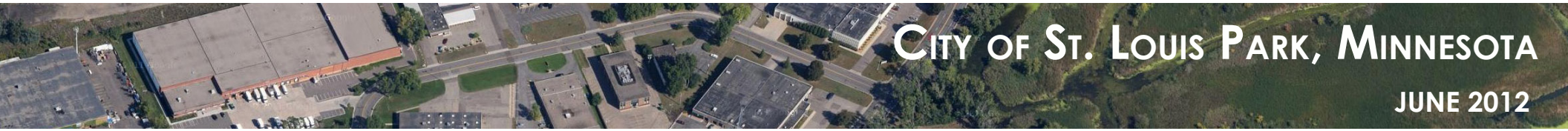
BELTLINE AREA FRAMEWORK & DESIGN GUIDELINES



CITY OF ST. LOUIS PARK, MINNESOTA

JUNE 2012

St. Louis Park MINNESOTA

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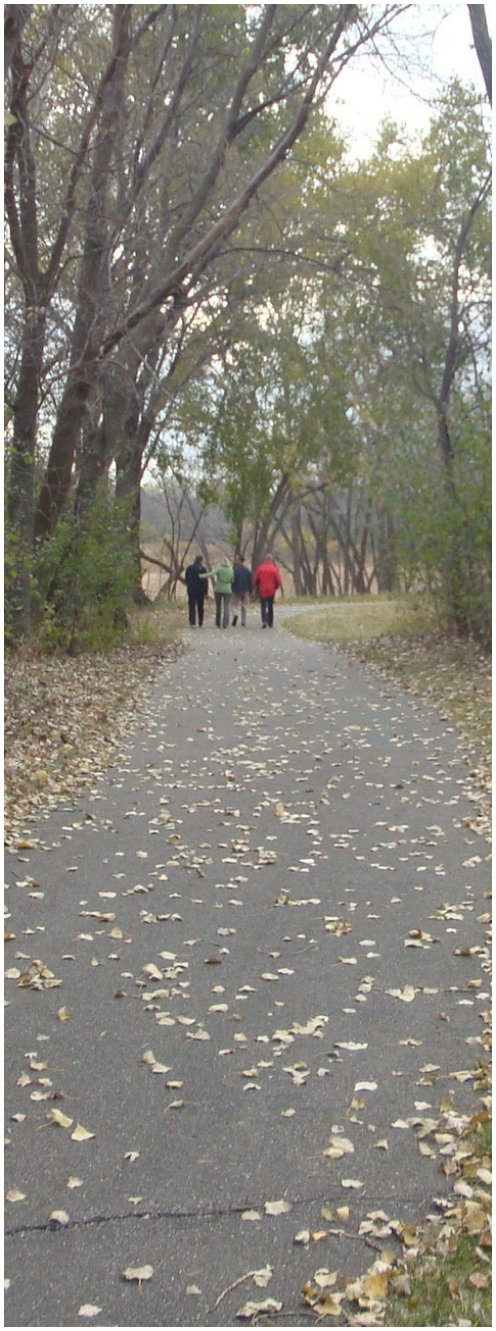
Chapter 5: Private Development Design Guidelines



Executive Summary

The proposed Southwest LRT line connecting Minneapolis to St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka and Eden Prairie will travel in the existing railroad corridor located on Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) property just south of and largely parallel to CSAH 25/ TH 7. Current LRT plans show the future Beltline Transit Station being located just southeast of the intersection of Beltline Boulevard and CSAH 25. The Beltline Station study area is generally defined as the area between TH 100 (west), Excelsior Boulevard/CSAH 3 (south), France Ave (east), and Minnetonka Boulevard/CSAH 5 (north). The Beltline Station study area encompasses three defined neighborhoods within St. Louis Park: Wolfe Park, Triangle and Minikahda Oaks.

The purpose of the Beltline Area Framework & Design Guidelines is to provide a guide to help shape future changes in the Beltline area. In light of the future addition of a Beltline Transit Station, the Beltline area will continue to evolve with other infrastructure changes, redevelopment and reinvestment. The Framework describes the future vision for the Beltline area and the Design Guidelines provide recommendations for the design of future public and private investment in the Beltline area.

The Framework envisions the Beltline area as a transit-oriented community hub for jobs, neighborhoods, and recreation. The future Beltline area will have a unique and well-defined sense of identity with strong connections to both local and regional destinations. New development and redevelopment will enhance and reinforce the Beltline area's role as a regional employment center surrounded by desirable neighborhoods and a wealth of parks and open spaces.

This future vision is supported and reinforced by 10 guiding principles, which are:

1. ***Create a unique sense of identity for the Beltline area***
2. ***Weave together the distinct Beltline districts***
3. ***Increase street connectivity and mobility***
4. ***Assure superior walking and biking accessibility***
5. ***Foster the Beltline area as a growing regional employment center***
6. ***Capture the value of transit***
7. ***Promote transit-oriented development***
8. ***Create a connected network of great public spaces***
9. ***Advocate for a convenient, safe and pleasant transit station center***
10. ***Manage parking effectively***

The Framework also describes the preferred development pattern for the Beltline area, including land uses, development form, connectivity/access, mix of distinct Beltline "character districts", and Beltline's overall area identity.

The Design Guidelines provide design guidance for future private development and public systems/spaces in the Beltline area. The private development design guidelines address site development, buildings, parking, service/ delivery/storage areas, signage, and lighting within the Beltline Area. The public systems/spaces design guidelines address the development of all future above ground, visible elements of the public environment including street and roadway

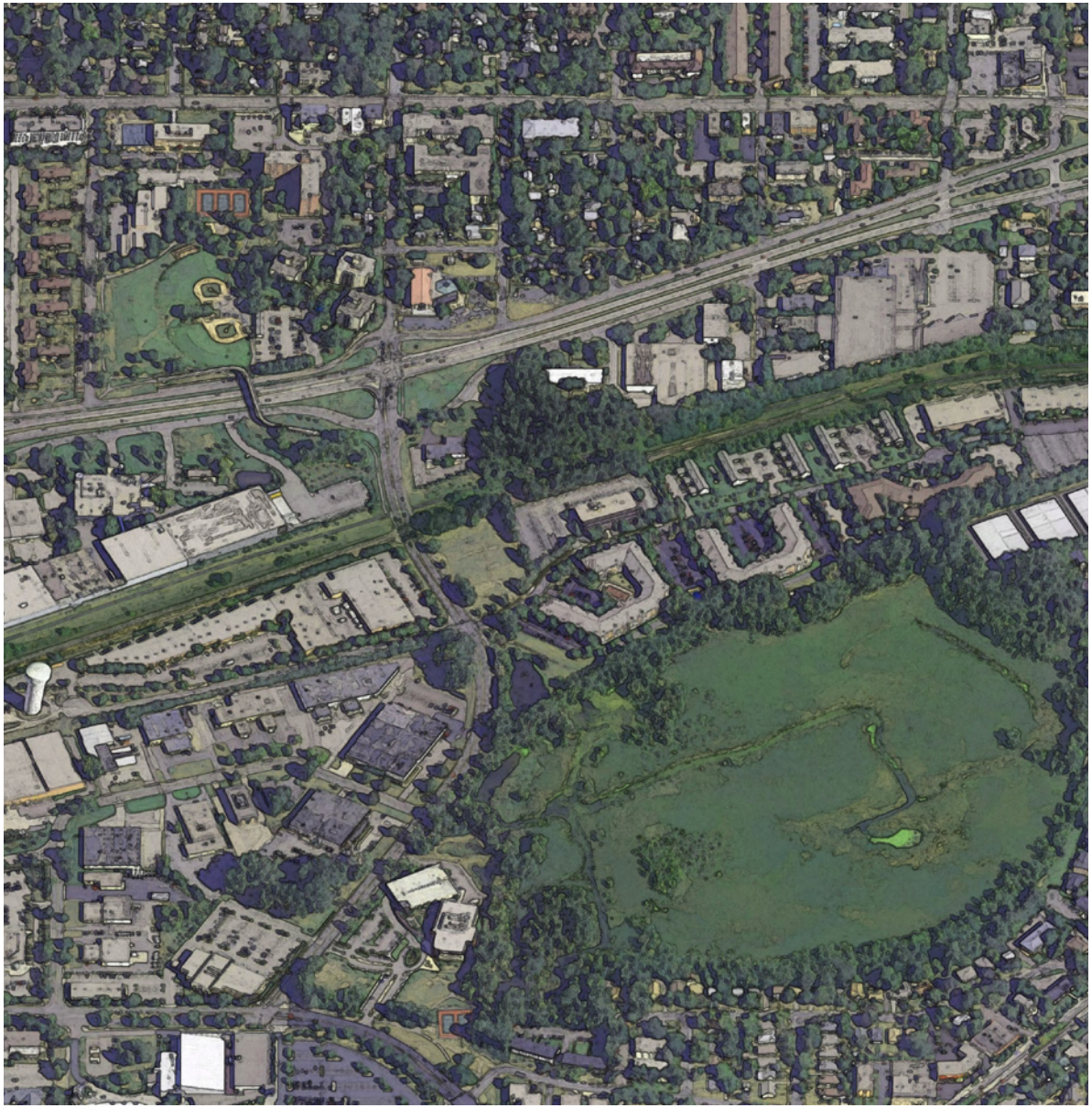
design, sidewalks and trails, public gathering spaces, public transit and parking facilities, storm water management and utility structures.

The Framework and Design Guidelines are advisory and are intended to complement the City's policies and regulations.

Priority Action Plan

Recommended initial action steps to implement the Framework for the Beltline area are:

1. *Pursue rezoning of employment-oriented areas to the Business Park (BP) zoning designation and address the land use designation and zoning for mixed-use areas.*
2. *Prepare a detailed bicycle and pedestrian connectivity plan for the Beltline area.*
3. *Begin planning, funding and concept design work for the redesign of CSAH 25 (east of Beltline/Ottawa) from a divided highway to an urban street. Work with Hennepin County to get the project in its work plan as a priority project for planning, design and funding.*
4. *Use the Beltline Design Guidelines with Metropolitan Council and Hennepin County during the upcoming Southwest LRT Transitional Station Area Action Plan and Preliminary Engineering processes to help shape the Beltline area LRT design.*
5. *Prepare a feasibility analysis of key Beltline area transportation projects - new street connections (e.g. north-south, Park Glen Road, Raleigh, 32nd Street), the Beltline/Ottawa and CSAH 25 intersection, the LRT line/railroad and Beltline/Cedar Lake Trail intersection and the CSAH 25,east of Beltline/Ottawa, urban street design.*
6. *Consider creating a transit station area overlay zoning district for the Beltline transit station area.*
7. *Conduct a detailed redevelopment study of areas adjacent to CSAH 25 in conjunction with the redesign of the roadway.*



Existing patterns of the Beltline area

Framework

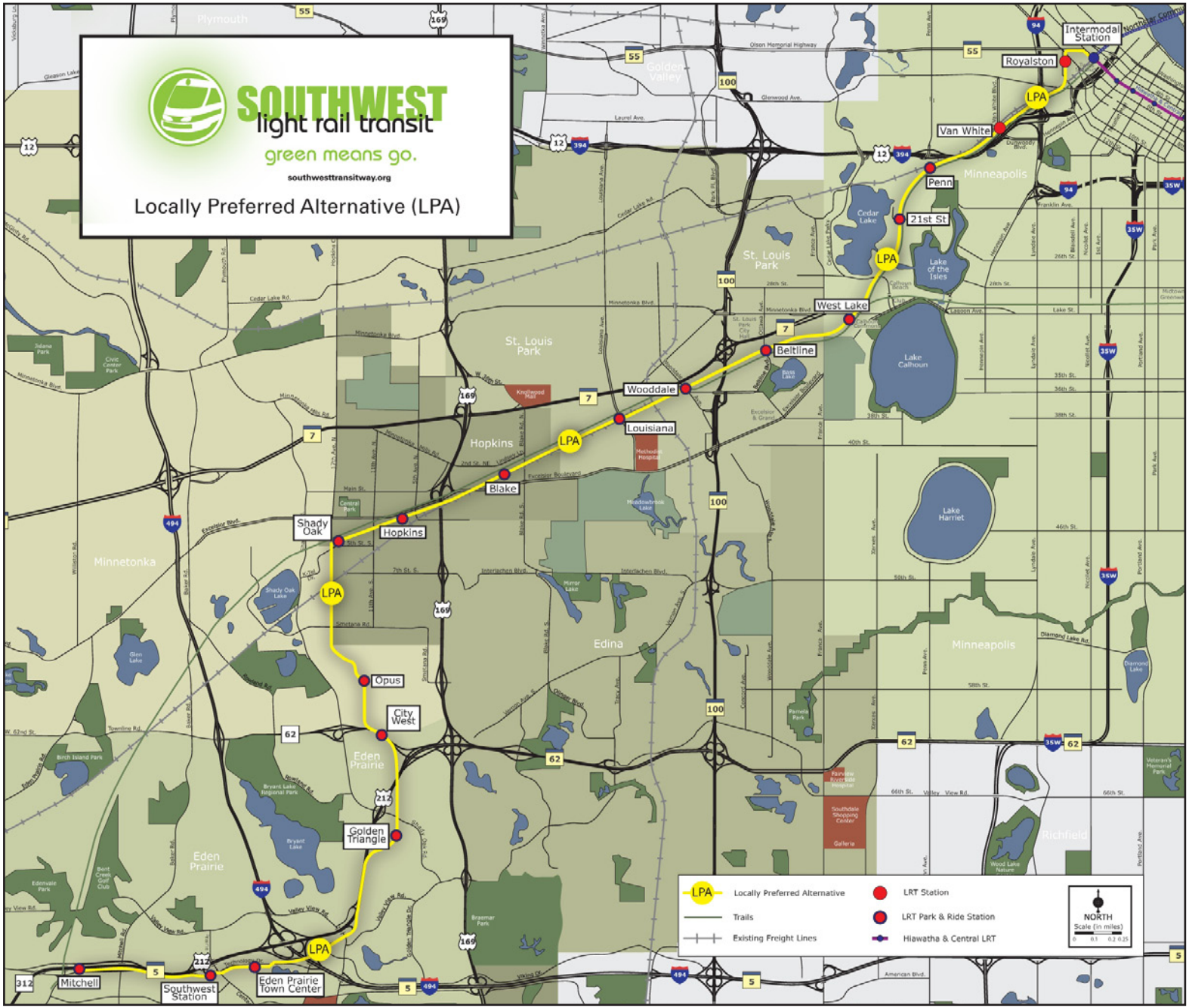


Figure 1.1: Planned Southwest LRT route and stations

Beltline Area Today

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This section briefly describes the planned Southwest LRT line, Beltline station area, the general station area planning process, historical development of the Beltline Area, and the station area's existing conditions.

Southwest LRT Line

The Southwest LRT line is a proposed 15-mile high-frequency train line that will serve the growing southwest metro area from downtown Minneapolis to St. Louis Park, Hopkins, Minnetonka and Eden Prairie. The Southwest LRT line will connect to the Twin Cities' other rail lines, including Hiawatha, Central and Northstar), and high-frequency bus lines in downtown Minneapolis. There are currently 17 stations planned within these five cities as shown on Figure 1.1. Three LRT stations are planned for St. Louis Park as part of the Southwest LRT line: Beltline Boulevard, Wooddale Ave and Louisiana Ave. The Beltline station is tentatively planned to be a single platform located between the two existing tracks on the east side of Beltline Boulevard. The Cedar Lake Trail, which crosses Beltline Boulevard north of the rail corridor is currently planned to be relocated to the south side of the rail corridor and future LRT station. The Southwest LRT line is currently anticipated to begin operating in 2018.

Station Area Planning

The City participated in a previous conceptual station area planning study in 2008/2009 that resulted in a conceptual station area development plan. This study was funded by the Hennepin County Regional Railroad Authority (HCRRA) and conducted in partnership with the cities in the SW LRT corridor. The Beltline conceptual development plan shows the station area with an expanded and intensified employment center as the focal point and higher density residential neighborhoods surrounding the employment center. This long-term development concept, which goes beyond the City's typical 20-year time horizon, was based on the identification of the ultimate future opportunities and demands for more intense land uses near the LRT station. An estimate of potential square footage of buildings and additional housing units was calculated based on this long-term development concept. These estimates represent the potential development capacity within the station area for achieving transit-oriented development densities. Since this long-term development concept goes beyond the 20-year time horizon of the City's Comprehensive Plan, it has not been adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

North of future Beltline Transit Station

South of future Beltline Transit Station

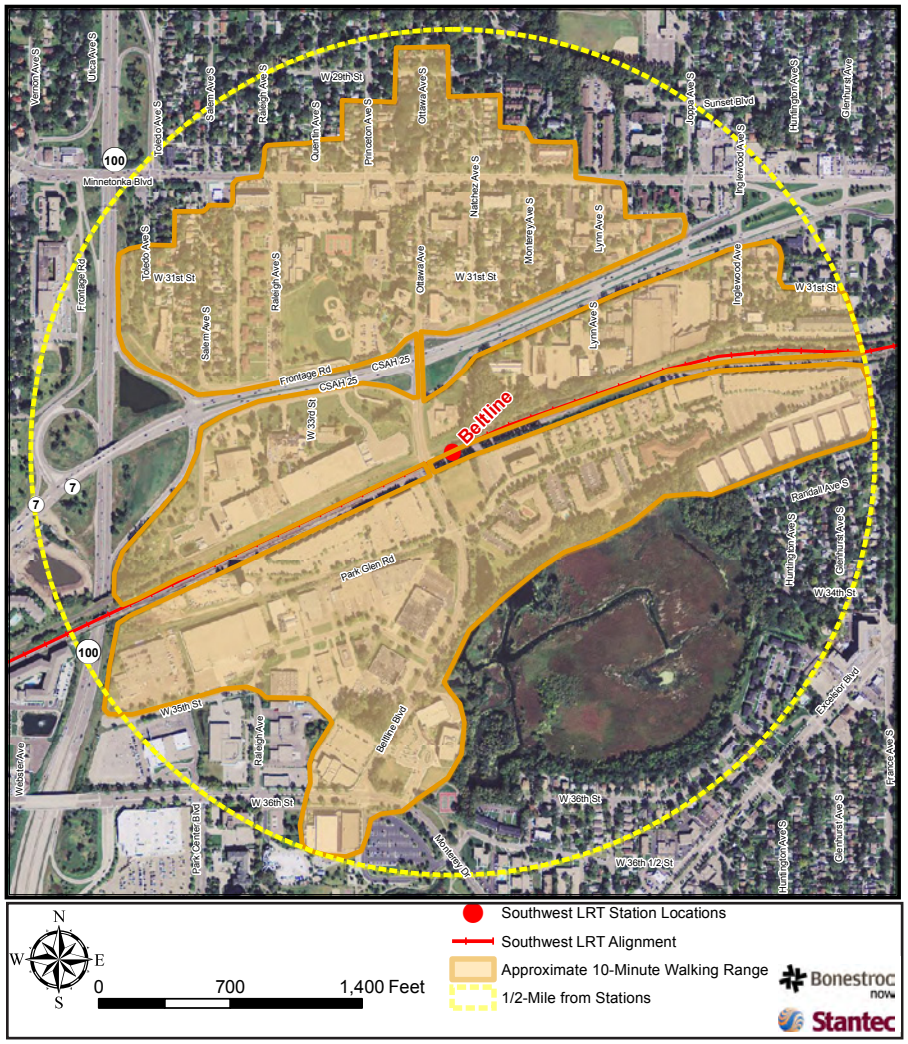


Figure 1.2: 10-minute walking area around the planned Beltline Transit Station

Beltline Station Area

The Beltline Station Area encompasses the area that is generally within a 10-minute walking distance (half-mile radius) of the future Beltline LRT Station. Figure 1.2 shows the Beltline Station walkable area. This station area falls within the Wolfe Park and Triangle neighborhoods primarily, with a small area within the Fern Hill neighborhood. Figure 1.3 shows the boundaries and features of these neighborhoods.

Figure 1.3: Defined neighborhoods and open spaces within the Beltline area

Evolution of the Beltline Area

The Beltline area, like St. Louis Park in general, is bisected by railroad and highway corridors, which tend to limit street and trail connectivity within the community. The freight railroad corridor and CSAH 25 (former MN Hwy 7), which parallel each other, run through the center of the Beltline area. The south side of the railroad corridor was a major train switching yard extending from France Ave west to TH 100 until the 1980s, which prevented any north-south street crossings. Like Highway 100, Highway 7 was designed and constructed in the 1930s as public works projects funded in part by the federal Works Progress Administration (WPA). Highway 7 was designed as a high speed multi-lane highway with a landscaped median, frontage roads on both sides and limited at-grade crossings. It was intended to provide a high speed and high quality highway connection between Minneapolis and the Lake Minnetonka area. Existing industrial and commercial development north of the railroad line is oriented to the railroad and Highway 7 corridors. Nordic Ware is a major industry within the community and has been located on the south side of CSAH 25/Hwy 7 since the 1940s. Other manufacturing, warehousing, showroom and office businesses are located along the highway to the east of Nordic Ware.

The Beltline area contains two of the community's historic assets. The Peavey-Haglin Experimental Concrete Grain Elevator, which is located on the Nordic Ware site and bears the company's name, is a National Historic Landmark on the National Register of Historic Places. Constructed in 1899-1900, it was the first circular reinforced-concrete grain elevator in the U.S. This structure continues to be one of the community's most identifiable landmarks. Adjacent to the grain elevator and Nordic Ware is Lilac Park, which was extensively renovated in 2009 as a historical Highway 100/ Lilac Way roadside park. Of the original seven Lilac Way roadside parks, this park and another park in Robbinsdale will be the only ones remaining in the future.

South of the railroad corridor, the Beltline Industrial Park began developing in the 1950s. Today, the Beltline business park area includes a mix of industrial properties, offices and retail/service businesses. When the railroad switching yards ceased operations in the 1980s, opportunities to redevelop the area south of the railroad corridor and build a north-south street connection became feasible. Beltline Boulevard was constructed across the railroad corridor and connected to Ottawa Avenue in 1986. Prior to 1986, the areas north and south of the railroad corridor were completely disconnected from each other. Construction of Park Glen Road and the development of the area north of Bass Lake Preserve followed soon after.

In 1988, MN Hwy 7 was decommissioned as a state highway east of MN Hwy 100 and turned back to Hennepin County as CSAH 25. As part of a major highway swap between MnDOT and Hennepin County in 1988, this stretch of MN Hwy 7 was no longer planned to be a principal arterial highway. Instead, MnDOT's focus was on developing a connected freeway system which consisted of MN Hwy 100, MN Hwy 169, MN Hwy 62 and I-394. Even though CSAH 25 was downgraded from a state highway and principal arterial to a county highway and minor arterial, its physical design has not evolved to fit its function. The character of CSAH 25 today is essentially that of a leftover state highway with an overly wide right-of-way, frontage roads and limited access points.

The Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail was constructed in the Beltline area in 1995. Land within the rail corridor became available for conversion to a regional trail when some railroad operations were consolidated elsewhere. The Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail connects to the Midtown Greenway and Kenilworth trails in Minneapolis and the Southwest LRT Trail west of Highway 100. The Cedar Lake Regional Trail was the first federally funded bicycle commuter trail in

1940 Aerial of Beltline area

1971 Aerial of Beltline area

1975 Aerial of Beltline area

The Beltline area today is a mix of industrial, office, residential uses, such as Lilac Park, Wolfe Lake Professional Center, Park Glen Apartments, and the Melrose Institute shown in photos above.

Beltline Station

Demographics	
2010 Population	1947
2000 Population	1929
2000-2010 Population Change	0.93%
2010 Households	1231
Owner Occupied Households	17%
Live-Alone Households	59.45%
Households with Child	8.95%

Employment	
2009 Jobs	2803
2002 Jobs	3591
2002-2009 Job Change	-21.94%
Jobs with Wages up to $15,000/Yr	23.1%
Jobs with Wages $15,000-$40,000/Yr	31.4%
Jobs with Wages over $40,000/Yr	45.5%

the nation. This regional trail corridor has become a highly valued open space amenity for the community. The at-grade crossing of the trail at Beltline Boulevard continues to be a concern for trail users and the community.

Beltline Area Today

The Beltline area today is primarily an employment center. Within walking distance of the station, the Beltline study area contains approximately 2,800 jobs in 2009, which was down substantially (-22%) from its 3,591 jobs in 2002. The largest job sectors were manufacturing (15%), wholesale trade (12%), retail trade (12%), health care/social assistance (11%) and educational services (8%). The area's jobs have a mix of wage levels: over $40,000/year (46%), $15,000-$40,000 (31%), up to $15,000 (23%).

The Beltline area today has a population of 1,947 people and 1,231 households (2010). The area's housing is currently 83% renter-occupied. One-person households represent 59% of all households, whereas, households with kids represent just 9%. The Triangle residential neighborhood, which is the largest residential area, is located within walking distance of the LRT station site but on the opposite side of CSAH 25. The Triangle neighborhood contains a variety of housing types, including high and medium apartment buildings and single-family houses. The Bass Lake Preserve pocket neighborhood, which includes three higher density buildings, is located directly adjacent to the LRT station site.

Beltline Area Constraints & Opportunities

A preliminary analysis of the existing development and transportation patterns was undertaken as part of the process of developing the Beltline Area Framework and Design Guidelines. The Beltline area's constraints and opportunities include, but are not limited to, the following:

Constraints

- Railroad corridor bisects the area and limits north-south vehicle, pedestrian and bike crossings
- CSAH 25 leftover state highway design divides the area and limits north-south movement
- Street network lacks connections
- Complex intersection where Beltline Boulevard, CSAH 25, frontage roads, rail line and Cedar Lake Trail meet
- Streets are not inviting for biking and walking
- Lack of center for the area in the vicinity of the future station area
- Lack of identity for the area in general
- Existing industrial and commercial buildings are low density in both floor area and jobs per acre
- Open space areas are not well connected
- Existing buildings and sites are auto-oriented in design

Opportunities

- Upgrade Beltline Boulevard to be an attractive, multi-modal, landscaped and memorable street
- Redesign crossing of future LRT line/ Cedar Lake Trail with Beltline Boulevard as a separated-grade intersection
- Develop a connected street network that includes additional north-south streets and trails
- Grow Beltline area as a major employment center through intensification and expansion of business park development
- Develop publicly-owned (Hennepin County) vacant site adjacent to future LRT station
- Intensify underutilized properties in the Beltline business park and along CSAH 25
- Connect the wealth of open space amenities within the area, including Bass Lake Preserve, Cedar Lake Regional Trail, Wolfe Park, Carpenter Park/Skippy Field, and Lilac Park
- Create an identifiable center for the Beltline Area that encompasses the future LRT station, Beltline Boulevard, CSAH 25, Cedar Lake Regional Trail, and new mixed-use development
- Create identifiable gateway areas
- Design new buildings and sites to be more transit- and pedestrian-friendly

The existing rail corridor, highways, and Beltline/Ottawa/ CSAH 25 intersection shown in photos above present constraints for future changes in the Beltline area.

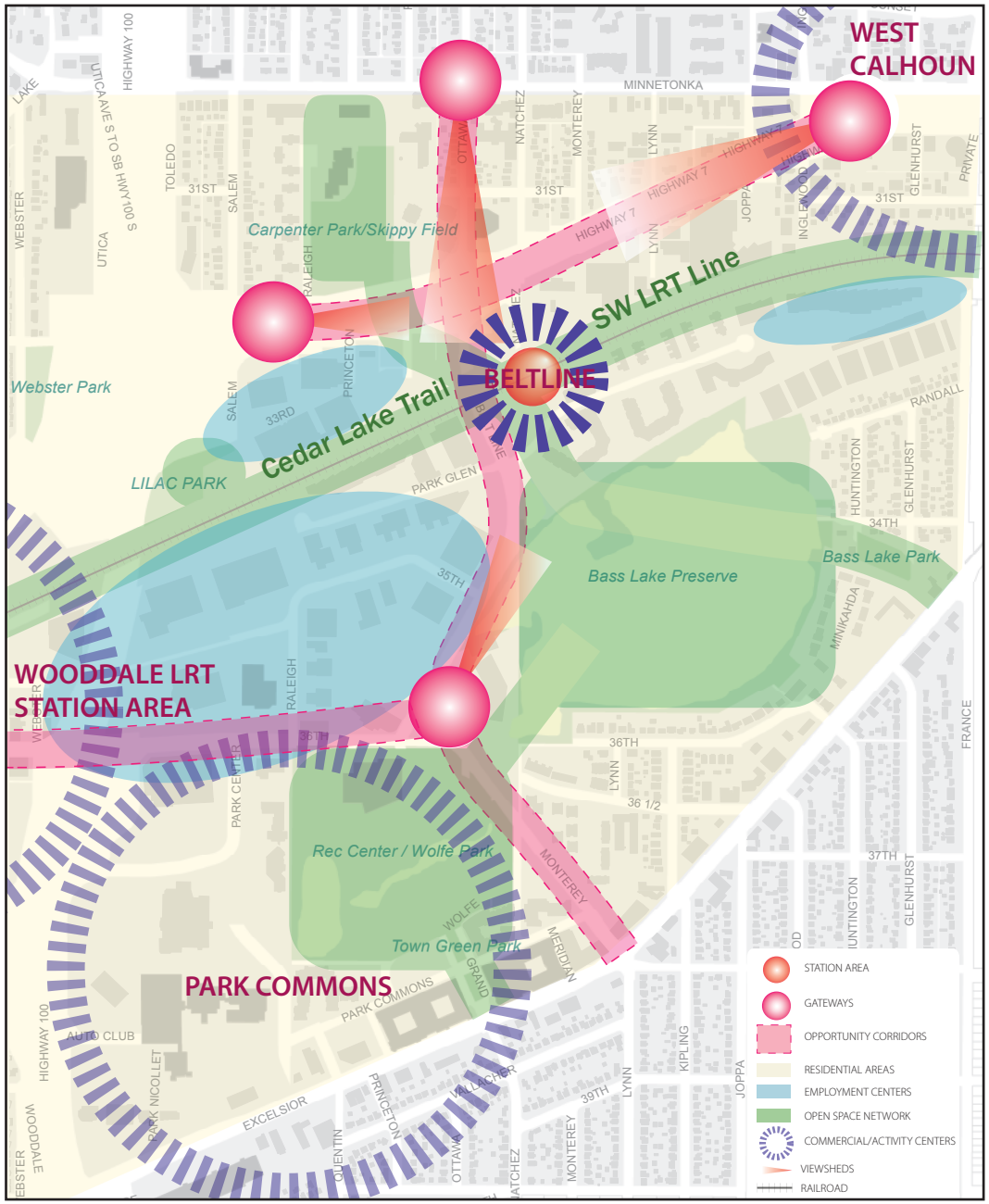


Figure 2.1:Beltline Area Vision Diagram

Vision, Guiding Principles & Development Patterns

2

Beltline Area Vision

The Beltline area is home to a number of existing community assets. The future Southwest LRT line and transit station present a valuable opportunity for building upon and connecting the area's assets to create a vibrant new community hub in the Beltline area.

Building upon existing assets

The overriding character of the Beltline area today is one of separated areas with without an identifiable center; more of a pass-through area than a destination or memorable place. The Beltline Area today consists of a diverse mix of places, including manufacturing, warehousing, showroom and office businesses, retail/services, medical, civic, parks/recreation, natural open spaces, and a wide variety of housing types. The area has an excellent location in the metro area adjacent to attractive local and regional destinations - Park Commons/Excelsior & Grand to the south and the Chain of Lakes/Uptown area to the east - and easy access to the regional highway system via TH 100 and CSAH 25/TH 7. The Cedar Lake Regional Trail, which runs through the center of the Beltline area, is an important regional recreational amenity and bicycle commuting corridor. In addition to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail open space corridor, the area also is home to a wealth of public open and recreational spaces, including Bass Lake Preserve, Wolfe Park, Lilac Park, Carpenter Park, Skippy Field and the Rec Center/Aquatic Park. Although the Beltline area has lots of existing assets, they are not well-connected and do not create a truly identifiable and desirable sense of place.

Creating a vibrant and connected community hub for jobs, neighborhoods and recreation

The vision for the Beltline area is for it to evolve into a transit-oriented community hub for jobs, neighborhoods and recreation with a well-defined sense of identity and better connections, both internally and to regional destinations. New development and redevelopment are anticipated to further enhance the Beltline area's role as a regional employment center surrounded by desirable neighborhoods. The emphasis will be on increasing the number of jobs in the area, protecting and enhancing the quality of life of surrounding neighborhoods, and creating a much more connected street, sidewalk and trail network for all modes of travel.

Connectivity will be enhanced via the addition of the Beltline Transit Station and a combination of street, sidewalk, trail and transit improvements. These public infrastructure investments and Beltline's excellent location in the metro area in order to foster private investment in the form of job-intensive business development on underutilized properties, new mixed-use development near the transit station and along Beltline Boulevard, and high-quality housing options in existing neighborhoods. A stronger and more cohesive sense of identity will be created through the addition of landmarks at and near the transit station, gateway areas, well-designed boulevard streets, wayfinding signage, and park/trail/open space enhancements. The Beltline area has the potential to better link its parks, open spaces and trails to create a connected green space system or "Chain of Parks" that enhances the area's sense of identity and quality of life.

Beltline Area Guiding Principles

The following are proposed as the Guiding Principles for the Beltline area. The Guiding Principles are intended to define the big picture direction, character and priorities for subsequent planning and design of public and private investment in the area. The Guiding Principles should embody the community's general desires and objectives for future changes, investments and redevelopment in the area. The Guiding Principles will help shape the subsequent preparation of more detailed Design Guidelines and are intended to be touchstones for policies, plans and future decision-making related to the Beltline area.

1. **Create a unique sense of identity for the Beltline area**
   a. *Create an identifiable neighborhood center around the Beltline Transit Station at the crossroads of the LRT, Cedar Lake Regional Trail, Beltline Boulevard and CSAH 25/TH 7*
   b. *Design major entrances/intersections into the Beltline area as gateway areas including CSAH 25/Beltline Blvd, CSAH 25/Minnetonka Blvd, 36th St/Beltline Blvd and Ottawa/Beltline Blvd*
   c. *Connect the existing parks/open spaces along Beltline Boulevard into an identifiable "Chain of Parks"*
   d. *Transform Beltline Boulevard and CSAH 25 into memorable, landscaped, multi-modal boulevards*
   e. *Explore the opportunity for naming CSAH 25 as a way to enhance the corridor's identity*

2. **Weave together the distinct Beltline districts**
   a. *Leverage the future Beltline Transit Station as the heart of an expanding and intensifying Beltline regional employment center on both sides of Beltline Boulevard*
   b. *Provide convenient and safe connections from the Triangle neighborhood to destinations south of CSAH 25 and the rail line*
   c. *Promote conversion of Beltline Boulevard and adjacent properties to create a walk/bike-friendly street between Park Commons and the Beltline Transit Station*
   d. *Preserve and enhance the desirable qualities of the Bass Lake Preserve area for living, working and recreating*

3. **Increase street connectivity and mobility**
   a. *Increase north-south street connectivity across regional transportation corridors - CSAH 25 and the rail line*
   b. *Connect Park Glen Road east and west of Beltline Blvd as a through-street*
   c. *Promote the conversion of CSAH 25, east of Beltline Blvd, from its current divided highway layout with frontage roads (which is a barrier to movement and divides neighborhoods) to a four-lane urban boulevard similar to Excelsior Blvd that provides increased local connectivity*
   d. *Integrate the streets, trails, bus routes, sidewalks, and LRT line to work together in the best possible way*

4. **Assure superior walking and biking accessibility**
   a. *Develop a network of "complete streets" that is safer and more convenient for all modes of travel (vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders)*
   b. *Fill the gaps in the Beltline area's existing sidewalk and trails network*
   c. *Evaluate grade-separating the LRT line and Cedar Lake Regional Trail from Beltline Boulevard*
   d. *Ensure convenient and safe local access to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail*
   e. *Improve the legibility and wayfinding of routes and destinations*

5. **Foster the Beltline area as a growing regional employment center**
   a. *Encourage expansion of existing businesses that increase the number of jobs per acre and increase site utilization*
   b. *Promote redevelopment to business park uses that increase the number of jobs per acre*
   c. *Increase the diversity of employment opportunities within the Beltline area*
   d. *Promote employee parking strategies that account for the Beltline area's connection to regional transit and trail facilities*

6. **Capture the value of transit**
   a. *Maximize transit ridership and bike/walk opportunities so that the primary modes of access to LRT are walking, biking and local transit*
   b. *Optimize economic development and place-making opportunities*
   c. *Leverage neighborhood-scale amenities in conjunction with new development*

7. **Promote transit-oriented development**
   a. *Support expansion/intensification of existing businesses*
   b. *Promote redevelopment to higher intensity business park uses*
   c. *Protect and strengthen the character of residential neighborhoods through preservation, renovation and redevelopment*
   d. *Support higher density housing located within convenient walking distance of the transit station*
   e. *Encourage human scale mixed-use development along a walk/bike-friendly Beltline Boulevard*
   f. *Encourage new development that creates diverse, interesting and cohesive street environments (buildings and public spaces that front onto the street, engaging building facades, parking to the rear or side of buildings, walk/bike-friendly streetscapes, etc.)*

8. **Create a connected network of great public spaces**
   a. *Connect the Beltline area's wealth of existing parks, open spaces, Park Commons, Rec Center/Water Park and Cedar Lake Regional Trail to each other and the transit station as the Beltline area's "Chain of Parks"*
   b. *Encourage publicly accessible outdoor plazas in developments adjacent to the transit station and add smaller urban plaza spaces with other new developments*
   c. *Create "great streets" that function well for pedestrians and bicycles as well as automobiles (e.g. Beltline Boulevard Transit Street, 36th Street Arts Corridor)*

9. **Advocate for a convenient, safe and pleasant transit station center**
   a. *Provide four-season comfort and access*
   b. *Follow CPTED guidelines, such as open sight lines, adequate lighting and clear entries/exits*
   c. *Incorporate or connect to green spaces/plazas/public art*
   d. *Pursue bike and car sharing programs at the station*
   e. *Encourage nearby support retail/services for transit rider*

10. **Manage parking effectively**
   a. *Encourage station area vehicle parking (park & ride) in structures shared between the transit station and adjacent development; discourage surface parking lots for transit user parking*
   b. *Provide convenient drop-off facilities near the transit station*
   c. *Creatively manage on-street parking through innovative parking strategies that benefit the Beltline area and the community*
   d. *Provide convenient, user-friendly bicycle parking facilities, including secure bike parking, and other facilities catering to the bicycle/transit commuter*

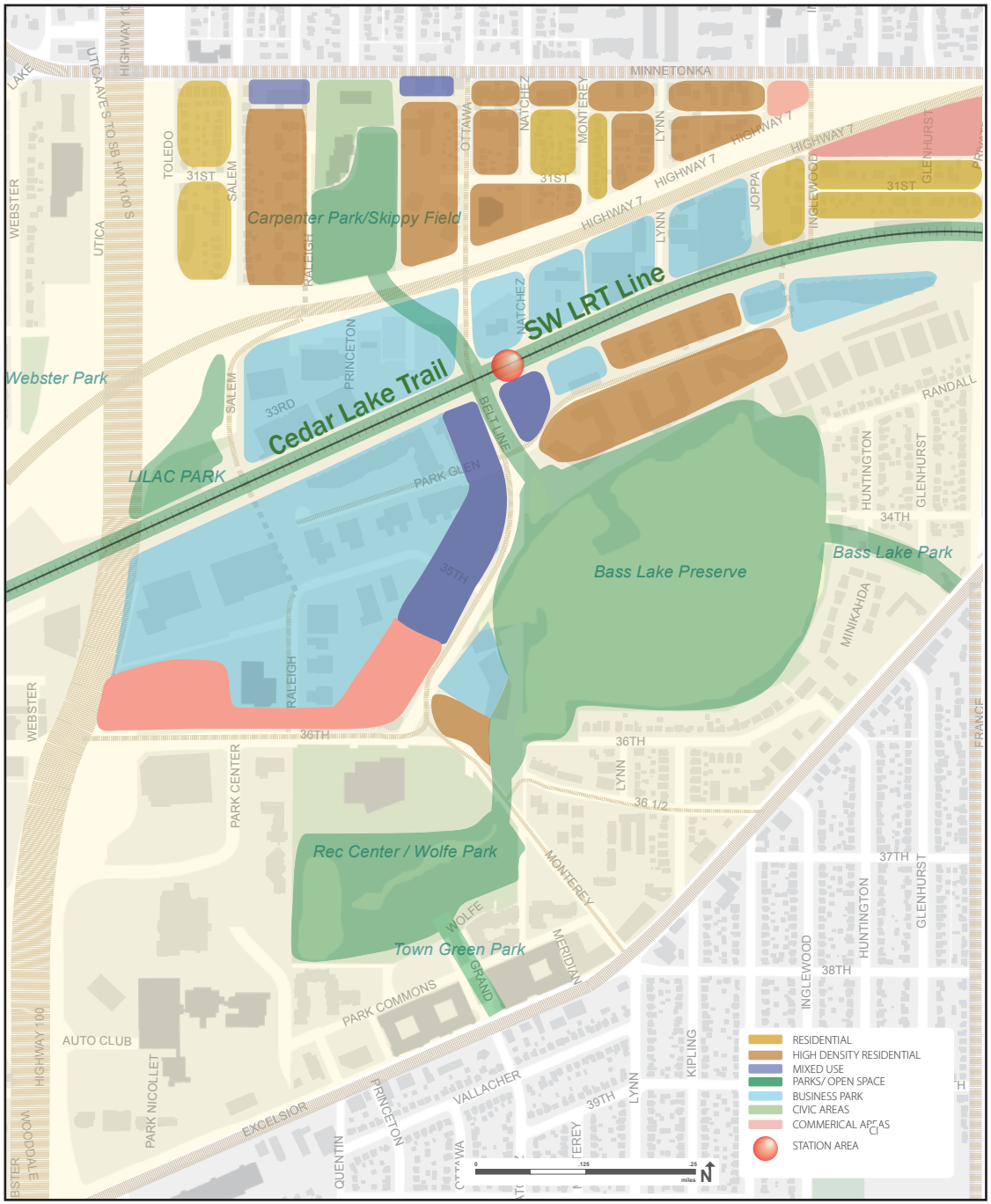


Figure 2.2: Preferred Land Use Pattern Diagram

Land Use & Building Patterns

The preferred future land use pattern for the Beltline area is envisioned as a complementary mix of distinct districts that are weaved together as an urban center. The Beltline urban center will contain a mix of employment (office and light industrial), residential (low, medium and high density), neighborhood-scale retail/services within mixed-use buildings, civic uses and parks/open space. As a growing regional employment center, the Beltline area will draw employees from the community and region. Other destinations within the Beltline area will primarily draw residents from surrounding neighborhoods and the community, such as civic, recreation and retail/service facilities.

The future Beltline Transit Station is seen as the heart of the Beltline area. Located at the crossroads of the Southwest LRT line, Cedar Lake Regional Trail, Beltline Boulevard and CSAH 25/TH 7, the transit station will be the hub for major travel routes in the Beltline area for all travel modes. The Beltline area will be well-served by convenient access to regional transportation options, including regional highway access, transit and trails.

Beltline/Nordic Ware Business Park will be expanded and intensified as a regional employment center providing a high number of jobs per acre. The business park will encompass the employment uses west and east of Beltline Boulevard with the Beltline Transit Station in the middle of it. A significant amount of business expansion and redevelopment is envisioned as this area transitions from low-scale industrial and commercial uses to a mix of higher-scale business park uses, including office, office-showroom, research and development. To support the intensification of the business park, it is anticipated that parking will transition from primarily surface lots to eventual use of parking ramps.

The Beltline area will continue to contain a significant amount of housing within walking distance of the future

Beltline Transit Station. High and medium density residential will be the primary uses in the adjacent Triangle Neighborhood and the Bass Lake Preserve Pocket Neighborhood with small areas of single-family detached homes. Surrounding the Beltline area are additional residential neighborhoods, including Park Commons/Excelsior & Grand, Minikahda Oaks, Minikahda Vista and Fern Hill. Existing and new housing in the Beltline area has convenient access to parks and open spaces. The CSAH 25 Corridor area is seen as having great potential for employment-intensive redevelopment long-term and may also offer future opportunities for adding new transit-oriented housing options within easy walking distance of the Beltline Transit Station.

Beltline Boulevard is envisioned as the major transit street with mixed-use buildings lining Beltline Boulevard and clustered around the future transit station. These mixed-use buildings could contain street level retail/services and upper level office or residential uses.

Future development, expansion and redevelopment in the Beltline area is envisioned to incorporate buildings that accommodate increased employment and residential densities in support of their convenient access to the new LRT station. Figure 2.3 shows preferred building height ranges for the Beltline area. The recommendations for number of building floors/stories are based on:

- Targeting the Beltline area as a more jobs-intensive regional employment center with potential for taller buildings in the business park areas (2-8 stories) and adjacent to the transit station (3-10 stories).
- Redesigning the character of Beltline Blvd to allow for a mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented street environment with 3-5 story buildings.
- Assuring appropriate building scale transitions next to existing single-family residential homes to preserve the current neighborhood character.

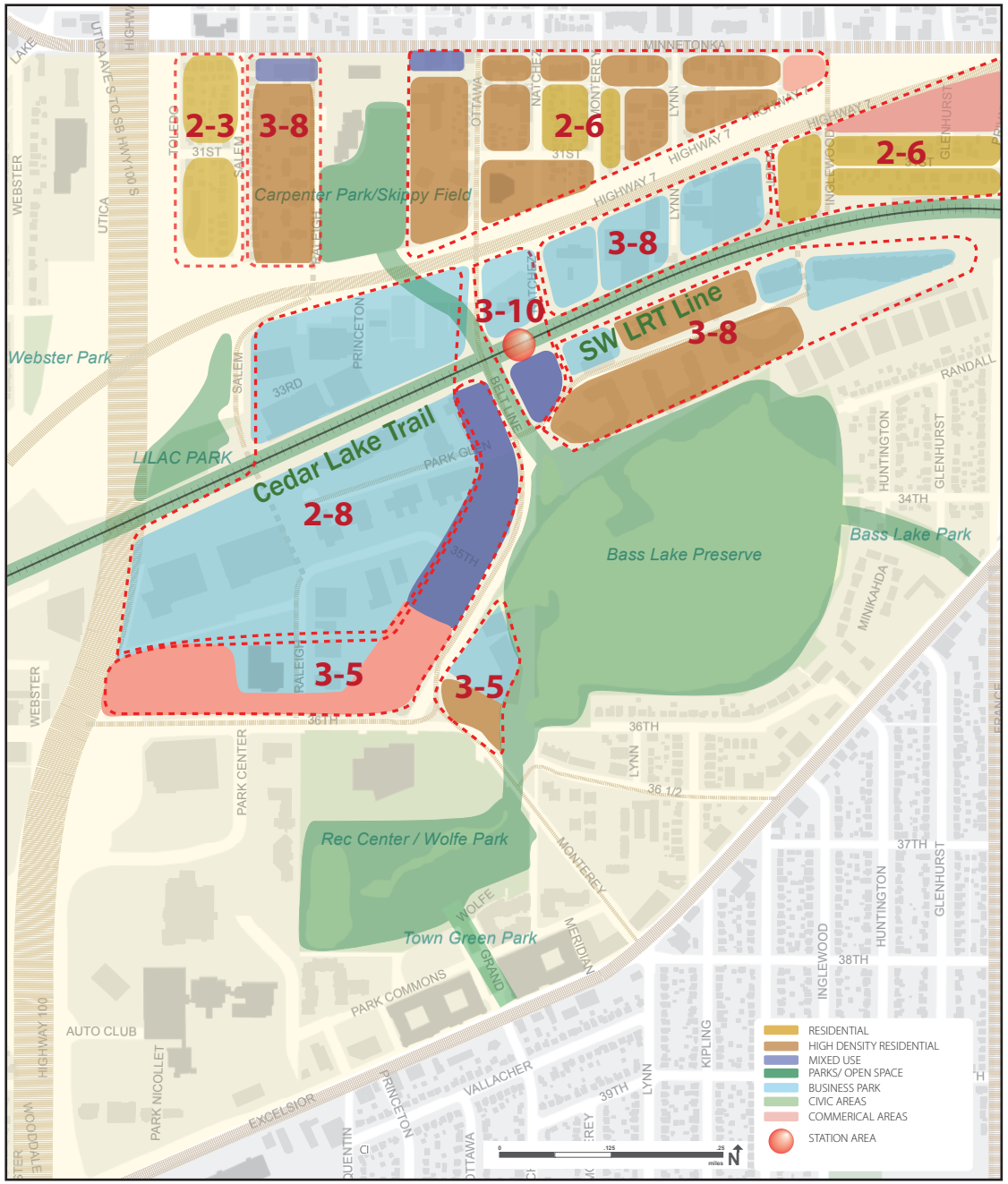


Figure 2.3: Preferred Building Heights Diagram shows the preferred number of floors/stories for buildings. Building heights could be increased over those shown above with use of the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process.

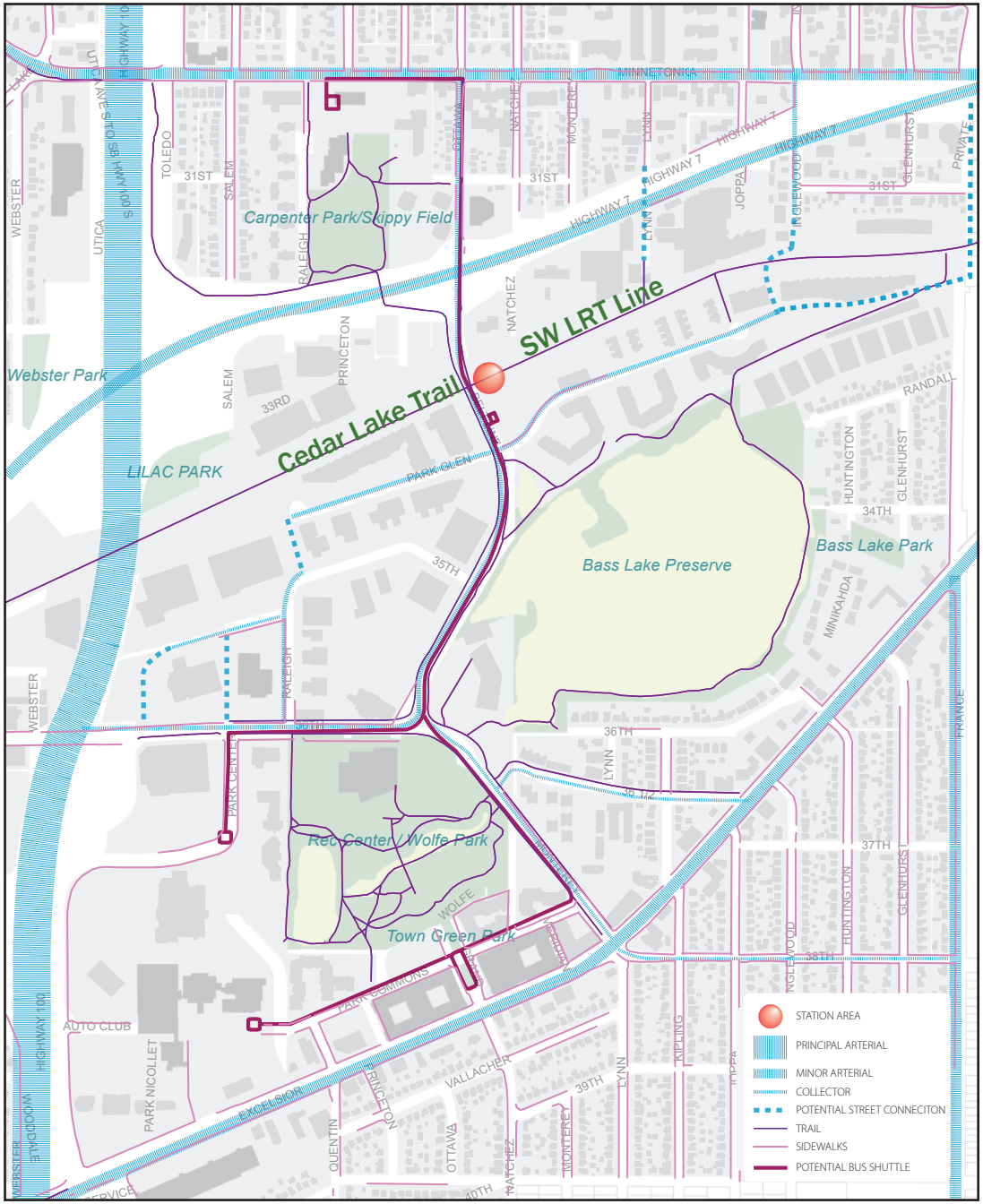


Figure 2.4: Potential Connectivity & Access Diagram

The Beltline area has a wealth of recreational and green space amenities, including Bass Lake Preserve, Cedar Lake Regional Trail, Wolfe Park, Carpenter Park/Skippy Field, and Lilac Park. Future development patterns are guided to improve the creation of a linked "Chain of Parks" system of green spaces and recreational destinations.

Establishing a unique identity for the Beltline Area is an important element of the future land use and development pattern. Four street gateway areas are envisioned for the Beltline area at Beltline Blvd/TH 7 (west), Minnetonka Blvd/CSAH 25 (east), Beltline Blvd/36th Street (south), and Ottawa/Minnetonka Blvd (north). The most important locations for creating the Beltline area's unique identity are along Beltline Boulevard, CSAH 25, around the future Beltline Transit Station, and at the four gateway areas.

Connectivity & Access Patterns

One of the major challenges of the Beltline Area is its poor connectivity and access. Barriers to connectivity include the existing rail line, CSAH 25's layout as a divided highway and frontage roads, limited north-south streets, extremely large "blocks", and Bass Lake Preserve. In general, it is very challenging to travel north-south within the Beltline area with only one option available – Beltline Boulevard. Although east-west travel is better, it is also limited especially south of the rail line/Cedar Lake Regional Trail. Park Glen Road dead-ends both east and west of Beltline Boulevard.

In general, the Beltline area should evolve into a walk/bike-friendly area that makes it very convenient and safe to get to the future Beltline Transit Station as well as Beltline's many other destinations. A significantly expanded pedestrian and bicycle network will be needed including sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use trails. The function and convenience of the Cedar Lake Trail for non-motorized recreation and transportation should be preserved and enhanced, if possible, as part of the Southwest LRT project. Thinking about


MARKET
YAC
YAC

Beltline Character Districts

3

The preferred development patterns for the Beltline area, which are described in Chapter 2, are based upon five somewhat distinct Beltline "character districts" that will be weaved together to create a vibrant transit-oriented urban center. These five character districts are:

- Beltline Boulevard Transit Street
- Beltline/Nordic Ware Business Park
- Bass Lake Preserve Pocket Neighborhood
- CSAH 25 South Wedge
- Triangle Neighborhood

The existing character of the Beltline area is dominated by its natural landscape features, particularly Bass Lake Preserve and the barriers created by the major highway and rail line that bisect the Beltlne area from east to west. These significant features have resulted in and define five distinct districts within the Beltline area. This chapter describes these five distinct yet complementary "character districts" that will continue to have somewhat different development patterns and character, but will be better connected in the future.

The vision for the Beltline area calls for increasing connectivity and reducing the barriers created by the major roadways, rail corridor and Bass Lake Preserve. One of the keys to achieving the future Beltline area vision is guiding future redevelopment and public improvements to fit the desired character of the overall area as well as the distinct places within the area. This vision for the Beltline Area to become a unique place with a cohesive identity calls for these five "character districts" to be connected together as an urban center. These distinct "character districts" warrant approaches to development and infrastructure improvements that are tailored to each district's unique conditions and character.

TRIANGLE NEIGHBORHOOD

BELTLINE BOULEVARD TRANSIT STREET

CSAH 25 SOUTH WEDGE

BASS LAKE PRESERVE POCKET NEIGHBORHOOD

BELTLINE/NORDIC WARE BUSINESS PARK

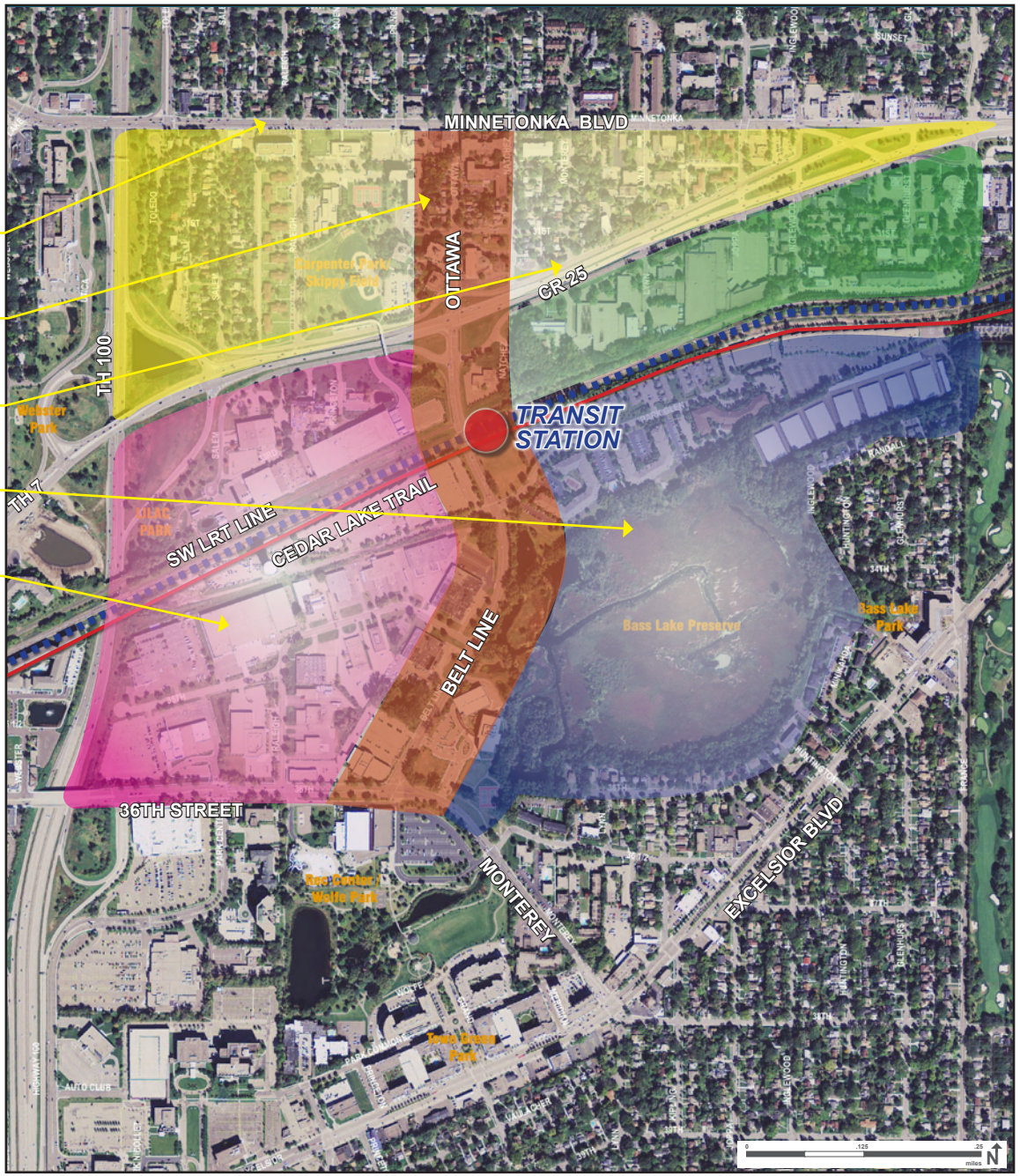


Figure 3.1: Beltline Character Districts

Beltline Boulevard Transit Street

Beltline Boulevard is envisioned as a transit-oriented street since it will be the primary north-south link for all transportation modes to the Beltline Transit Station. This area encompasses both sides of Beltline Boulevard/Ottawa Ave, approximately one-block in depth along each side, from 36th Street to Minnetonka Boulevard. Beltline Boulevard is currently the community's only north-south street connection east of Highway 100 that crosses the existing freight rail line/future LRT line and CSAH 25. Today, the character of the development along Beltline Boulevard is not very cohesive or memorable. As a 4-lane roadway with no parking, its purpose is primarily to provide a street connection across the rail line between CSAH 25 and 36th Street/Excelsior Boulevard. South of CSAH 25, all existing buildings are suburban in character with surface parking lots located between the street and the buildings, except for one. The Wolfe Lake Professional Center at the intersection of Beltline Boulevard and 36th Street is the exception (although its front door is not oriented to the street). Existing buildings are a mix of industrial, commercial and medical uses. North of CSAH 25, which is actually Ottawa Ave, the existing mix of buildings is generally oriented to the street. These buildings are primarily residential along with a commercial building and a former religious institution.

Beltline Boulevard's function, character and identity as a high quality transit-oriented street will be critical to transforming the Beltline Area into a transit-oriented area. In order to recreate Beltline Boulevard as the area's high quality transit-oriented street, the design of the street needs to accommodate and attract all modes of transportation, including driving, walking, bicycling and riding transit (LRT and connecting bus lines). Beltline Boulevard should be redesigned as a "complete street" and boulevard features that accommodate dedicated bike lanes/paths and sidewalks/paths on both sides and increased landscaping (in wide side boulevards and/or a median).

Due to Beltline Boulevard's close proximity to the future Beltline Transit Station and role as the primary connection street for transit services, future development along both sides of the street should be transit-oriented in use, scale and character. Future development should focus on higher density buildings that bring more people, residents and employees, to live and work within walking distance of the Beltline Transit Station. Taller buildings for office, residential, and mixed use (residential or office above retail) are appropriate along Beltline Boulevard/Ottawa. All buildings on properties adjacent to Beltline Boulevard should be street-oriented with minimal building setbacks, entry doors and windows along the street.

Figure 3.5: Beltline Boulevard Transit Street

Beltline/Nordic Ware Business Park

The Beltline/Nordic Ware Business Park is currently a major employment center consisting primarily of a mix of relatively lower scale manufacturing, assembly, processing, warehousing, distribution, office, retail and service uses. Located along Highway 100, this business park is one of the most visible areas in the City of St. Louis Park. This fact is highlighted by one of the community's most visible and historic landmarks, the concrete grain elevator that now bears the Nordic Ware name. This area is bounded by Highway 100 to the west, 36th Street to the south, Beltline Boulevard to the east, and CSAH 25 to the north. The Beltline/Nordic Ware Business Park occupies a strategic location at the intersection of Highway 100 and the CP Rail/Bass Lake Spur, as well as the future SW LRT line.

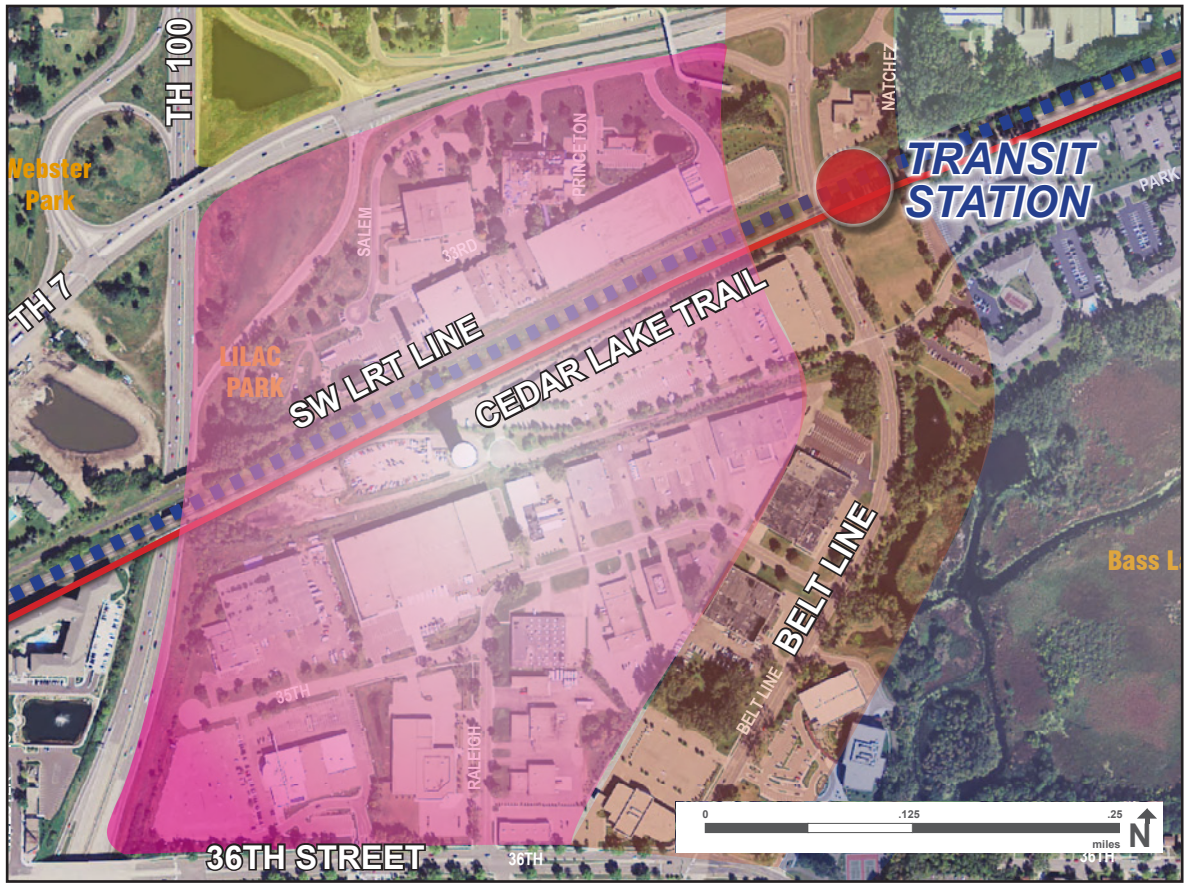


Figure 3.6: Beltline/Nordic Ware Business Park

The Beltline/Nordic Ware Business Park is intended to evolve into a higher intensity business park and employment center with convenient access to many desirable work place amenities, including the regional highway system, transit, regional trail system for commuting, local trails, green space, recreational facilities, and retail/restaurants. The City has designated this area as the community's largest future business park area. It is intended to accommodate a diverse mix of office and light industrial uses, higher density development, more jobs per acre, and higher quality site and building architectural design. Taller buildings are encouraged in the business park, in the range of 2-8 stories, and higher lot coverages to enable higher jobs per acre. Properties located along major community streets should develop with buildings oriented to these streets, including Beltline Boulevard, 36th Street, and CSAH 25. Buildings should be located relatively close to these streets and have pedestrian-oriented facades. Surface parking lots should not be placed along the major community streets. Parking structures are encouraged to increase development potential and create a more pedestrian/transit-oriented environment. This evolution to higher scale buildings has begun with Nordic Ware's facility expansion and a number of relatively recent multi-story buildings along Beltline Boulevard, including the Wolfe Lake Professional Center, Sheehan Corporate Center, and Melrose Institute.

Greater access and connectivity, both externally and internally, is envisioned to accommodate the traffic needs of higher development densities, relieve some traffic pressures on Beltline Boulevard (particularly truck), attract a greater diversity of uses, improve overall site design, and provide convenient connections to the Beltline Transit Station. The business park will have an internal street network that improves connectivity to CSAH 25 and 36th Street, and ultimately the TH100 interchanges, as well as Beltline Boulevard.

Bass Lake Preserve Pocket Neighborhood

The Bass Lake Preserve Pocket Neighborhood is currently dominated by high density residential uses but also contains a multi-story office building, single-level multi-tenant industrial buildings, and a large storage business. This area is bounded by Beltline Boulevard to the west, the LRT line/Cedar Lake Regional Trail to the north, Bass Lake Preserve/36th St to the south, and Bass Lake Preserve/France Ave to the east. Today, this linear area is hidden because of its location between the rail line and Bass Lake Preserve and its lack of any street connection to the east. Park Glen Road is the only street in this area, which dead-ends at its eastern end, and connects to Beltline Boulevard just south of the future Beltline Transit Station.

The future character of this pocket neighborhood should be oriented to the significant open space network surrounding the neighborhood, including Bass Lake Preserve to the south and Cedar Lake Regional Trail to the north. The neighborhood's beautiful natural setting should be protected and celebrated as part of any new development or redevelopment, including views between buildings and from building units, tree preservation, natural landscaping, and trail access. Higher density buildings, both residential and office, are desirable in this neighborhood due to its location next to major open spaces and the future LRT station.

Future development along Beltline Boulevard provides significant opportunity to connect this neighborhood to the future transit station, as well as create a stronger identity and entrance for this pocket neighborhood. The County's vacant site directly adjacent to the future transit station offers a golden opportunity to create a transit-oriented development, such as a mixed-use building with convenience retail/services, an outdoor plaza near the station, and a bike-related facility.

Increasing connectivity for all transportation modes will be important for improving the character of this pocket neighborhood. Linking Park Glen Road to a north-south street connection across the rail line will significantly increase access for the neighborhood's residents and employees. Park Glen Road should be redesigned from a dead-end street to an urban street with sidewalks, paths and/or lanes for walking and bicycling. The street should also accommodate on-street parking. More trail connections to the Bass Lake Preserve trail network will also be needed, particularly from development on the north side of Park Glen Road.

Figure 3.7: Bass Lake Preserve Pocket Neighborhood

CSAH 25 South Wedge

The CSAH 25 South Wedge is bounded by CSAH 25 to the north, Beltline Boulevard to the west, France Ave to the east, and the LRT line/Cedar Lake Regional Trail to the south. The CSAH 25 South Wedge is currently split up into three development types. Along the south side of CSAH 25, primarily highway character industrial buildings are set back from the highway from Joppa Ave west to Beltline Boulevard. East of Joppa Ave to France Ave, primarily highway character commercial buildings are set back from the highway. A frontage road further separates existing buildings from CSAH 25. A small residential pocket neighborhood is located south of the commercial area between Joppa Ave and France Ave, including a mix of low and high density housing. Today, this linear area is literally sandwiched between a big divided highway and a freight rail line with very challenging roadway access points to CSAH 25 and Beltline Boulevard.

This area's location directly adjacent to the future Beltline Transit Station and its existing highway character development make it an area with strong potential for attracting reinvestment and redevelopment that better fits with high quality transit access. The future identity of this area should be strongly linked to the Beltline Transit Station, evolving dramatically from its existing highway character to future development that is urban and transit-oriented in character. West of Lynn Ave, this area is envisioned to evolve into a higher density mixed-use area with strong pedestrian connections to the Beltline Transit Station. Mixed-use development is desirable to optimize the benefits of this site being adjacent to the future transit station, Beltline Boulevard and at the corner of a major crossroads area. Either office or residential over retail/services would be appropriate here. Since this area is somewhat separated from adjacent areas, this area should allow taller buildings to support higher density development adjacent to the transit station. East of Lynn Ave, higher density office development is appropriate along CSAH 25. East of Joppa Ave, commercial or office development is appropriate but should be complementary in scale to the existing residential pocket neighborhood to the south and east.

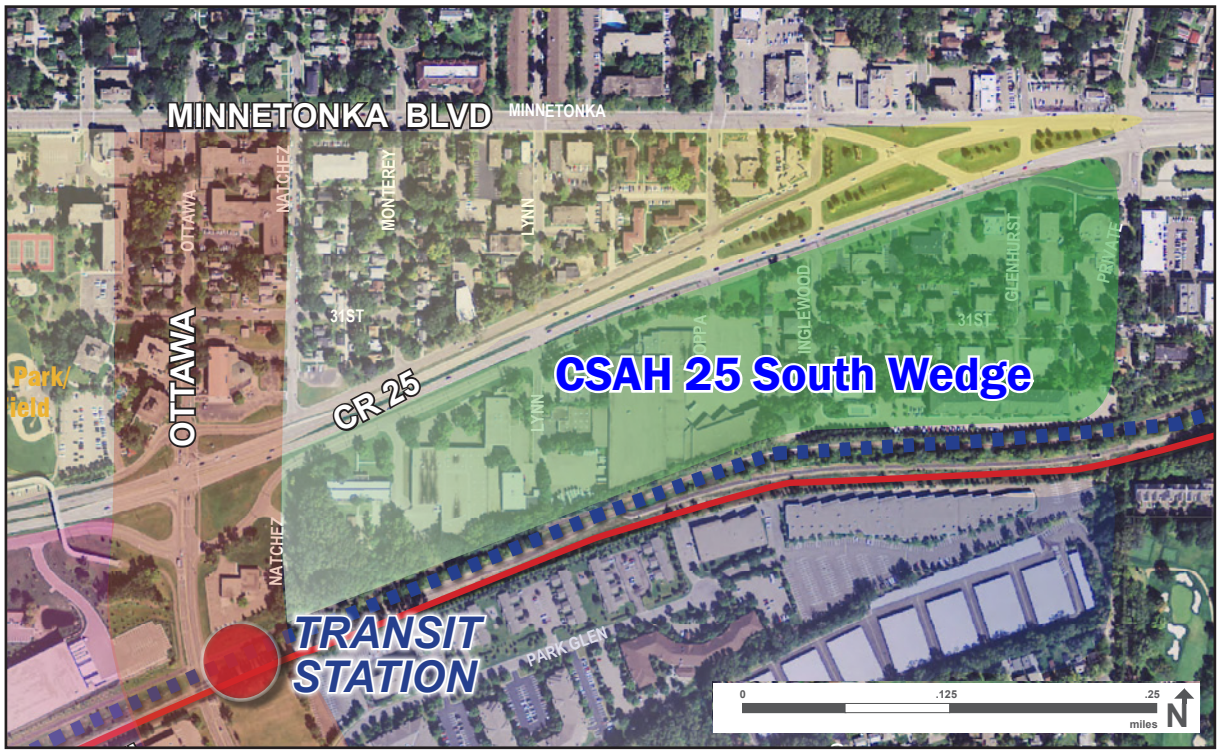


Figure 3.8: CSAH 25 South Wedge

A major factor in this evolution will need to be the transformation of the existing CSAH 25 divided highway with frontage roads on both sides to more of an urban boulevard without frontage roads and with more local connectivity. Access to this area is envisioned to change significantly with the potential removal of the frontage road, potential addition of a "backage road", and the potential addition of north-south connections at Inglewood Ave, Joppa Ave and/or Lynn Ave. At least one of these connections would ideally cross the LRT line to connect to Park Glen Road and the Beltline Transit Station. In the future, buildings should be strongly oriented to CSAH 25. Access to CSAH 25 should be improved for this area with streets, public or private that link directly to CSAH 25 at regular intervals but not necessarily every block. Buildings should be located relatively close to CSAH 25 and have pedestrian-oriented facades. Surface parking lots should not be placed along CSAH 25. Parking structures are encouraged to increase development potential and create a more pedestrian/transit-oriented environment.

Triangle Neighborhood

The Triangle neighborhood is one of the community's oldest and most diverse in terms of development. The neighborhood contains a broad mix of housing types from high density to single-family houses, the civic campus (City Hall and Police Station), Carpenter Park, Skippy Field, a former religious institution building, and small commercial/office uses scattered along Minnetonka Boulevard. This area is bounded by CSAH 25 to the south, TH100 to the west, Minnetonka Boulevard/CSAH 5 to the north, and France Ave to the east.

The existing CSAH 25 divided highway with frontage roads on both sides creates a major barrier between the Triangle neighborhood and the rest of the Beltline Area to the south, including the location of the future transit station. This roadway and its frontage roads are very challenging to cross as a driver, walker and bicyclist. Beltline Boulevard is currently the only street connection between the Triangle neighborhood and the area south of the rail line/Cedar Lake Regional Trail. The existing pedestrian bridge over CSAH 25 provides a safer and more pleasant crossing for people on the west side of the neighborhood. A major factor in improving the neighborhood's connectivity and access to the south will need to be the transformation of the existing CSAH 25 to more of an urban boulevard highway without frontage roads, possibly similar to Excelsior Boulevard. The existing frontage road should be considered for removal and replaced with the appropriate number of street connections to a redesigned CSAH 25.

Changes to CSAH 25 could provide a valuable opportunity to significantly improve the area along CSAH 25, particularly between Ottawa Ave and Joppa Ave. Any redevelopment along this edge of the primarily residential neighborhood should be residential and reflect the existing traditional block pattern. This area is within walking distance of the future transit station, so new high density residential development would be appropriate here. The Triangle neighborhood's existing broad diversity of housing types opens up opportunities for adding new and interesting housing options to the neighborhood. The block at the NE corner of CSAH 25 and Ottawa Ave, which is a vacant religious building, may present a valuable opportunity for a transit-oriented residential redevelopment project and significantly enhancing the identity of the Beltline Area.

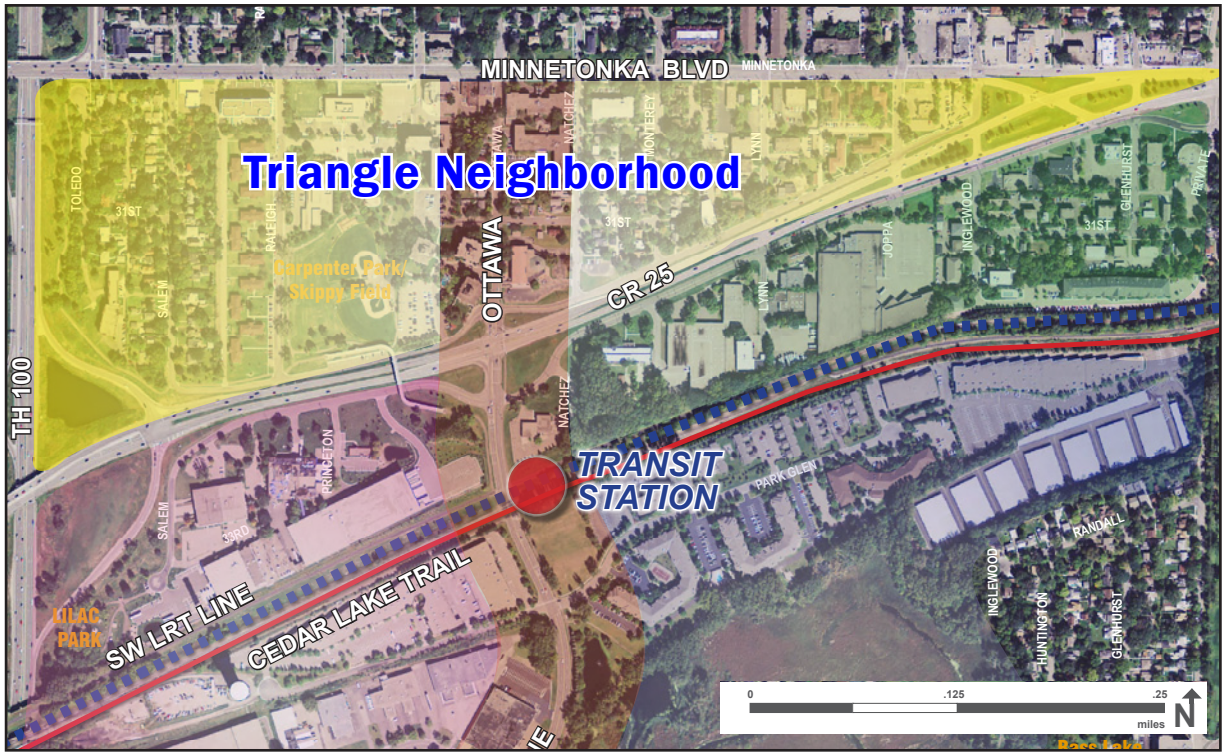


Figure 3.9: Triangle Neighborhood


RIGHT

Design Guidelines

Purpose & Intent of Design Guidelines

The purpose of these design guidelines is to provide a proactive tool for communicating and achieving the community's future vision and desired character for the Beltline area. They are intended to guide reinvestments in both public and private properties in ways that will achieve the Beltline Area Vision and Guiding Principles established in Chapter 2. Design guidelines are a proactive tool for communicating the community's vision for reinvestment in the Beltline area that balances the community's goals, neighborhood concerns, the new LRT amenity, redevelopment market realities, and sensitivity to the site's existing context. The design guidelines provide direction while leaving room for individual expression and flexibility that is needed as part of the redevelopment process and for creating a varied and dynamic built environment.

Organization of the Design Guidelines

The design guidelines are organized into two broad categories: Public Systems/Spaces and Private Development. Chapter 4 addresses Public Systems & Spaces design elements, including streets, walk/bike network, parks & open spaces, LRT station, public parking, signage, utilities and stormwater management. Chapter 5 addresses Private Development design elements, including site design, buildings, private off-street parking, service/delivery/storage areas, signage and lighting. Each design element has goal statements, design guidelines and photos that visually illustrate the desired future character of the Beltline area.

Using the Design Guidelines

The City's Zoning Code and Subdivision Code regulations as well as Comprehensive Plan land use guidance have legal standing related to future redevelopment on the site. The intent is for new development, redevelopment and public improvements in the Beltline area to substantially conform to these Design Guidelines. The design guidelines are not, however, legally mandated requirements that must be met in order to obtain project approvals. They depict preferred conditions and represent the best case conditions for redevelopment. As such they are the foundation of dialogue with development interests and will influence future development on this property.

Public Systems & Spaces Design Guidelines

4

Overview

The Public Systems & Spaces Design Guidelines describe the goals and provide guidance for development of the public environment. The public spaces and systems represent the organizing elements that give shape, form and identity to the Beltline area and provide a framework in which private development, redevelopment and rehabilitation occurs. The Design Guidelines will guide the development of all future above ground, visible elements of the public environment including street network and design, sidewalks and trails, public gathering spaces, public transit and parking facilities, storm water management and utility structures.

A. Streets

Because streets occupy the most space within the public right-of-way, and they are the primary conduits for movement, they have a significant impact on how people experience a place. Since streets are shared by many users, the guidelines offer a balanced set of recommendations to enhance the environment and functionality for all user groups (pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, trucks, buses and automobiles) and guidance for future street improvements.

Today, the area surrounding the proposed Beltline station is challenged with access and circulation issues. The lack of north-south roadways, long dead end streets, super-sized blocks, expansive CSAH 25 roadway width, and existing freight and future LRT tracks have a significant impact on the ability to travel to, from and within the station area. Additionally, the lack of continuous pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the area discourages alternatives modes of travel.

As redevelopment interest increases in the area and public infrastructure investments become a priority, measures should be taken to provide an integrated system of "complete streets" that promote the effective, safe and convenient access and circulation for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, as well as trucks, buses and automobiles.

Incorporate "complete street" features into new streets

Unify streetscapes with street trees, lighting and furniture

Goals

The design guidelines for public street improvements are based on the following goals:

- Provide a connected network of streets that offer alternative routes of travel to, from and within the Beltline area.
- Accommodate all modes of travel including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit, automobiles, and trucks.
- Enhance street gateways into the Beltline area.
- Improve connections to the future Beltline Transit Station.
- Enhance pedestrian safety, convenience and comfort.
- Visually unify the streetscape with street trees, lighting, street furniture.
- Reduce visual clutter, such as billboards and overhead utilities.

Design Guidelines

1. STREET NETWORK & DESIGN

a. Expand the street network, especially more north-south streets, to reduce traffic congestion and speeds on Beltline Boulevard and make it easier to travel within the district.

b. Incorporate "complete street" design features in new streets and improvements to existing streets that accommodate all modes of travel.

c. Add roadway and streetscape design features that calm traffic, particularly in high volume traffic areas and residential areas, such as narrower travel lanes, on-street parking, street trees/plantings, bump-outs, clearly marked pedestrian crossings, refuge islands, and buildings that face the street and are located next to the sidewalk.

d. Redesign Beltline Boulevard to enhance its function and character, transforming the street into an attractive, landscaped, multi-modal boulevard with continuous sidewalks, bikeways, transit facilities, lighting, street furnishings, public art and attractive signage.

e. Promote the redesign of CSAH 25, east of Beltline Blvd/Ottawa Ave, to significantly narrow the right-of-way to create an attractive arterial boulevard that accommodates the needs of vehicle travel, as well as pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders.

f. Promote additional street crossings and signalized intersections along CSAH 25 between Ottawa Ave/ Beltline Blvd and France Ave which will calm traffic and provide more connections across CSAH 25.

g. Encourage further study of other potential street realignments such as the Beltline/36th Street intersection, grade separation of Beltline Blvd from the LRT line/Cedar Lake Trail, connection to 32nd Street in Minneapolis, etc.

2. SIDEWALKS

a. Provide continuous sidewalks along all streets and minimize the impacts of curb cuts.

b. Provide sidewalks that address the needs of people with differing physical abilities, such as curb ramps, smooth pavement materials, adequate width, etc.

c. Provide adequate sidewalk width for anticipated pedestrian traffic levels.

d. Promote better sidewalk connections to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail.

e. Where feasible, provide a sidewalk separated from the curb with landscaping between the curb and the sidewalk.

f. In mixed-use areas with ground level retail and restaurant uses, provide a sufficient pedestrian zone to accommodate pedestrian movement while allowing for street furnishings, lighting, plantings and outdoor restaurant seating.

3. WALK/BIKE CROSSINGS

a. Provide a sufficient number of marked walk/bike crossings to provide safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists to the transit station from homes, shops and businesses in the Beltline area.

b. Clearly mark walk/bike crossings with reflective paint, special paving materials, light signal and/or signage alerting motorists to the walk/bike crossing.

c. Provide pedestrian activated countdown crossing lights at key signalized intersections.

Accommodate all modes of travel

Enhance pedestrian safety and comfort

Provide clearly marked pedestrian crossings

Consider opportunities to incorporate marked bike boxes

Provide bike connections to Cedar Lake Trail

Provide bike parking facilities

Provide dedicated bikeways

d. Explore the potential for incorporating medians or refuge islands for pedestrians/bicyclists in new arterial/collector streets and improvements to existing arterial/collector streets.

e. Promote traffic signal timing throughout the area that allows sufficient time for walk/bike crossings while maintaining efficient traffic flow.

4. BIKE FACILITIES

a. Provide bikeways on streets that can accommodate them and where they will fill in gaps in the existing bike network, including Beltline Blvd, Minnetonka Blvd, 36th Street, Monterey Drive, France Ave, and future new street connections.

b. Indicate on-street bikeways with special pavement markings to improve visibility of bicyclists.

c. Explore the potential for incorporating marked bike boxes for bicyclists to stop in at signalized intersections where feasible.

d. Where on-street bikeways are not feasible, investigate the potential for multi-use off-street trails to provide bike connections.

e. Provide additional bikeway connections to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail.

f. Provide bike parking/storage facilities at or near public facilities, including civic buildings, parks, transit stations/shelters/stop and other major destinations.

g. Promote development of a bike station that provides a broad range of amenities, such as covered bike parking, air pumps, drinking fountain, and possibly shower/locker facilities.

5. BUS FACILITIES

a. Promote the siting and design of bus shelters and stops as integral elements of the streetscape with features that use patterns and materials that reflect the Beltline area's unique identity.

b. Promote safe, secure and identifiable bus shelters and stops with lighting for safety and clear signage.

c. Encourage the investigation of potential circulator bus routes and stops that connect the future Beltline Transit Station with major destinations within the Beltline area.

d. Encourage the provision of public seating at each bus stop.

e. Coordinate provision of public bicycle parking/storage facilities at each bus shelter/stop.

6. TRAFFIC CALMING

a. Design new streets and improvements to existing streets with "complete street" features, improving circulation and access for all modes of travel and calming traffic by more evenly distributing it.

b. Where feasible, construct curb "bump-outs" in high pedestrian traffic areas and residential areas to shorten crosswalk distances, calm traffic and provide areas for street furnishings.

c. Explore the feasibility of adding on-street parking on Beltline Boulevard and Park Glen Road, which will help calm traffic and provide a safe zone between pedestrians and vehicle traffic.

d. Encourage new buildings to be located up to the sidewalk to make the street feel narrower, which will provide an increased sense of enclosure, put more "eyes on the street", and calm traffic.

e. Incorporate street tree planting along all streets.

Provide bus transit that connects the station with other major destinations in the area


Encourage minimal building setbacks to provide intimate, pedestrian- scaled spaces


Install curb "bumb-outs" in high pedestrian traffic areas

Enhance Beltline area's identity with attractive street lighting

Street lights should be able to accommodate banners, baskets and holiday decorations

Match street lighting with Park Commons

7. LIGHTING

a. A consistent and attractive street lighting theme should be installed on all public streets to provide safe lighting and to enhance the Beltline area's identity.

b. Unique and pedestrian-scaled lighting should be provided in pedestrian zones including public sidewalks and gathering spaces.

c. Pedestrian-scaled light fixtures should be installed at regular intervals, frequent enough and of such illumination levels to provide safe levels of light on public sidewalks and gathering spaces, without negatively impacting adjacent residential uses.

d. Overhead street lights provided for vehicular traffic needs should be coordinated with the pedestrian-scaled light fixtures.

e. Existing and new street light poles should accommodate banners, hanging flower baskets and holiday decorations that will improve the visual character and identity of the street, including Beltline Blvd, Ottawa Ave, Minnetonka Blvd, CSAH 25, 36th Street, and Monterey Drive.

8. STREET PLANTINGS

a. Street tree plantings should be provided on all streets to improve the street's pedestrian character by visually reducing the scale of the street, creating a sense of enclosure for the sidewalk, and provide a buffer between the sidewalk and vehicle traffic.

b. Street tree species and spacing should be consistent on both sides of the street within a given block.

c. Groundcover plantings should be encouraged in residential areas between the curb and the public sidewalk.

d. Plant materials should be selected to minimize visual obstruction of businesses facing the street.

e. Color and flowering of plant materials should be considered for enhancing the Beltline area's unique identity and seasonal change.

f. Plant materials, fencing, or landscape improvements greater than 18 inches in height should not be permitted within sight lines for any intersection of a street or driveway.

g. Artificial plant materials should not be used.

Design streets using consistent tree species and spacing to create unified blocks

Planting areas should be considered to enhance stormwater infiltration

Provide high quality, attractive site furnishings in parks and plazas

Enhance community identity with public art

9. STREET FURNISHINGS

a. Provide a consistent palette (style, materials and color) of street furnishings where appropriate (seating, trash receptacles, bike racks, etc.) to enhance the Beltline area's identity and link it to the streetscape character of Park Commons.

b. Street furnishings should be attractive, well designed, made of durable materials and provide user comfort.

c. Public seating and waste receptacles should be provided to serve bus shelters/stops, building entry areas and public spaces such as plazas and parks.

d. Where space is limited, sidewalk benches should be oriented parallel to the curb line so as not to impede pedestrian movement.

e. Public bike parking/storage facilities should be provided to promote alternative modes of transportation and be located near transit stops and building entries.

10. COMMUNITY IDENTITY/PUBLIC ART

a. Streetscape elements and screening fence materials are encouraged to incorporate artistic design elements, forms, patterns, colors, lighting and materials that communicate the Beltline area's character and identity.

b. Public art is encouraged in publicly accessible plazas and along significant pedestrian streets to create focal points, emphasize a gathering space, or communicate something about the Beltline area's character, identity or history.

c. Key street gateways should incorporate public art, landscaping, lighting, signage and furnishings within the public right-of-way, including Beltline/CSAH 25, Beltline/36th, Minnetonka Blvd/CSAH 25, Minnetonka Blvd/Ottawa Ave, Cedar Lake Regional Trail/France Ave and Cedar Lake Regional Trail/TH100.

B. Transit Station

The transit station will play an important role in the future development and redevelopment possibilities within the Beltline area. The more attractive, functional and connected the station is to its surrounding context, the greater the chances are for attracting high ridership levels for the transit system and maximizing the benefits of high quality transit services for the surrounding neighborhoods. The Beltline Transit Station design should be sensitive to its context and provide facilities and amenities for transit riders as well as surrounding residents and business owners. The immediate transit station area offers a unique opportunity to incorporate a significant open space/plaza that can serve as a community gathering space adjacent to the transit station and in the center of the district. Buildings, open spaces/plazas and streetscapes adjacent to the transit station should be designed to complement each other and create a unified place that reflects the Beltline area's unique character and identity. Design opportunities include references to Beltline's landscape, historical and cultural features, such as Bass Lake Preserve, Lilac Park, WPA highway construction, Nordic Ware, Park Commons and the Cedar Lake Regional Trail. The transit station and adjacent facilities should create an inviting, safe, and comfortable environment for transit users that encourages regular use of the transit system. The transit station design guidelines are intended to provide input for the preliminary engineering and design phases of the Southwest LRT project.

Goals

The design guidelines for the Beltline LRT Transit Station are based on the following goals:

- Provide a transit station that is convenient and accessible to a wide range of users including pedestrians, cyclists, motorists, bus riders, and the mobility- and sensory-impaired population.
- Provide an innovative and user-friendly station by incorporating supporting facilities such as waiting rooms, restrooms and ticket facilities.
- Provide pleasant, covered platform areas and shelter from environmental and micro-climate factors prevalent in the region (i.e. sun/heat, wind, rain, snow, hail, etc.)
- Provide aesthetically pleasing and visually engaging surroundings that people will enjoy while waiting for the trains to arrive.
- Maintain quality design standards through the design and construction process so that the station facilities will endure public use for many years.
- Provide safe and secure places for the commuter during day and night.
- Provide that all areas are barrier-free for the physically challenged.
- Accommodate for safe and practical circulation methods between the various station components and parking/drop-off areas.
- Incorporate the use of sustainable planning, building, and implementation practices to ensure long-term use and cost-effectiveness.

Design Guidelines

1. TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT

a. Transit-oriented development should be promoted near the transit station. Development should emphasize a greater mix of land uses and higher density development that enable more people to have convenient access to the transit station and create a more walk/bike-friendly environment.

Provide pleasant, covered areas to protect from environmental conditions

Promote transit-oriented development near the transit station

Maximize access to the Cedar Lake Trail

Prioritize pedestrian and bike transit near the station area

Provide adequate bike parking

Provide intermodal transit connections near the transit station area

2. WALK/BIKE ACCESSIBILITY

a. Support investigation of the feasibility of grade separating the Southwest LRT rail line and/or Cedar Lake Regional Trail from Beltline Boulevard to provide better access to the transit station and reduce automobile conflicts with pedestrians, bicyclists and transit users.

b. The station should incorporate design strategies and elements that make it easily accessible for all travel modes and riders – pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, commuters and the mobility and sensory impaired.

c. Enhanced walk/bike connectivity to the transit station should be a high priority for any public improvements in the Beltline area.

d. Pedestrians and bicyclists should receive the highest priority of all travel modes near the Beltline Transit Station. The transit station environment should be designed with clear and unobstructed walk/bike connections to the station area.

e. Outdoor plaza spaces should be incorporated into the design of areas adjacent to the transit station to provide open areas for heavy pedestrian movement and gathering.

f. A bike station with adequate bike parking/storage and rentals (e.g. Nice Ride program) should be considered near the Beltline Transit Station.

3. BUS/SHUTTLE ACCESSIBILITY

a. Intermodal transit connections for bus and shuttle services should be provided near the LRT transit station to make bus/LRT transfers easy and generate increased ridership of the overall transit system.

b. Provide convenient and adequate drop-off and pick-up areas near the transit station (within 400-600 feet) for "Kiss and Ride" transit riders.

c. Design drop-off and pick-up areas so as to reduce conflicts with pedestrians and bicyclists at the transit station and create a walk/bike-friendly transit station environment.

4. SAFETY, SECURITY AND COMFORT

a. Incorporate Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategies to minimize crime and ensure safety and security near the transit station.

b. Areas where transit users congregate (waiting areas) should be designed to offer shade and protection from weather elements such as wind, sun, rain and snow.

c. The transit station and all related facilities should be visible and well lit for safety of transit riders at all times of the day and night.

d. Provide safe bike/walk crossings to the transit station.

e. Provide clear and visible wayfinding systems near the transit station to provide direction for transit users and to reduce conflicts between pedestrians, bicyclists and vehicles.

5. COMMUNITY IDENTITY/PUBLIC ART

a. Advocate for the transit station building and associated facilities to be designed to complement the context, scale and character of the Beltline area and enhance its unique identity.

b. Encourage the use of building features and materials that complement Beltline's unique character and history, such as the TH100 roadside parks, historic concrete grain elevator, Bass Lake Preserve, and Excelsior & Grand.

c. Adjacent open spaces/plazas should be designed to complement the transit station and associated facilities.

d. Promote the incorporation of public art reflecting Beltline's unique character, identity and history near the transit station, as part of the building design and/or incorporated within the open spaces/plazas adjacent to the transit station.

Provide safe, comfortable and attractive transit facilities

Provide highly visible wayfinding signage near the transit station

Provide clearly marked connections to Cedar Lake Trail

Provide enhanced walk/bike connections to major destinations

Design sidewalks, trails and bike lanes to ensure safety and reduce conflict with vehicles

C. Walk/Bike Network

Accessibility and connectivity for a wide range of users is a key factor to the success of the Beltline area. A non-fragmented and integrated walk/bike network within the Beltline area will encourage alternative modes of travel and can increase ridership of the transit systems that serve the area. A comprehensive system of sidewalks, trails and bikeways will also support active lifestyles of the residents and employees living and working in the Beltline area.

Today, the area surrounding the proposed Beltline Transit Station is challenged with walk/bike access and circulation issues. Measures should be taken to enhance walk/bike connectivity to, from and within the Beltline area by designing and implementing a comprehensive system of sidewalks, trails and bikeways. The expanded walk/bike network needs to provide better connections for both residential areas near the transit station and the Beltline employment center.

Goal

Provide a safe, convenient, and attractive walk/bike network that accommodates and encourages pedestrian and bike movement, and provides connectivity to all land uses and major destinations within the Beltline area.

Design Guidelines

1. LOCAL NETWORK

a. Circulation systems in the Beltline area should emphasize safe and convenient walk/bike movement by providing pedestrian-friendly, landscaped streets and trails.

b. New walk/bike paths should connect with existing trails and sidewalks, providing connections to the network where gaps currently exist.

c. Consider formalizing existing informal walk/bike paths.

d. Design features of the built environment in the Beltline area should emphasize the scale and activity of walking and biking.

e. Sidewalks, trails and bikeways should be planned and developed to ensure safety, reducing conflicts with vehicles where necessary, and providing access to important destinations. Consider grade separated crossings where appropriate and feasible.

f. Design and implementation of trails, sidewalks and paths should conform to American with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines and be responsive to individuals with mobility limitations.

g. Provide public bike parking/storage facilities at key locations to encourage bike travel, particularly near major destinations, trailheads and at the Beltline Transit Station.

2. CEDAR LAKE REGIONAL TRAIL

a. Provide safe, convenient, accessible and clearly marked connections to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail from the transit station and all other sidewalks, trails and bikeways within the Beltline area.

b. Provide safe and clearly marked walk/bike crossings between the Cedar Lake Regional Trail, Beltline Boulevard and the LRT rail line.

c. Support investigation of the appropriateness and feasibility of a grade separated crossing where the Cedar Lake Regional Trail intersects with Beltline Boulevard.

d. Explore design solutions to improve local trail connections to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail; in particular, the likely fencing along both sides of the rail line can present a barrier to trail connections.

D. Open Space, Parks and Plazas

Open space, parks and plaza spaces provide the community with valuable common places for public gathering and recreation. They may also provide the places to host community events and performances. If designed properly, they may also serve stormwater management and infiltration needs.

Today, there are several significant parks and open spaces within the Beltline area including the Bass Lake Preserve, Wolfe Park, Lilac Park, Carpenter Park/Skippy Field and the Cedar Lake Trail. These parks and open spaces help shape the character and identity of the Beltline Area and provide the community with important places to gather and recreate. They also provide important environmental functions. The goal for the area is not to add additional parks and open spaces but to focus on upgrading and improving these important assets and providing better connections to each park and open space destination.

While the area contains significant parks and open spaces, there will be a need for additional gathering spaces/ plazas near the proposed transit station. The development of a well-designed and appropriately sized and located plaza should be considered as design and development of the transit station occurs.

Goals

The design guidelines for parks, open space and plazas in the Beltline area are based on the following goals:

- Improve and enhance existing parks and open spaces within the Beltline area to meet the future needs of a growing transit-oriented regional employment center and residential neighborhoods.
- Strengthen connections between existing parks and open spaces in the Beltline area and to adjacent neighborhoods and businesses.
- Encourage the development of a publicly accessible outdoor plaza space for public circulation and gathering near the Beltline Transit Station. The plaza should be designed to safely and comfortably accommodate circulation of transit riders, trail users and small community gatherings.

Design Guidelines

1. PARKS AND OPEN SPACES

a. Improve and enhance the performance and function of existing public spaces for their intended use by residents employees and visitors, including public gathering, recreation and/or environmental functions.

b. Provide enhanced connectivity to, from and between existing parks and open spaces in the area, particularly Bass Lake Preserve/George Haun Trail, Wolfe Park, Lilac Park, Carpenter Park/Skippy Field and Cedar Lake Regional Trail.

c. Manage and maintain parks and open spaces to be easily accessible and comfortable for as much of the year as possible. They should provide shade in summer, sun in winter and protection from wind at all times of the year. Consider establishing a special service district for parks/ open spaces if needed to achieve an enhanced level of maintenance.

d. Park amenities such as restrooms, water fountains, and protected seating areas should be considered to provide comfort for park users and promote increased park use.

e. Consider opportunities to integrate public art, site furnishings, site lighting and signage where appropriate.

Provide attractive publicly accessible space near the transit station

Provide connectivity between various parks and open spaces

Utilize high quality paving materials

2. PLAZAS

a. Encourage the provision of a future publicly accessible outdoor plaza near the proposed Beltline Transit Station for public gathering and community events. The size and location of the plaza should be appropriately designed to accommodate people waiting for transit, community gathering, and outdoor dining.

b. Outdoor plaza paving materials should be high quality, durable materials such as, but not limited to, patterned concrete, stone, or concrete unit pavers.

Design plazas, parks and open areas to have adequate seating, sun exposure and shade

c. Buildings and storefronts/office entrances should be oriented to outdoor plaza space.

d. Specific pavement systems should be selected and designed to minimize long term maintenance, minimize the effects of freeze thaw damage, reduce conflicts with snow removal. Use pervious paving systems that increase permeability of storm water where appropriate.

e. Ornamental fountains/water features or public art are encouraged as focal elements in outdoor plazas.

f. Provide adequate levels of shade tree planting and public seating to provide comfort and ensure the space is utilized.

g. Provide adequate site lighting to ensure safety and security at all times of the day/night in outdoor plaza spaces.

h. Encourage small outdoor gathering spaces adjacent to sidewalks, particularly near restaurants, cafes and other small businesses.

i. All publicly accessible outdoor plazas should be sited and designed to encourage frequent use, such as easy access, location on a pedestrian corridor, safety and visibility, sunny exposure, and locations near building entries.

E. Public Parking

Public parking is an important component to the future Beltline area, particularly to promote successful transit use. The amount and type of parking facilities to address the needs of transit users will be determined by the City and the Southwest LRT project office. On-street parking is an important public parking element in the district for street level businesses. It provides convenient, visible parking adjacent to retail businesses.

Goal

Provide adequate and well-designed public parking facilities to service public transit users at the Beltline Transit Station and street level retail businesses within the Beltline area.

Design Guidelines

a. Public parking facilities should be planned for and designed in coordination with existing and future public transit facilities, including LRT and bus transit facilities.

b. A combination of on-street public parking and off-street public parking structures should be encouraged to help meet parking requirements in the Beltline area.

c. Provide well designed and convenient parking structures to service the Beltline Transit Station.

d. Public parking structures should be designed to include other ground level uses that face significant publicly accessible outdoor spaces/plazas or streets. These uses should be compatible with and encourage use of the adjacent outdoor plaza spaces.

e. Public parking facilities should communicate district identity through the use of patterns, forms, colors and materials, consistent with other design elements in the public realm.

f. Public parking facilities should be easily accessible and identifiable.

g. District signage should be utilized to identify public parking.

h. Design parking facilities to limit conflicts between vehicles and pedestrians.

i. Parking garage mechanical systems should be screened to minimize visual disturbance from public view.

j. Landscaping and other screening devices are encouraged to buffer parking structures at the street level from pedestrian view.

k. Discourage the development of surface and/or structured parking adjacent to the street. If it is necessary to develop parking adjacent to the street, require the parking lot design and ornamental fencing and plantings to screen parking areas from street views.

Provide on-street public parking

Public parking structures designed with active ground level uses

Provide signage controls within the public realm

Provide historic/cultural interpretive signage

F. Signage

Signage is an important and visible element in the public landscape. If sited and designed properly, it can provide important information for people and enhance community identity.

Goal

Promote high quality, comprehensive and attractive sign and graphic design to provide district identity, information and understandable wayfinding in the Beltline area.


Provide trail signage

Wayfinding signage should orient visitors within the Beltline District

Design Guidelines

a. Create a public signage and wayfinding master plan that identifies key signage locations and strategies for communicating the Beltline area's identity, entry, destinations, routes, etc.

b. Signage lighting, typography, color and materials should reflect common themes relating to the unique destinations, identity and character of the Beltline area.

c. Signage materials should be constructed of high quality, attractive and durable materials.

d. Signs should creatively use two and three dimensional form, profile, and iconographic representation.

e. Signage size should be appropriate to the message being communicated.

f. Public signs should be located within the public right-of-way and/or on other public property or structures.

g. Public signage system should provide information and wayfinding for all users (vehicles, transit, bicycles and pedestrians).

h. Avoid visual conflicts with adjacent residential uses whenever possible.

i. Avoid visual conflicts with sight lines for traffic safety.

G. Stormwater Management

Managing stormwater effectively is critical to the ecological function and public safety of the public landscape in the Beltline area. There have been many advancements in the area of stormwater management that should be considered in the Beltline area such as rain water gardens, permeable pavements, green roofs, bioretention/infiltration areas, etc. The use of these low impact design (LID) strategies can lead to water conservation, groundwater recharge and reductions in the cost of stormwater infrastructure and maintenance.

Goal

To design and implement a storm water management system that collects and filters storm water, improves water quality, reuses the water resource for other needs, reduces infrastructure and long term maintenance costs and provides a valuable aesthetic amenity for the Beltline area.

Design Guidelines

a. Integrate the storm water management systems and community open space to provide unique public and private amenities.

b. Incorporate rain garden systems to catch and filter storm water in public spaces like streetscapes, plazas and parking lot planting islands.

c. Where feasible, install non-traditional swales with natural meanders and stone check dams to slow water runoff, creating visual amenities for the area.

d. Where feasible, reuse stored storm water supply for the irrigation of public spaces.

e. Plant pond edges with native plantings to discourage geese from using sodded areas and create a natural landscape identity.

f. Encourage the use of green roofs in new building construction to reduce storm water runoff.

g. Design all construction areas to minimize impacts to water quality in drainage areas adjacent to the construction site.

Incorporate rain gardens in parking lot islands

Promote creative stormwater management techniques

Screen utility structures with planted landscapes, fencing or other screening devices

H. Utilities

Adequate utility development is important to the function and operation of the Beltline area businesses and residences. As development, redevelopment and rehabilitation of public and private areas occurs within the district, utility upgrades may be necessary. In the event that utility construction is needed, new utility lines and above ground structures should be strategically designed, located and constructed to reduce the visual impacts on the character and identity of the public realm.

Goal

Provide a fully operational, complete and integrated system of public utilities (water, sewer, waste water) to adequately serve the Beltline area. Design the system in coordination with other public improvements and locate above ground structures carefully so that they do not become visual detriments to the character and identity of the area.

Design Guidelines

a. Integrate future water, sewer, and waste water infrastructure with existing utilities that will remain to serve the future residents and businesses of the Beltline area.

b. Remove those existing utilities that will not be incorporated into future utility systems.

c. All utilities should be buried within the public right-of-way and make connections to individual projects from a "back of building" location or alley where feasible.

d. The design and installation of all public utilities should be coordinated with private utility companies to ensure timely installation of private utility infrastructure.

e. Locate above ground utility and communication access points and/or structures away from major pedestrian and gathering areas, building entrances, windows and drainage corridors.

f. Any above grade utility structures should be screened with landscape materials, fencing or other approved screening devices.

Screen utility structures with planted landscapes, fencing or other screening devices


McCoy's
STOP
Amphitheater
Wolfe Park
Parking
USA TODAY

Private Development Design Guidelines

5

Overview

The Private Development Design Guidelines establish the goals and design guidelines for private sector redevelopment and reinvestment within the Beltline area. The Design Guidelines are organized to provide general guidance and, when needed, specific guidance for each character area within the Beltline area. The Design Guidelines provide guidance for site development, buildings, parking, service/delivery/storage areas, signage, and lighting within the Beltline area.

A. Site Development

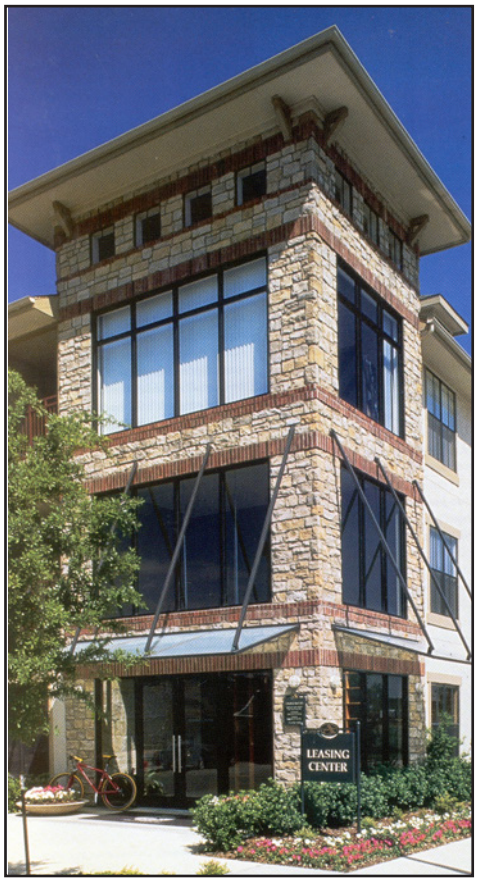
Goals

- Promote site development patterns that are oriented to public streets, parks and open spaces/plazas and promote pedestrian activity within the Beltline area.
- Promote site development patterns that reflect a unified scale and character, create an identifiable Beltline district, and emphasize the needs of a major employment center.
- Promote site development patterns that relate directly to the Beltline area's existing and future amenities, including the Beltline transit station, regional highway access, Park Commons, walk/bike network, Beltline parks/open spaces, Cedar Lake Regional Trail, West Calhoun district, and Minneapolis's Chain of Lakes.
- Promote the development of a transit-oriented urban center with buildings that define and enclose Beltline's streets and parks/open spaces, create a sense of the street as a "place", reinforce the urban character of the district, and encourage pedestrian-oriented activity along the streets and sidewalks.
- Promote an attractive, vibrant and green Beltline area designed to become a memorable "place" that strengthens Beltline's unique identity. Landscaping that complements buildings and the public realm while promoting sustainable, low maintenance design solutions should be encouraged within the Beltline area.

Encourage street-fronted buildings to promote pedestrian-friendly streetscapes

Commercial and mixed-use buildings should front onto the street to the greatest degree possible

Set back residential buildings



Building corners should be prominent

- Managing stormwater effectively is critical to the ecological functions and public safety of the Beltline area. The use of low impact design (LID) strategies such as rain water gardens, permeable pavements, green roofs, bioretention/ infiltration areas, etc. are encouraged as sites are developed in the Beltline area. These stormwater management techniques can lead to water conservation, groundwater recharge and reductions in the cost of the City's stormwater infrastructure and maintenance.
- Encourage the provision of convenient, safe and attractive walk/bike connections from building entries and parking facilities to public sidewalk and trail systems, bike parking/storage facilities, and personal facilities (e.g. changing rooms, lockers and showers).

Design Guidelines

1. BUILDING PLACEMENT AND SETBACKS

a. Buildings on major roadways (Beltline, Ottawa, CSAH 25 east of Beltline, 36th Street) should be sited to front onto the street to the greatest degree possible, creating a continuous, comfortable and attractive pedestrian-oriented streetscape environment.

b. Building corners at primary intersections should be treated as prominent features, taking advantage of the opportunity to create a unique district identity by incorporating well-defined entrances and architectural features.

c. Buildings should have their primary axis orientation perpendicular or parallel to the street they front. Primary building facades should be parallel to the sidewalk (right-of-way).

d. Parking areas should be located behind or to the side of buildings to encourage continuity of building frontages that support pedestrian activity along the street.

e. Commercial, office, mixed-use, or civic buildings along Beltline Boulevard, Ottawa Avenue, 36th Street, CSAH 25, Minnetonka Boulevard and Park Glen Road should be built-to the public right of way as much as possible to create a continuous, pedestrian-oriented streetscape. Building frontage may be set back from the right-of-way in order to provide outdoor areas for landscaping, seating, gathering and dining.

f. Residential buildings along Beltline Boulevard, Ottawa Avenue, CSAH 25, Minnetonka Boulevard and Park Glen Road should be set back from the right-of-way to provide space for landscaping between the public sidewalk and the private residences.

g. Encourage buildings with recessed spaces along Beltline Boulevard,, and 36th Street for front door entries, outdoor dining, plazas and public art that invites pedestrian activity and creates an attractive public realm throughout the area.

h. Buildings adjacent to the Beltline Transit Station should be placed to shape inviting and comfortable outdoor spaces/plazas for gathering, dining and seating adjacent and connected to the transit facilities. Buildings that front the outdoor spaces/plazas associated with the transit station will also put "eyes" on the publicly accessible spaces, contributing to their safety.

i. Buildings at key intersections along Beltline Boulevard/ Ottawa Avenue and CSAH 25 should be sited to create attractive and identifiable gateways into the Beltline area.

j. Buildings that front on Cedar Lake Regional Trail should be placed and oriented to take advantage of being adjacent to this amenity and put "eyes" on the trail.

k. Buildings on the south side of the Cedar Lake Regional Trail should be designed to minimize shading of the trail surface, which could be achieved by incorporating building step-backs and/or building set-backs.

l. Buildings that front onto CSAH 25 and Hwy 100 should be sited and oriented to take advantage of highway visibility and create a positive identity for the Beltline business park.

m. Buildings that front onto Bass Lake Preserve should be placed and oriented to preserve its unique character and environmental qualities while benefitting from views of and access to this tremendous open space amenity.

n. Buildings that front onto Carpenter Park/Skippy Field should be placed and oriented to take advantage of being adjacent to this open space amenity and put "eyes" on the park.

Encourage setbacks for landscaping

Encourage recessed spaces for outdoor dining

Landscaped courtyards encouraged

Encourage on-site stormwater management

Provide safe routes for pedestrians

2. LANDSCAPING

a. Outdoor spaces/plazas should incorporate ornamental and shade trees, planting beds, and potted plants with plant materials that emphasize seasonal color and change.

b. Landscaped plazas and courtyards are encouraged.

c. Hardy plant species should be chosen for resistance to extremes in climate change, road salt, and disease.

d. Parking, outdoor storage, service areas, trash storage, loading, utility structures and other objectionable views should be screened with landscape plantings.

e. Where possible, encourage landscaped connections between private and public amenities and spaces.

f. Use of low maintenance (native) plant materials is generally encouraged; however, there may be a need to utilize higher maintenance materials in areas with high pedestrian traffic and community gathering spaces.

g. Encourage unique landscaped areas at or near key intersections along Beltline Boulevard/Ottawa Avenue and CSAH 25 to create inviting, attractive and identifiable gateways into the district.

h. Require native plant species near the Bass Lake Preserve to protect and preserve the unique character and environmental qualities of this special and sensitive ecological amenity.

3. STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

a. Encourage or require the use of low impact stormwater management design strategies as sites are developed within the Beltline Area.

b. Incorporate rain garden systems to catch and filter storm water on development sites and parking lot planting islands.

c. Where feasible, install non-traditional swales with natural meanders and stone check dams to slow water runoff, creating visual amenities for the development sites.

d. Where feasible, reuse stored storm water supply for the irrigation of landscaped areas.

e. Plant pond edges with native plantings to discourage geese from using sodded areas and create a naturalistic landscape identity.

f. Encourage the use of green roofs in new building construction to reduce storm water runoff.

g. Design all construction areas to minimize impacts to water quality in drainage areas adjacent to the construction site.

h. Increase storm water permeability where possible by creating planting beds and rain gardens rather than using hard paving materials. If paving materials are required, consider permeable pavers to encourage greater stormwater infiltration and reduce runoff.

4. WALK/BIKE CONNECTIONS

a. Provide safe routes for pedestrians and bicyclists to access public sidewalks and trails from all building entries and parking facilities.

b. Provide walk/bike connections to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail from properties abutting the trail (where feasible).

c. Provide convenient bike parking/storage facilities at building entries and parking facilities.

B. Buildings

Goal

Encourage buildings that are well-designed, human scaled, and enhance the identity of the Beltline area. It is not the intent of these guidelines to impose a particular architectural style upon new development or building construction in the Beltline area.

Design Guidelines

1. USES

Beltline Boulevard Transit Street

a. Encourage vertical integration of complementary uses within buildings near the Beltline Transit Station and along Beltline Boulevard that support transit system ridership. Buildings should include street level uses that promote pedestrian activity and interest, which could include mixing residential or office uses over street level shops and services.

b. Allow a complementary mix of employment, retail/service (where appropriate and feasible) and residential buildings along Beltline Boulevard.

c. Any redevelopment along Ottawa Avenue should be predominately residential buildings.

Beltline/Nordic Ware Business Park

a. Promote employment buildings that accommodate a relatively high number of jobs per acre.

b. Encourage supportive commercial buildings along 36th Street.

Bass Lake Preserve Pocket Neighborhood

a. Allow a complementary mix of high-density residential and business park buildings within the Bass Lake Preserve Pocket Neighborhood that support transit system ridership.

CSAH 25 South Wedge

a. Encourage predominately employment buildings, with support retail and service uses (where appropriate and feasible) along CSAH 25.

b. Encourage commercial buildings at the intersection of CSAH 25 and Minnetonka Boulevard.

c. Allow high density residential buildings east of Lynn Street.

Triangle Neighborhood

a. Encourage predominately residential buildings within the Triangle Neighborhood.

b. Allow mixed-use buildings at key nodes along Minnetonka Boulevard.

2. HEIGHT AND MASSING

a. Building heights should be compatible with surrounding buildings. See the Preferred Building Heights Diagram in Chapter 2.

b. Building heights and massing should present a unified, human scale and street orientation to reinforce the sense of a connected and identifiable Beltline area.

c. Exterior building façade design that leads to the overall appearance of multiple structures, building fronts and tenants along Beltline Boulevard, Ottawa Avenue, CSAH 25, 36th Street and Park Glen Road is encouraged.

d. Multi-tenant buildings located along Beltline Boulevard, Ottawa Avenue, CSAH 25, 36th Street and Park Glen Road should be designed with breaks in the building mass to allow pedestrian access between the front (street) and rear (parking) side of the building.

e. Promote building stepbacks to present a pedestrian-oriented scale and character along Beltline Boulevard,

Promote employment uses in the district

Encourage mixed-use buildings along Beltline Blvd

Encourage variety in building facades

Recessed building entrances

Ottawa Avenue, CSAH 25, 36th Street and Park Glen Road.

f. Building heights on south side of the Cedar Lake Trail should not cause significant shading of the trail surface.

3. FORM AND FAÇADE

a. Building facades should include multiple changes in building materials, parapet heights, fenestration, and other elements which create variety in the building façade.

b. Buildings should be designed to provide human scale, interest and variety.

c. Emphasize building entries through projecting or recessed forms, detail, color or materials.

d. Uses that include non-pedestrian or auto-oriented uses, including garage entries, service bays or similar functions should be oriented away from primary street frontage, placing active, pedestrian functions toward the street.

e. Consistent setbacks should be maintained for all pedestrian oriented building uses in order to reinforce the scale and character of the street and to facilitate the ease of pedestrian circulation between uses.

Beltline Boulevard Transit Street

a. For ground level retail, office and commercial uses along Beltline Boulevard and Ottawa Avenue, primary street side storefronts should include at least 60% of the storefront area in transparent windows or doors.

b. Buildings should be designed with an understanding of their role in meeting the overall objectives of the Beltline Boulevard Transit Street, such as providing edges or enclosure to the street and open spaces along it, creating linkages and gateways, reinforcing pedestrian connections as well as framing or terminating views.

c. Provide as much street oriented building frontage and activity as possible along Beltline Boulevard.

d. Encourage the incorporation of functional balconies in buildings along Beltline Boulevard, Ottawa Avenue and proximate to the Beltline Transit Station to create interest and variety of the building façade as well as put more "eyes on the street".

e. Buildings proximate to the Beltline Transit Station should be designed to provide human scale, interest, variety and communicate the transit supportive uses located in the station area.

Beltline/Nordic Ware Business Park

a. Buildings in the Beltline/Nordic Ware Business Park are intended for employment uses primarily. With this in mind, form and façade treatments should follow the buildings intended function, which could range from industrial to office/commercial uses.

b. Building form and façade treatments along major roadways with visibility into the business park, such as Hwy 100, CSAH 25, Beltline Boulevard and 36th Street should be designed to project an attractive and unique identity for the business park that is consistent with the rest of the Beltline area.

c. Office buildings that front major roadways and the Cedar Lake Trail should incorporate transparent windows or doors to provide views to and from the trail and roadways.

Bass Lake Preserve Pocket Neighborhood

a. New building form and façade treatments in the Bass Lake Preserve Pocket Neighborhood should be sensitive to existing residential buildings in the area. Provide transitions in the scale of multi-story buildings near single family homes by utilizing building step-backs.

b. Buildings along the Cedar Lake Regional Trail should incorporate façade treatments (windows, balconies and doors) that enhance the ability to view and provide access to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail as much as possible.

CSAH 25 South Wedge

a. For ground level retail, office and commercial uses along CSAH 25, primary street side of the building should incorporate transparent windows or doors to provide views to and from the roadway.

b. Buildings should be designed with an understanding of their role in meeting the overall objectives of the CSAH 25, such as providing edges or enclosure to the street and open spaces along it, creating linkages and gateways, reinforcing pedestrian connections as well as framing or terminating views.

c. Buildings proximate to the Beltline Transit Station should be designed to provide human scale, interest, variety and communicate the transit supportive uses located in the station area, particularly at the ground level of the building.

d. Buildings along the Cedar Lake Regional Trail should incorporate façade treatments (windows, balconies and doors) that enhance the ability to view and provide access to the Cedar Lake Regional Trail as much as possible.

Triangle Neighborhood

a. New building form and façade treatments in the Triangle Neighborhood should be sensitive to existing residential buildings in the area. Provide transitions in the scale of multi-story buildings near single family homes by utilizing building step-backs.

b. For ground level retail and commercial uses along Minnetonka Boulevard, Ottawa Avenue and CSAH 25, primary street side storefronts should incorporate transparent windows or doors to provide views to and from the roadways.

c. Buildings should be designed with an understanding of their role in meeting the overall objectives of the Triangle Neighborhood, such as providing edges or enclosure to major roadways and open spaces, creating linkages and gateways, reinforcing pedestrian connections as well as framing or terminating views.

4. ROOFS

A variety of roof styles, heights and materials is encouraged as part of creating variety within the area.

a. Repetition of some roof forms in residential areas is encouraged as a way to provide common, consistent elements within the area.

b. Roofs should not be designed as attention-getting devices related to the reinforcement of signage or as an identifiable corporate image.

c. The design of the roof form, materials, color and trim should be an integral part of the architecture.

d. Rooftop mechanical equipment, including satellite dishes and antennas, should be screened from public view.

5. EXTERIOR BUILDING MATERIALS

a. Primary building materials should be high quality, durable materials including brick, stone, cast stone, or pre-cast concrete panels.

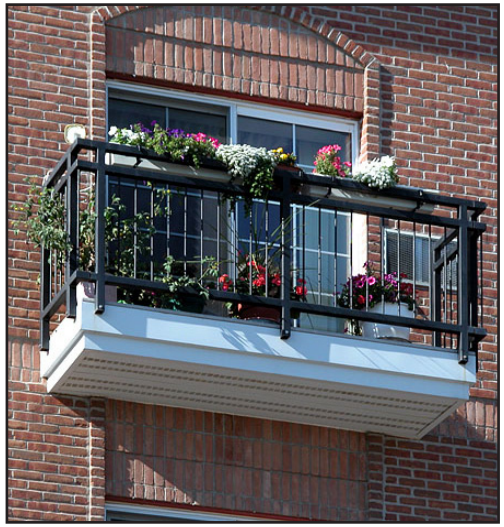
b. Accent materials may include a variety of finished architectural metals, metal curtain wall systems, stucco, wood lap siding and/or shakes, shingles and shakes as a roofing material, and fabrics for canopies and awnings.

c. Synthetic materials that adequately duplicate natural materials may be acceptable.

d. Large walls of glass should incorporate a variety of mullion patterns, bay dimensions, glass types, or detailing to provide human scale.

e. Reflective glass is discouraged.

Encourage a variety of roof lines



Utilize high quality building materials

Ecourage green roofs where feasible

6. ENTRIES

a. Building entries should be designed as unique elements, reinforce variety and address the street and sidewalk.

b. Primary building entries should be visible from and connected to the street sidewalk by the most direct route practical.

c. Ground floor residences that adjoin a public street or open space should provide direct resident access to the public street or open space.

d. Each building should have one or more clearly identifiable "front doors" that address the street.

Building entrances should be designed as unique elements

7. GREEN DESIGN

Buildings and sites should be designed to:

a. Balance the footprint of the building with pervious surface needs.

b. Orient buildings to maximize the positive aspects of solar gain and renewable energy.

c. Reduce heat islands and minimize light pollution.

d. Utilize day lighting and passive heating and cooling to reduce energy consumption.

e. Establish a minimum level of energy efficiency complying with corresponding ASHRAE (American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers) provisions.

f. Reduce ozone depletion through zero use of CFC (Chlorofluorocarbon) based refrigerants.

g. Optimize performance of building components.

h. Be designed to be adaptable to new uses, with materials that can easily be reclaimed at the end of their useful life.

i. Encourage the use of renewable energy sources.

j. Provide an accessible area that serves the building dedicated to the collection and storage of materials for recycling.

k. Use non-toxic materials, paints and finishes to enhance indoor air quality.

l. Recycle and/or salvage non-hazardous construction debris.

m. Use materials that have been extracted, recovered or manufactured locally.

C. Private Off-Street Parking

Goal

Parking is necessary to support development but should not be the focus of the development from the public view. The use of parking structures located behind primary buildings or beneath the building is encouraged.

Design Guidelines

a. Large, surface parking lots are discouraged. Where they are necessary, they should be broken up with landscape areas and incorporate permeable pavement systems as much as feasible to increase permeability.

b. Structured parking should be located adjacent to, or within building massing.

c. Where parking structures must be developed alongside the street a liner of commercial use (office, retail or restaurant) should be incorporated into the ground level of the structure and the entire street side façade of the parking structure should be architecturally treated so as to blend in with the surrounding building facades.

d. In mixed-use areas, parking should be accessed from the rear of parcels if possible. If not possible, the entrance to parking from the street should be hidden, designing it as part of the rhythm of storefronts, but not in such a way that it becomes a hazard for pedestrians.

e. When necessary, such driveways should be minimized in width and provide good visibility of pedestrians from vehicles using the driveway. A change in material for the sidewalk should be utilized to indicate or warn pedestrians where the access to parking is located.

f. The entrance to parking facilities should be located on secondary streets, not along major roadways.

g. Shared parking spaces should be promoted in the Beltline area.

h. The overall parking supply should be managed to meet the needs of both short and long term users.

i. Locate mechanical equipment out of public view.

j. Design and plan for adequate lighting levels for auto and pedestrian safety, while minimizing disturbance of light pollution to adjacent land uses.

k. Design parking lot lighting to prevent visibility of light sources and reduce glare from inside and outside the parking garage.

l. Design parking garages to minimize impacts of vehicle headlights on residential units.

m. Consider incorporating landscape or other screening devices into the parking structures.

Beltline Boulevard Transit Street

a. Surface parking lots should be discouraged. Where surface parking is necessary, it should be located behind the primary buildings that front Beltline Boulevard and Ottawa Avenue.

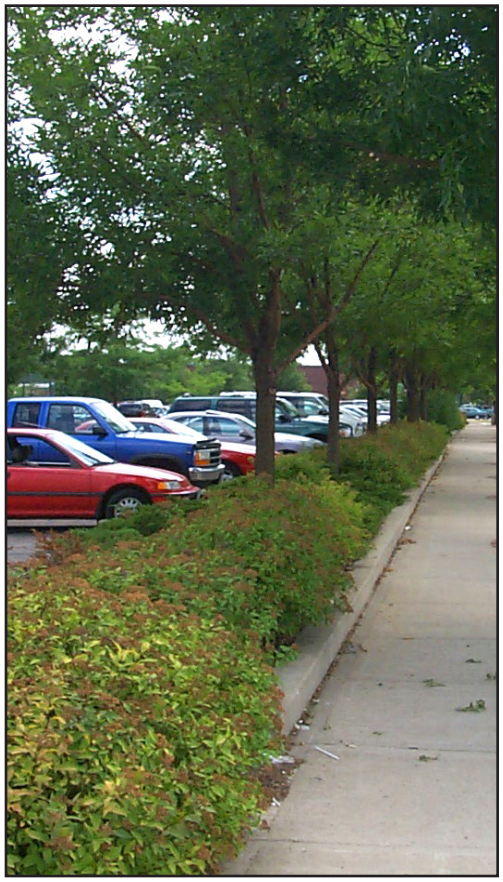
b. Structured parking is encouraged rather than surface parking when feasible.

c. Parking structures should be located behind or beneath primary buildings, with entrances located off secondary streets when possible and not off Beltline Boulevard or Ottawa.

d. Where parking access is required off Beltline Boulevard or Ottawa Avenue, minimize drives and curb cuts as these cause interruptions to pedestrian movement.

e. Parking structures developed at or near the Beltline Transit Station should include a liner of commercial use (office, retail or restaurant) incorporated into the ground level of the structure and the entire street side and plaza façade of the parking structure should be architecturally treated so as to blend in with the surrounding building facades.

Encourage structured parking with active street level uses



Screen surface parking lots

Locate service areas away from view

D. Service, Delivery and Storage Areas

Goal

Minimize the visual impact of service, delivery, and storage areas from public view. Strategic placement and screening of these areas is encouraged.

Design Guidelines

a. Locate loading docks and service areas so that views from adjacent properties, streets, open spaces and pathways are minimized.

b. Where feasible, utilize landscape and architectural screening devices to minimize visual impacts of service, delivery and storage areas.

c. Use signage to clearly identify service entrances to discourage the use of main building entries for service deliveries.

Building lighting should be used to highlight architectural features and entrances

E. Lighting

Goal

Promote lighting strategies that accentuate key components of building and landscape elements, provide adequate illumination for pedestrian and vehicular safety, and minimize night sky pollution.

Design Guidelines

a. Building lighting should only be used to highlight specific architectural features.

b. Lighting of architectural features should be designed with the intent of providing accent or interest or to help identify entry and not to exhibit or advertise buildings.

c. Accent lighting should be limited to indirect lighting of signage, architectural and landscape features only.

d. No bare bulb or exposed neon lighting should be used to accentuate building forms or details, landscape elements, or signage.

e. Service area lighting should be confined within the service area boundaries and enclosure walls.

f. No spill-over lighting should occur outside of the service or storage area. Lighting sources should not be visible from the street.

g. Lights at service or exit doors should be limited to low wattage downcast or low cut-off fixtures that may remain on throughout the night.

F. Signage

Goal

Signage design in the Beltline Area should provide identity, direction and information while maintaining a visual connection and continuity to its urban neighborhood setting. The type of sign used and its particular design should perform its primary role and reinforce the image and identity of the district.

Design Guidelines

a. Monument signage should comply with City standards and ordinance regulations.

b. Placement of signs should not impede visibility of vehicular or pedestrian traffic.

c. Building signs should be integrated into the architecture of the building and not overwhelm the scale of the building or the sense of pedestrian orientation desired within the district.

d. Catalog sign elements such as backlit signs, awning signs, and internally illuminated cabinet signs should be discouraged.

e. Flush-mounted or blade signs should be permitted to identify buildings and/or tenants within a building.

f. Signage that projects from the building should not exceed four square feet and be mounted at least eight feet from grade to minimize conflicts with pedestrian movement.

g. Signage should be constructed of high quality, durable materials.

h. Signage lighting should cast subtle light onto the sign object. Conceal the light source from view.

Signage should compliment building materials

Signage should be intergrated into the building design

Signage should be constructed of high quality materials

Glossary

Amenity zone
Amenity zone refers to the portion of the public streetscape/ sidewalk that accommodates street plantings, lighting, seating and other forms of streetscape furnishings.

Bike boxes
Bike boxes are designated, marked areas at a signalized intersection that places bicycles at the front of the queue. Bike boxes increase the visibility of bicyclists and allow them to enter/clear the intersection before motor vehicles.

Building setback
Building setback refers to the placement of the building footprint being set back from a property line.

Building stepback
Building step-back refers to architectural treatment that steps the mass of the building back after a certain height.

Bump-outs
Bump-outs, also called curb extensions, are traffic-calming devices designed to narrow portions of a street. Curbs are constructed to eliminate parking lanes, or to narrow through lanes at intersections. The narrowing of the travel lanes reduces the distance of pedestrian crossings and causes motorists to slow their speed.

Complete streets
“Complete streets” are roadways designed and operated to enable safe, attractive, and comfortable access and travel for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists and public transport users of all ages and abilities.

Connectivity
Connectivity refers to the extent that destinations are connected within the area, by roads, trails, or sidewalk systems.

District identity
District identity refers to the character, scale, uses and overall identity of the Beltline Area.

“Eyes on the street”
Eyes on the street refers to surveillance derived naturally from the number of people using a street or public place or the ability to see the street or public place from nearby residences or businesses.

Goal
Goal statements are provided to define the intent or objectives for which the guidelines have been created to achieve.

Great streets
"Great streets" refers to streets that function as gathering places for residents of the community, and attractive must-visit destinations for visitors.

Guidelines
Guidelines provide further considerations to promote the goal statements. They are intended to provide guidance or specific strategies considered critical to achieving the intended goals.

Human scale
Human scale refers to buildings that are scaled to human physical capabilities and senses.

Kiss and ride
"Kiss and ride" refers to a place where commuters are driven and dropped off at or near the transit station.

Light pollution
Light pollution is excessive or obtrusive light emanated from artificial sources.

Low impact design (LID)
Low-impact design (LID) is a term used to describe a design approach to managing stormwater runoff through infiltrating, filtering, storing, evaporating, and detaining runoff close to its source.

Pedestrian zone
Pedestrian zone refers to the portion of the public streetscape/sidewalk that accommodates pedestrian movement.

Placemaking
Placemaking refers to the planning, design and management of public and private spaces that capitalizes on the community's assets, inspiration, and potential, ultimately creating good spaces that promote people's health, happiness, and well-being.

Rain garden
A rain garden is a planted depression that allows rainwater runoff from impervious areas like roofs, driveways, walkways, parking lots, and compacted lawn areas the opportunity to be absorbed.

Sustainable
The term sustainable refers to design solutions that have minimal negative and/or long-term effects on the environment.

Traffic-calming
Traffic-calming refers to various design features and strategies intended to reduce vehicle traffic speeds and volumes on a particular roadway.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)
A transit-oriented development (TOD) is a mixed-use residential or commercial area designed to maximize access to public transit, often incorporating features to encourage transit ridership. A TOD neighborhood typically has a center with a transit station or stop surrounded by relatively high-density development with progressively lower-density development spreading outward from the center.

Walkability
Walkability is a measure of how friendly an area is to walking.

Wayfinding
Wayfinding refers to the ways in which people orient themselves and navigate from place to place.