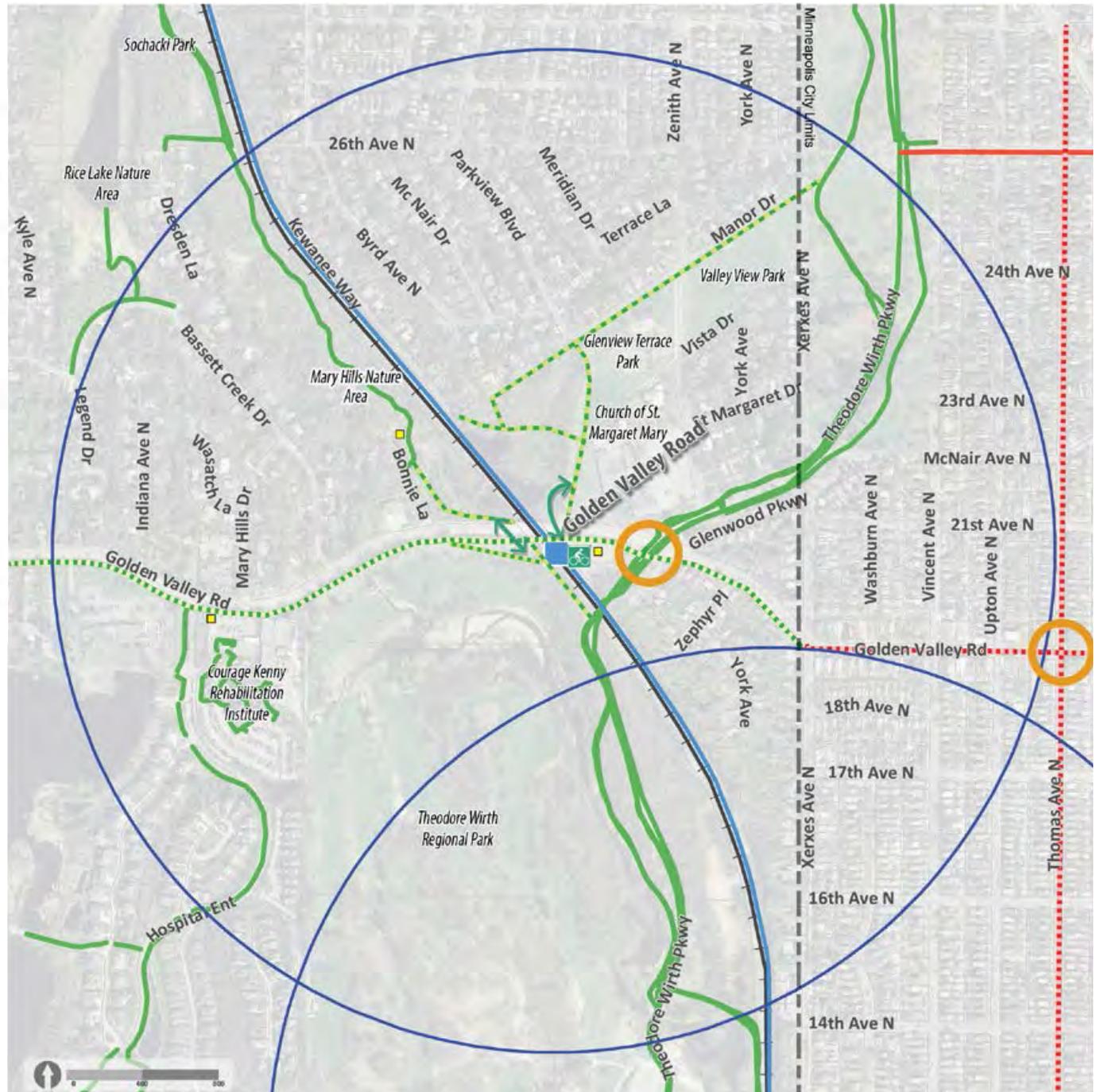


Figure 3.10: Bicycle Circulation Enhancements

This map shows recommended bicycle circulation enhancement to better support station area livability and LRT station access.

-  Trail Connection Under Golden Valley Road
-  Safe Intersection Crossing
-  Proposed Bike Parking
-  Proposed Nice Ride Station
-  Proposed Paved Trail
-  Existing Paved Trail
-  Proposed On-Street Bike Facilities
-  Existing On-Street Bike Facilities
-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Railroad



separated crossing under the Golden Valley Road Bridge into Theodore Wirth Regional Park. Once in Theodore Wirth Regional Park, the extended trail could connect to the existing regional trail network in the park. A spur trail should also be provided between the new trail and the Bassett Creek Regional Trail on the south side of Golden Valley Road.

Additional approaches to better support walking and biking to the station from points north, include a proposed multi-use trail along Manor Drive, and another trail across Glenview Terrace Park and along the west side of the Church of St. Margaret Mary property. A second trail is envisioned across Glenview Terrace Park that would make a connection to Kewanee Way. All proposed trails located east of the freight rail and LRT could be designed as a grade separated crossing under Golden Valley Road enabling a direct connection to the LRT platform. Any scenarios for new multi-use trails across these properties would need to have the full support and participation of the property owner.

Finally, in Minneapolis, new on-street bicycle lanes are proposed on Thomas Avenue and on Golden Valley Road, which would better facilitate bicycle connections to the station. A Nice Ride Station is proposed near the LRT platform, as well.

Transit

Route 14 will continue to serve the station and a short extension of Route 30 is envisioned allowing the route to terminate at the LRT station. Stops may be shifted slightly to facilitate a more direct transfer from LRT to bus. Prior to LRT service starting operations, Metro Transit will evaluate the bus routes and bus stop locations and make modifications as necessary to

best support convenient transfers between bus and LRT service.

The concurrent West Broadway Transit Study could result in recommendations for enhanced bus or streetcar connections to either the METRO Blue Line Extension Golden Valley Road station or Robbinsdale station.

Future Development

Development Character

The Golden Valley Road station is situated in a location where parkland extends for acres to the north and south, and single family neighborhoods have developed to the east and west. The neighborhoods close to the station are predominantly single family homes in quiet environments that are close to natural features. Maintaining the special character of the area is an important principle as the area evolves in the future.

Development opportunities are limited, and where they are present they will require the willing sale by, or participation of, existing property owners. Over the long run, however, new development near the station could offer a lot. It could provide more households the opportunity to live in a setting that is uniquely connected, and close to natural and recreational areas. It could also provide additional safety at the transit station itself through the informal surveillance it might offer. For this reason, over the long run there may be benefits to fostering some high quality housing development in areas near the station.

There are a few opportunities for development to the west of the station along Golden Valley Road. A City fire station property on the north side of the road may

become available, as the City is currently evaluating the feasibility of closing this station. Additionally, the Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute and Minneapolis Clinic of Neurology have large sites that could support facility growth, or other development along their Golden Valley Road frontage.

To the east of the station, across the Minneapolis border, new medium density housing would be supported along some parts of Golden Valley Road—providing households that could take advantage of the proximity to high quality transit service. Low density development guidance would remain between Xerxes Avenue and Vincent Avenue. The existing character of development on these blocks is proposed to be retained because it reflects the blocks' close proximity to the regional park.

Land Use Guidance—Golden Valley

Policy guidance for the development of areas around the Golden Valley Road station is offered in the City of Golden Valley's comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan currently shows all of the residential areas near the station as Low Density Residential. This is not proposed to change with adoption of the station area plan.

Consideration of a future development proposal would require a change to the comprehensive plan. Consideration would be given to how the development offered new living opportunities near the station, while demonstrating compatibility with the special character of the neighborhood. Proposals are likely to be medium to high density apartment or condominium developments. They are unlikely to include retail businesses, given the market analysis that indicates this is a poor location for retail because of low visibilities and low traffic volumes.

Housing

This station area location would be an excellent setting for households across the demographic and income spectrums—including active young couples and empty nesters, working class and affluent households. New multifamily housing, if built in the future, could serve community needs for rental housing options that have both rent-restricted affordable rents, and market rate rents at various price points. It could also offer a range of ownership and rental typologies that are not currently present in the neighborhood—such as townhomes, courtyard-oriented single family clusters, and others.

Development Opportunities

Development opportunity sites are properties that are judged to be likely candidates for redevelopment. Properties in the Golden Valley Road station area were evaluated to identify development opportunity sites. A broad set of criteria was used to determine these sites, including the following:

- Property value per square foot of land
- Public ownership
- Vacant property
- Opportunity to bundle properties for significant redevelopment projects

A property that is identified as a development opportunity is judged to be somewhat easier to develop, from a financial perspective, than other properties in the area—even if it is privately owned, or already developed. In situations where property is privately owned, the property owner would have to be a willing seller of his or her property before such a development

could take place. Development opportunity sites are indicated in **Figure 3.11**.

Land Use Guidance—Minneapolis

This plan supports the development vision by offering formal land use guidance for the Plymouth Avenue Station Area by proposing changes to the Future Land Use map in *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* (the comprehensive plan for the entire City of Minneapolis), providing a more detailed Future Land Use map as part of this small area plan—which has policy effect upon adoption. **Figure 3.12** depicts the Future Land Use map adopted in *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*.

Important land use policy goals are represented by features on the Future Land Use map in the City of Minneapolis's comprehensive plan. To provide policy support for the development envisioned for the area, two changes are proposed to the features in this map as depicted in **Figure 3.13 - Figure 3.14**.

1. The station location at Golden Valley Road is designated a "Transit Station.

A Transit Station designation on the Land Use Map establishes policy support for high-density development at transit stations in most cases. This is done to encourage transit use. However, this does not mean that high-density residential is appropriate on every parcel near a transit station. The comprehensive plan states that potential densities and/or redevelopment opportunities are generally highest within ¼ mile of the transit station, but are also dependent upon factors such as existing neighborhood

character, and the availability and cost of land.

2. A Community Corridor for Golden Valley Road is added west from Penn Avenue North to the City of Minneapolis boundary.

A Community Corridor designation on the Future Land Use Map indicates a corridor that carries moderate traffic volumes, and makes important connections to other locations. "The development of low- to medium-density housing" is generally supported along the corridor "to serve as a transition to surrounding low-density residential areas." This does not mean that every parcel on a Community Corridor has to be medium-density and existing low-density residential is allowed.

The land use plan directs the new housing and commercial activity to the east end of the station area at the Penn Avenue/Golden Valley Road intersection and blocks adjacent to that node on Golden Valley Road and Penn Avenue, rather than in the area west of Vincent Avenue going west to the City of Minneapolis boundary.

The addition of the Transit Station and Community Corridor land use features are important additions to help prioritize infrastructure decisions and to support strong pedestrian, bike, and transit connections rather than to encourage the redevelopment of the entire area to medium and high-density housing.

The policy excerpts on this page provide more detail about the policies that are supported at designated Transit Stations and Community Corridors.

Figure 3.15 is consistent with the Future Land Use map in the City's comprehensive plan, but it provides additional detail to it. Along the Golden Valley Road corridor, for example, it puts residential development in one of two density categories—low density or medium density.

Although the colors on the future land use map seem to imply great precision, that is not their intent. For example, a medium density residential development that incorporates a “low-density” property or two may be deemed consistent with the policy intent of this plan without plan amendment.

Development Intensity

Figure 3.16 contributes additional clarity concerning the desired density of future development. The map is parcel-specific, similar to the plan's Future Land Use map (although as described above, that should not be taken to imply complete policy precision). Darker shades of blue indicate policy support for medium or higher density development. Light blue indicates policy support for lower density development.

The map assigns property in the Golden Valley station area to one of two development districts. The two development districts represent different acceptable density levels. The Urban Scale development district suggests a four story upper limit on development and the Neighborhood Scale development district supports low to medium density development types that are more compatible with the character of the surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Density is frequently measured using parameters like floor area ratio, or dwelling units per square foot of property area. Those density measures are not very

Policy Excerpts from The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth

Policy 1.9: *Through attention to the mix and intensity of land uses and transit service, the City will support development along Community Corridors that enhances residential livability and pedestrian access.*

1.9.1 *Support the continued presence of existing small-scale retail sales and commercial services along Community Corridors.*

1.9.2 *Support new small-scale retail sales and services, commercial services, and mixed uses where Community Corridors intersect with Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.*

1.9.3 *Discourage uses that diminish the transit and pedestrian oriented character of Community Corridors, such as automobile services and drive-through facilities.*

1.9.4 *Discourage the conversion of existing residential uses to commercial uses outside of Neighborhood Commercial Nodes.*

1.9.5 *Encourage the development of low- to medium-density housing on Community Corridors to serve as a transition to surrounding low-density residential areas.*

1.9.6 *Promote more intensive residential development along Community Corridors near intersections with Neighborhood Commercial Nodes and other locations where it is compatible with existing character.*

Policy 1.13: *Support high density development near transit stations in ways that encourage transit use and contribute to interesting and vibrant places.*

1.13.1 *Encourage pedestrian-oriented services and retail uses as part of higher density development near transit stations.*

1.13.2 *Pursue opportunities to integrate existing and new development with transit stations through joint development.*

1.13.3 *Discourage uses that diminish the transit and pedestrian character of areas around transit stations, such as automobile services, surface parking lots, and drive-through facilities.*

1.13.4 *Encourage architectural design, building massing and site plans to create or improve public and semi-public spaces near the station.*

1.13.5 *Concentrate highest densities and mixed use development adjacent to the transit station and along connecting corridors served by bus.*

1.13.6 *Encourage investment and place making around transit stations through infrastructure changes and the planning and installation of streetscape, public art, and other public amenities.*

Figure 3.11: City of Golden Valley Future Land Use - Transition Areas

This map highlights future land use transitions that would be supported by the City of Golden Valley if property owners decide to redevelop their sites in the future.

-  Potential Residential Redevelopment Areas
-  Low Density Residential
-  Open Space
-  Institutional
-  Public Facilities
-  Semi-Public Facilities
-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Railroad



Figure 3.12: City of Minneapolis Existing Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use

This map depicts the Future Land Use map in the adopted Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth.

Note: The City of Minneapolis defines a Commercial Corridor as historically prominent destinations consisting of a mix of uses, with commercial uses dominating.

The City of Minneapolis defines a Community Corridor as primarily residential with intermittent commercial uses clustered at intersection nodes.

-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Neighborhood Commercial Node
-  Commercial Corridor
-  Community Corridor
-  Mixed Use
-  Parks and Open Space
-  Urban Neighborhood

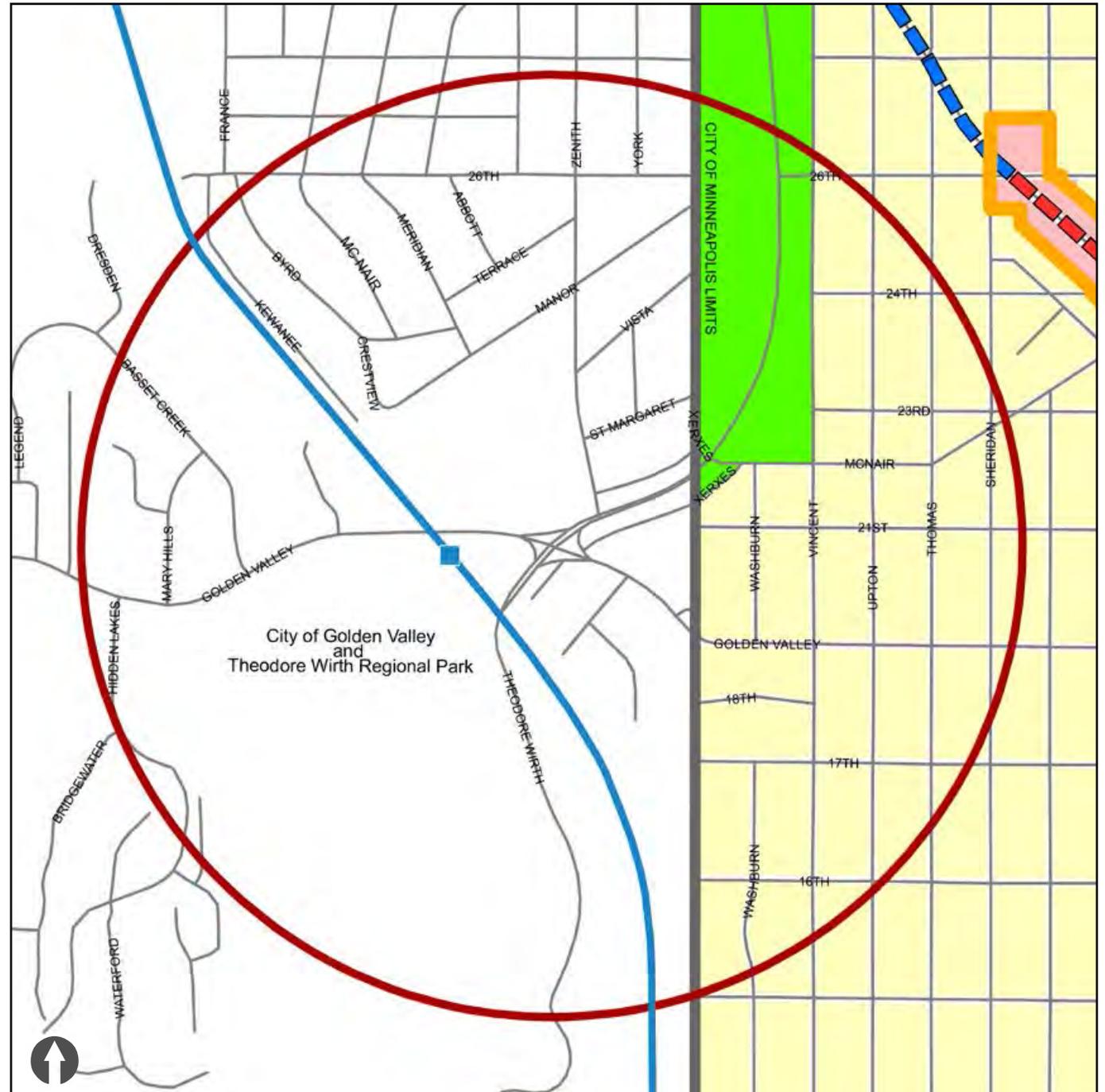


Figure 3.13: City of Minneapolis Future Land Use Modifications

This map highlights proposed modifications to the City of Minneapolis' future land use.

-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  Transit Station (shown in Golden Valley to provide context for Minneapolis land use modifications only)
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Community Corridor

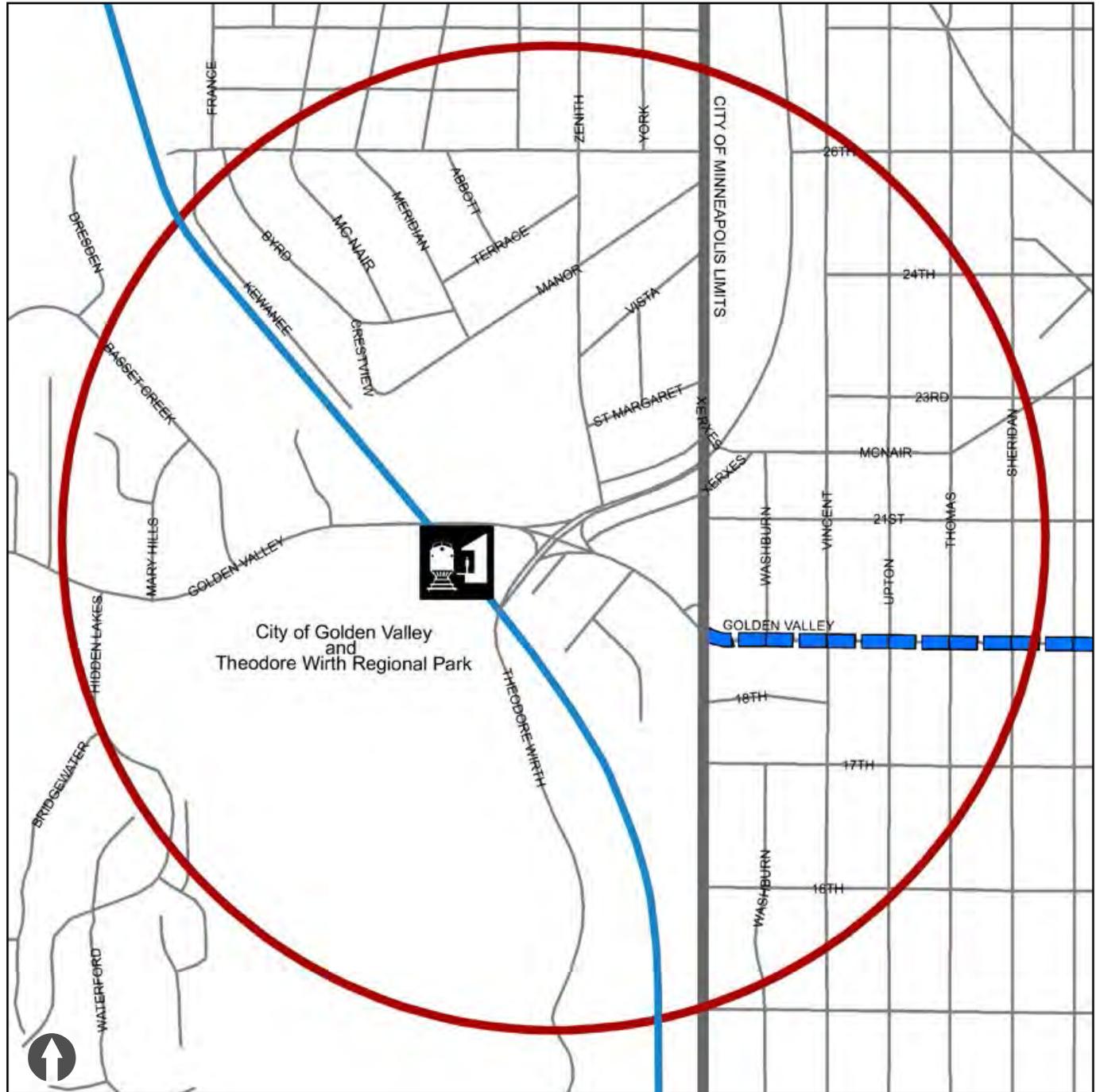


Figure 3.14: City of Minneapolis Future Land Use

This map depicts proposed modifications to the City of Minneapolis' future land use in context with the City's adopted future land use map.

-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  Transit Station (shown in Golden Valley to provide context for Minneapolis land use modifications only)
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Neighborhood Commercial Node
-  Commercial Corridor
-  Community Corridor
-  Mixed Use
-  Parks and Open Space
-  Urban Neighborhood

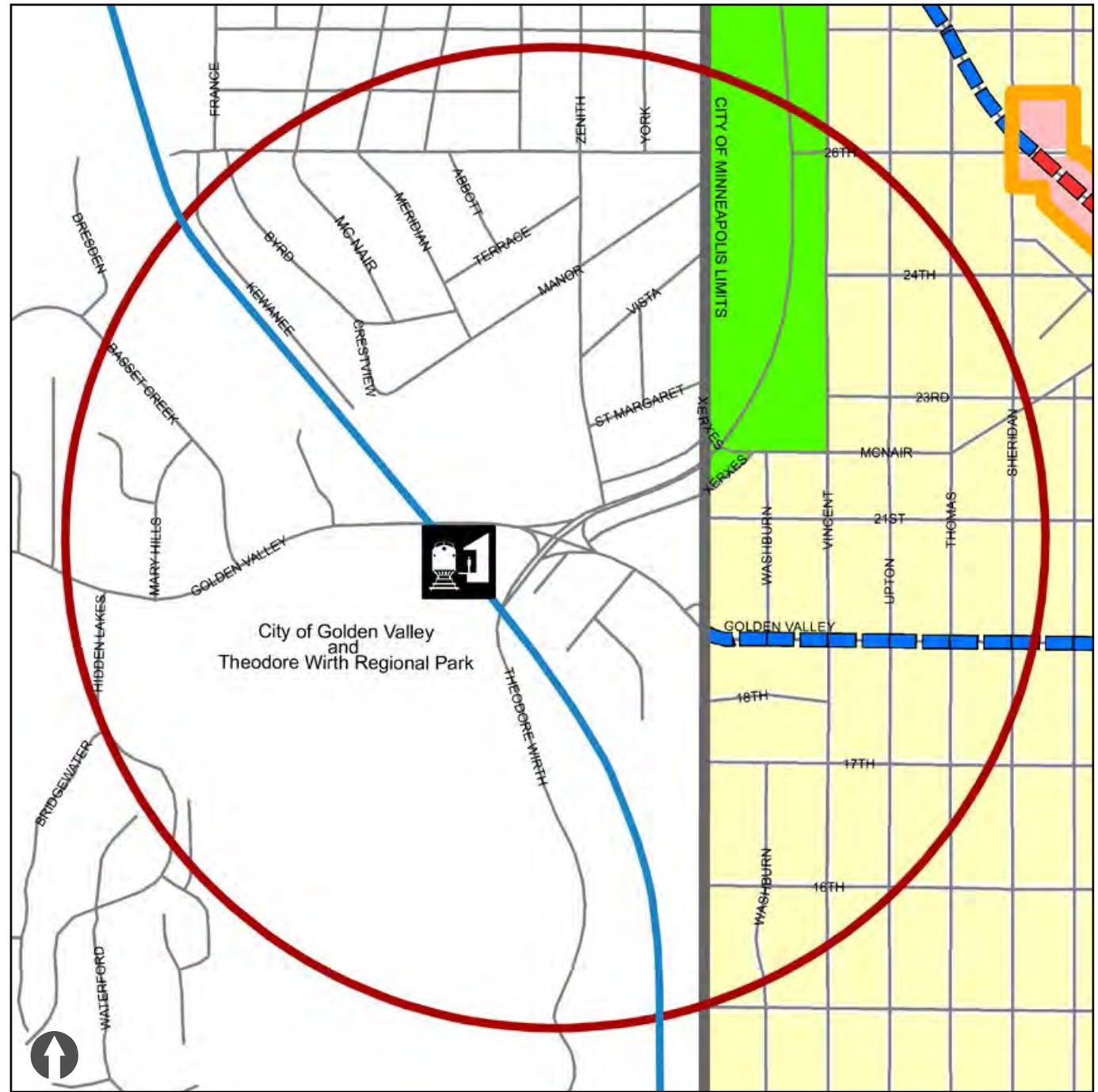


Figure 3.15: City of Minneapolis Future Land Use (Parcel Basis)

This map depicts recommended City of Minneapolis future land use on a parcel-specific basis.

-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Low Density Residential
-  Medium Density Residential
-  Parks and Open Space

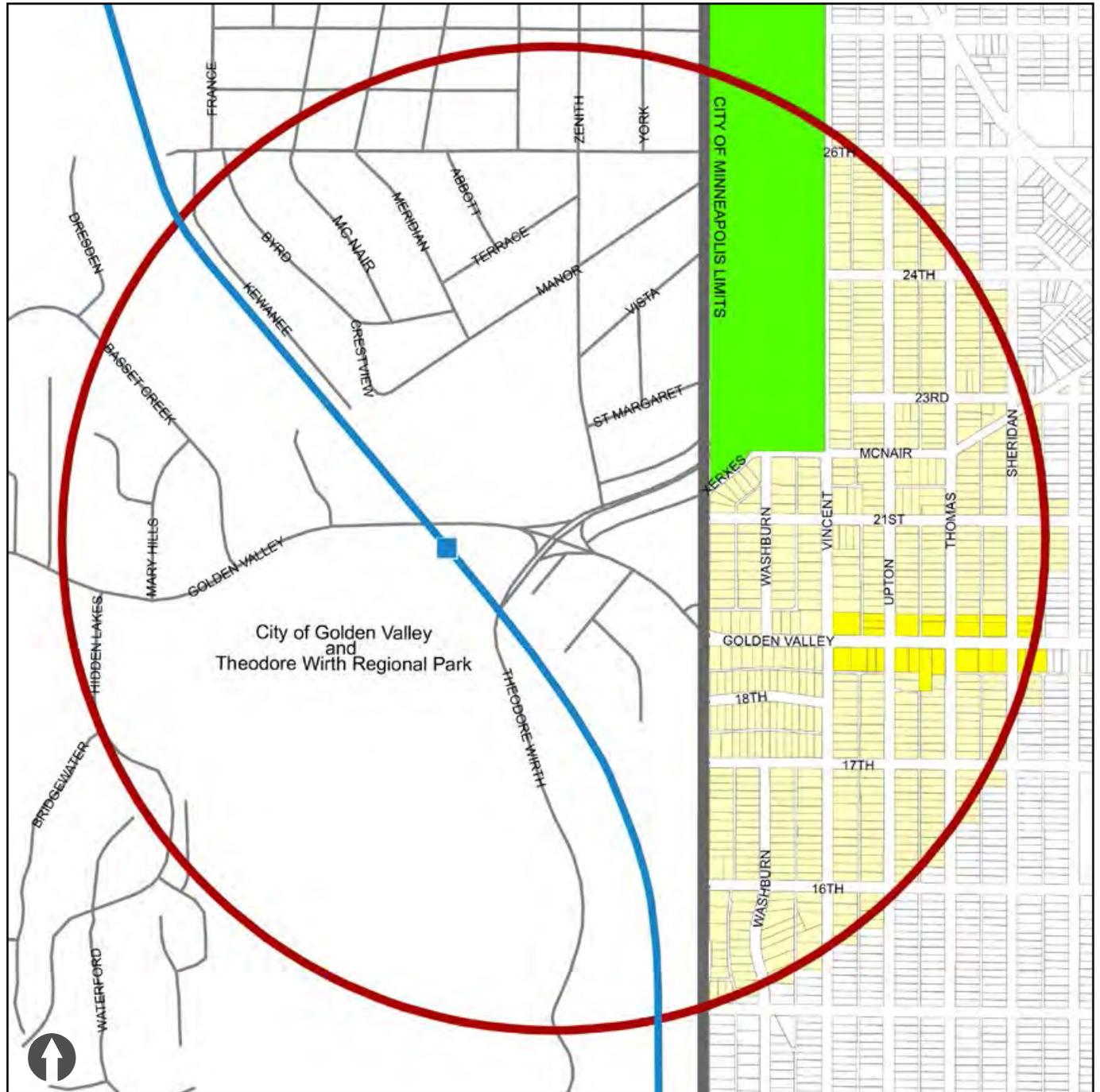
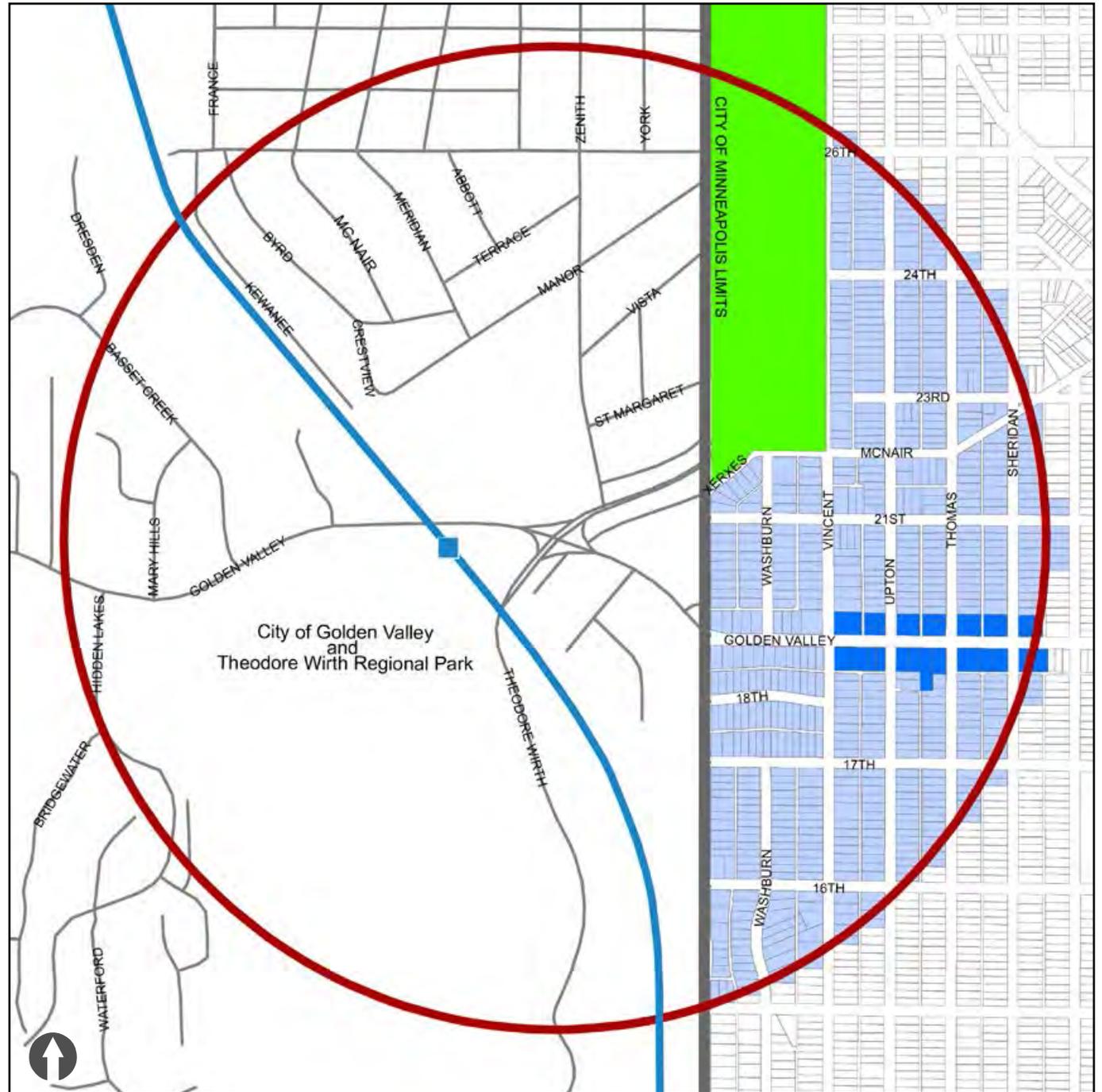


Figure 3.16: City of Minneapolis Development Intensity

This map provide guidance concerning desired density of future City of Minneapolis development.

-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Neighborhood Scale
Single family homes, townhomes, and two to three story small apartment/condominium buildings.
-  Urban Scale
Townhomes, and apartment/condominium buildings up to four stories.
-  Parks and Open Space



intuitive, in part because they don't lend themselves to being depicted visually. The density scale employed in this plan attempts to make the proposed density levels more intuitive by correlating each district with a mix of compatible development types that are common in Minneapolis and will be easily recognized by most Minneapolis citizens. Where commercial development occurs, it should be of a similar scale to the listed residential building types, or it may be situated on the ground level of an otherwise residential development.

Note that, along Golden Valley Road, the couple of blocks nearest the station area are proposed to remain low density, while medium density redevelopment would be supported further east along Golden Valley Road.

Housing

This station area location would be an excellent setting for households across the demographic and income spectrums—including active young couples and empty nesters, working class and affluent households. New multifamily housing, when and if it is built, could serve community needs for rental housing options that have both rent-restricted affordable rents, and market rate rents at various price points. It could also offer a range of ownership and rental typologies that are not currently present in the neighborhood—such as townhomes, courtyard-oriented single family clusters, and others.

Public Realm Improvements

Public realm improvements are critical components of the station area as they create a safe and comfortable environment that support walking and biking to the

station. These improvements also provide economic, environmental and social benefits that are supportive of overall neighborhood livability. **Figure 3.17** shows recommended public realm improvements; **Figure 3.18** shows representative public realm improvement images.

Streetscaping

Enhancing the streetscape environment in the Golden Valley Road station area will facilitate improved mobility to and from the station platform from nearby amenities, destinations, homes and businesses, and improve the character of the public realm. Streetscape enhancements may include improvements to pedestrian facilities, greening the streets, street and pedestrian lighting, street furnishings, signage, and wayfinding elements. Specific streetscape improvements recommended near the Golden Valley Road Station area include:

Golden Valley Road

Golden Valley Road should include streetscape enhancements that create a pedestrian-friendly corridor. **Figure 3.19** depicts the desired character and streetscape features for Golden Valley Road west of Xerxes Avenue, and reflects recommendations from the *Basset Creek Regional Trail Feasibility Study*. Recommended improvements include:

- Provide minimum 5-foot sidewalks on the north side of the street, separated from the curb by a turf boulevard
- A 10-foot multi-use trail along the south side of the roadway separated from the curb by a turf boulevard

- Street trees
- Pedestrian lighting
- Site furnishings (benches, trash receptacles, bicycle racks) at key intersections
- Signage and wayfinding
- Relocating overhead utilities underground

Xerxes Avenue

Xerxes Avenue is an important connector to the Golden Valley Road Station for residents located to the north and south of the station. Streetscape improvements to Xerxes should include the following:

- Minimum 5-foot wide sidewalk detached from the curb on the west side of the street
- Minimum 5-foot wide turf boulevard
- Boulevard street trees where they don't currently exist
- Pedestrian lighting
- Site furnishings (benches, trash receptacles) at the intersections of Xerxes Avenue with Theodore Wirth Parkway and Golden Valley Road.
- Signage and wayfinding

Zenith Avenue

Zenith Avenue is an important connector to the Golden Valley Road Station for residents located to the north of the station. Streetscape improvements to Zenith Avenue should include the following:

- Street tree infill within the turf boulevard at locations where trees currently don't exist

Figure 3.17: Public Realm Improvements

This map depicts public realm improvements that provide economic, environmental and social benefits that are supportive of station area livability.

-  Enhanced Streetscape
-  Trail Lighting / Roadway Lighting
-  Park
-  Wayfinding
-  Public Art
-  Vertical Circulation
-  Redevelopment Opportunity Site
-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Railroad
-  Proposed Sidewalks
-  Existing Sidewalks
-  Proposed Paved Trail
-  Existing Paved Trail
-  Proposed On-Street Bike Facility
-  Existing On-Street Bike Facility

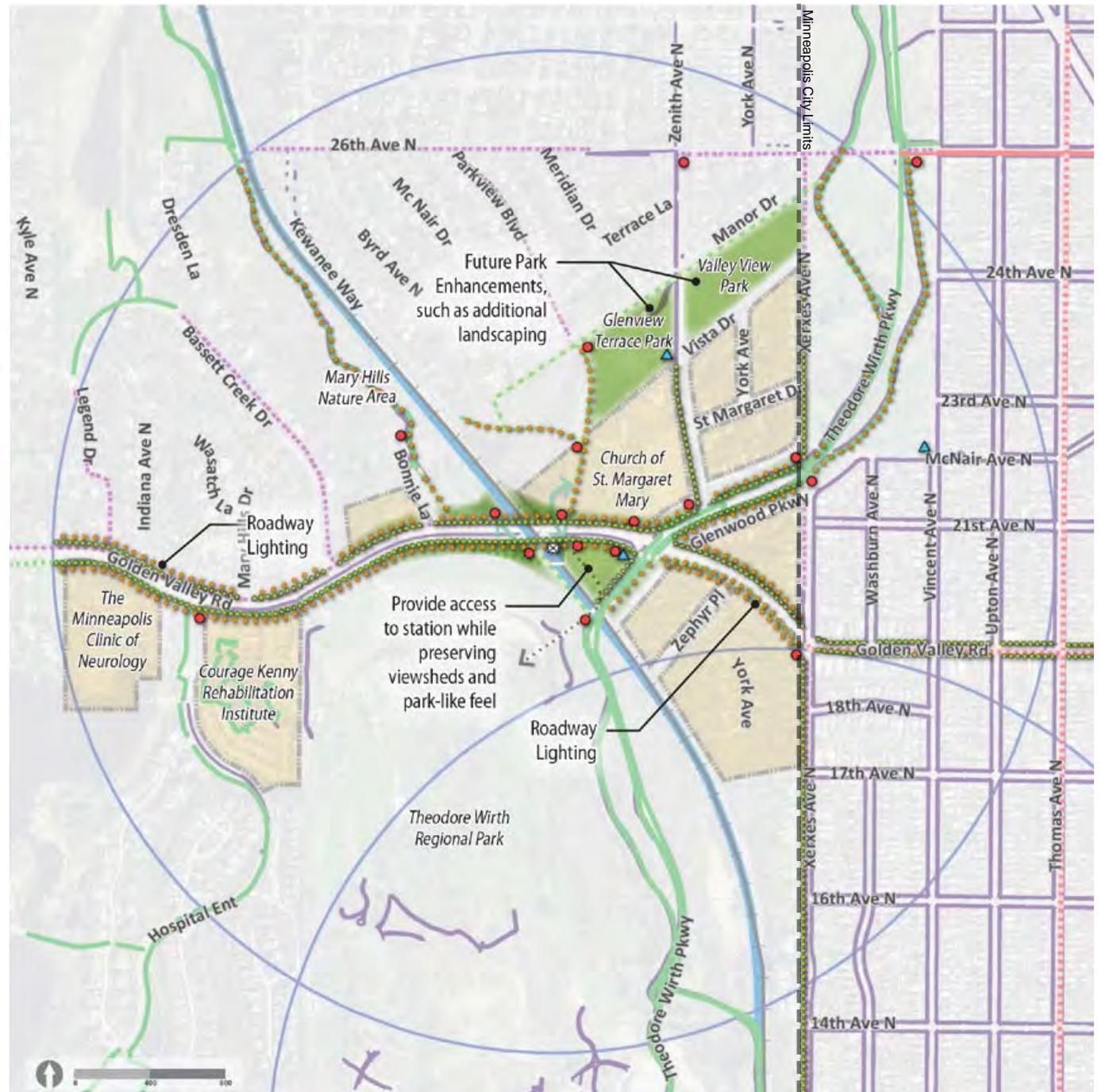


Figure 3.18: Representative Public Realm and Streetscape Improvements

●●● Enhanced Streetscape



Includes sidewalks, lighting, seating, and planting

●●●● Trail Lighting



■ Park



Enhanced programming; maintain park-like feel near station

● Wayfinding



▲ Public Art



■ Bicycle Parking



Short-term and long-term parking

☒ Vertical Circulation



Elevator, ramp, and stairs

-
- Pedestrian lighting
 - Site furnishings (benches, trash receptacles)
 - Signage and wayfinding

Wayfinding

Wayfinding and signage is an important urban design element that orients and directs people to and from their destinations, and enhances the sense of character and identity of a place, neighborhood or community. Wayfinding is also an important element to delivering transit users to the station in a safe and convenient manner. Improved wayfinding can enhance mobility to and from the Golden Valley Road Station and increase transit ridership in the area. Since the Golden Valley Road station platform will be located adjacent the depressed railroad corridor near the Golden Valley Road bridge, an attractive and comprehensive signage and wayfinding system should be incorporated into streetscape improvements. These should be located along Golden Valley Road, particularly at the bridge, along Theodore Wirth Parkway at key intersections, along trails, and within parks and open spaces as identified on **Figure 3.17**.

Vertical Circulation

The station platform will be located adjacent the bridge where Golden Valley Road crosses the rail line, requiring vertical circulation at the station platform to move transit users safely and conveniently between Golden Valley Road and the station platform.

The triangular regional parkland between Golden Valley Road, Theodore Wirth Parkway and the proposed LRT will need to transition from street elevation down to the station platform. This area should be designed

to reinforce community character and create a welcoming community open space that incorporates site furnishings, lighting, wayfinding, public art, short and long-term bicycle parking options, and a Nice Ride station.

Public Art Opportunities

Public art is an important placemaking element within the public realm. It can communicate the history or character of a place, and draw connections to the larger community context. The integration of public art opportunities should be considered in conjunction with streetscape enhancements in the station area. Public art should be considered near the intersection of Golden Valley Road and Theodore Wirth Parkway and should be sensitive to the residential neighborhood and park settings. Other opportunities for public art in the area are at Glenwood Terrace Park and along Theodore Wirth Parkway in the vicinity of the McNair Avenue and Vincent Avenue intersection.

Open Space and Parks

Enhancements to existing parkland, such as Valley View Park and Glenview Terrace Park, can provide additional amenities for neighborhood residents as well as transit users of the Golden Valley Road Station.

Trail Lighting

Enhanced trail lighting in Mary Hills Nature Area and Glenview Terrace Park will improve public safety and mobility between nearby destinations and the Golden Valley Road Station.

Heritage Preservation

Theodore Wirth Regional Park and the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway comprise a large portion of the station area. The design of the LRT platform and track should be done in a manner to minimize impacts to these valuable community resources.

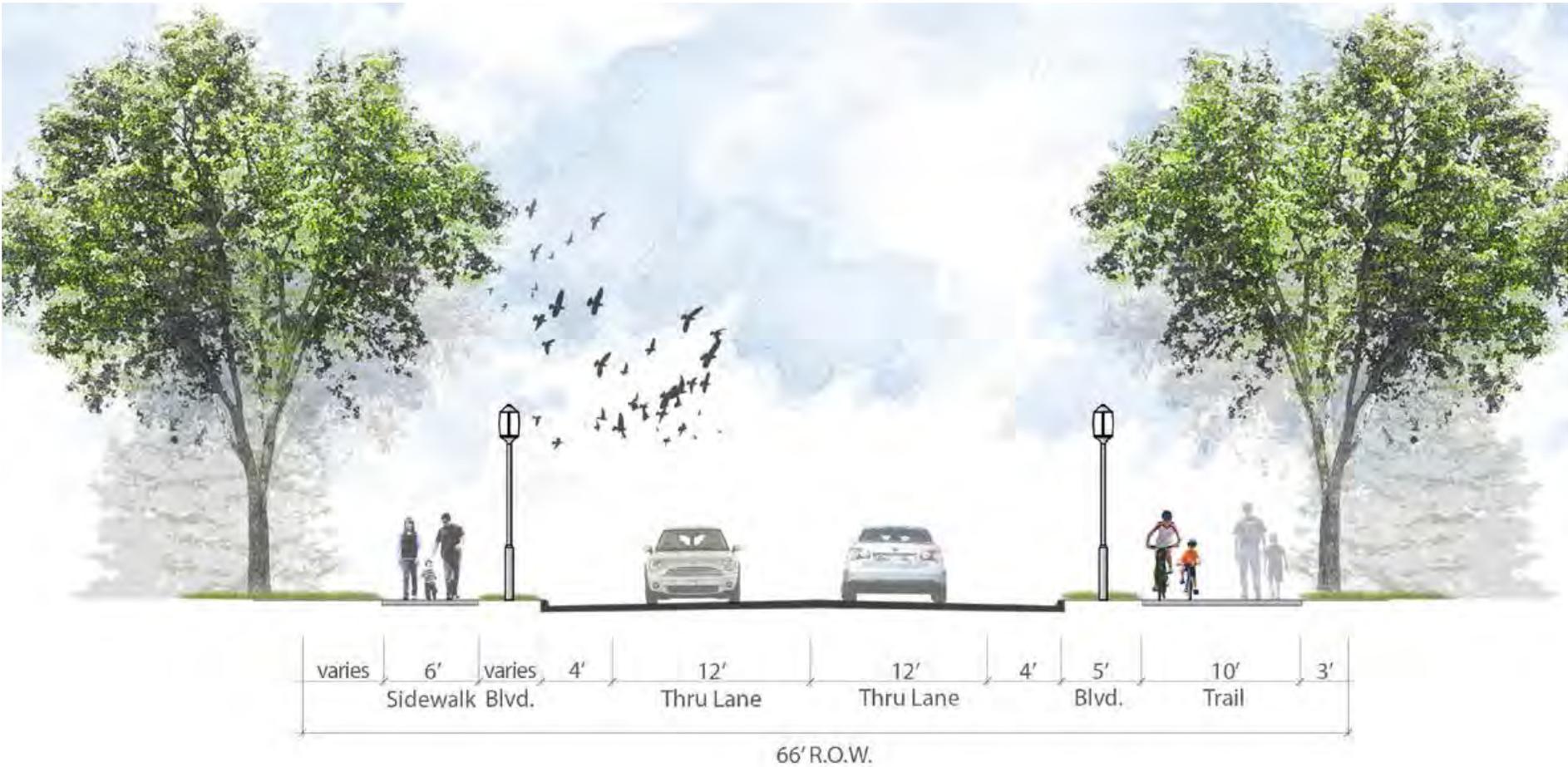
The histories of Golden Valley and Minneapolis are manifested in the general character of the neighborhoods in the station area, which includes the housing styles and street and block configurations. There are apartment buildings on Golden Valley Road east of Xerxes Avenue that have been nominated as a historic district. This historic district nomination is currently under review by the City of Minneapolis. In the near term, housing preservation is proposed to retain community character and to make wise use of resources embedded in the existing housing stock.

Even though many of the historic resources in Minneapolis are not officially designated, any future development in close proximity to them should be done in a manner that either avoids or sensitively incorporates these existing historic resources.

Environment and Stormwater Management

Theodore Wirth Regional Park and Mary Hills Nature Area comprise a large portion of the station area. The design of the LRT platform and track should be done in a manner to minimize impacts to the rich environmental resources found in these areas. Installation of vegetative plantings adjacent to the LRT tracks between stations should be considered to buffer adjacent parkland and residential areas from the LRT line. Yet at the station platforms, clear sight lines should be provided to enhance user safety.

Figure 3.19: Golden Valley Road Street Section (West of Xerxes Avenue)



Implementing the LRT system, improving non-motorized access to the LRT stations, installing new street trees, and incorporating of transit-oriented development principles are all consistent with the City of Minneapolis' sustainable development goals.

Should any brownfield sites exist within the station area, the City in which it is located should work with the property owners to facilitate environmental cleanup and site redevelopment. Any building demolition associated with redevelopment should be done in a manner that allows for salvaging and recycling of building materials to the extent possible.

New development should manage stormwater on site, using stormwater management techniques such as low impact development and green infrastructure. These stormwater management practices attempt to mimic natural hydrologic processes to promote stormwater infiltration and reduce the quantity of runoff entering the storm sewer system, while also meeting water quality, rate control, and volume control requirements.

Maintenance of Public Realm Improvements Minneapolis

Many of the streetscape elements shown in the document will require further discussions between the City of Minneapolis, Hennepin, County, and adjacent property owners to identify operations and maintenance funding. Special Service Districts have been successfully implemented throughout the city in commercial areas, however current state statutes prevent special service districts in residential areas. Current policy states that street lighting on pedestrian priority corridors will be funded as part of reconstruction project budget. Banners, street

benches, colored pavement, pavers, plantings, and trash receptacles may be funded through special service districts or by encroachment permit. Adjacent property owners in residential areas or in commercial areas without special service districts may work with the city to secure encroachment permits or may enter into agreements with the city to operate and maintain a streetscape element. Stormwater elements will also require discussions with the city so that property maintenance is performed.

Low impact development and green infrastructure often requires higher maintenance commitments, which requires additional resources and acceptance from the maintaining agency.

Golden Valley

Many of the streetscape elements shown in the document will require further discussions between the City of Golden Valley, Hennepin, County, and adjacent property owners to identify operations and maintenance funding. Stormwater elements will also require discussions with the city so that property maintenance is performed. Low impact development and green infrastructure often requires higher maintenance commitments, which requires additional resources and acceptance from the maintaining agency

Community Health Benefits

The station area plan recommends improvements to sidewalks and bikeways that could improve safety for people walking and biking to, though, and around the station area. Additionally, this station area provides access to physical activity opportunities including an extensive network of biking and walking trails including the Grand Rounds Scenic Byway, a bike route

that circles Minneapolis. **Table 3.2** summarizes healthy community design features that are incorporated into the station area plan.

Table 3.2: Healthy Community Design Features

Healthy Community Design Feature	How Station Area Planning Is Addressing Healthy Community Design
Socially equitable and accessible community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The METRO Blue Line Extension will bring light rail transit (LRT) to underserved communities. • Transit helps improve overall health in communities by improving physical activity levels, job access, housing and transportation costs, traffic safety, education access and access to healthy food.
Housing for different incomes and different stages of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development concepts show a variety of new housing types that could be either ownership or rental opportunities and show the preservation of a majority of existing housing.
Easy connections to the METRO Blue Line Extension and the regional transit system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gaps in sidewalk network are recommended to be filled in. • New bicycle facilities are recommended. • Metro Transit will be investigating potential bus service improvements.
Mixed land uses where homes, shops, schools and work sites are located close together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Station area plans show a variety of land uses as appropriate to the station area contexts.
Jobs and education are accessible from/within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Van White Boulevard station area and Plymouth Avenue/Penn Avenue commercial node show new job/education land uses. • Station area plans maintain existing sources of jobs. • The METRO Blue Line Extension will improve access to jobs and education destinations.
Walking and biking are safe and comfortable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe crossings of Olson Memorial Highway are recommended. • Various options are recommended to safely reach the grade-separated Plymouth Avenue and Golden Valley Road stations. • Sidewalks are recommended to be buffered from the street by a planted boulevard. • New bicycle facilities are recommended. • Enhanced lighting is recommended. • Improved wayfinding signage is recommended to help direct people to the stations.
Public places for social interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development concepts provide community gathering spaces near the stations.
Parks and green spaces are easy to get to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New sidewalk and bicycle connections to parks are recommended.
Outlets for fresh, healthy food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mixed-use commercial nodes at the Van White Boulevard Station and at the intersection of Plymouth Avenue and Penn Avenue could accommodate small grocery service or a small farmers market. • Existing community gardens are maintained.

Implementation Framework

Adoption and Modification of Policy Guidance

City of Golden Valley

Implementing the development vision for the Golden Valley Road station area will not require modifications to City of Golden Valley policy and regulatory documents. Yet, it is recommended that this plan be adopted by the City of Golden Valley as official City guidance for the Golden Valley Road station area.

City of Minneapolis

Implementing the development vision for the Golden Valley Road station area requires modifications to City of Minneapolis policy and regulatory documents.

- **METRO Blue Line Extension (Bottineau LRT) Phase 1: Station Area Planning.** This plan should be adopted by the City of Minneapolis as official City guidance for the four station areas. The plan should be referenced in the City's comprehensive plan in the list of adopted plans,

and its area of impact denoted in the map that illustrates adopted plans.

- **The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth.** A modification to the City of Minneapolis comprehensive plan, and specifically to its Future Land Use map, should be adopted, so as to make it consistent with the land use policy guidance in this plan. Two modifications to land use features are required. A Transit Station feature should

be added to the map at the Golden Valley Road station and a Community Corridor designation should be added on Golden Valley Road between Penn Avenue on the east and the city limits on the west.

- **Rezoning of Property.** A rezoning study should follow adoption of this plan. Its purpose would be to propose changes in zoning that are consistent with the policy intent of this plan, as described in the narrative, and as illustrated in this plan's Future Land Use and Development Intensity maps.

- **Minneapolis Health Department Participation.** Because the Health Impact Assessment (HIA) completed in 2013 found that the LRT was likely to have a positive influence on health, and that the potential land use changes and investments that come with the LRT project present a valuable opportunity to address challenges in the corridor, it is recommended that the Minneapolis Health Department participate and provide input on implementation of these station area plans to ensure the integration of the HIA's findings. These include physical activity, housing + transportation costs, employment, education access, traffic safety, and healthy food access – all public health policy elements that would emphasize and promote health and health equity in the communities of North Minneapolis.

Development Vision Implementation

City of Golden Valley

Development is not recommended in the Golden Valley station area. Yet, should the City receive a development proposal in the future, it would require an amendment to the comprehensive plan. For any future development proposal received, consideration would be given to how the development offered new living opportunities near the station, while demonstrating compatibility with the special character of the neighborhood.

City of Minneapolis

Infill housing. There is concern about the vacant properties that linger in the neighborhood. Attracting new single family housing to these properties is important for stabilizing the blocks they are on, and stemming further disinvestment.

Infill housing development is a traditional focus of the City of Minneapolis. But the infusion of federal funds that supported this work in the wake of the foreclosure crisis are being reduced. Because of this, it is timely to reexamine budget allocations, and consider alternative options for strengthening these activities.

The development of new transit service at Golden Valley Road should strengthen neighborhood property values, and reduce the subsidy required to attract infill development.

Physical Environment Improvements

Physical environment improvements have been broken into two phases.

- **Day of Opening Improvements.** These are improvements recommended to be constructed and functional on the first day that the LRT is operating. Day of opening improvements support safe and convenient access to the station platform for station area residents and visitors.
- **Future Improvements.** These are desired station area improvements that support enhanced livability within the station area and enhanced access, but do not significantly impact access to the station platform.

Day of Opening Improvements

Recommended day of opening improvements are listed in **Table 3.3** and depicted on **Figure 3.20 - Figure 3.23**. Agencies responsible for implementation of these improvements and the timing of implementation will be discussed and resolved as part of the preliminary engineering phase of the project.

Future Improvements

Table 3.4 suggest potential partners who may individually or jointly take on the responsibility for implementation of the future improvement. The list of potential partners does not imply a commitment by the listed agencies to implement the future improvements.

Implementation of the recommended policy, development and physical environment improvements, while not comprehensive, will support transit ridership through the provision of safe and convenient access

to the transit stations. These improvements will also provide economic, social, and environmental benefits to the station area and broader community.

Table 3.3: Day of Opening Improvements

Improvements	Comments	Improvements	Comments
A Roadway and wayfinding signage	Legible to people who speak multiple languages and located directly adjacent to platform	L Additional lighting for safety around the station platform/under the bridge	Note: not depicted on Figure 3.20 – Figure 3.23
B Wayfinding signage at key decision points	<p>Legible to people who speak multiple languages. Key decision points include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Golden Valley Road and Theodore Wirth Parkway intersection b. Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute c. Theodore Wirth Parkway and Zenith Avenue intersection d. Theodore Wirth Parkway and Xerxes Avenue intersection e. Golden Valley Road and Xerxes Avenue intersection f. Mary Hills Nature Area trailhead g. Along trail that traverses Glenview Terrace Park and Saint Margaret Mary Church 	M Reconfiguration of the Golden Valley Road and Theodore Wirth Parkway intersection that eliminates free right turn movements to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists	
C Vertical circulation between platform and street level	<p>Assumes enclosed structure that includes good user visibility and ADA compliant access</p> <p>Provide safe and comfortable access, including ADA compliant pathways for pedestrians and bicyclists, seating, lighting, and incorporation of short- and long-term bicycle parking</p>	N Increased bus service frequency, bus route modifications, and bus stop improvements	Note: not depicted on Figure 3.20 – Figure 3.23
D Public art at the station	Note: not depicted on Figure 3.20 – Figure 3.23	O Development of a station area parking strategy that minimizes parking impact on station area properties	Note: not depicted on Figure 3.20 – Figure 3.23
E Bicycle parking near platform		P Trail linkages under Golden Valley Road bridge	
F Nice Ride station near platform		Q Provide trail connection between Bassett Creek Regional Trail and Theodore Wirth trail west of BNSF Railway	
G Bus drop-off area	May require curb line modifications		
H Passenger drop-off area	May require parking restrictions		
I Bassett Creek Regional Trail and improved sidewalk along Golden Valley Road			
J Lit trail connection through Glenview Terrace Park and Saint Margaret Mary Church			
K Pedestrian-scaled street lighting along Golden Valley Road			

Figure 3.20: Day of Opening Roadway Circulation Improvements

This map identifies roadway improvements that are recommended to be in place by the first day of LRT operations. Map elements not coded with a letter are intended to be future improvements.

- X Day of Opening Improvements
(see Table 2.1)
- Enhanced Intersection Configuration
 - Remove or Reconfigure Right Turn Lanes
 - Improve Lighting
 - ADA Compliant Pedestrian Ramps
- Planned LRT Station
- Bottineau LRT Alignment
- LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
- Railroad

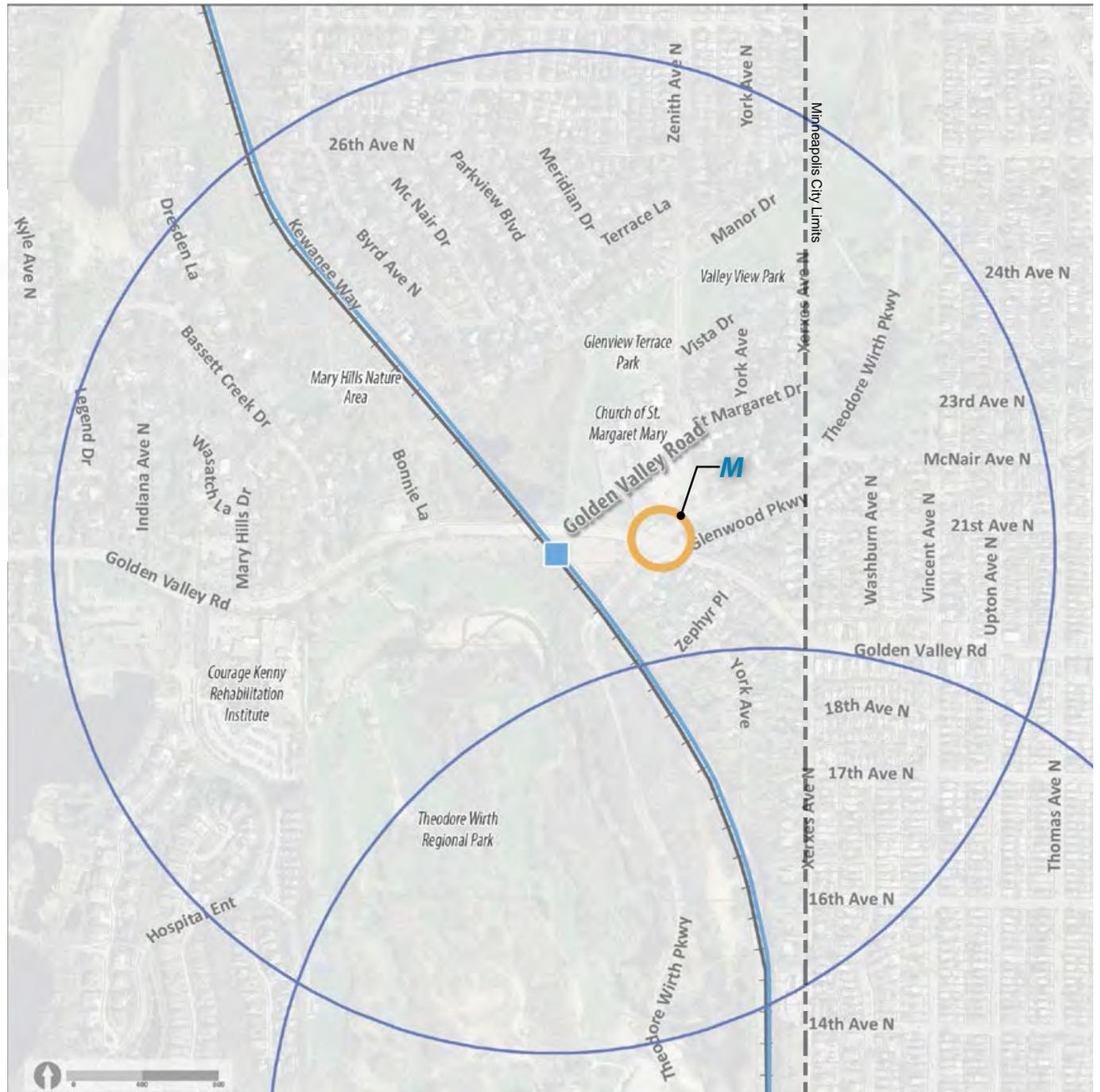


Figure 3.21: Day of Opening Pedestrian Circulation Improvements

This map identifies pedestrian circulation improvements that are recommended to be in place by the first day of LRT operations. Map elements not coded with a letter are intended to be future improvements.

- X** Day of Opening Improvements (see Table 2.1)
-  Safe Intersection Crossing
-  Primary Bus Connection
-  Passenger Drop-off
-  Trail Connection Under Golden Valley Road
-  Proposed Sidewalks
-  Existing Sidewalks
-  Proposed Paved Trail
-  Existing Paved Trail
-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Railroad

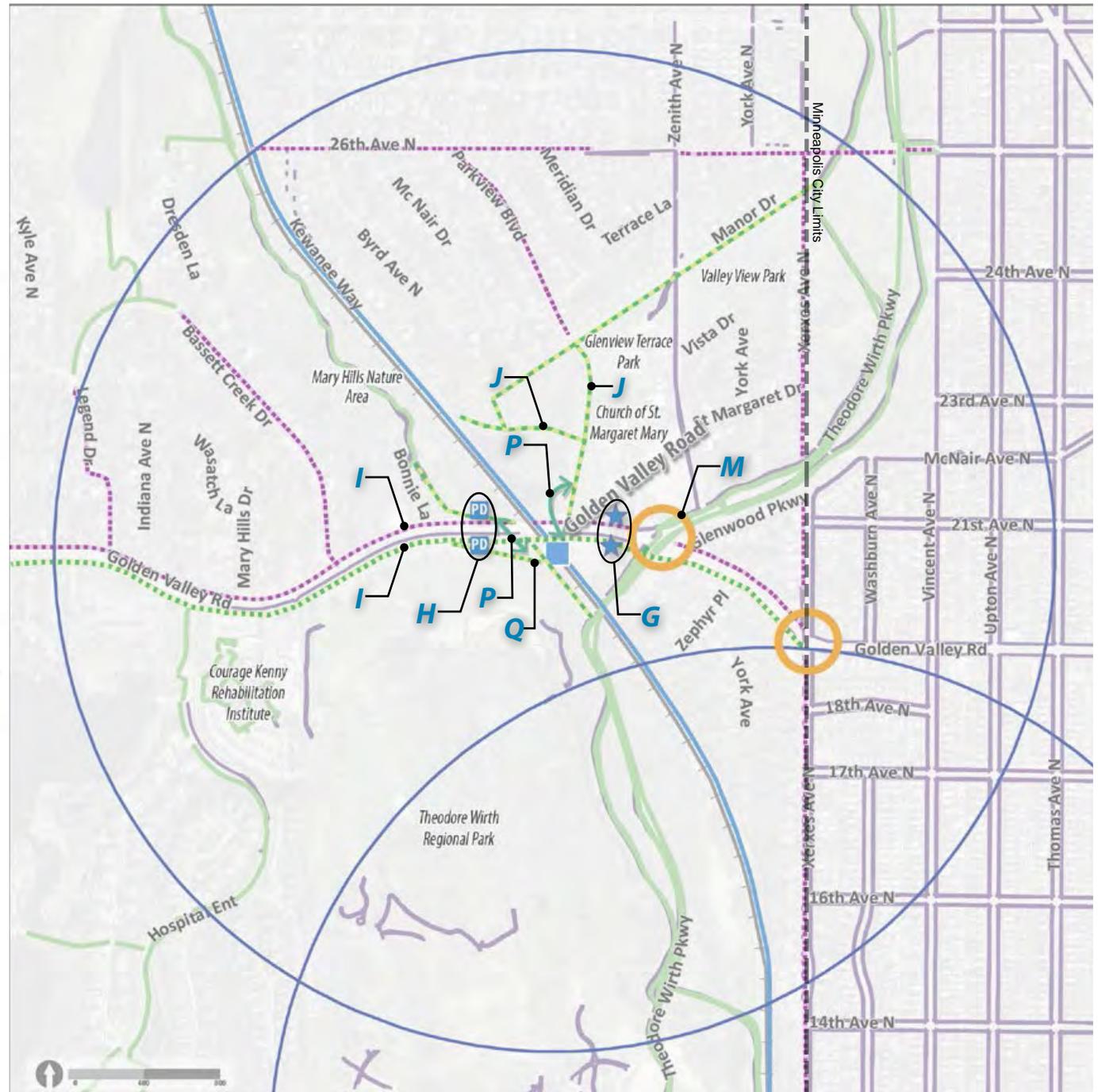


Figure 3.22: Day of Opening Bicycle Circulation Improvements

This map identifies bicycle circulation improvements that are recommended to be in place by the first day of LRT operations. Map elements not coded with a letter are intended to be future improvements.

- X** Day of Opening Improvements (see Table 2.1)
-  Trail Connection Under Golden Valley Road
-  Safe Intersection Crossing
-  Proposed Bike Parking
-  Proposed Nice Ride Station
-  Proposed Paved Trail
-  Existing Paved Trail
-  Proposed On-Street Bike Facilities
-  Existing On-Street Bike Facilities
-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Railroad

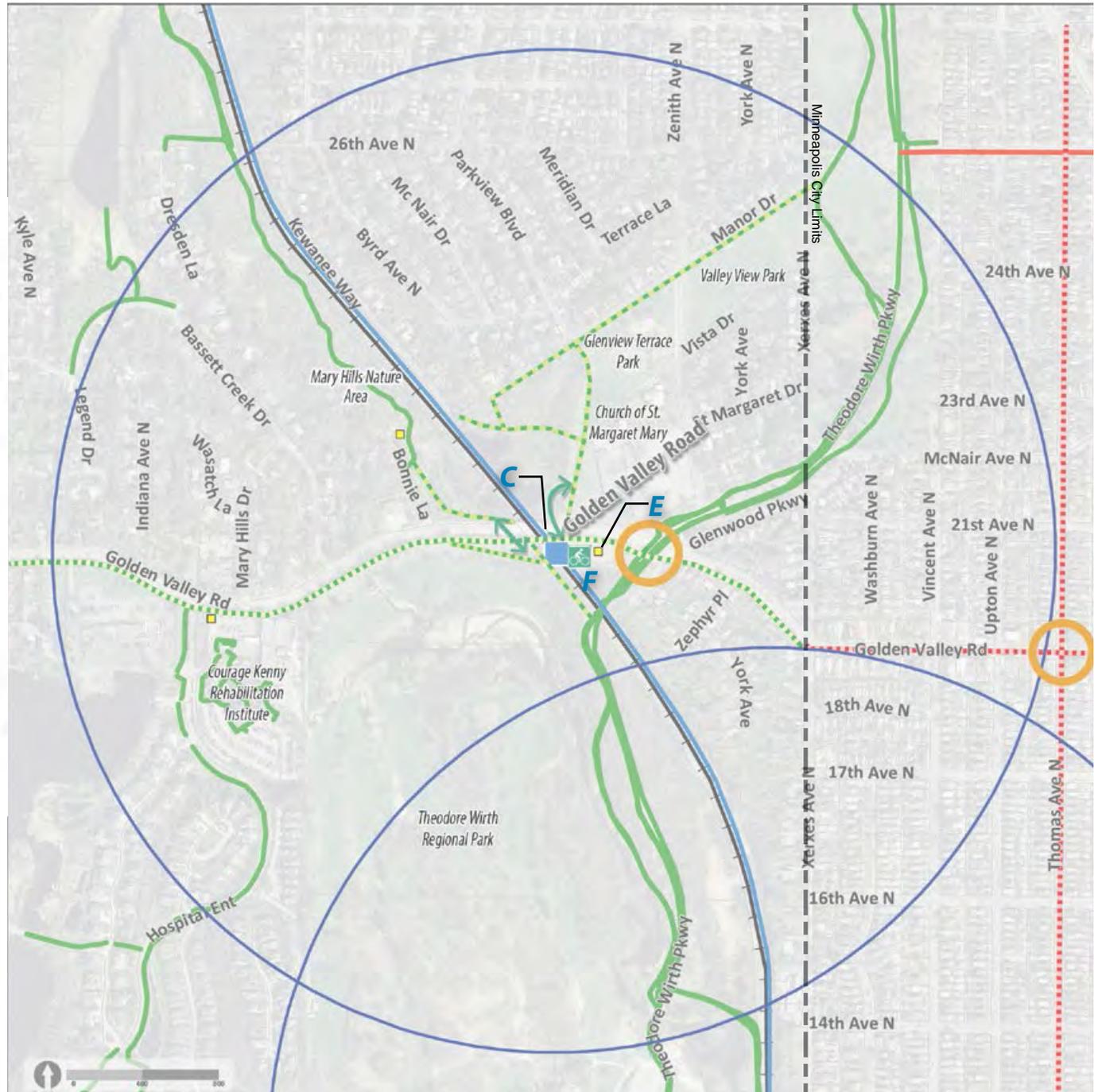


Figure 3.23: Day of Opening Public Realm Improvements

This map identifies public realm improvements that are recommended to be in place by the first day of LRT operations. Map elements not coded with a letter are intended to be future improvements.

- X** Day of Opening Improvements (see Table 2.1)
-  Enhanced Streetscape
-  Trail Lighting / Roadway Lighting
-  Park
-  Wayfinding
-  Public Art
-  Vertical Circulation
-  Redevelopment Opportunity Site
-  Planned LRT Station
-  Bottineau LRT Alignment
-  LRT Station Half Mile Buffer
-  Railroad
-  Proposed Sidewalks
-  Existing Sidewalks
-  Proposed Paved Trail
-  Existing Paved Trail
-  Proposed On-Street Bike Facility
-  Existing On-Street Bike Facility

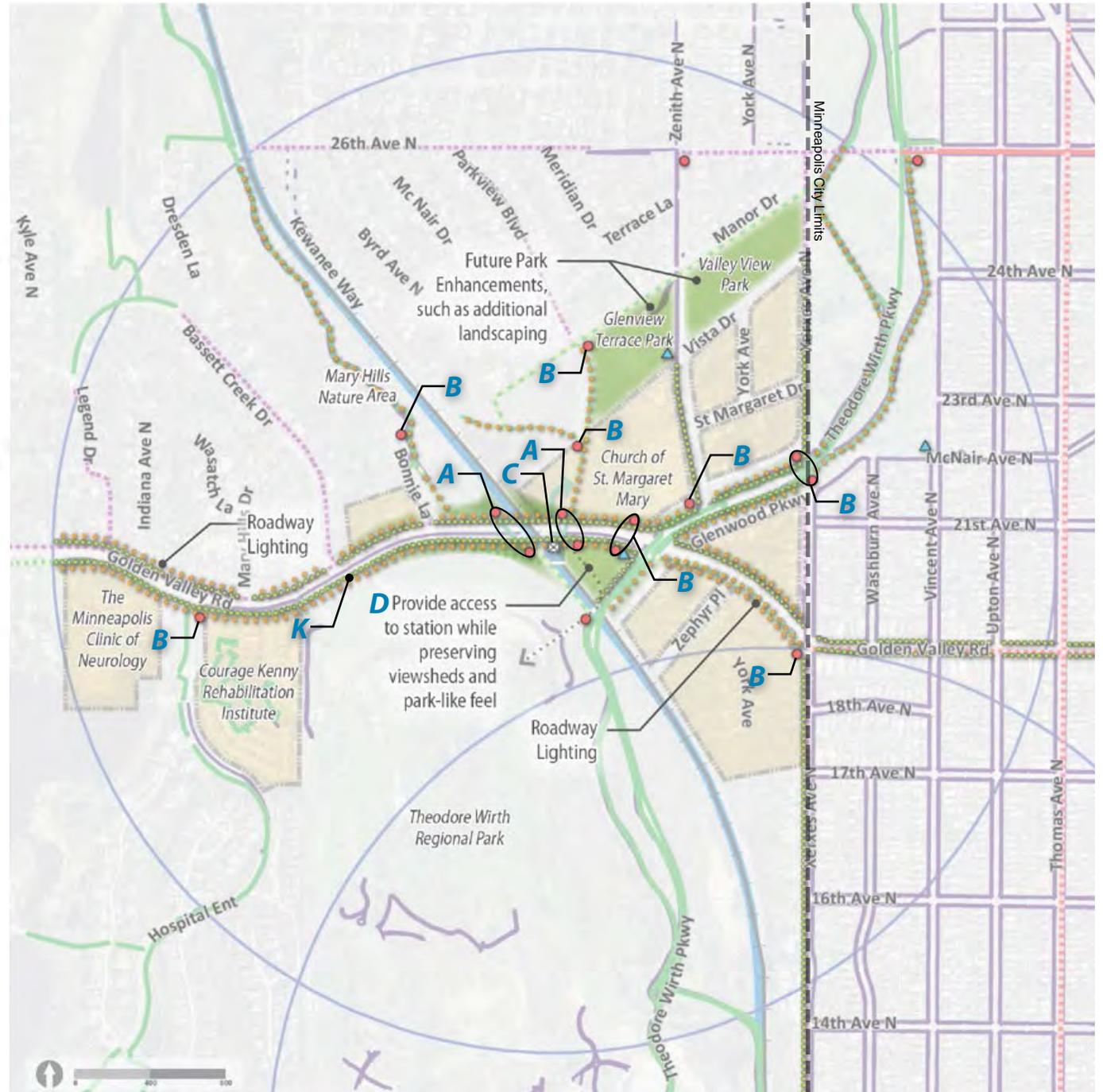


Table 3.4: Future Improvements

Improvements	Potential Partners	Comments
Streetscape enhancements along Golden Valley Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Minneapolis • City of Golden Valley • Hennepin County • Xcel Energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Street trees (complete gaps) • Site furnishings at key intersections (benches, trash receptacles, bike racks) • Relocate existing overhead utilities underground
Streetscape enhancements along Xerxes Avenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Minneapolis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum 5 foot wide sidewalk on west side of street (26th Avenue N to Theodore Wirth Parkway and Glenwood Parkway to Plymouth Avenue) • Minimum 5 foot wide boulevards • Street trees (fill in gaps) • Pedestrian lighting • Site furnishings at key intersections(benches, trash receptacles, bike racks)
Public Art	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Minneapolis • City of Golden Valley • Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board 	Opportunities along Theodore Wirth Parkway at Golden Valley Road, and in the vicinity of McNair Avenue, and in Glenview Terrace Park
Park enhancements at Valley View Park and Glenview Terrace Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Minneapolis • City of Golden Valley • Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board 	MPRB will be developing the North Service Area Master Plan in 2017, which will include the creation/ update of individual park master plans in the North Service Area. Park enhancement recommendations in the station area plans will be considered as part of the North Service Area Master Plan process in collaboration with the City of Golden Valley.
Complete remainder of wayfinding system	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hennepin County • City of Minneapolis 	Less critical, but important locations located along Golden Valley Road, Theodore Wirth Parkway, and 26th Avenue
Improved pedestrian and bicycle crossings of Golden Valley Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Minneapolis • City of Golden Valley 	
Key sidewalk linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Golden Valley • City of Minneapolis 	
Complete bicycle network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three Rivers Park District • City of Golden Valley • Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board 	
Bicycle parking at key neighborhood destinations		Includes Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute, Mary Hills Nature Area Trailhead, and Glenview Terrace Park

APPENDIX A

GLOSSARY

Access or Accessibility: In transportation, “access” or accessibility refers to the ease with which people can reach multiple destinations. People in places that are highly accessible can reach many other activities or destinations quickly and easily.

Free Right Turns: Dedicated right turn lanes that bypass the traditional intersection of two roadways.

Grade Separation: A bridge or tunnel that separates transportation facilities such as a highway or railroad so that they will not disrupt each other’s traffic flow when they cross.

Green Infrastructure: A stormwater management practice that attempts to mimic natural hydrologic processes to remove pollutants, promote stormwater infiltration, and reduce the quantity of runoff entering the storm sewer system.

Health Equity: When every person has the opportunity to realize their health potential — the highest level of health possible for that person — without limits imposed by structural inequities (systems of society such as finance, housing, transportation, education, social opportunities, et cetera — that are structured in such a way that they benefit one population unfairly, whether intended or not)³.

Low Impact Development: A stormwater management practice that attempts to mimic natural hydrologic processes to remove pollutants, promote stormwater infiltration, and reduce the quantity of runoff entering the storm sewer system.

Light Rail Transit (LRT) Station Area: An area of land around a proposed light rail transit (LRT) station typically defined as a one-half mile radius (or “buffer”) from the station, or the distance the average person will walk to/from the station in ten minutes. One-half mile is the transit industry standard for the maximum length that people are willing to walk to reach a transitway station. While a one-half mile is equated with a ten-minute walk, in reality this does not always hold true on the ground as factors such as individual walking preferences, terrain, and the transportation network affects how people move through the station area.

LRT Station Half Mile Buffer: See Light Rail Transit (LRT) Station Area definition.

Mixed-use Development: The practice of allowing more than one type of use in a building or set of buildings.

Mobility: The ability of people and goods to move freely within the transportation system.

Nice Ride: A non-profit bike sharing system in the Minneapolis – Saint Paul metropolitan area. Nice Ride stations are conveniently located around the community. Users can pick up or drop off rental bicycles at the stations.

Passenger Drop-off: Dedicated location on the street for short term use where LRT passengers can exist or enter vehicles.

Protected Bikeway: An exclusive facility for bicyclists that is located within or directly adjacent to the roadway and that is physically separated from motor vehicle traffic with a vertical element.

Station Area Planning: A process by which county and city staff work together with community members to establish a plan for the area surrounding a proposed transit station.

Ten Minute Walk: See Light Rail Transit (LRT) Station Area definition.

Wayfinding: An important urban design element that orients and directs people to and from their destinations, and enhances the sense of character and identity of a place, neighborhood or community. Wayfinding typically involves the use of signage and maps at key navigational decision points, use of landmarks, and improved sight lines. It is an important public realm element for delivering transit users to and from a station in a safe and convenient manner.

³Minnesota Department of Health, “Advancing Health Equity in Minnesota,” February 2014, Page 11, http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/chs/healthequity/ahe_leg_report_020414.pdf