

REDEVELOPMENT OF HOPKINS 325 BLAKE ROAD

Redevelopment of 17-acres near the future Blake Road LRT Station in Hopkins highlights partnerships that can leverage Transit Oriented Development (TOD) through pollution cleanup and environmental restoration. In 2011, the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD) purchased the vacant Hopkins Cold Storage facility as part of larger watershed improvement project along Minnehaha Creek called the Minnehaha Creek Greenway. MCWD will restore and retain ownership of approximately four acres along the creek including more than 1,000 feet of creek frontage. The remaining 13 acres will be developed as TOD that will include integrated affordable housing on a site that invites people into Minnehaha Creek's green space.



Current conditions and conceptual site plan for Hopkins Cold Storage facility at 325 Blake Road. Locations impact built environment and orientation.

FAST FACTS

PROJECT FACTS

Owner:

Minnehaha Creek Watershed District (MCWD)

Developer:

Kraus-Anderson

Partner:

City of Hopkins

STATION AREA

Transit:

METRO Green Line Extension

Station:

Blake Road

Station Area:

Concentrated area of rental housing, employment, and Blake School.

PLAN FACTS

Focus:

Partnered redevelopment for TOD and environmental restoration.

Outcomes:

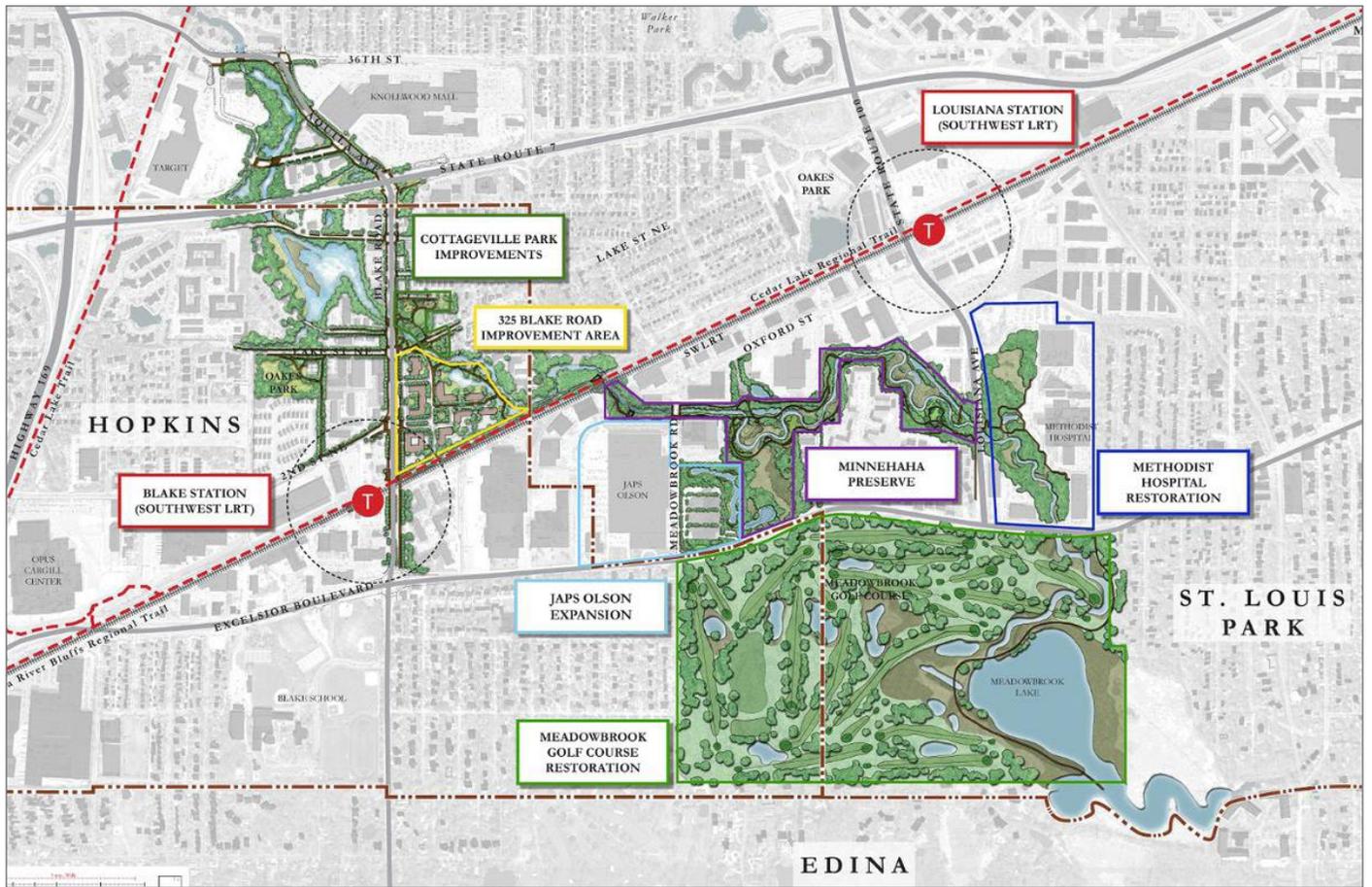
The industrial site will become a mixed use TOD through collaboration of partners and community involvement.

Implementation:

Watershed improvements begin in 2018.
Redevelopment in 2019

MINNEHAHA CREEK GREENWAY

The planned Minnehaha Creek Greenway consists of over 50 acres of contiguous green space and watershed improvements along Minnehaha Creek in the Cities of Hopkins and St. Louis Park. As a private industrial site that bordered the creek, the 17-acre Hopkins Cold Storage site prevented access to the creek by the public. Furthermore, with no treatment of surface water runoff, the site has been one of the highest polluting areas along the creek. MCWD will implement stormwater treatment best practices that will treat water from the site as well as a surrounding 260-acre drainage area.



The 325 Blake Road redevelopment site shown as the 325 Blake Road Improvement Area within the larger Minnehaha Creek Greenway planning area.

HOPKINS 325 BLAKE ROAD REDEVELOPMENT

The MCWD undertook an extensive Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process with assistance from the Southwest LRT Community Works Blake Road Corridor Subcommittee, which included representatives from the cities of Hopkins, St. Louis Park and Edina, Hennepin County, and the Blake Road Corridor Collaborative. The RFQ emphasized principles of urban ecology and TOD to benefit the community, the environment, and the local economy. MCWD selected Kraus-Anderson as the master developer.

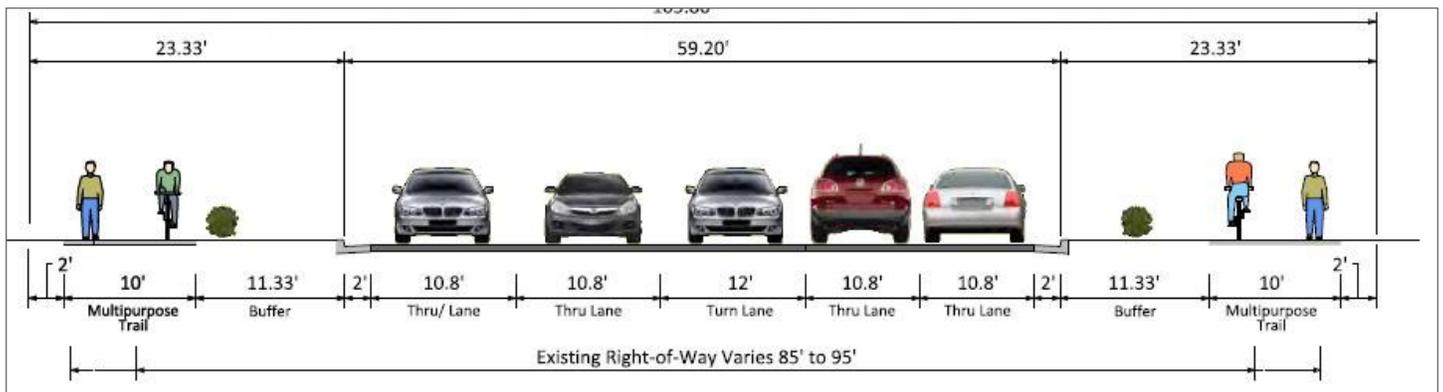
The Kraus-Anderson proposed the creation of a neighborhood that aligns with the community's vision for the site. Conceptual site plans include approximately 20 percent of affordable units mixed with market-rate units. Parking will primarily be within a structure, with limited surface and on-street stalls. Green space and community gathering areas will be integrated into the development. The Creek will be highlighted as the central attraction amid walking and biking trails, playgrounds, boulevards, and community areas.

Demolition of the existing facility is expected in 2018. The City of Hopkins received a \$805,700 grant from the Metropolitan Council for asbestos abatement and demolition of the existing facility. The demolition will be coordinated with the Blake Road Reconstruction project. Environmental improvements as well as site redevelopment will begin in 2019.

COLLABORATION AND COORDINATION

The development of Cottageville Park in 2015 by the City of Hopkins fostered partnerships that the MCWD utilized for its efforts on the 325 Blake Road site. Cottageville Park has a wide variety of amenities, including a community garden and access to the creek, that will be available to future residents.

Blake Road borders the 325 Blake Road site on the west. Reconstruction of Blake Road is underway and scheduled to be completed in 2019. A [recent corridor study](#) highlighted problems associated with the roadway's character for pedestrians as well as any TOD redevelopment efforts along its extent. The project will include lighting, landscaping, benches, and bike racks.



Typical cross section of the reconstructed Blake Road.

The Metropolitan Council, City of Hopkins, and the Minnehaha Creek Watershed District coordinated infrastructure reconstruction and demolition with the Blake Road project to minimize impact on the community. These include the Metropolitan Council’s new Hopkins sanitary sewer lift station as well as the pipe improvements and diversions needed for the MCWD stormwater management improvements.

HOW DOES THIS PLANNING WORK SUPPORT TOD?

Connect: This site is an integral part of the Minnehaha Creek Greenway and will connect residents to green space within and around the site. Cedar Lake Regional Trail will be accessible from the site, and additional bike lanes will be added to Blake Road during reconstruction. The site has immediate access to the planned Blake Road Station on the METRO Green Line Extension.

Intensify: Although final plans are under development, the RFQ shows the vacant industrial site will accommodate nearly 500 residential units with almost 20 percent as affordable housing. Parking will be concentrated in a structure or underground, with relatively few surface stalls.

Demonstrate: Stormwater management will improve the water quality along the Creek and provide green space for neighborhood residents. A collaborative approach of the MCWD maintaining ownership of approximately four acres, while Kraus-Anderson develops the remaining land, creates an environmentally friendly site attractive for TOD.

CHALLENGES AND LESSONS LEARNED

Challenges

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District overcame misconceptions of its role in development by communicating to the public about water quality in both urban and natural contexts. The MCWD’s planning approach considers the relationship between water and its social, environmental, and economic impacts. The integration of TOD and environmental principles in the 325 Blake Road site exemplifies the regional role of the MCWD.

The 325 Blake Road Site faces many environmental challenges, from clean up to demolition to managing a complex project. The MCWD and its partners are working together to ensure that the site will be successfully transformed. These partnerships are dedicated to open dialogue and using creativity to see the site’s potential and overcome its environmental challenges.

Lessons Learned

Coordinating construction across the four local projects (325 Blake Road, Blake Road reconstruction, METRO Green Line Extension Blake Road Station, and lift station and pipe diversions), the MCWD and its partners have efficiently used resources and encouraged coordination between multiple projects. Coordination expanded beyond construction and has facilitated a cohesive plan for the Blake Road area.

Redevelopment of the 325 Blake Road site presented an opportunity for the MCWD to demonstrate its regional presence and willingness to learn, by facilitating dialogue and partnerships. All partners working on the site, including the MCWD and the City of Hopkins, collaborated and shared expertise to realize this project.

LEARN MORE

Planning and Project Websites
MCWD 325 Blake Road Redevelopment
Blake Road Corridor Study
Blake Road Reconstruction Project

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FEEDBACK

Did you find this information useful? Do you have questions or suggestions for improvement? Contact us at TODGuide@metc.state.mn.us

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**TRANSIT
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