

## Community Development Committee

Meeting date: April 18, 2016

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of April 27, 2016

**Subject:** City of Saint Paul Gold Line Station Area Plans Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Review File No. 20535-14

**District(s), Member(s):** District 13, Richard Kramer

**Policy/Legal Reference:** Metropolitan Land Planning Act (Minn. Stat. § 473.175)

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Patrick Boylan, AICP, Planning Analyst, Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1438)

**Division/Department:** Community Development / Regional Planning

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Adopt the attached Review Record and allow the City of St. Paul to place the Gold Line Station Area Plans Comprehensive Plan Amendment (amendment) into effect.
2. Find that the proposed amendment does not change the forecasts for the City.
3. Advise the City to implement the advisory comments in the Review Record for Forecasts, Wastewater, and Transportation.

### Background

The Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is under study by Washington and Ramsey Counties along the north side of I-94 from Union Depot to the eastern end of Woodbury. Gold Line BRT construction could start as soon as 2018, with operations commencing in 2022. The St. Paul Planning Commission initiated a station area planning process in April 2014 in order to influence BRT project decisions by injecting community-based concerns early in the process, and in order to take full advantage of this major potential transportation investment by preparing land use and infrastructure plans that take BRT into account.

The purpose of the amendment is to re-guide four of the Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations as "Neighborhood Centers," which calls for compact, higher-density, mixed-use growth adjacent to a major transit corridor. The proposed amendment affects 246 parcels, resulting in the potential for a minimum increase of 945 housing units. The Gold Line BRT Stations are located at: Mounds Boulevard, Earl Street, Etna Street, White Bear Avenue, and Sun Ray Shopping Center. Mounds Boulevard Station area would maintain its Residential Corridor and Established Neighborhood designations due to its location in an historic district.

### Rationale

The proposed amendment conforms to regional system plans, is consistent with Council policies, and is compatible with the plans of other local communities and school districts.

### Funding

None.

### Known Support / Opposition

There is no known opposition to this amendment.

# Review Record

City of St. Paul

Gold Line Station Area Plans Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Review File No. 20535-14, Council Business Item 2016-75

## BACKGROUND

The City of St. Paul is approximately 36,000 acres in size, or 56 square miles. The City, located in southern Ramsey County, is north of Lilydale, Mendota, Mendota Heights, South St. Paul and West St. Paul in Dakota County and northwest of Newport in Washington County. It is south of the Ramsey county cities of Roseville, Falcon Heights, and Lauderdale, and south and west of Maplewood, and east of the Hennepin County city of Minneapolis. The Mississippi River forms part of the city's southern and western boundaries.

Consistent with the policies adopted by the Council in June 2014 (Business Item 2014-143) regarding review of local comprehensive plans, this amendment is being reviewed under *Thrive MSP 2040* and its policy plans.

*Thrive MSP 2040 (Thrive)* identifies the City as an Urban Center community. The Metropolitan Council (Council) forecasts that the City will grow between 2020 and 2040 from 308,600 to 334,700 people; from 125,000 to 137,600 households; and that employment will grow from 190,900 to 218,000 jobs.

The Council reviewed the City's Comprehensive Plan Update (Business Item No. 2009-415, Review File No. 20535-1) on December 9, 2009. This amendment is the thirteenth amendment since the Update was reviewed.

## REQUEST SUMMARY

The purpose of the amendment is to re-guide four of the Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations as "Neighborhood Centers," a designation which calls for compact, higher-density, mixed-use growth adjacent to a major transit corridor. The proposed Amendment for new, higher residential areas for the "Neighborhood Center" designation for the Earl Station and Etna Station areas yields a net residential minimum density of 27 units per acre on the identified station area sites. The amendment proposes to re-guide 246 parcels which would result in a minimum increase of 945 housing units for parcels in the Gold Line BRT station areas. The stations are located at: Mounds Blvd., Earl Street, Etna Street, White Bear Avenue, and Sun Ray Shopping Center. Mounds Boulevard Station area would maintain its Residential Corridor and Established Neighborhood designations due to its location in an historic district.

## OVERVIEW

### Conformance with Regional Systems

The amendment conforms to the Regional System Plans for Parks, Transportation (including Aviation), and Wastewater, with no substantial impact on, or departure from, these plans.

### Consistency with Council Policies

The CPA is consistent with the *Thrive MSP 2040*, with the *Housing Policy Plan*, with water resources management, and is consistent with Council forecasts.

**Compatibility with Plans of Adjacent Jurisdictions** The amendment will not have an impact on adjacent communities, school districts, or watershed districts, and is compatible with the plans of those districts.

## PREVIOUS COUNCIL ACTIONS

- The Council acted on the City's Update on December 9, 2009 (Review File No. 20535-1, Business Item No. 2009-415).
- The District 4 Plan Update Summary & Adopted East 7<sup>th</sup> Street Design Guidelines CPA (Review File No. 20535-2, Business Item No. 2010-144) on May 21, 2010.
- The Downtown Station Area Plan CPA (Review File No. 20535-3) was reviewed administratively on May 17, 2011.
- The District 9 Plan Summary CPA (Review File No. 20535-4) was reviewed administratively on April 7, 2011
- The Smith Avenue Revitalization Plan CPA (Review File No. 20535-5) was reviewed administratively on January 19, 2012
- The St. Anthony Park Como Plan CPA (Review File No. 20535-6) was reviewed administratively on May 16, 2012.
- The North End-South Como District 6 Plan CPA (Review File No. 20535-7) was reviewed administratively on November 2, 2012.
- The Near East Side Roadmap CPA (Review File No. 20535-8) was reviewed administratively on January 2, 2013.
- The Lowertown Master Plan CPA (Review File No. 20535-9) was reviewed administratively on April 24, 2013.
- The District del Sol Small Area Plan CPA (Review File No. 20535-10) was reviewed administratively on May 23, 2013.
- The West Side Community Plan CPA (Review File No. 20535-11) was reviewed administratively on July 1, 2013.
- The Great River Passage Master Plan CPA (Review File No. 20535-12) was reviewed administratively on August 7, 2013.
- The District 12, St. Anthony Park Community CPA (Review File No. 20535-13) was reviewed administratively on August 18, 2013.
- The Council also reviewed eight environmental reviews since the Update was approved in 2009.

## ISSUES

- I. Does the amendment conform to the regional system plans?
- II. Is the amendment consistent with *Thrive MSP 2040* and other Council policies?
- III. Does the amendment change the City's forecasts?
- IV. Is the amendment compatible with the plans of adjacent local governmental units and affected jurisdictions?

## ISSUES ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

### *Conformance with Regional Systems*

The amendment conforms to the regional system plans for Regional Parks, Transportation, and Wastewater, with no substantial impact on, or departure from, these system plans. The following are additional review comments regarding regional parks and including advisory comments for wastewater and transportation.

### **Regional Parks**

Reviewer: Jan Youngquist (651-602-1029)

The amendment conforms to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan (RPPP)*. Several regional parks system facilities as identified in the RPPP are within proximity of the Gold Line BRT Station Areas, including Battle Creek-Indian Mounds Regional Park, Bruce Vento Regional Trail and Nature Sanctuary, the planned Trout Brook Regional Trail, and Johnson Parkway Regional Trail Search Corridor. Connectivity and accessibility recommendations for the specific station areas will improve access to these regional parks system facilities. The Station Area Plan is not anticipated to negatively impact the regional parks system.

### **Wastewater**

*Reviewer: Roger Janzig (651-602-1119)*

The amendment conforms to the Council's plans for regional wastewater services. The project location identified in the amendment can be served through the existing local wastewater collection system.

### **Advisory Comments**

The Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) extends along the north side of I-94 from the Union Depot in St. Paul to the eastern end of Woodbury. Any construction projects along this transitway may have an impact on multiple Metropolitan Council Interceptors in multiple locations. To assess the potential impacts to our interceptor system, prior to initiating any proposed project, preliminary plans should be sent to Scott Dentz, Interceptor Engineering Manager (651-602-4503) at the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services for review and comment.

The Metropolitan Disposal System has adequate capacity for this project location.

### **Transportation**

*Reviewer: Russ Owen (651-602-1724, Steve Baisden (612-349-7775)*

The proposed amendment conforms to the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP)*. The amendment has minimal impact on the transportation/aviation system. The amendment is consistent with the Council's policies for transit-supportive planning.

### **Advisory Comments**

The re-zoned station areas allow for compact, higher-density, mixed-use growth that will offer a pedestrian-friendly and transit-supportive environment.

The document makes several recommendations that Metro Transit should consider and evaluate new connections to particular stations through our Service Improvement Plan process. The process of evaluating potential bus connections to these particular stations does make sense, but does not guarantee that new bus connections will be provided. The land use patterns and/or immediate street grid near the proposed Earl and Etna Stations may present potential connection issues.

### **Consistency with Council Policy**

The amendment is consistent with Council policies for forecasts, land use, housing, sub-surface sewage treatment systems, and water supply. Additional review comments regarding forecasts are detailed below.

### **Forecasts**

*Reviewer: Todd Graham (651-602-1322)*

The forecast-related content of the amendment is consistent with Council policy.

The City offers that the plan amendment will not affect the community-wide forecast (question 6 of CPA submittal form). Council staff concur: Land use guidance changes described in this amendment could result in a redistribution of development between zones within the City. Still, the City-wide forecast

already assumes a very large development capacity. Council staff conclude that no change to the City-wide forecast totals is needed at this time.

### *Advisory Comments*

The Council has prepared a draft set of sub-city TAZ forecasts for 2040. This is now ready for local governments to review, and has been provided to staff at St Paul PED. We are asking for review, comments, and edits on TAZ forecasts currently. The City can provide additional comments and edits with its next Comprehensive Plan Update, expected by 2018.

### **Land Use**

*Reviewer: Patrick Boylan (651-602-1438)*

The amendment is consistent with *Thrive* policies for “Urban Center” communities, which directs communities to accommodate forecasted growth at a minimum residential density 20 units per acre. The *2040 Transportation Policy Plan* defines density expectations near Transitway Stations serving highway Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) for projects in Urban Centers at a minimum of 25 units per acre. The city of St. Paul’s guiding exceeds Council policy for Urban Center communities and residential density near Transitway Stations for BRT. The overall density range for the City of St. Paul is 30 to 150.8 units per acre. The proposed Amendment for new, higher residential areas for the “Neighborhood Center” designation for the Earl Station and Etna Station areas yields a net residential minimum density of 27 units per acre on the identified station area sites.

The Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) is under study by Washington and Ramsey Counties along the north side of I-94 from Union Depot to the eastern end of Woodbury. Gold Line BRT construction could start as soon as 2018, with operations commencing in 2022. The St. Paul Planning Commission initiated a station area planning process in April 2014 in order to influence BRT project decisions by injecting community-based concerns early in the process, and in order to take full advantage of this major potential transportation investment by preparing land use and infrastructure plans that take BRT into account. Gold Line BRT Stations in the City are located at: Mounds Blvd., Earl Street, Etna Street, White Bear Avenue, and Sun Ray Shopping Center (see Figure 2). The proposed amendment re-guide four of the Gold Line Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations as “Neighborhood Centers,” which calls for compact, higher-density, mixed-use growth adjacent to a major transit corridor. The amendment also calls for rezoning 246 parcels, resulting in the potential for an increase of at least 945 housing units at the low end of the density range on potentially developable properties. Mounds Boulevard Station area would maintain its Residential Corridor and Established Neighborhood designations due to its location in an historic district.

### **Housing**

*Reviewer: Tara Beard (651-602-1021)*

The proposed amendment is consistent with Council housing policy. The amendment provides additional opportunities for the City to address its share of the region’s affordable housing need of 2,625 units and its lifecycle housing goal of 2,625 to 7,000 units by increasing the allowable density ranges in several of the station areas.

### *Compatibility with Plans of Adjacent Governmental Units and Plans of Affected Special Districts and School Districts*

The proposed amendment is compatible with the plans of adjacent jurisdictions. No compatibility issues with plans of adjacent governmental units and plans of affected special districts and school districts were identified.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Figure 1: Location Map Showing Regional Planning Areas

Figure 2: Location Map Showing Regional Systems

Figure 3: Current and Proposed Land Use Guiding

Figure 4: Station Area Plans: Mounds Station

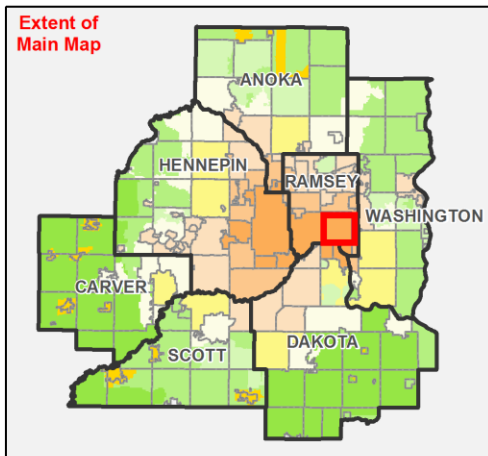
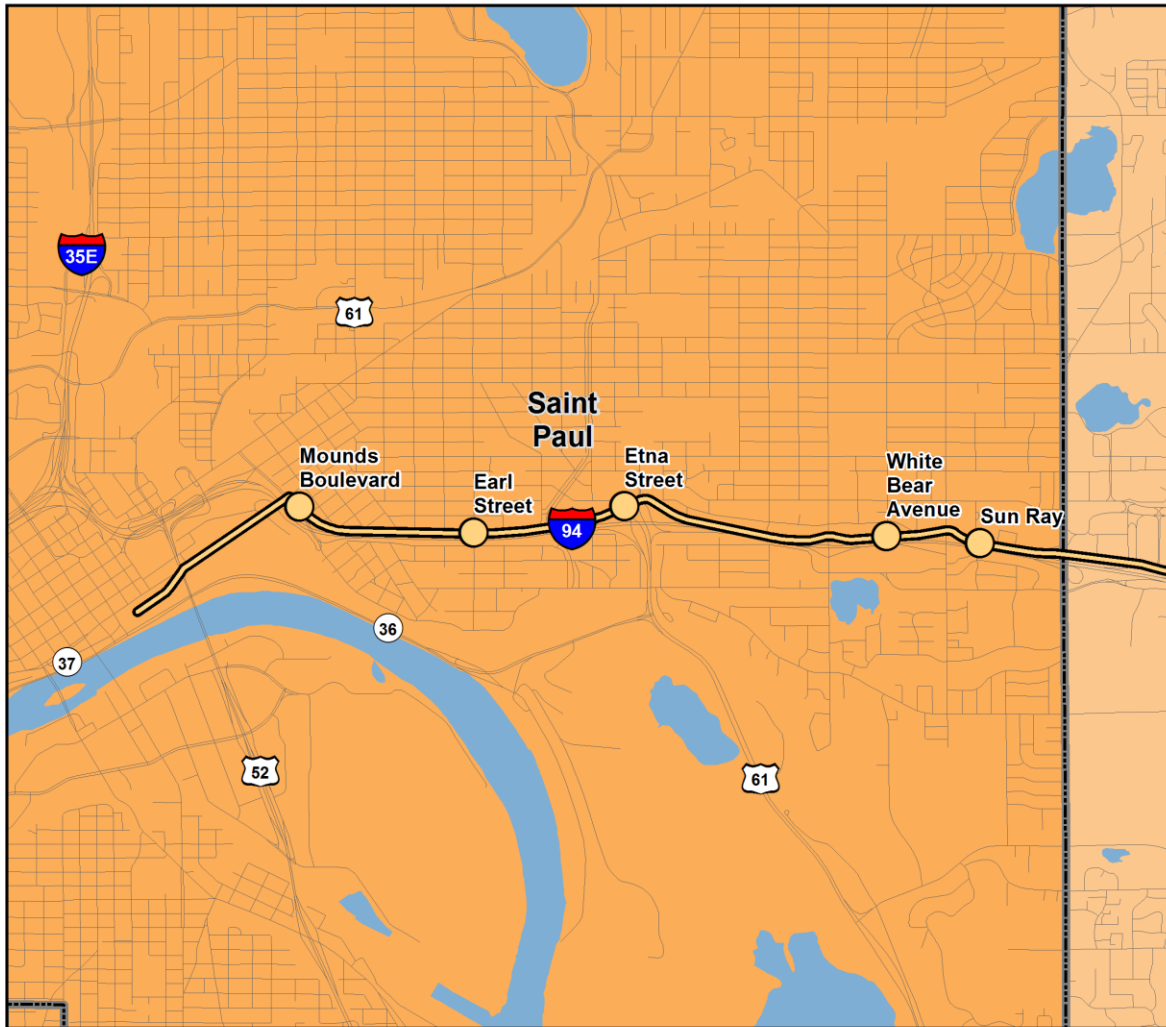
Figure 5: Station Area Plans: Earl Station

Figure 6: Station Area Plans: Etna Station

Figure 7: Station Area Plans: White Bear Station

Figure 8: Station Area Plans: Sun Ray Station

Figure 1: Location Map Showing Community Designations



**ThriveMSP 2040 Community Designations**

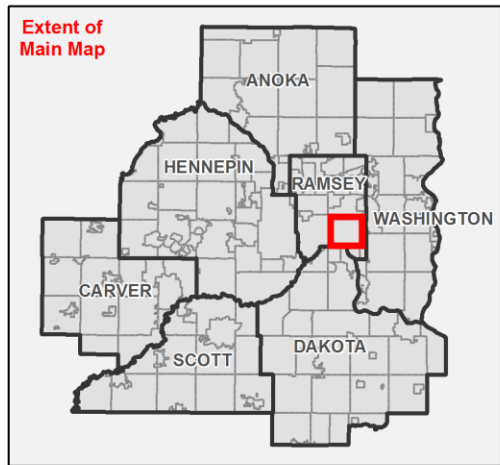
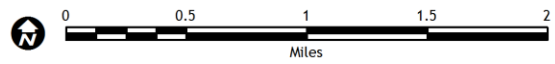
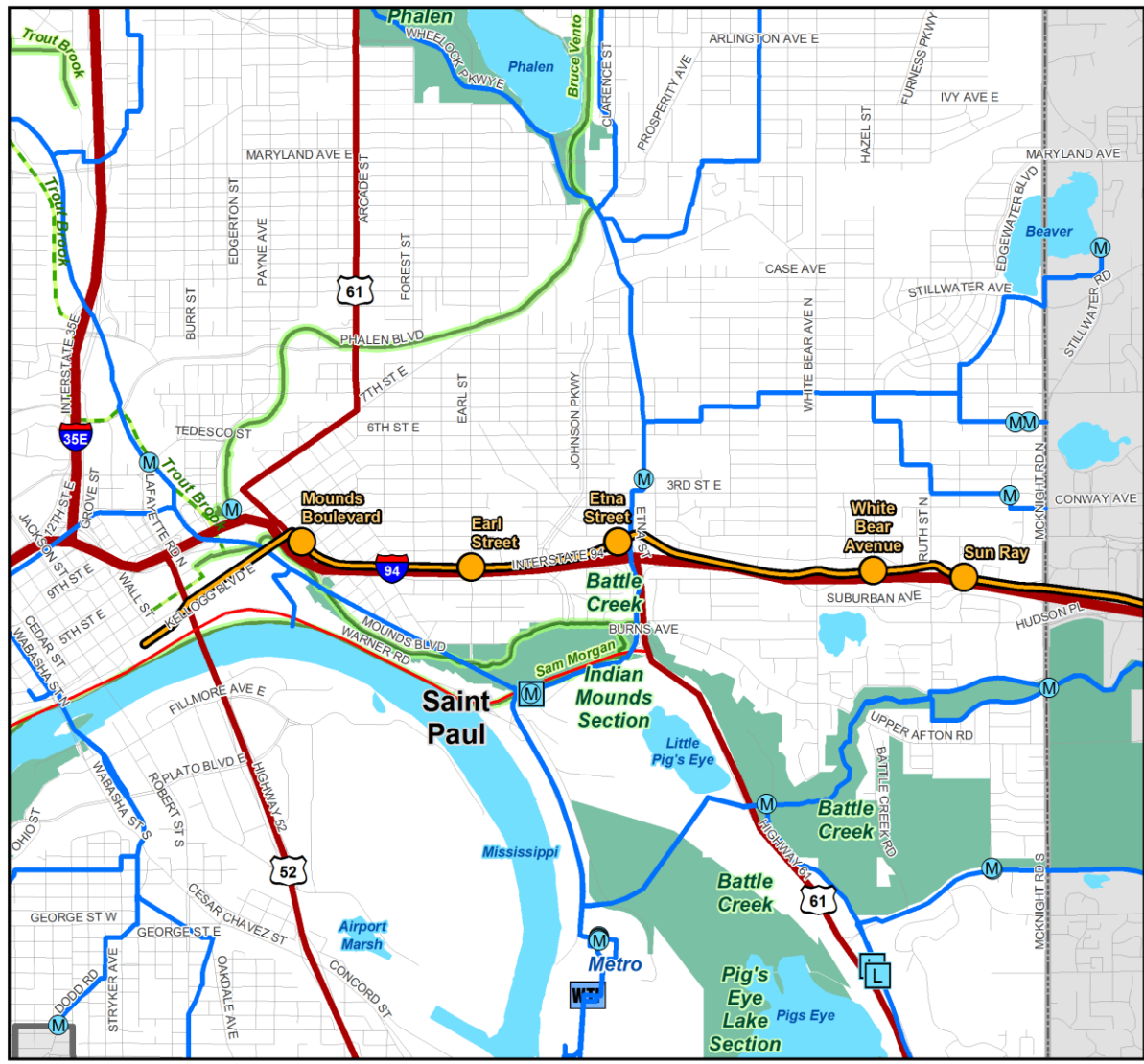
- Agricultural
- Rural Residential
- Diversified Rural
- Rural Center
- Emerging Suburban Edge
- Suburban Edge
- Suburban
- Urban
- Urban Center

Gold Line Planned Stations

Gold Line Planned Route

Ncompass Street Centerlines

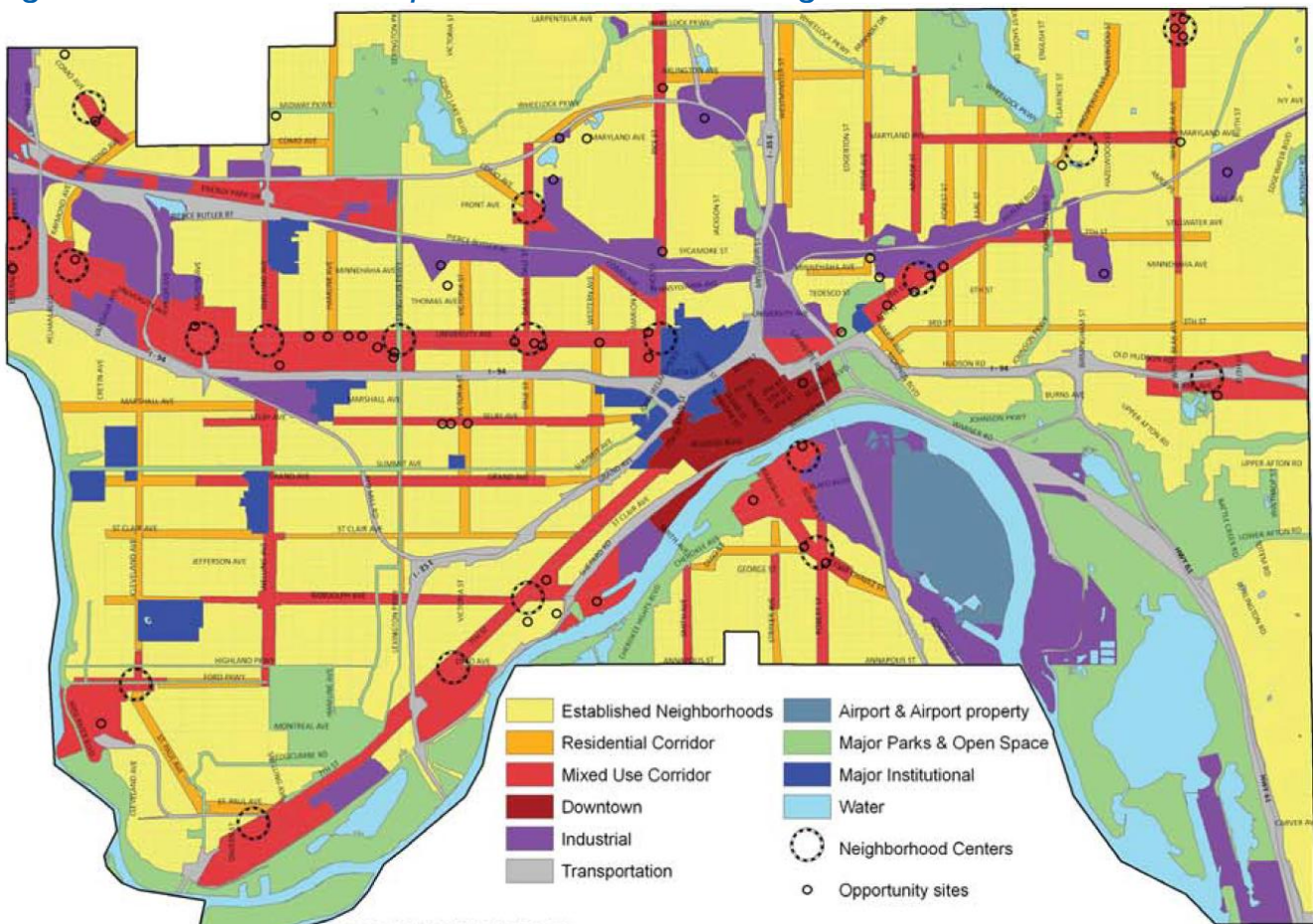
Figure 2: Location Map Showing Regional Systems



- Regional Systems**
- Wastewater Treatment**
    - Meters (M)
    - Lift Stations (L)
    - MCES Interceptors (Blue line)
    - MCES Treatment Plants (WTP)
  - Recreation Open Space**
    - Park Reserve (Dark Green)
    - Regional Park (Light Green)
    - Special Recreation Feature (Yellow)
    - Existing Regional Trail (Green line)
    - Planned Regional Trail (Dashed Green line)
  - Transportation**
    - Interstates (Thick Red line)
    - US Highways (Red line)
    - State Highways (Orange line)
    - County Roads (Thin Red line)
    - Gold Line Planned Stations (Yellow circle)
    - Gold Line Planned Route (Thick Orange line)
    - Ncompass Street Centerlines (Thin Grey line)



Figure 3: Current and Proposed Land Use Guiding



**NOTES FOR THE GENERALIZED LAND USE MAP\***

1. This map provides a general framework for accommodating the growth of future housing, businesses, services, and open spaces in Saint Paul. Adopted summaries of small area plans and district plans provide more specific guidance on future development in the areas of the city where they apply.
2. This map does not reflect current zoning, but it provides general guidance for the rezoning of property.
3. The "Saint Paul Land Use Table in 5-Year Stages" provides the range of residential densities allowed in each land use category, as well as guides acres in each land use category. Commercial and office uses are included within Mixed Use Corridors, and Downtown.
4. The table entitled "Saint Paul Residential Uses by 2030 Land Use Category" includes data demonstrating how the city will meet its household forecasts.
5. All categories of Land Use may contain parks/open space, recreational facilities, trails, institutional uses of less than 15 acres, and small scale commercial uses.
6. Current and proposed regional parks are described in more detail in Appendix B of the Parks chapter of this plan. Parcel-level additions to the regional park system are shown on Figure 23.
7. Parcel-specific boundaries of Holman Field (the St. Paul Downtown Airport) are shown on this map.

Figure 4: Station Area Plans: Mounds Station

**MOUNDS STATION AREA PLAN**

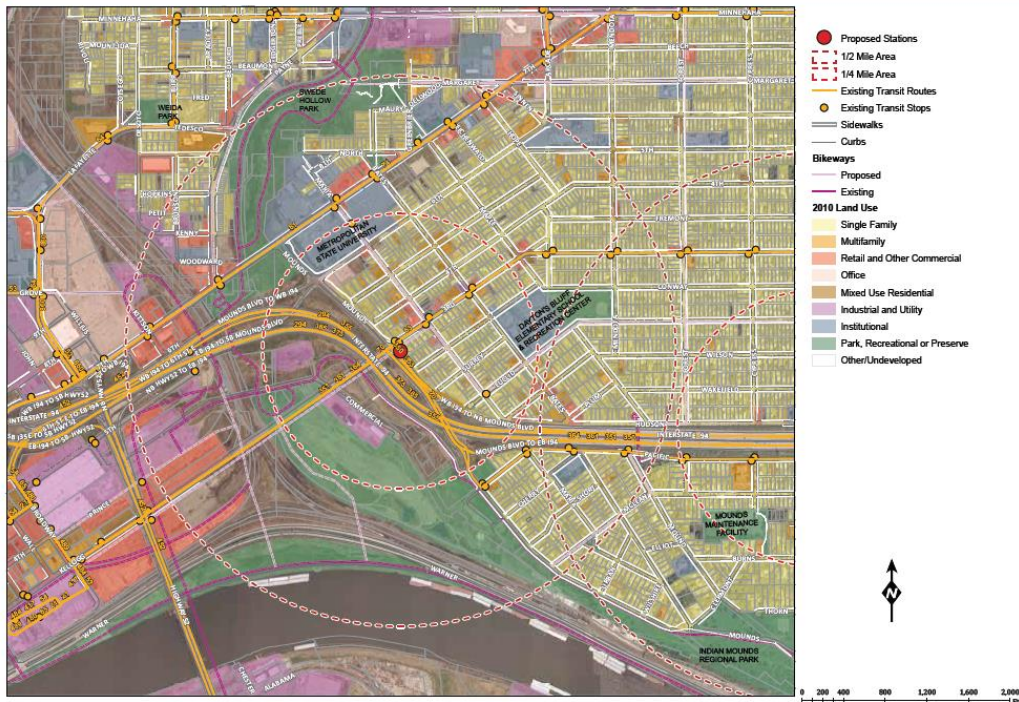


Figure 5: Station Area Plans: Earl Station

**EARL STATION AREA PLAN**

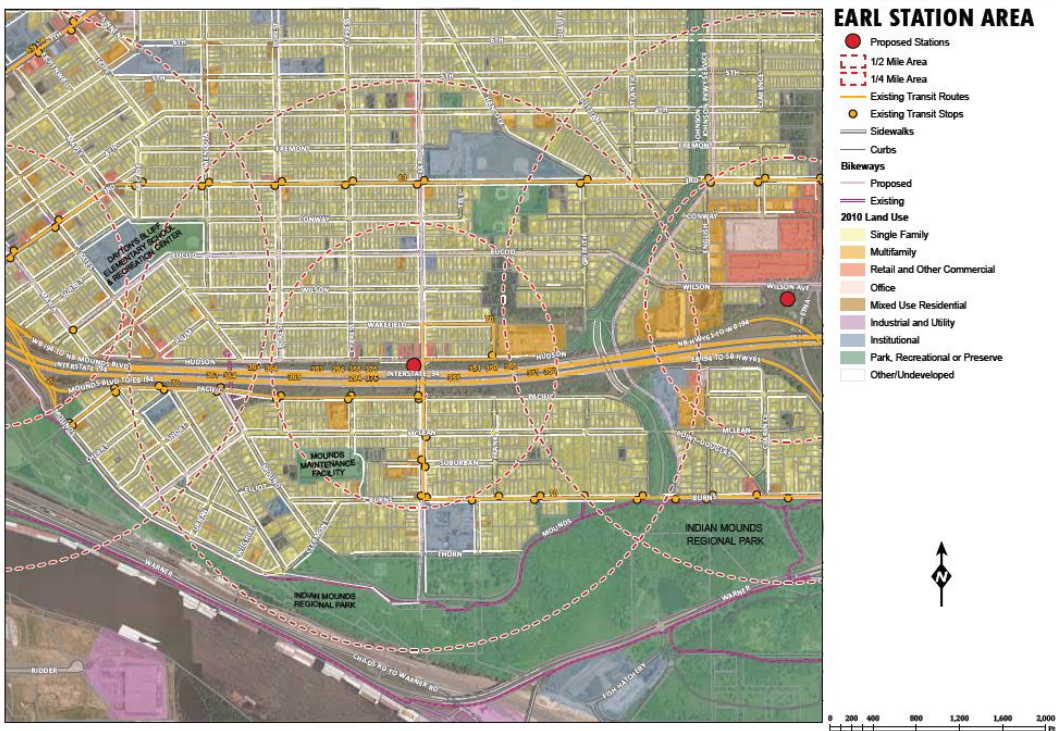


Figure 6: Station Area Plans: Etna Station

**ETNA STATION AREA PLAN**

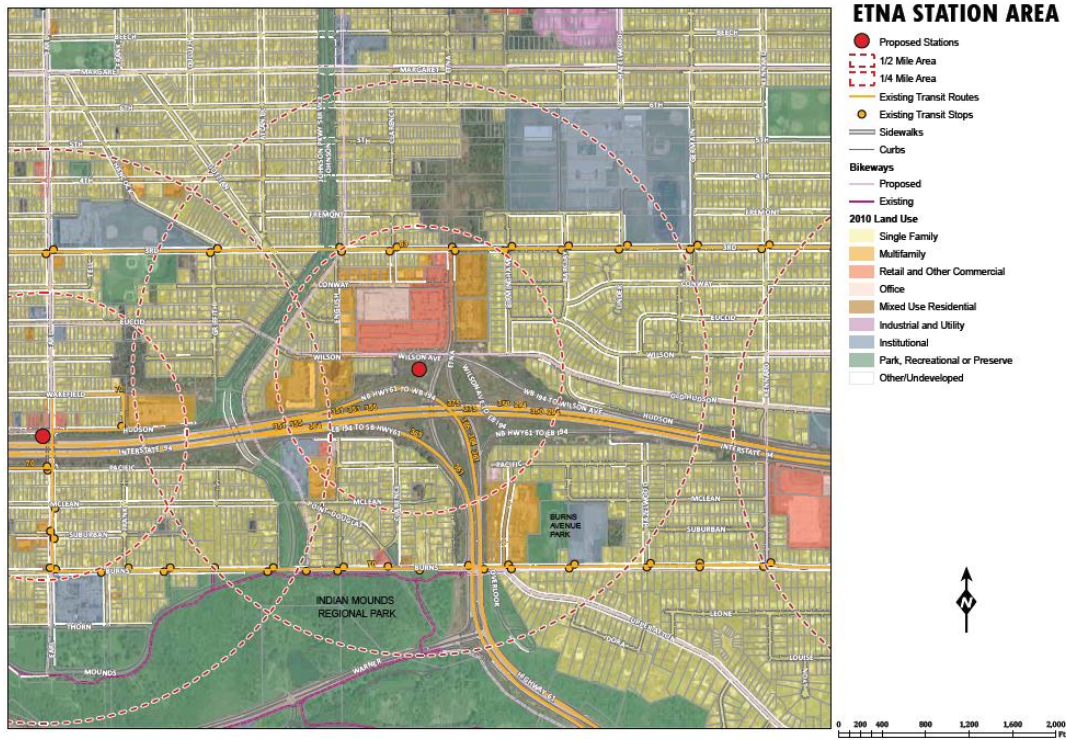


Figure 7: Station Area Plans: White Bear Station

**WHITE BEAR STATION AREA PLAN**

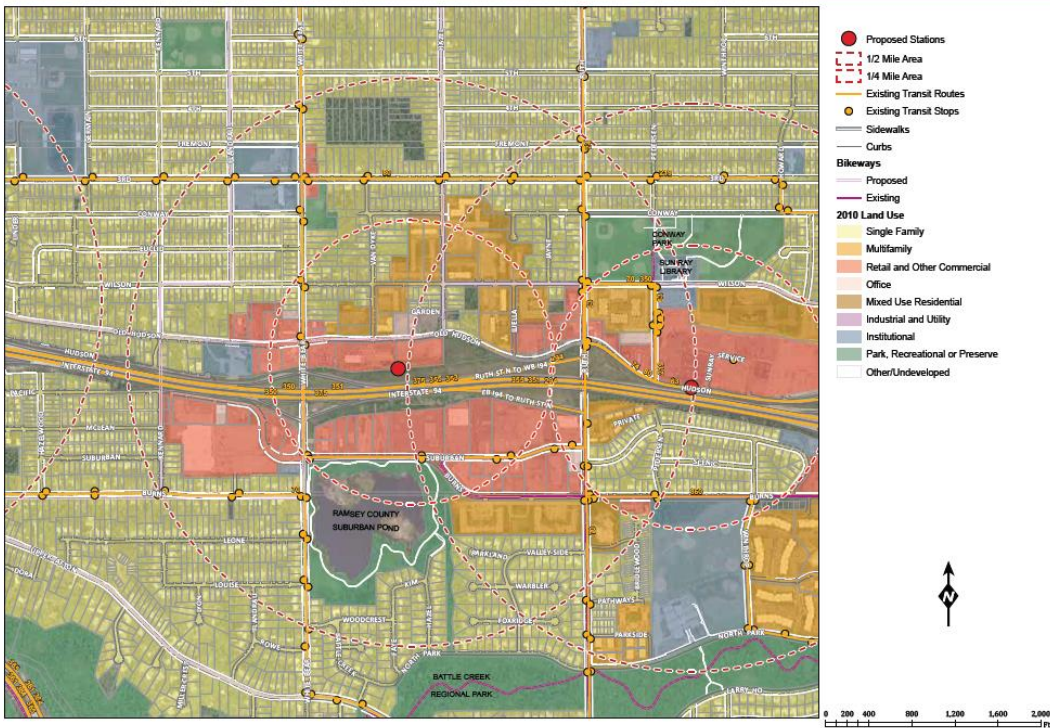


Figure 8: Station Area Plans: Sun Ray Station

SUN RAY STATION AREA PLAN

STATION AREA PLAN

