

## Community Development Committee

Meeting date: June 5, 2017

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of June 14, 2017

**Subject:** City of St. Louis Park PLACE Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Review File No. 20619-13

**District(s), Member(s):** District 6, Gail Dorfman

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

**Staff Prepared/Presented:** Michael Larson, AICP, Senior Planner, Local Planning Assistance (651-602-1407)

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

### Proposed Action

That the Metropolitan Council:

1. Adopt the attached Review Record and allow the City of St. Louis Park to place the PLACE Comprehensive Plan Amendment into effect.
2. Find that the amendment does not change the City's forecasts.
3. Advise the City to implement the advisory comments in the Review Record for Wastewater, Land Use, and Forecasts.

### Background

The proposed amendment regulates approximately 3.8 acres from Office, Business Park, Railroad, and Right-of-Way to Mixed Use. The amendment accommodates the proposed PLACE mixed-use development, which is located adjacent to the future METRO Green Line Wooddale Station. The project includes 299 residential units (200 affordable at 60% of Area Median Income); a 110-room hotel; 15,400 square feet of commercial space; a 10,000 square foot E-Generation facility; 0.88 acres of "urban forest"; and a plaza. An environmental assessment worksheet (EAW) was also previously prepared for the proposed project (Review File No. 20693-1).

### 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.

### Thrive Lens Analysis

The proposed amendment is reviewed against the land use policies in *Thrive MSP 2040*. To achieve the outcomes identified in Thrive, the metropolitan development guide defines the Land Use Policy for the region and includes strategies for local governments and the Council to implement. These policies and strategies are interrelated and, taken together, serve to achieve the outcomes identified in Thrive.

### Funding

None.

### Known Support / Opposition

There is no known local resident or local government opposition to this proposal.

# Review Record

## City of St. Louis Park PLACE Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Review File No. 20619-13, Council Business Item No. 2017-122

### BACKGROUND

The City of St. Louis Park (City) is a Hennepin County community of approximately 10.5 square miles, bordered by Minneapolis on the east, Golden Valley and Plymouth on the north, Minnetonka on the west, and Hopkins and Edina on the south.

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) designates St. Louis Park with an “Urban Center” community designation. Thrive forecasts, as amended in March 2017, for 2040 are 51,800 population, 25,700 households, and 46,700 jobs.

The Council reviewed the City’s Comprehensive Plan Update ([Business Item 2009-441](#), Review File No. 20619-1) on December 9, 2009. This is the City’s eleventh CPA since the review of the Update.

### REQUEST SUMMARY

The proposed amendment reguides approximately 3.8 acres from Office, Business Park, Railroad, and Right-of-Way to Mixed Use. The amendment accommodates the proposed PLACE mixed-use development, which is located adjacent to the future METRO Green Line Wooddale Station. The project includes 299 residential units (200 affordable at 60% of Area Median Income), a 110-room hotel, 15,400 square feet of commercial space, a 10,000 square foot E-Generation facility, 0.88 acres of “urban forest”, and a plaza. An environmental assessment worksheet (EAW) was also previously prepared for the proposed project (Review File No. 20693-1).

### OVERVIEW

#### Conformance with Regional Systems

The CPA 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 CPA 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 ([Business Item 2009-441](#), Review File No. 20619-1).
- The Council administratively approved the City's *Galaxy Drive-In Parking Lot Expansion* CPA on March 8, 2010 (Review File No. 20619-2). This CPA reguided 0.56 acres from Low Density Residential to Comercial.
- The Council administratively approved the City's *Three Sites* CPA on April 6, 2010 (Review File No. 20619-3). This CPA changed the guidance on three sites to be consistent with previous guidance in the 2020 comprehensive plan.
- The Council administratively approved the City's *City of St. Louis Park Plan by Neighborhood* CPA on June 27, 2012 (Review File No. 20619-4). This CPA created a new section of the comprehensive plan that articulates comprehensive plan policy at the neighborhood level.
- The Council approved the City's *Eliot Park Apartments* CPA on April 10, 2013 ([Business Item No. 2013-106](#), Review File No. 20619-5). This CPA reguided 4.27 acres of land from Civic to High Density Residential and Low Density Residential to accommodate a 141-unit multi-family development and three single-family homes.
- The Council administratively approved the City's *Wooddale Flats* CPA on August 27, 2013 (Review File No. 20619-6). This CPA reguided 2.42 acres from Civic to Medium Density Residential to accommodate a 34-unit multi-family development.
- The Council approved the City's *Highway 7 & Glenhurst* CPA on March 25, 2015 ([Business Item No. 2015-57](#), Review File No. 20619-7). This CPA reguided 2.23 acres from Commercial and Medium Density Residential to Mixed Use to accommodate a mixed use development with 151 dwelling units and 10,000 square feet of commercial space.
- The Council administratively approved the City's *Flexible Planned Densities* CPA on June 5, 2015 (Review File No. 20619-8). This CPA changed policy to allow development to exceed ordinary density maximums in the High Density Residential, Mixed Use, Commercial, and Office districts when projects meet the City's Livable Communities Principles and other comprehensive plan goals.
- The Council approved the City's *Bridgewater* CPA on August 12, 2015 ([Business Item 2015-174](#), Review File No. 20619-9). This CPA reguided 2.42 acres from Commercial to Mixed Use to accommodate a mixed use development with 166 dwelling units and 17,000 square feet of commercial space.
- The Council administratively approved the City's *Arlington Row Apartments West* CPA on November 18, 2015 (Review File No. 20619-10). This CPA reguided 1.39 acres from Low Density Residential to Medium Density Residential to accommodate two 17-unit multi-family buildings.
- The Council administratively approved the City's *Municipal Boundary Adjustment* CPA on March 31, 2016 (Review File No. 20619-11). This CPA established a land use guidance of Industrial for 2.44 acres attached from the City of Hopkins.
- The Council approved the City's *Beltline Boulevard Station Redevelopment Area* CPA on March 8, 2017 ([Business Item 2017-54](#), Review File No. 20619-12). This CPA reguided 5.21 acres from Business Park to Mixed Use to accommodate future mixed-use development adjacent to the future METRO Green Line Beltline station.

## 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 Township'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 CPA conforms to the regional system plan for Regional Parks, Transportation, and Wastewater, with no substantial impact on, or departure from, these system plans. Additional review comments for regional parks are included below.

#### **Transportation**

*Reviewer: Russ Owen (651-602-1724)*

The amendment conforms to the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP)*. The proposed development is adjacent to both Trunk Highway 7 and the future Wooddale station on the METRO Green Line Extension. The development is not anticipated to negatively impact the principal arterial highway. The density and mix of uses near the station conforms to land use policies in the TPP for regional transitways.

#### *Advisory Comments*

The project proposer needs to continue to coordinate their design with the Southwest Light Rail Transit (SWLRT) Project to resolve pedestrian and access conflicts that exist with their current design. Design coordination items include, but are limited to, pedestrian access, maintenance access, vehicle access and parking, location and amount of lighting, location and amount of signage, additional retaining walls, sidewalks, stairs, accessible ramps, and landscaping.

Once design coordination is complete, changes will likely need to be made to pedestrian access to the Wooddale Station to accommodate the PLACE design. These changes will result in a Change Order to the SWLRT Project that are not in the project scope or budget and will need to be paid for by others.

#### **Wastewater**

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

The amendment conforms to the *2040 Water Resources Policy Plan*. The existing Metropolitan Disposal System has adequate capacity for the proposed change in guided land use.

#### *Advisory Comments*

Metropolitan Council Forcemain Interceptors (8041-A and 8041-B) are within the Highway 7 service road right-of-way, which runs through this project location. The interceptors were built in 2011 and are 24-inch PVC pipes at depths of approximately 7 to 10 feet. There are specific processes that must be followed before encroachment on Council property can be granted, including obtaining an Encroachment Agreement. Please continue to coordinate with Scott Dentz, Interceptor Engineering Manager (651-602-4503) at the Metropolitan Council Environmental Services.

#### **Regional Parks**

*Reviewer: Jan Youngquist (651-602-1029)*

The amendment conforms to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan (RPPP)*. The Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail travels through the middle of the amendment site. The Cedar Lake LRT Regional Trail is operated by Three Rivers Park District and is governed by the RPPP. The change in land use guiding from Office, Business Park, Railroad, and Right-of-Way to Mixed Use is not anticipated to impact the regional trail.

**Advisory Comments**

The proposed development associated with the amendment appears to have incorporated the regional trail into the design and includes new connections to the trail. Council staff encourages the City and the developer to continue to coordinate with Three Rivers Park District throughout final design and construction of the project to ensure safety for trail users.

**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 consistency with land use and housing policies are detailed below.

**Land Use**

*Reviewer: Michael Larson (651-602-1407)*

Thrive designates the City as an Urban Center community. Thrive expectations for the overall density of new development and redevelopment in Urban Center communities is a minimum average residential density of 20 dwelling units per acre (du/acre) for new development and redevelopment. The proposed amendment reguides approximately 3.8 acres from Office, Business Park, Railroad, and Right-of-Way to Mixed Use, which supports residential development at densities from 20 to 50+ du/acre. As a result of the amendment, the City’s overall planned density increases slightly from 18.6 to 18.71 du/acre, as shown in Table 1 with changes underlined.

**Table 1. City of St. Louis Park Planned Residential Density**

Category	2010-2030 Change				
	Density Range		Net Acres	Min Units	Max Units
	Min	Max			
Medium Density Residential	6	30	4.7	28	140
High Density Residential	20	50+	9.2	184	459+
<u>Mixed Use</u>	20	50+	<u>36.9</u>	<u>738</u>	<u>1845+</u>
<b>TOTALS</b>			<b>47.74</b>	<b>950</b>	<b>2444+</b>
<b>Overall Density</b>				<b>18.6</b>	<b>48.1+</b>

The proposed PLACE development is a Mixed Use project that includes both residential and non-residential components. The development site totals 5.2 acres, with 299 dwelling units in two buildings. As a Mixed Use district, the City’s assumes that approximately 80% of land will be developed with residential uses. Using this assumption, the project’s net density is approximately 72 du/acre. The City’s comprehensive plan includes policy language allowing development to exceed the ordinarily maximum density of 50 du/acre when it meets the City’s Livable Communities Principles and other goals of the comprehensive plan. The City has determined that the PLACE project meets those principles and goals.

In February 2017, the City prepared an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the proposed project. Council staff found the EAW to be complete and accurate with respect to regional concerns (Review File No. 21693-1, letter dated April 5, 2017). The proposed amendment is consistent with the project proposal analyzed in the EAW.

### ***Advisory Comments***

The City's full comprehensive plan does not currently meet the Thrive policy expectation for an average minimum planned density of 20 du/acre in Urban Center communities, as shown in Table 1. However, the community will have an opportunity to adjust guiding densities in its 2040 comprehensive plan update. Recent development, the proposed PLACE project, and likely future market conditions all support a higher minimum density for redevelopment in the City.

The *2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP)* establishes policy for the density of residential development near transit stations. The areas addressed by the TPP encompass an area within a ½-mile radius of the station platform. This amendment regulates property within this radius. For light rail transit (LRT) station areas in Urban Center communities, the average minimum planned residential density is 50 du/acre. The City should consider this policy requirement during the update of its comprehensive plan so that overall guiding land use conforms with regional system plans and policy. The proposed project density of 72 du/acre conforms to the TPP, but the guiding density of 20-50 du/acre is below the required average minimum.

The City's current comprehensive plan does not establish upper density limits for High Density Residential and Mixed Use categories, and this is represented in Table 1 with plus symbols. This approach was established with the Flexible Planned Densities amendment (Review File 20619-8), which was administratively approved by the Council on June 5, 2015. At that time, the Metropolitan Council advised that a boundless density range does not enable the Council to fully assess the amount of growth that communities may accommodate nor the potential impact on various regional systems.

In the City's update, the Council expects the City to guide land uses with density ranges that have upper bounds, even if the upper end of that range is conditioned by local policy performance standards, such as what is articulated with the City's Livable Communities Principles. The Council uses a number of factors to fully consider scenarios that would result in the greatest impact to regional systems. They include maximum residential density, allocation of growth forecasts to Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZs), and identification of redevelopment areas.

The Council made similar comments in its review of St. Louis Park's Beltline Boulevard Station Redevelopment Area Comprehensive Plan Amendment ([Business Item 2017-54](#), Review File 20619-12), the City's most recent CPA.

### **Forecasts**

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

The amendment is consistent with the Council's forecasts. The City does not propose forecast adjustments with this amendment.

### ***Advisory Comments***

The City and the Council can consider revising the forecasts of households and population as the City prepares its plan update. The City is on pace to surpass its 2020 forecast (23,600 households) in 2017. The Council has flexibility to adjust the 2020 milestone, as well as 2030 and 2040. Please contact Council staff to begin this discussion.

### **Housing**

*Reviewer: Jonathan Stanley (651-602-1555)*

The amendment is consistent with the Council's *Housing Policy Plan*. The proposed project supports the development of 200 dwelling units affordable at 60% of Area Median Income. The City's share of the region's affordable housing need from 2011-2020 is 501 units; and its lifecycle housing goal is 500 to 1000 units. Prior to this amendment, the City already had the capacity in its guided land uses for

2011-2020 to support its affordable housing need and the lifecycle housing goal. By reguiding approximately 3.8 acres from non-residential land uses to Mixed Use, the amendment further increases the amount of land that supports the development of affordable and lifecycle housing. The City now has a total of 46.1 acres guided at densities of at least 20 units per acre. This results in the capacity to support at least 922 new housing units at minimum guided densities.

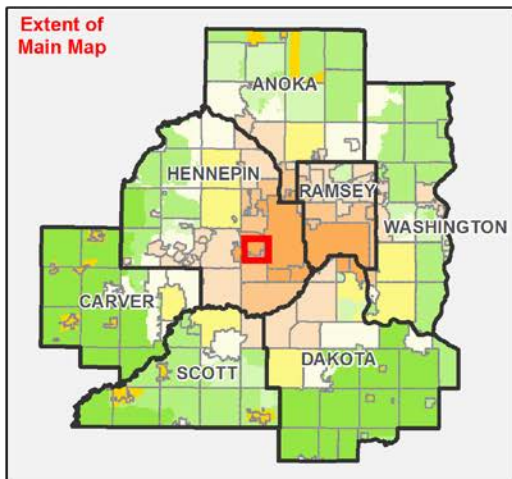
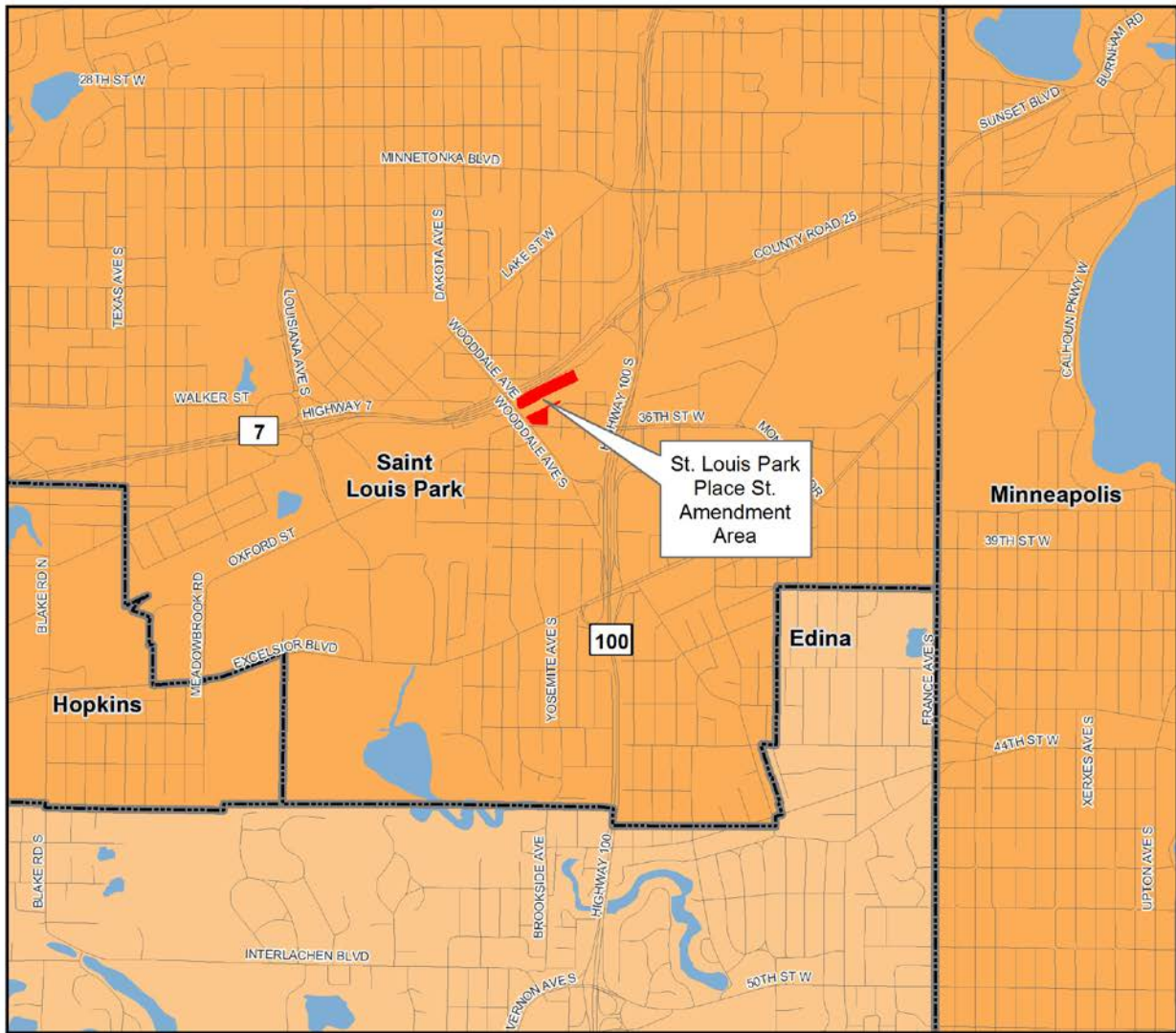
### *Compatibility with Plans of Adjacent Governmental Units and Plans of Affected Special Districts and School Districts*

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 Community Designations
- Figure 2: Location Map showing Regional Systems
- Figure 3: Current and Proposed Land Use Guiding

Figure 1: Location Map Showing Community Designations

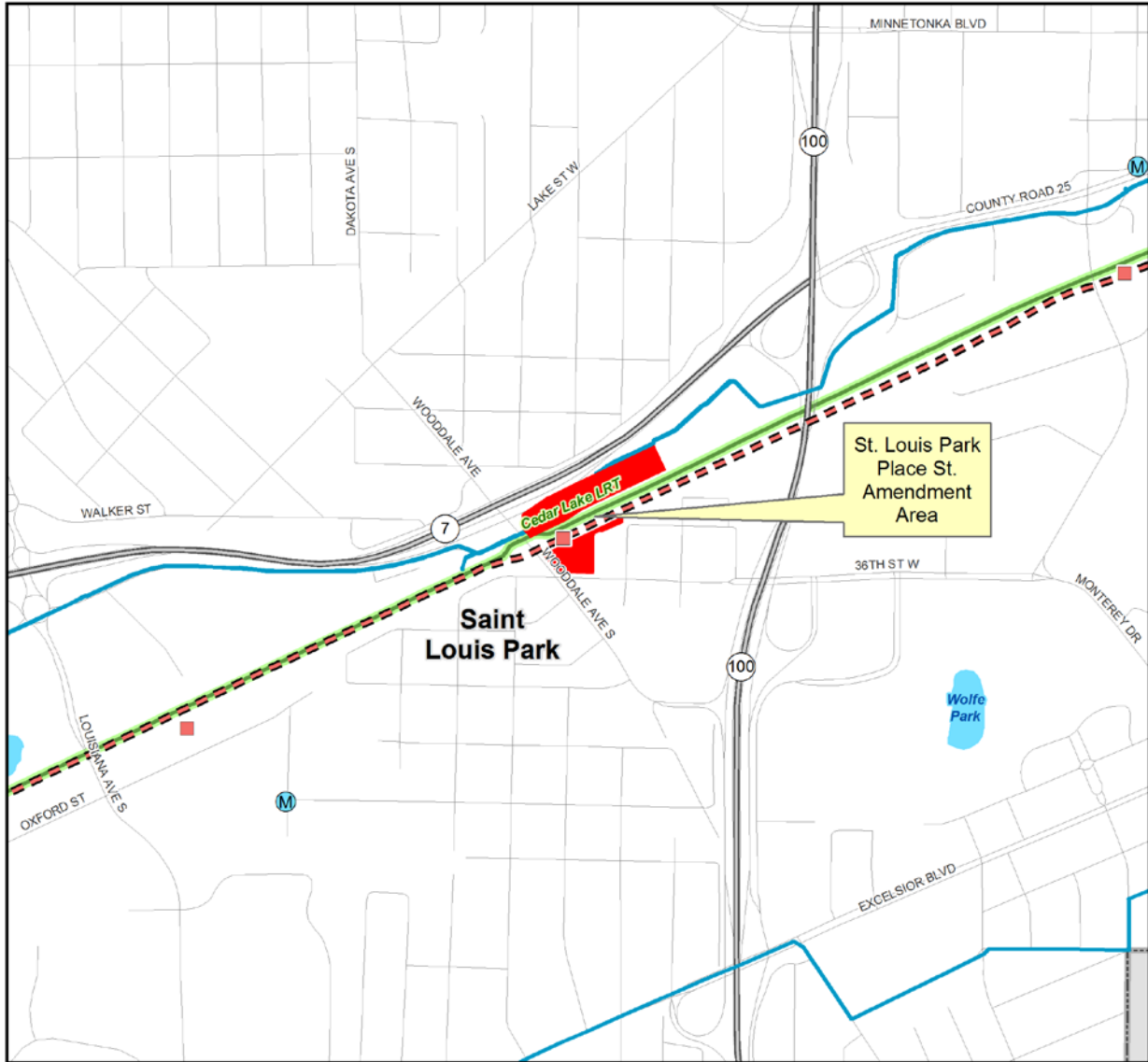


**ThriveMSP 2040 Community Designations**

- Agricultural
- Rural Residential
- Diversified Rural
- Rural Center
- Emerging Suburban Edge
- Suburban Edge
- Suburban
- Urban
- Urban Center
- Ncompass Street Centerlines



Figure 2: Location Map Showing Regional Systems



**Regional Systems**

**Regional Highway System**

- Interstates
- US Highways
- State Highways
- County Roads

**Regional Transitways**

- Existing, Fixed Guideway
- Proposed, Fixed Guideway
- Existing, Bus Rapid Transit
- Proposed, Bus Rapid Transit
- Existing Fixed Guideway Stations
- Planned Fixed Guideway Stations

**Recreation Open Space**

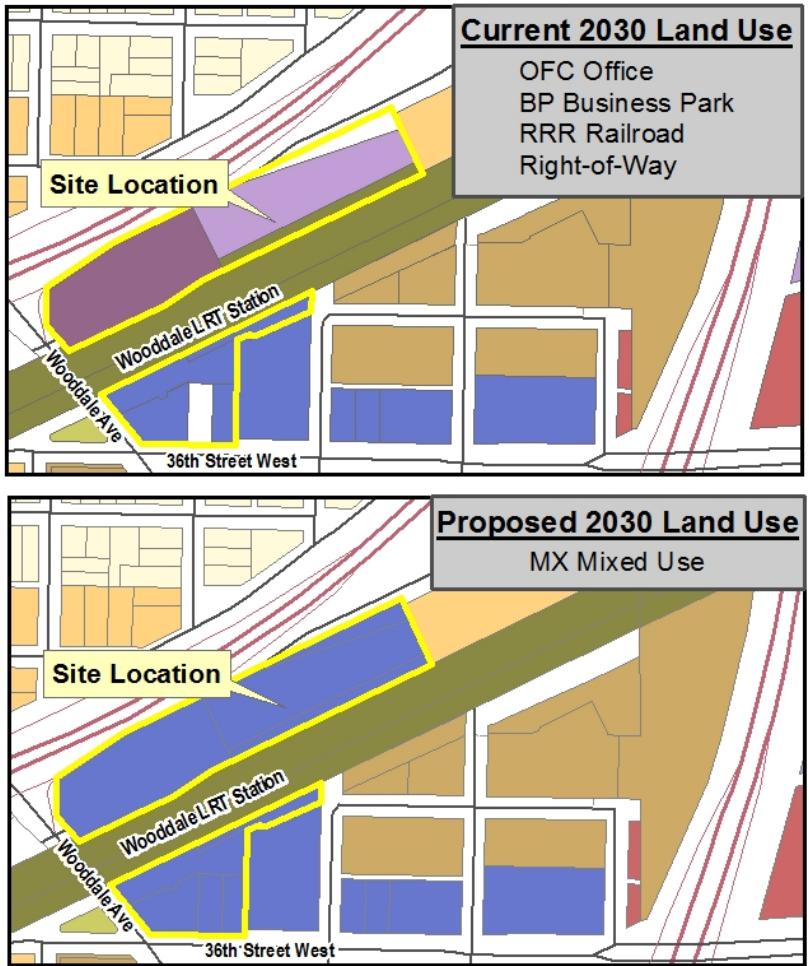
- Park Reserves
- Regional Parks
- Special Recreation Features
- Existing Regional Trails
- Planned Regional Trails

**Wastewater Treatment**

- Ⓜ Meters
- Ⓛ Lift Stations
- MCES Interceptors
- Ⓜ WTP MCES Treatment Plants

— Ncompass Street Centerlines

Figure 3: Current and Proposed Land Use Guiding



**Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment  
 2030 Land Use Map**

**Legend**

**CompPlan30**

- RL - Low Density Residential
- RM - Medium Density Residential
- RH - High Density Residential
- MX - Mixed Use
- OFC - Office
- BP - Business Park
- CIV - Civic
- RRR - Railroad
- ROW - Right of Way

