

Community Development Committee

Meeting date: June 4, 2018

For the Metropolitan Council meeting of June 13, 2018

Subject: City of Oakdale Helmo Bus Rapid Transit Station Area Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Review File No. 20281-5

District(s), Member(s): District 11, Sandy Rummel

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 Oakdale to place the Helmo Bus Rapid Transit Station Area Comprehensive Plan Amendment into effect.
2. Revise the City's forecasts for population and households for 2030, and 2040, as shown in Table 1 of the Review Record.
3. Advise the City to implement the advisory comments in the Review Record for Forecasts, Land Use, and Housing.

Background

The amendment revises the City's comprehensive plan to incorporate the Helmo Bus Rapid Transit Station Area Plan, a small area plan that addresses 44 acres of land adjacent to the future Helmo Avenue Station on the METRO Gold Line. The amendment creates a general guiding land use called Bus Rapid Transit Oriented Development, which is applied to the entire 44 acres. The small area plan further refines guiding land use categories, including High Density Residential (18.72 acres), Medium Density Residential (7.57 acres), Industrial/Office (6.09 acres), Professional Office (3.62 acres), and Retail (0.99 acre). Remaining acreage includes the future station/plaza (1.77 acres), park/open space (4.14 acres), and existing natural area (10.7 acres). Concurrently, the City is requesting a forecast increase of 700 additional households and 1,700 population. This amendment is associated with the Helmo Station Area Redevelopment Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW), which was reviewed by the Council on February 26, 2018 (Review File No. 21857-1).

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 Oakdale Helmo Bus Rapid Transit Station Area Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Review File No. 20281-5, Council Business Item No. 2018-141

BACKGROUND

The City of Oakdale (City) is located in western Washington County. The City is bordered by the cities of Mahtomedi and Pine Springs to the north; the city of Lake Elmo to the east; the cities of Woodbury and Landfall to the south; and the cities of Maplewood and North St. Paul to the west.

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 Oakdale with a “Suburban” community designation. Figure 1 shows the general location of Oakdale and nearby communities, and the Council’s *Thrive MSP 2040* Community Designation. The Council currently forecasts that from 2016 to 2040, the City will grow from 27,937 to 30,200 population and from 11,270 to 12,500 households. The Council also forecasts that, between 2017 and 2040, the City’s employment will increase from 11,238 to 14,600 jobs.

The Council reviewed the City’s Update ([Business Item 2009-241](#), Review File No. 20281-1) on August 12, 2009. This amendment is the City’s fourth since the review of the Update.

REQUEST SUMMARY

The amendment revises the City’s comprehensive plan to incorporate the Helmo Bus Rapid Transit Station Area Plan, a small area plan that addresses 44 acres of land adjacent to the future Helmo Avenue Station on the METRO Gold Line. The amendment creates a general guiding land use called Bus Rapid Transit Oriented Development, which is applied to the entire 44 acres. The small area plan further refines guiding land uses categories, including High Density Residential (18.72 acres), Medium Density Residential (7.57 acres), Industrial/Office (6.09 acres), Professional Office (3.62 acres), and Retail (0.99 acre). Remaining acreage includes the future station/plaza, open space, and existing natural area (10.7 acres). Concurrently, the City is requesting a forecast increase of 700 additional households and 1,700 population. This amendment is associated with the Helmo Station Area Redevelopment Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW), which was reviewed by the Council on February 26, 2018 (Review File No. 21857-1).

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 amendment 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 2030 Comprehensive Plan Update on August 12, 2009 ([Business Item 2009-241](#), Review File No. 20401-1).
- The Tartan Crossing CPA was approved by the Council on December 14, 2011 ([Business Item 2011-245](#), Review File 20281-2). The CPA reguided 28.6 acres from Commercial to Mixed Use to support redevelopment of the Oakdale Mall site with 120 units of senior housing; 114,000 square feet of retail/commercial space; and 40,000 square feet of medical office space.
- The 2011 System Statement CPA was approved by the Council on April 25, 2012 ([Business Item 2012-132](#), Review File No. 20281-3). The CPA responded to the 2011 System Statement by revising text and figures in the transportation portion of the plan to show the addition of a MnPass Lane to TH 36, and to remove previously planned improvements from I-694.
- The 302 Hadley Avenue North CPA was administratively approved by the Council on August 22, 2012 (Review File No. 20281-4). The CPA reguided 0.99 acre from Commercial to Industrial Office to support continued use of the site as industrial/office

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 amendment 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 are included below.

Regional Parks

Reviewer: Michael Larson (651-602-1407)

The proposed amendment conforms to the *2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan* (RPPP). There are no existing or planned regional parks or trails identified in the RPPP within 0.5 mile of sites affected by the amendment. Therefore, the amendment is not anticipated to impact the regional parks system.

Transportation

Reviewer: Russ Owen (651-602-1724)

The amendment conforms to the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan* (TPP). The amendment recognizes and supports the future Helmo Station on the METRO Gold Line, which is part of the Current Revenue

Scenario of the TPP, and which is currently in Project Development. The Council expects service to begin in 2024.

Advisory Comments

The amendment does not address the potential for future connecting bus service that would serve the Helmo Station. The Council will evaluate potential connecting bus service as part of service planning in support of Project Development.

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 changes in guided land use.

Council staff have identified long-term system capacity limitations in the portion of the regional system downstream of the proposed development area. These limitations are based on assumptions related to potential service areas, proposed land uses within those service areas, and the wastewater generation rates from those areas. At this time, we do not know the exact timing of when we expect flow to reach system capacity. We do know that it is likely to be 15 to 20 years based on current assumptions. The Council is charged with, and committed to, providing regional wastewater services at the time when those services are needed.

Advisory Comments

In the future, if system flows indicate that regional wastewater system improvements are necessary to provide the service, the Council will program those improvements so that capacity is available when and in the amount needed as reflected in approved comprehensive plans. We will perform a more comprehensive system capacity analysis using more regionally pertinent information when all the local 2040 comprehensive plans have been approved by the Council. The information provided in the amendment, and in the City's forthcoming 2040 comprehensive plan, will be used to estimate timing for the increase in wastewater flow.

Consistency with Council Policy

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

Forecasts

Reviewer: Todd Graham (651-602-1322)

The Helmo Station Area Plan estimates the potential for 962 units of apartments and townhomes in an area currently guided for non-residential uses. Development as a result of reguided land has the potential to attract population and households in amounts that exceed current forecasts for the immediate area and city as a whole. The City requests that 700 households and 1,700 population be added to the community-wide forecast, and that this growth be allocated to TAZ #2412. This is consistent with the Metropolitan Council recommendation in the review of the Helmo Station Area Development EAW for the area (Review File No. 21857-1).

As shown in Table 1, Council staff recommend that the adjustment occur for the forecast years of 2030 and 2040 forecast years, as these developments are unlikely to be complete and occupied by 2020.

Table 1. Metropolitan Council Forecasts for the City of Oakdale

	Census	Previous Council Forecasts			Revised Council Forecasts		
	2010	2020	2030	2040	2020	2030	2040
Population	27,401	28,500	<u>29,500</u>	<u>30,200</u>	28,500	<u>31,200</u>	<u>31,900</u>
Households	10,956	11,700	<u>12,200</u>	<u>12,500</u>	11,700	<u>12,900</u>	<u>13,200</u>
Employment	8,651	11,300	12,600	14,000	11,300	12,600	14,000

With this forecast revision, the 2021-30 Affordable Housing Need for the City increases. The new 2021-30 Affordable Housing Need numbers are: 195 units at <=30% AMI, 92 units at 31-50% AMI; 78 units at 51-80% AMI; 365 units total.

These forecast and affordable housing need changes are effective at the time of Metropolitan Council action on the plan amendment

Advisory Comments

Council staff advise that the City’s 2040 comprehensive plan should reflect the forecast changes above, including the allocation of the forecast increase to TAZ #2412.

Land Use

Reviewer: Michael Larson (651-602-1407)

The proposed amendment is consistent with the land use policies in *Thrive*, which designates the City as a Suburban community. Thrive expectations for the overall density of new development and redevelopment in Suburban communities is a minimum average residential density of 5 dwelling units per acre (du/acre) for new development and redevelopment.

The Helmo Station Area Plan is a framework for new development and local infrastructure, including new streets and open spaces, to support a denser and more pedestrian friendly environment near the future Helmo Station. It states that all “proposals for development of the area must be in substantial compliance with the layout and principles of the BRTOD Plan and meet the standards in the Design Framework/Planning Unit Development zoning ordinance”.

The amendment creates a new guiding land use category of Bus Rapid Transit Oriented Development, which is further articulated in the Helmo Station Area Plan. These detailed guiding land uses include High Density Residential, Medium Density Residential, Industrial/Office, Professional Office, Retail, and Park/Open Space. General guiding land use and detailed guiding land use are shown in Figures 4 and 5, respectively.

As a result of the amendment, including the new guiding land use categories, the City’s overall planned density increases from 4.00 to 6.55 du/acre, as shown in Table 2 with changes underlined.

Table 2. City of Oakdale Planned Residential Density

Category	2010-2030 Change				
	Density Range		Net Acres	Min Units	Max Units
	Min	Max			
Low Density Residential	3	3	16.12	48	48
High Density Residential	8	8	4.24	34	34
<u>BRTOD-Medium Density Residential</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>7.57</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>182</u>
<u>BRTOD-High Density Residential</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>50</u>	<u>18.72</u>	<u>562</u>	<u>936</u>
Mixed Use	4	8	177.63	711	1,421
	TOTALS		224.28	1,468	2,621
	Overall Density			6.55	11.99

Expectations of the *2040 Transportation Policy Plan (TPP)* for new development and redevelopment in station areas along transitways with fixed or dedicated rights-of-way in Suburban communities is a minimum average residential density of 20 du/acre. The proposed amendment conforms to that requirement. The minimum densities for the new guiding land uses of BRTOD-Medium Density Residential and BRTOD-High Density Residential are 15 and 30 du/acre, respectively. With the identified acreage in the small area plan, the minimum average planned density for new development within the BRT station area is 25.7 du/acre.

Advisory Comments

The City’s 2040 comprehensive plan will include various calculations regarding land use, density, housing, and development staging. The City should use the detailed guiding land uses in the Helmo Station Area Plan for these calculations.

The development scenario envisioned by the Helmo Station Area Plan assumes a mix of uses including residential, employment, retail, and green space. This approach is generally consistent with the activity policies of the TPP, which are intended to increase the value and productivity of transit station areas. The TPP includes an activity level guideline that each ½-mile station area along transitways include a minimum of 7,000 residents, employees, and/or student population. Approximately 78% of the station area is within the jurisdiction of Oakdale. The Metropolitan Council estimates that the Oakdale portion of the station area currently includes 2,070 residents, employees, and/or student population.

Development as guided in the Helmo Station Area Plan would increase the level of activity in the station area. The station area plan stipulates that non-residential uses shall have a floor area ratio (FAR) of 0.5-1.0. The City should refer to the Local Planning Handbook fact sheet [Measuring Employment](#) to estimate the potential impact of future employment uses on employment levels in the station area. We encourage the City to implement land use regulations that optimize employment intensity in the station area. The City should discourage non-residential uses that have low FARs and low rates of space utilization.

The ½-mile Helmo Station Area includes land west of I-694 and north of I-94. During the forthcoming review of the City’s 2040 comprehensive plan, the Metropolitan Council will evaluate this area against policies in the TPP for residential density (if applicable) and activity levels. Please refer to the Local Planning Handbook, [Density and Activity Near Transit](#), for additional guidance.

As land uses and public infrastructure plans become more refined through the development review process, the Council encourages the City to consider an additional comprehensive plan amendment to memorialize the final plans in the City's comprehensive plan. Proposals that represent substantial changes from the station area plan should be accompanied by an additional comprehensive plan amendment. Alternatively, final development plans or changes to the station area plan could be represented in the City's forthcoming 2040 comprehensive plan.

Housing

Reviewer: Tara Beard (651-602-1051)

The proposed comprehensive plan amendment is consistent with the Council's policies for housing. The City currently provides sufficient land to address its share of the region's 2011-2020 need for affordable housing, which is 184 units. The proposed amendment increases the City's inventory of land guided to promote the development of low- and moderate-income housing. After this amendment, the City will be guiding over 102 acres of residential land such that at least 1,093 units could be built.

The City participates in Livable Communities Act programs, and most recently was a part of a Washington County Community Development Agency Local Housing Incentives Account (LHIA) award that included the absorption of at least one single family home in the City into the Two Rivers Community Land Trust in 2012. The most recent affordable housing built in the City were three ownership units built in 2016.

Advisory Comments

The proposed BRTOD guiding land use designation is broad. To track land guided at densities high enough to support the City's 2011-2020 allocation of affordable housing need, we have added to the City's inventory the planned acreage guided as BRTOD-Medium Density Residential and BRTOD-High Density Residential (Table 1 of the amendment submittal). Development proposals that represent substantial changes from the station area plan should be accompanied by a comprehensive plan amendment, or be reflected in the forthcoming comprehensive plan update. Any changes may impact land supply for affordable housing. Please see similar comments in this regard under the Land Use review.

With the forecast changes included in this amendment, the City should be aware that its share of the region's 2021-2030 need for affordable housing is now 365 units. In preparing the 2040 comprehensive plan update, the City should note that the minimum density of land guided to address this need is 8 units per acre. The City is encouraged to contact their Sector Representative or Council housing staff with any questions regarding the Council's housing policy for the 2040 comprehensive plan update.

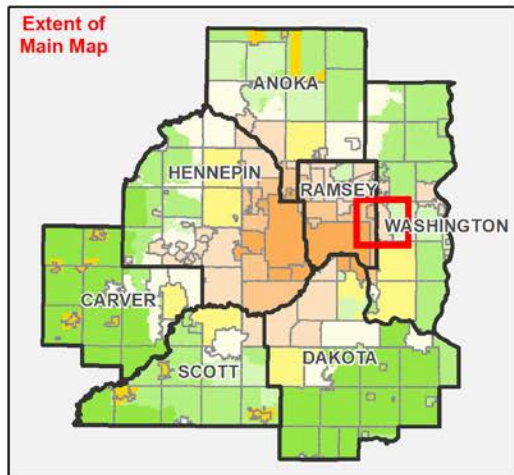
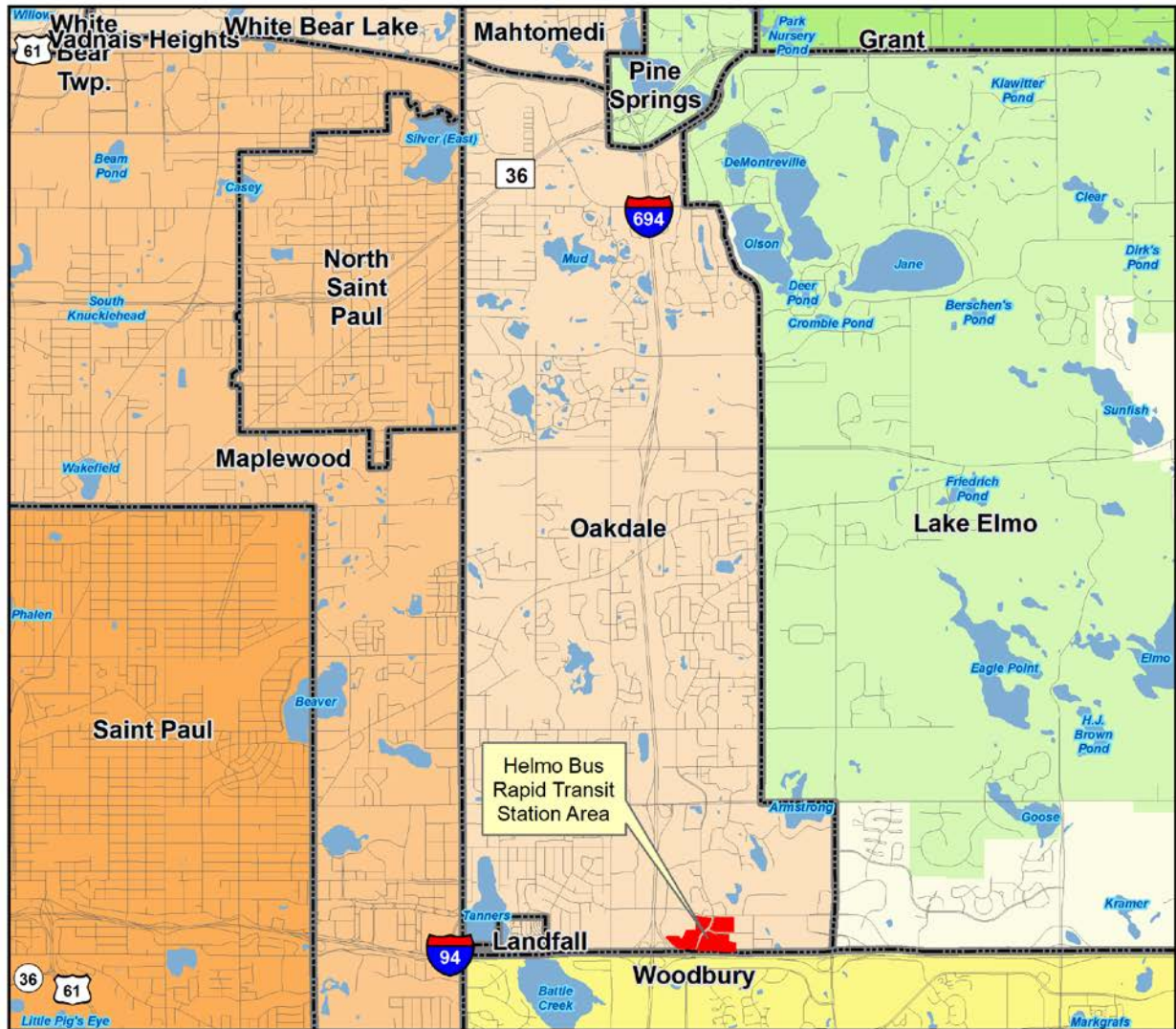
Compatibility with Plans of Adjacent Governmental Units and Plans of Affected Special Districts and School Districts

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 Land Use Guiding
- Figure 4: Proposed Land Use Guiding
- Figure 5: Proposed Land Use Guiding – Small Area Plan Detail

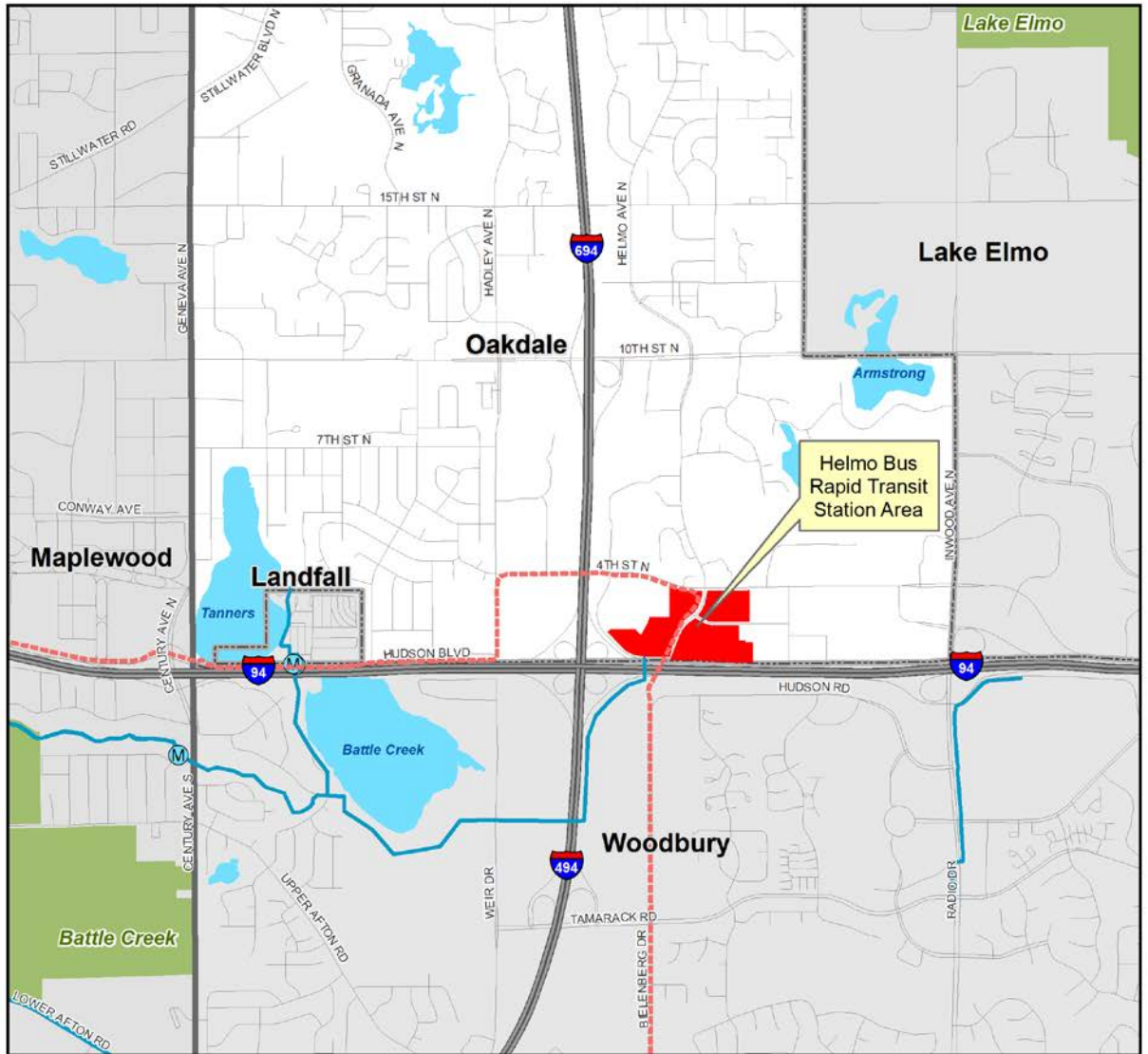
Figure 1: Location Map Showing Community Designations



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**
- Planned Fixed Guideway Stations
 - Existing Fixed Guideway Stations
- Regional Transitways**
- Existing, Fixed Guideway
 - Proposed, Fixed Guideway
 - Existing, Bus Rapid Transit
 - Proposed, Bus Rapid Transit
- Wastewater Treatment**
- Ⓜ Meters
 - Ⓛ Lift Stations
 - MCES Interceptors
 - Ⓜ WTP MCES Treatment Plants
- Regional Highway System**
- Interstates
 - US Highways
 - State Highways
 - County Roads
 - Ncompass Street Centerlines
- Regional Trails**
- Existing Regional Trails
 - Planned Regional Trails
- Regional Parks**
- STATUS**
- Existing (Open to Public)
 - In Master Plan (Not Open to Public)
 - Planned Units

Figure 3: Current Land Use Guiding



- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Office / Limited Business
- Commercial
- Bus Rapid Transit-Oriented Development
- General Industrial
- Industrial / Office
- Business Campus
- Public
- Park
- Open Space
- Open Water
- Semi-Public

Figure 4: Proposed Land Use Guiding

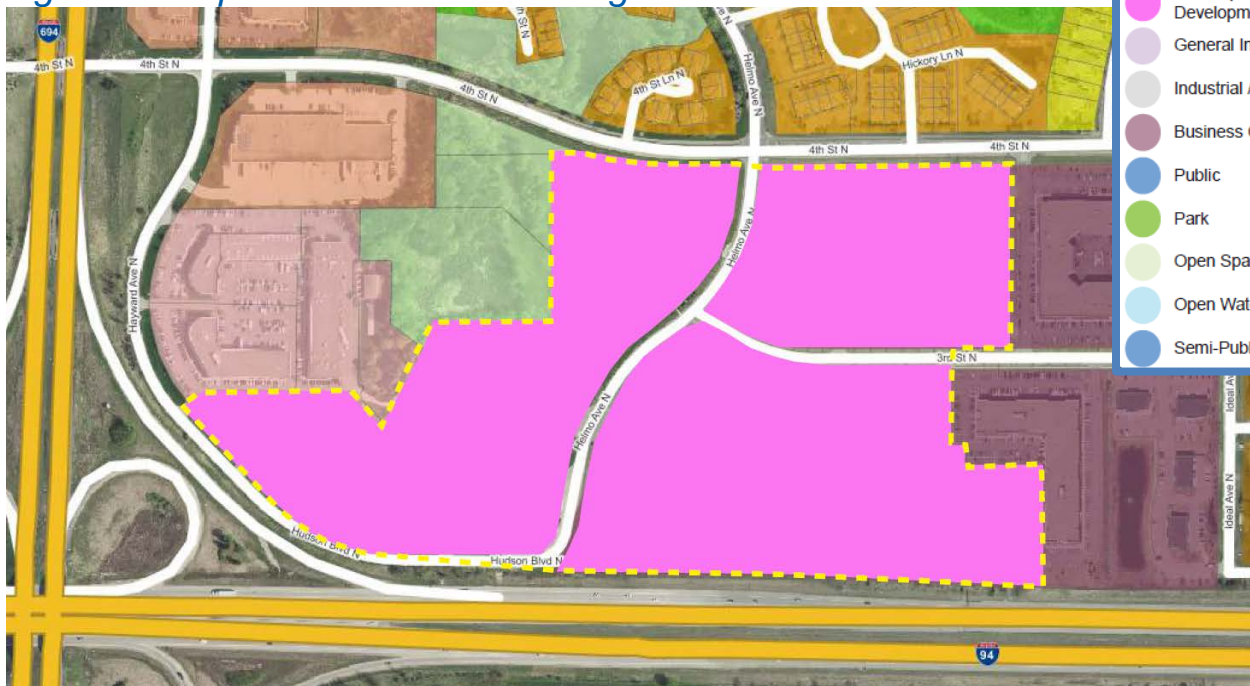


Figure 5: Proposed Land Use Guiding – Small Area Plan Detail

