

4 Land Use and Community Facilities

Introduction

The land use plan is arguably the most prominent chapter in the Richfield Comprehensive Plan because it gives people a visual representation of what the community is expected to look like in the future. The text, maps and images contained in this section are important because they identify a framework for the future use of every parcel of land in the community. They also guide the form of future development and redevelopment. In doing so, they establish how areas where people live, shop and work are expected to look and function ten or twenty years from now.

Goals and Policies

The land use plan for Richfield is guided by a set of goals and policies that have their origins in both the 1997 Richfield Comprehensive Plan and the Richfield 2020 – Focus on the Future report. The goals and policies are focused on reflecting historical development patterns in Richfield while helping to position the City for the future. They represent the community’s vision for

future development, redevelopment and change. The framework for the goals and policies includes:

- Emphasizing sustainability as a measure to ensure the future economic, environmental and social health of the community.
- Strengthening and enhancing the low density residential areas of the community.
- Maintaining a diversity of housing types and price ranges.
- Committing to a balanced transportation system.
- Providing quality parks and recreation areas and trails and walkways that connect the community.
- Recognizing the importance of the Lakes at Lyndale area as the community center for commerce.

The following goals and policies address land use issues consistent with the framework referenced above.

Goal:

Maintain and enhance the “urban hometown” character of Richfield.

Policies:

- Establish a land use pattern and supporting infrastructure that creates a “walkable” environment.
- Maintain a housing supply that meets changing needs while sustaining the integrity of existing neighborhoods.

- Encourage “green” building practices.
- Preserve historical, natural and cultural resources.
- Develop residential standards (scale, density, etc.) for redevelopment areas that creates neighborhood character.
- Support commercial land uses that are diverse and responsive to their context.
- Maintain and provide quality amenities and a safe living environment.

Goal:

Develop the Lakes at Lyndale area as a City Center.

Policies:

- Continue to develop and redevelop the Lakes at Lyndale area as a mixed-use center of living, commerce and recreation.
- Provide appropriate density transitions from the intense uses at 66th and Lyndale to the surrounding neighborhoods.
- As the market permits, provide circulator transit services connecting the City Center area to the remainder of Richfield.
- Provide the means to calm vehicular traffic at the intersection of 66th Street and Lyndale Avenue South to enhance safety and livability for residents and visitors.
- Expand the vision of the Lakes at Lyndale to include the original “HUB” and Nicollet shops.

Goal:

Beyond the City Center, develop identifiable nodes, corridors and gateways throughout the community.

Policies:

- Facilitate an intense mixed pattern of regional and community-oriented land uses along regional corridor routes including I-494 and Cedar Avenue.
- Encourage a mix of uses that serve a market in and around Richfield in community commercial nodes.
- Encourage a mix of uses that serve surrounding local neighborhoods in neighborhood commercial nodes.
- Create meeting places in multiunit complexes to allow for interaction between its residents and between its residents and surrounding neighbors.
- Improve gateways to create a visual means of welcoming people to Richfield.

Goal:

Provide an economic climate within Richfield that will encourage the availability of quality goods, services and employment opportunities for residents.

Policies:

- Accommodate business growth.
- Encourage and support the development of strong commercial districts that respect the values and standards of the citizens of Richfield.
- Encourage the development of viable and responsive neighborhood commercial services.

- Promote development that broadens the tax base.
- Create commercial districts that sustain specific types of development and stabilize the economic base.

Changes in Richfield 1997 to 2007

Table 1 provides a comparison of land uses for 1997 and 2007. Although derived from different sources resulting in some overall variation in numbers, they do serve to illustrate both things that have changed and things that have remained the same over the ten year period of time.

The most notable change is the amount of mixed-use that was tabulated in 2007. Mixed use as a category refers to the vertical integration of uses; commonly a scenario in which retail and/or office uses occur on the first floor of a building with residential uses above. In 1997, mixed-use was not even a category listed in the plan because no such projects existed in the community. By 2007, the amount of mixed-use in the community was approximately 12 acres. More detail on Richfield's mixed-use areas is included later in this section.

Also notable in the numbers is what hasn't changed. Richfield has and always will be predominately a single-family community. The total amounts of both single-family housing and multi-family housing have remained essentially unchanged with the differences in numbers

being explained more by variations in the sources of information than from actual changes in the community. Land categorized as commercial increased slightly.

In the 1997 Comprehensive Plan, the New Ford Town neighborhood was included in the tally of residential land. This former Richfield neighborhood is now an active part of the Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport.

Table 4.1 Land Use Comparison (1997 and 2007)

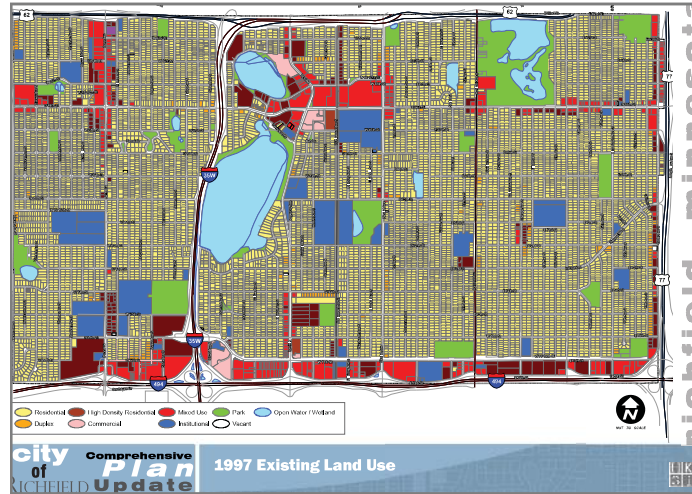
Land Uses	2007 Acres	1997 Acres
Single-Family Residential	2,039.51	2,120.20
Multi-Family Residential	216.82	212.70
Commercial	272.55	245.60
Mixed Use	12.10	0
Publi/Quasi Public	215.30	217.80
Parks & Recreation	242.55	447.20*
Railroad	5.72	5.80
Vacant	1.50	2.30
Open Water	237.58	0
Right-of-Way	1,211.47	1,286.90
Total:	4,455.09**	4,538.50***

* The 1997 existing land use numbers included open water as part of there overall parks and recreation acreage total.

** The land use numbers were derived from the Hennepin County Tax Assessor's Office and the City of Richfield.

*** The 1997 land use numbers were taken directly from the 1997 Comprehensive Plan (Chapter 3, Page 7).

Figure 4.1 1997 Lane Use Plan



Numbers alone don't begin to illustrate the change that has taken place in Richfield over the past ten years. Changes that have occurred in Richfield are the direct result of past planning efforts. Being a fully developed, first-ring City, Richfield has been cognizant of the need to redevelop and reshape areas of the community as they age and deteriorate. The amount of change that has taken place over the past decade is notable. A number of plans have served as catalysts for both public and private investments that have changed the face of Richfield along some of its most prominent corridors and at several key community nodes.

Influencing planning efforts have included:

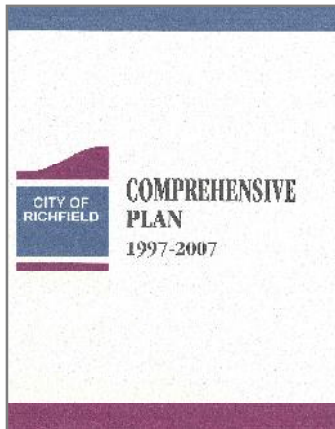
- City of Richfield Comprehensive Plan (1997 – 2007)

- The Lyndale Gateway – A Redevelopment Plan and Strategy
- Lakes at Lyndale Master Plan
- Redevelopment Master Plan – Cedar Avenue Corridor
- I-494 Corridor Study
- Penn Avenue Revitalization

It is important to recognize and understand these planning efforts since they establish both a foundation and framework for future change. Accordingly, the following is a brief overview of each:

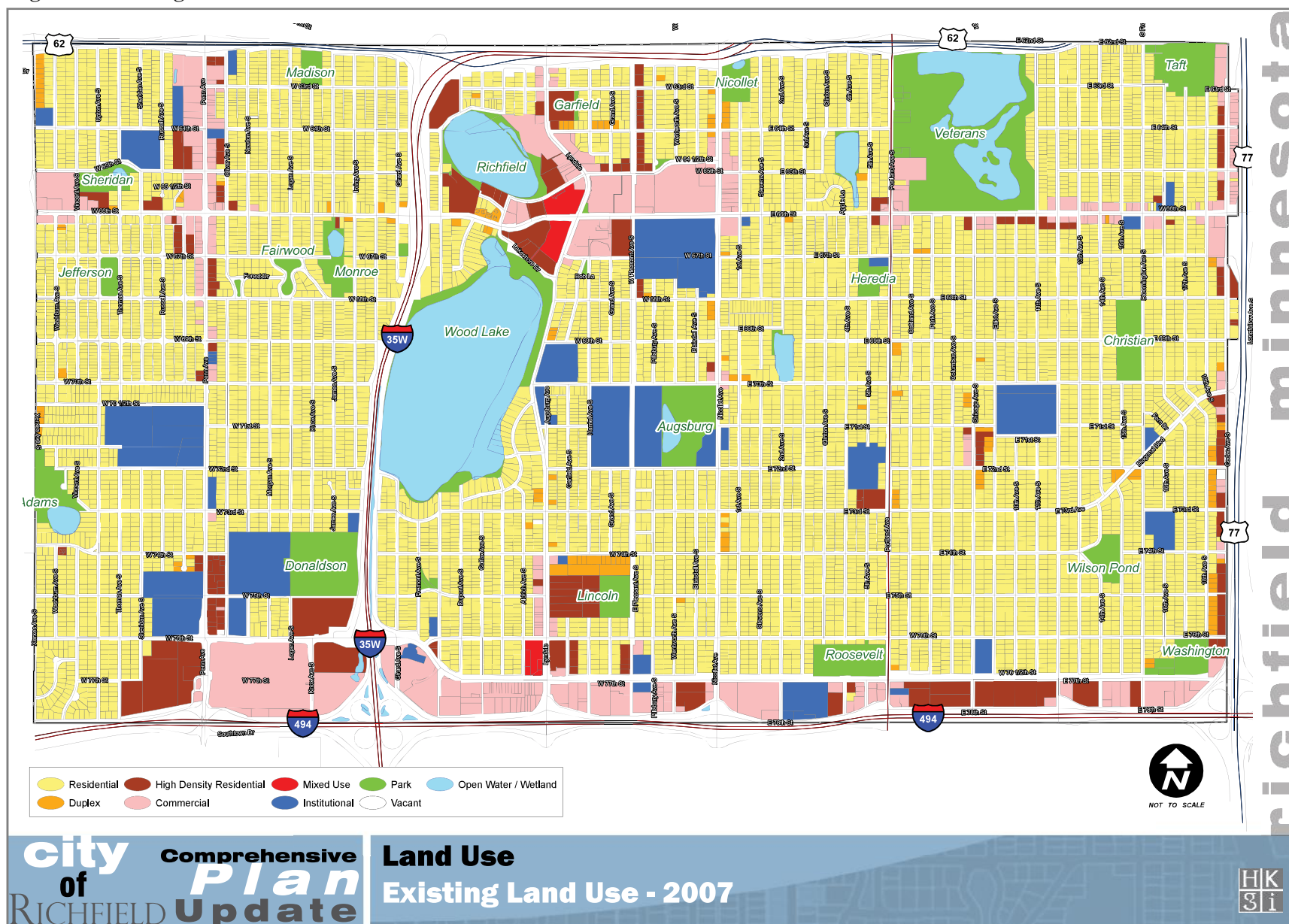
City of Richfield Comprehensive Plan (1997–2007)

The previous version of Richfield's Comprehensive Plan contained specific recommendations pertaining to land use, parks, urban infrastructure and housing. Those recommendations have been a foundation for decisions that the City has made. The plan defined a series of



Richfield Comprehensive Plan

Figure 4.2 Existing Land Use - 2007





Lyndale Gateway before redevelopment

Figure 4.3 Lyndale Gateway Plan



Lyndale Gateway after redevelopment

sub-areas and then offered a land use framework for each. Most of the sub-areas have been the subject of more specific planning initiatives that are discussed below.

The Lyndale Gateway—A Redevelopment Plan and Strategy

Discussions relative to the updating of the Comprehensive Plan in the mid-1990s resulted in an interest in creating a plan to reshape the Lyndale Avenue gateway which begins at 77th Street and extends to the north to about 74th Street. The plan that was assembled contained the Planning Commission's recommendations to the Richfield HRA and City Council to establish a mixed-use development in the Lyndale Avenue corridor area. It sought to replace a series of deteriorating one-story buildings with multi-story mixed-use buildings that would truly serve as a gateway entrance into the community.

In 2003, the first phase of the Lyndale Gateway redevelopment went into the ground, located on both sides of Lyndale Avenue from 77th Street north to 76th Street. The development has transformed a tired

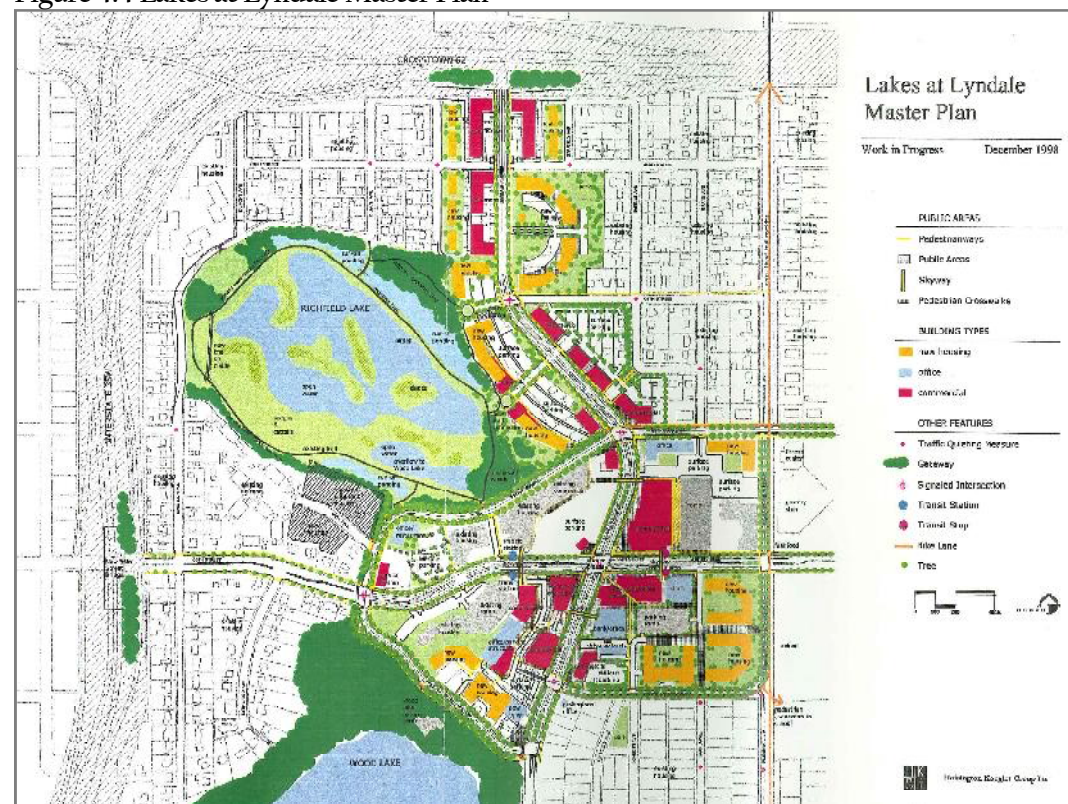
commercial corridor into a new mixed-use environment that offers housing of both the general population as well as seniors along with a variety of restaurant and other commercial uses.

Lakes at Lyndale Master Plan

The Lakes at Lyndale area is generally regarded as Richfield's "downtown". While the area may not necessarily fit the textbook definition of a downtown, it is center of commerce in the City and it contains one of Richfield and the region's most important park facilities, the Wood Lake Nature Center. It is also the home of Richfield Lake, a body of water that has been largely neglected over the years.

The Lakes at Lyndale Master Plan was designed to create new housing opportunities, upgrade commercial and retail properties and provide enhanced recreational opportunities around Richfield Lake. Although the master plan covered a broad area, the starting point for change was the centrally located intersection of 66th Street and Lyndale Avenue. New construction on the southwest and southeast corners of the intersection created a signature corner in the community. Smaller scale aging one-story retail was replaced by new buildings offering new housing choices, medical services, convenience services

Figure 4.4 Lakes at Lyndale Master Plan



City Bella at 66th Street and Lyndale Avenue

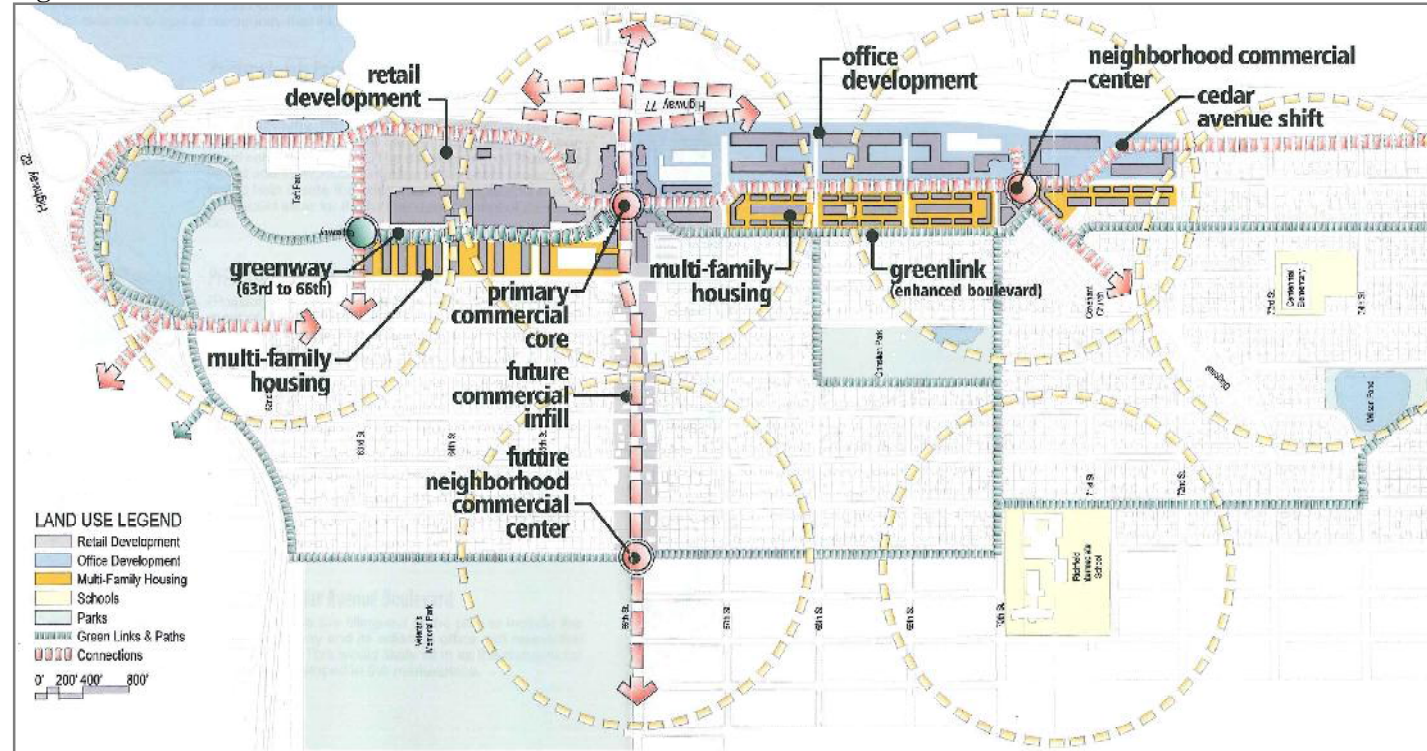


Large format retail at Cedar Point



66th Street roundabout provides access to the retail area

Figure 4.5 Cedar Avenue Corridor Master Plan



and open space opportunities. Plans call for the eventual redevelopment of substantial portions of the property along Lyndale Avenue north to the Crosstown.

Cedar Avenue Corridor

Cedar Avenue defines the eastern boundary of Richfield. Land uses along the roadway corridor, all of which face the Minneapolis St. Paul International Airport, include a mix of single-family homes, apartments and a number

of freestanding businesses. In 2004, the City completed a redevelopment master plan for the Cedar Avenue Corridor area. The plan, whose focus was primarily from 72nd Street north to the Crosstown, called for a mixture of multi-family housing, office and retail development. Much of the area encompassed in the plan was impacted by noise generated from a new north/south runway built at the adjacent airport.

In 2007, a new retail development opened on 66th Street, just west of Cedar Avenue. This development is looked at

Figure 4.6 I-494 Corridor Master Plan



as being the first phase of more extensive redevelopment in the area. It includes two large format retail stores and a number of smaller pad retail sites. A new round-about, the first built in Richfield is part of the development.

I-494 Corridor Study

In 2005, the City of Richfield completed a corridor study for the properties that front on I-494 between Cedar Avenue and I-35W. The study envisions the evolution of a strip freeway corridor into a complete community that features a range of housing types, shops, services, entertainment and amenities. The proposed land use pattern for the area is described as an urban village, an area of multiple story buildings that are more densely developed than the surrounding neighborhoods achieving a greater mix of land uses and more pedestrian activity.



A variety of land uses around I-494



Best Buy corporate headquarters



Penn Avenue area before redevelopment



Car dealerships were a mainstay along this portion of I-494 before redevelopment

One of the key features of the plan is a central greenway link that extends the length of the corridor. Zoning regulations governing the area were amended to encourage mixed-use, pedestrian friendly development.

Best Buy

One other significant redevelopment effort in Richfield is certainly of note. The City played a role in the redevelopment of a residential and commercial neighborhood into a new corporate campus for Best Buy along I-494 at Penn Avenue. Although not without controversy at the time, the result today is a significant local employer and a signature land use for the City.

A review of major planning and redevelopment areas in Richfield over the past decade demonstrates a number of important points:

- 1) Land use issues in Richfield have not been static over the past decade nor are they expected to be so in the decades that lie ahead.
- 2) Things happen based on plans – Richfield would be a very different place today absent the level of planning that has been done over the past decade.
- 3) First-ring communities can remake their futures, albeit one node or corridor at a time.

- 4) Richfield has established a strong track record of undertaking plans and redevelopments that keep the community competitive in today's marketplace.

Penn Avenue

In 2008 the City of Richfield completed a revitalization master plan for the Penn Avenue corridor between 68th Street and Highway 62. This area is one of the few remaining commercial nodes in the community without a clear vision. The purpose of the Penn Avenue Revitalization Master Plan is to establish a 20 year vision for change in the corridor including :

- 1) Establish tools to guide future public and private investments.
- 2) Establish a distinctive identity.
- 3) Maintain respect for the physical and social environment.

Growth Forecasts

The Metropolitan Council’s 2030 Regional Development Framework includes forecasts for households, population and employment in ten year increments through 2030. Forecasts are based on historic trends, Census data, building permit activity, land availability, redevelopment potential, Comprehensive Plans and regional policies. Forecasts to be included as a basis for this update of the Comprehensive Plan include the following:

Table 4.2 – Metropolitan Council Forecasts

	2000	2010	2020	2030
Population	34,310	37,700	41,300	45,000
Households	15,073	16,500	18,000	19,500
Employment	11,602	17,100	17,600	18,100

Source: Metropolitan Council

According to the forecasts, Richfield is expected to add approximately 1,400 households from 2000 to 2010 and another 1,500 households from 2010 to 2020. Using building permits for new construction as an approximate measure of household growth, Richfield added 459 housing units from 2000 through 2007. If the present pace continues, Richfield will fall short of the 2010 projections.

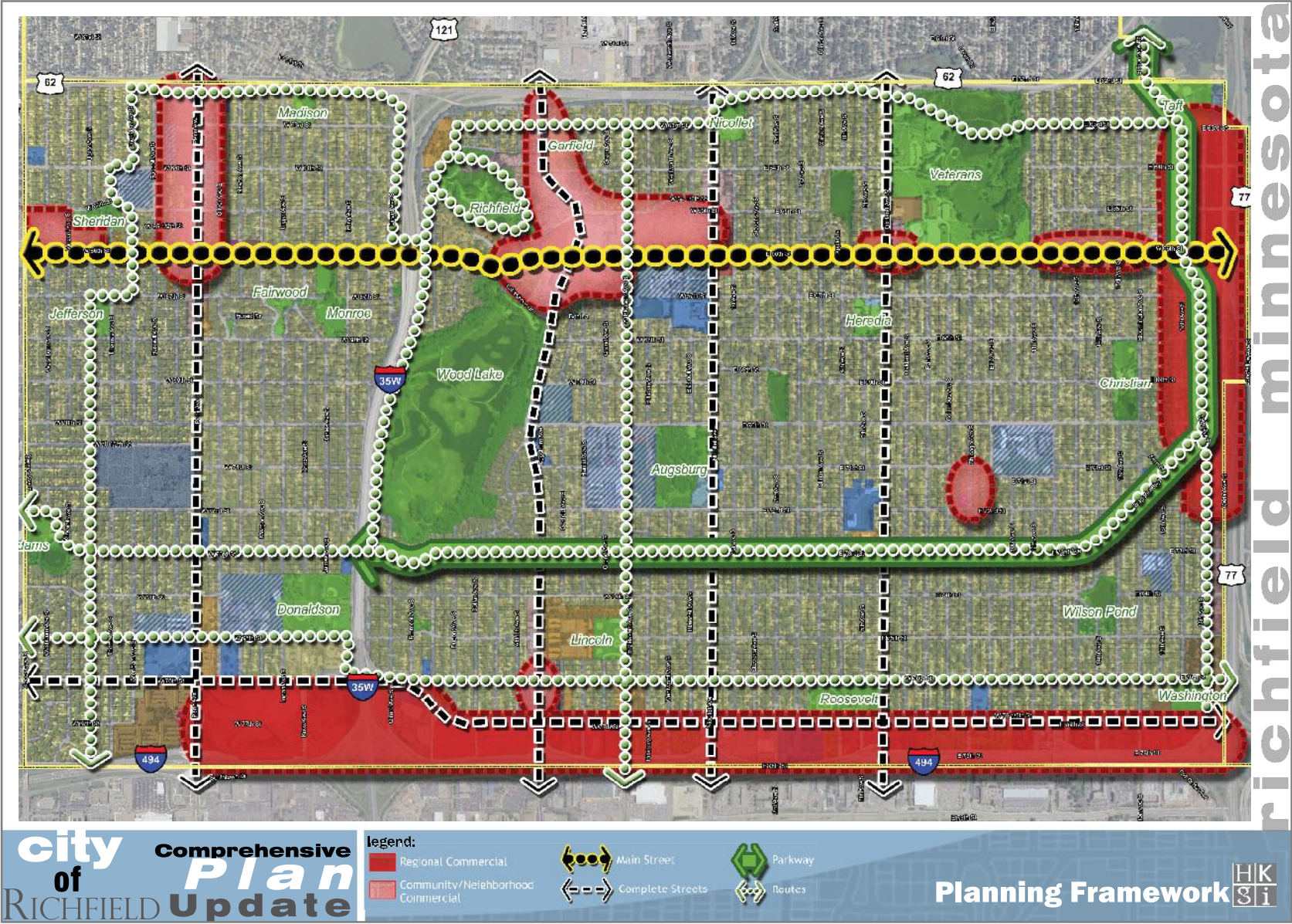
Since Richfield is a fully developed community with essentially no undeveloped land remaining, projected

growth of households, population and employment will occur primarily through redevelopment of vacant or underutilized properties. Over the past decade, Richfield has taken a strategic role in facilitating redevelopment. Over the next 20 years, redevelopment efforts are likely to be hindered by tighter controls on financial tools such as tax increment financing. Cuts in local, regional, state and federal financial resources are also expected to be additional challenges for redevelopment projects. As a result, it is unlikely that Richfield will reach the growth projections of the Metropolitan Council. The City’s future land use plan accommodates such growth in theory, however, depending on market conditions and changes in funding and redevelopment mechanisms, theory is not expected to match reality.

A Plan for the Future 2007 to 2030

As a fully developed community, change in Richfield is heavily influenced and sometimes constrained by the existing land use pattern and infrastructure. Sixty years ago, Richfield grew and changed by expanding into farm fields. Houses filled newly platted lots, local streets were built and parks were added, all combining to create the community that exists today. Change over the next ten to thirty years may not be as geographically extensive but may be nonetheless, just as noteworthy. Over the coming

Figure 4.7 Planning Framework Concept



decades, the challenge facing Richfield will focus on how the community positions itself to remain an attractive place to live and do business.

Planning Framework

Based on comments received during the initial stakeholder involvement process for the Comprehensive Plan update a general land use planning framework was drafted. The framework which is shown on the map on page 4-12, depicts major concepts and ideas to be included in the Plan. The concepts and ideas include the following:

Define Differing Scales of Commercial Development

The existing development pattern in Richfield combined with the overall transportation network defines varying scales of commercial development. In general, those areas that appeal to a large base of consumers and businesses because of freeway level visibility and access should be considered either regional or community in character. Business nodes that are more internal to the community and not immediately adjacent to freeways should be designated and designed at a community or even neighborhood scale.

Create a Hierarchy of Streets

Richfield should establish a hierarchy of streets with those of primary importance being designated and

designed as “complete streets”. Complete streets are those that by design, accommodate the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists in addition to vehicles. Complete streets also include enhanced landscaping.

Richfield has a main street but not perhaps in the traditional sense of the term. From the west border to the east border, 66th Street has always been the primary artery through the City and a street worthy of classification as Richfield’s main street. It contains a vibrant mix of uses ranging from low density residential, high density residential and a mix of commercial businesses. However, it lacks cohesiveness and consistency. More information on street classifications is included in the Community Character chapter of the plan.

Establishing Richfield Parkway

Richfield Parkway is envisioned as a vehicular and greenway corridor traversing much of central Richfield and extending north to the Minneapolis border. More information on the parkway is found in the Community Character chapter of the plan.

Trails

Connections are particularly important in Richfield. Major trails are planned throughout the community to link neighborhood and business areas. More information on trails is included in both the Park and Community Character chapters of the plan.

Planning Initiatives

Five general planning initiatives also came out of the early stakeholder involvement process for this Comprehensive Plan update. Of those, four are related to the land use plan. They include:

Enhanced Connectivity

Cities are increasingly looking for ways to improve connectivity. People today are interested in living environments that accommodate multi-modal travel including walking, biking, transit and vehicular movement. Much of the success of recent new urbanist developments is directly due to the creation of development patterns that allow people to walk from home to shops and even places of employment. As energy becomes an increasing concern and people begin to make more lifestyle changes, connectivity will become even more important.

Today, much of Richfield is unwelcoming to pedestrians and bicyclists. The roadway network in Richfield was built solely for cars, not for people walking or biking. Sidewalks along major roadways are generally not comfortable for pedestrian movements due to factors like location, width, driveway interruptions, etc. Surprisingly, sidewalks are almost non-existent in the residential areas. Even near schools, sidewalks are frequently inadequate to accommodate safe and comfortable movements. As land use and transportation issues are addressed in the

Comprehensive Plan, connectivity will be an issue of focus.

Neighborhood Stabilization and Revitalization

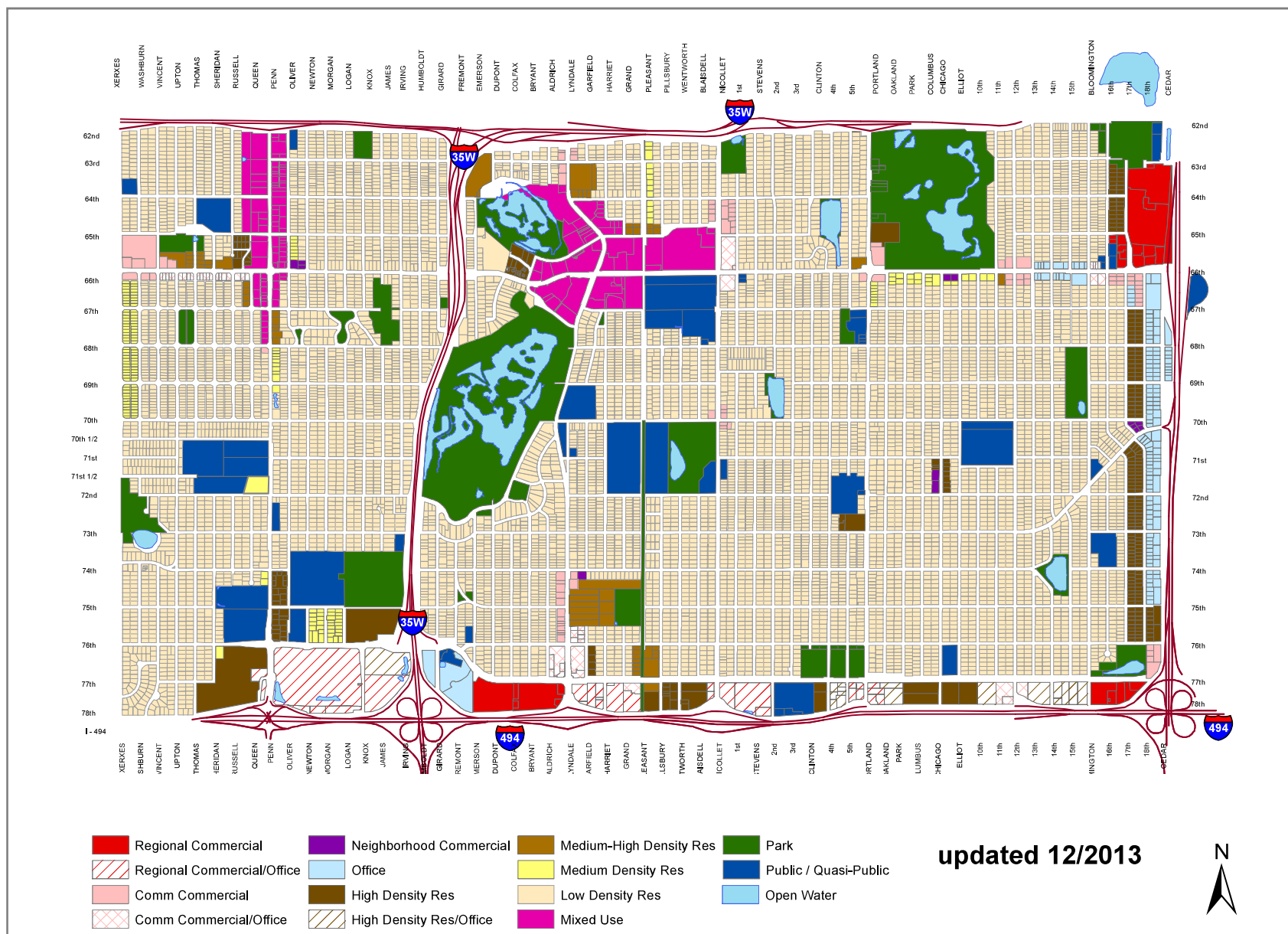
Richfield has a relatively homogenous residential pattern in the lower density, single-family neighborhoods. The housing stock which was largely built in a relatively short period of time exhibits similar characteristics – single story homes placed along a grid network of streets. Since the housing is all of similar age, consideration needs to be given to maintaining housing quality in both single-family and multi-family areas and on methods to revitalize housing that is beginning to suffer from deferred maintenance.

Although primarily a housing issue, neighborhood stabilization and revitalization is also a land use issue. The future land use plan needs to be cognizant of enhancing existing neighborhoods and protecting them from undue encroachments.

Targeted Redevelopment

Richfield is an acknowledged leader in redevelopment. Projects like the Best Buy campus have been effective in creating new employment opportunities and updating the City's stock of buildings. Participants in the first community meeting held as part of the planning process had an overwhelmingly positive reaction to the Best Buy redevelopment.

Figure 4.8 2030 Future Land Use Plan



In order to continue to replace aging and outdated structures and to provide contemporary living and working environments, Richfield will need to continue to promote targeted redevelopment efforts. Redevelopment can occur in and around the local, community and regional commercial areas without threatening existing lower density residential neighborhoods. In fact, done correctly, redevelopment can help “protect” single-family neighborhoods by serving as a buffer to more intensive uses. A prime example of this is the Cedar Avenue corridor which is likely to see redevelopment that reflects the adjacent airport as well as the Cedar Avenue freeway corridor while separating the abutting single-family neighborhood from such uses.

Expanded Business Opportunities

Richfield is almost within the shadow cast by one the largest shopping centers in the world, the Mall of America which annually attracts over 40 million visitors. Additionally, Southdale, the first enclosed shopping mall in the world, lies just west of Richfield’s border. While providing significant competition for some types of retail development, these neighbors are also advantageous to Richfield. They establish a strong regional retail node and attract traffic to the area. Future planning efforts will need to seek ways to further enhance business opportunities in Richfield either as part of upgrading existing retail areas, expanding new retail business opportunities and/

or seeking new and or redevelopment opportunities for offices, entertainment and service businesses

Future Land Use Plan

The future land use pattern in Richfield will evolve from what exists today. The almost total lack of undeveloped land in the City precludes new large scale development efforts. Development, growth and change that occurs will result from redevelopment initiatives or from changes in use such as the relocation of the City’s public works operations which will free up land for new residential and/or commercial purposes.

Table 4.3 – 2030 Future Land Use Tabulation

Future Land Use Plan	Acres	Percentage
Low Density Residential	1,955.97	43.90%
Medium Density Residential	37.97	0.85%
Medium - High Density Residential	44.23	0.99%
High Density Residential	117.75	2.64%
High Density Residential/Office	24.57	0.55%
Neighborhood Commercial	3.80	0.09%
Community Commercial	36.74	0.82%
Regional Commercial	50.65	1.14%
Community Commercial/Office	22.55	0.51%
Regional Commercial/Office	80.90	1.82%
Mixed Use	120.48	2.70%
Office	53.21	1.19%
Public / Quasi Public	206.93	4.64%
Park	250.03	5.61%
Open Water / Wetland	237.58	5.33%
Right-of-Way	1,211.72	27.20%
Total:	4,455.09	100.00%

Land Use Categories

The future land use plan contains a range of categories that address residential, commercial, industrial and public uses. A number of the categories accommodate a range of residential and commercial uses in a mixed-use format.



Low Density Residential (LDR)

The majority of Richfield's existing housing stock falls within the Low Density Residential land use category. The low density residential category has been derived from the Single-family Residential category that was included in the City's 1999 Comprehensive Plan. The low density residential category allows for the mixture of single-family detached and attached units such as, duplexes and lower density townhomes. Low Density residential development ranges from 1 to 6 units per acre.



Medium Density Residential (MDR)

The Medium Density Residential land use category was derived from the Single-family Residential – High Density category (R-SFH) that was included in the City's 1999 Comprehensive Plan. The medium density residential category replaces the R-SFH category. Naming this category medium density better clarifies the intent of the residential uses within this category. Medium density residential accommodates attached housing, predominantly townhomes or condominiums ranging from 7 to 12 units per acre. Medium density residential also includes manufactured housing.



Medium - High Density Residential (MHD)

Medium - High Density Residential includes multi-unit and multi-building developments. The intent is to allow for higher density housing, such as townhome developments. The allowed density would range from 12 to 24 units per acre and no greater than 4 stories tall.

High Density Residential (HDR)

High Density Residential also includes multi-unit and multi-building developments at a more intense scale. The allowed density range is a minimum of 24 units per acre. High Density Residential uses are primarily located convenient to transportation, utility, security, shopping and social services in order to support higher concentrations of people.



High Density Residential/Office (HDRO)

The High Density Residential/Office category is similar to the High Density Residential category. The HDRO includes multi-unit and multi-building developments with the presence of office uses. Like the HDR category, a minimum density of 24 units per acre is required.





Neighborhood Commercial (NC)

The Neighborhood Commercial land use category provides the opportunity for retail goods and services that directly cater to a limited geographic area or neighborhood in Richfield. The intent of this category is to provide space to allow for goods or services that neighborhood residents need on a frequent basis. For example, neighborhood uses may include a convenience store, coffee shop, drug store, hardware store or dry cleaner. Neighborhood commercial uses must fit within the character and scale of a residential neighborhood and should be accessible by foot and bicycle. The size of neighborhood commercial is limited to 5,000 square feet. An example of an existing neighborhood commercial use is the center that is located along Chicago Ave. between E 71st St. and E 72nd St.



Community Commercial (CC)

Community Commercial accommodates a wide variety of retail goods and services that are more intense than neighborhood scale commercial but generally not uses that attract customers from throughout the Twin City metropolitan area. Community commercial uses are intended to serve residents of Richfield and the immediate vicinity around Richfield. Community commercial uses are primarily located along major local corridors, such as 66th St., Penn Ave., Nicollet Ave., and Portland Ave. An example of an existing community commercial area is the HUB which is located at East 66th Street and Nicollet

Avenue. Community commercial uses can contain buildings up to 150,000 square feet in size.

Community Commercial/Office (CCO)

In addition to the retail and services uses allowed in the Community Commercial land use category, Community Commercial/Office allows for the presence of offices. Within this category, office uses are to be integrated into the overall development up to a total building size of 150,000 square feet. Office uses would preferably be located above retail uses or situated in stand-alone building developments.



Regional Commercial (RC)

Regional Commercial uses are primarily, if not exclusively located along regional corridors that provide visibility and accessibility, such as Interstate 35W, Interstate 494, US Highway 77 and US Highway 62. These commercial land uses are larger in scale, ranging from 150,000 + square feet and attract users from throughout the Twin City metropolitan area. Primary uses would include large anchor retail tenants, mid sized retailers or a collection of specialty retail tenants fashioned in lifestyles centers, shopping malls or large stand-alone buildings.





Regional Commercial/Office (RCO)

In addition to the retail and service uses allowed in the Regional Commercial land use category, Regional Commercial/Office allows for the presence of offices. Within this category, office uses are to be integrated into the overall development with buildings exceeding 150,000 square feet in size. Office uses would preferably be located above retail uses or situated in stand-alone building developments.

Mixed Use (MU)

Mixed Use is a new land use category that is being used to better clarify planned land use patterns near 66th Street & Lyndale Avenue and the Penn Avenue corridor from 68th Street to Highway 62.

Lyndale & 66th Street: The intent of the mixed use category is to focus on creating a city center in Richfield that would serve as a “downtown.” The city center is expected to include a mix of residential, shopping, recreational and businesses uses. The area at 66th Street and Lyndale has been developing for the past decade as Richfield’s city center. The intent is to continue the expansion of the city center area by incorporating residential housing at 50+ units per acre and providing commercial, office and recreational opportunities.

Penn Avenue Corridor: The intent of the mixed use category is to create a traditional neighborhood center that is a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented district. The



district would accommodate residential, shopping, recreational and businesses uses in a flexible arrangement that captures the spirit and intent of the Penn Avenue Revitalization Master Plan.

Office (O)

Office uses are accommodated in several of the residential and commercial land use categories. However, the office land use category is intended to provide stand-alone office development. These stand-alone developments may include such uses as office-showrooms, research and development facilities, real estate offices or banks. A floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.20 should be achieved for stand-alone office building development.

Public and Quasi-Public

Public and Quasi-public uses include all civic, county and state facilities (excluding parks); religious facilities, schools and other similar non-profit uses.

Park

The park designation includes all public parks, public playgrounds and trail corridors.

Right-of-Way

Right-of-way includes all public land that is under the jurisdiction of the City of Richfield, Hennepin County or the State of Minnesota that is generally devoted to transportation and/or utilities.



Police, Fire & City Hall Facilities

Community facilities are non-commercial uses that are intended to provide a public benefit or service. Richfield's community facilities include schools, the Hennepin County library, churches, police, fire, and other civic buildings. Community facilities are discussed throughout the Comprehensive Plan. The intent of this section is to highlight key community facilities, particularly those that are not featured in other sections of the plan.



Richfield Public Works - to be relocated

City Hall

City Hall was constructed in 1965 and since that time has served as the hub for civic activity in Richfield. Located at 6700 Portland Avenue South adjacent to Heredia Park, City Hall houses the administrative services, city council chambers and a motor vehicle licensing center. Being over 40 years old, the City Hall complex has become inadequate to support day-to-day operations. A new facility is required to accommodate both existing and future needs.

To address this issue, the City Council appointed a task force to explore potential sites. The results of the task force study determined that the most viable option would be to replace existing City Hall facility on the same site. It is anticipated the reconstruction would occur sometime in the short to mid-term future. The new Police, Fire and City Hall facility may require the acquisition of two

residential properties to the south, one being owned by the HRA.

In order to maintain a civic hub of activity in the community, Richfield will need to continue to work towards construction of a new City hall complex.

Public Works

The public works department is responsible for overseeing the maintenance of public buildings and local infrastructure including public roads, sidewalks, City sewer, the water storage and distribution system, storm drainage system, etc. A new public works facility was completed in June of 2008. The new facility is located at East 66th Street and Cedar Avenue. The old facility located at 7700 Pillsbury Avenue South is anticipated to redevelop. The City is currently exploring redevelopment options and foresees the site as a future home of medium to high density housing. Accordingly, the land use plan has designated the site for medium-high density residential.

Schools

Over the years, Richfield residents have been committed to the success of their schools. Strong support for investments through bonding and levies demonstrate the commitment of the community to its schools. In 1993, residents passed a \$36.9 million bond referendum for school renovation, remodeling and technology improvements. In 2002, residents passed a \$1.4 million operating levy, and in 2003, residents passed a \$1 million

technology bond. Most recently, residents approved renewal of existing levies, which increase local funding from \$837 per student to \$1,099 per student.

This commitment has promoted quality schools and a level of excellence in educational programming. The boundary of the Richfield School District (ISD #280) includes all of the City of Richfield as well as a small portion extending into the City of Edina. Richfield also is the home of several significant private institutions such as the Academy of the Holly Angels.

The Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of maintaining the overall quality and reputation of the Richfield public schools. In fact, the quality of schools in a community can play a vital role on a home buyer's decision to move or stay in an area. Recognizing this importance, the following planning efforts have been identified to support the continuing successes of the schools:

- Safe Routes – In recent years there has been a stronger effort to provide safe routes to schools. For example, the Federal Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program was created through legislation in 2005 under the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act (SAFETEA-LU). A key initiative from the SRTS program is to provide safer routes between neighborhoods and schools. These efforts have provided federal funding programs to support the construction of facilities (sidewalks, signalized intersections, school crossings, etc...) and programs that provide these connections.
- The Comprehensive Plan has identified potential pedestrian routes that would offer safe routes to schools via greenways, sidewalks or bikeways. The City should continue to work towards improving safe connections identified in the transportation and parks/trails chapter. In addition, explore funding mechanisms, such as SRTS to support those infrastructure improvements.
- Housing Balance – Attracting and retaining families in Richfield is important to maintain high levels of school enrollment. In order to do so, the City needs to continue to emphasize a well balanced housing stock. This allows existing and new residents the housing options necessary to accommodate families with children. The housing plan discusses the existing and future housing needs of Richfield in further detail.
- Coordination – Land use, transportation, housing and other planning efforts can have an impact on individual school sites as well as the system as a whole. The City of Richfield will continue to coordinate and collaborate with Richfield Schools to maintain the infrastructure necessary for the continuation of high-quality public education.

Aggregate Resources

Richfield is fully developed. Therefore, the City is not impacted by aggregate resources nor are there any opportunities for mining with the community.

Solar Access

The Metropolitan Land Planning Act (Minnesota Statutes 473.859, Subd. 2) requires that local comprehensive plans include an element for the protection and development of access to direct sunlight for solar energy systems. The City of Richfield will protect such access by requiring minimum standards for lot sizes, amounts of open space, yard setbacks, and maximum height of buildings for urban residents. Land uses should not preclude the possible use of solar energy systems. The City will review and revise, as necessary, the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to ensure protection of solar access.

Historic Resources

The Metropolitan Land Planning Act (Minnesota Statutes 473.859, Subd. 2) also requires that comprehensive plans include an historic preservation element. Currently there is one site in the City that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Bartholomew House, located at 6901 Lyndale Avenue South, was constructed in 1852. The Richfield Historical Society, Inc. was formed in 1967 in an effort to restore the home of General Riles Bartholomew.

The house has been restored to illustrate life on a farm in the 1850s and the site is also the location of the Richfield Historical Museum. The City does not anticipate that additional sites will be added to the National Register. The City will continue to encourage the preservation of the Bartholomew House by the Richfield Historical Society.