

# WHITE BEAR LAKE

## ARTS, CULTURAL AND EDUCATION

### AREA STUDY

OCTOBER 2021

#### SUMMARY PRESENTATION

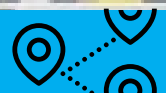


# STUDY PURPOSE

Montreal, Canada



The White Bear Lake Arts, Culture & Education Area Study explored potential improvements, as well as development and redevelopment opportunities to support the growth and integration of **arts, culture, and education** within the existing residential neighborhood north of Downtown White Bear Lake.



# STUDY PARTNERS

The following agencies worked together to explore interrelated projects and identify potential opportunities for collaboration or shared facilities in the study area



# COMMON VALUES

While working towards goals and actions that express these values, **the partner organizations are committed to fostering a welcoming, diverse, equitable, and inclusive community for all to live, work, create, and enjoy.**



The organizations involved in this study wish to **create a framework to continue communicating, coordinating, and collaborating** on future events, initiatives, and projects to foster an environment for creativity, expression, cultural exploration and learning, to serve the local community and to provide a destination for regional visitors.



Building and growing programs and services specifically for the community is very important. **The idea of 'giving back' is a common thread.**



Partner organizations are **looking to complement (not compete with) Downtown** White Bear Lake, and to strengthen connections to local businesses while creating a regional destination.



There is a common goal to **improve connectivity and accessibility** throughout the study area for safe and comfortable walking and biking for everyone.



There is a strong desire to identify and develop **more collaborative, multi-disciplinary programs and events** with other partner organizations.



Physical improvements in the study area should have **integrated elements of art, performance, interpretation, and education** woven into the design process, wayfinding, and other elements of the built environment.



There is an understanding that any ideas about a District will need to have **support and involvement from existing residents**. Maintaining livability for current residents is a priority.



There is a goal to create places and programs that attract people to the area during a **variety of times during the day, as well as throughout all seasons.**





# **SITE ANALYSIS & OPPORTUNITIES**

# EXISTING CONDITIONS



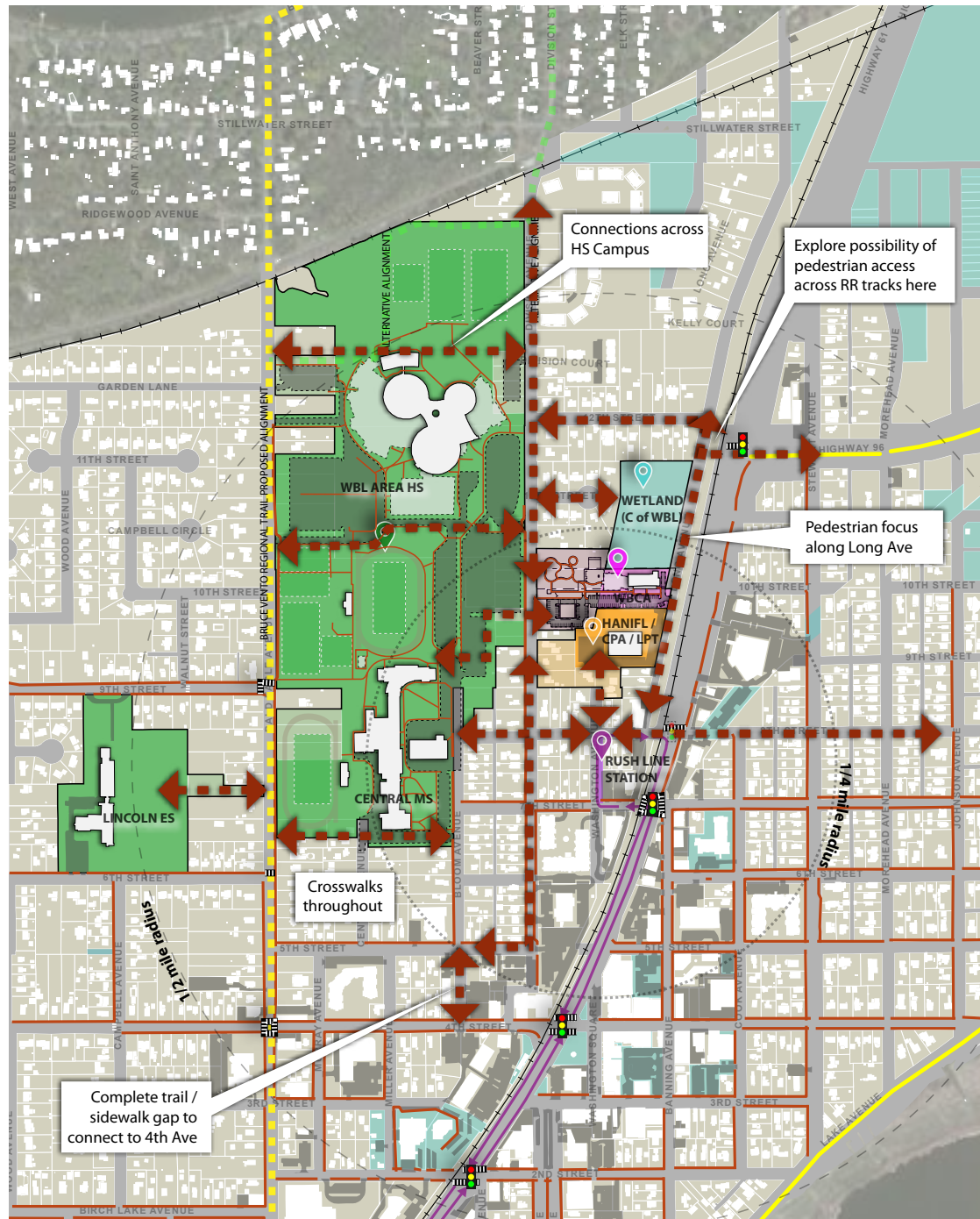
## KEY

- School District Property
- City-Owned Property
- White Bear Center for the Arts
- Hanifl Center for the Arts/ Lakeshore Players Theater/ Children's Performing Arts
- Rush Line BRT / Station
- ACE Study Partner Properties
- Existing Parking
- Future Parking

- Future expansion at High School + parking areas
- City-owned wetland area
- Future Site Expansion at White Bear Center for the Arts
- Potential future expansion for Hanifl Performing Arts Center
- Future Station for Rush Line BRT
- Future Bruce Vento Trail



# OPPORTUNITIES PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION



**KEY**

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**PEDESTRIAN LAYERS**

- Sidewalks
- Internal site sidewalks
- Existing Trails
- Future Trails

Marked Crosswalks

Signalized Intersection

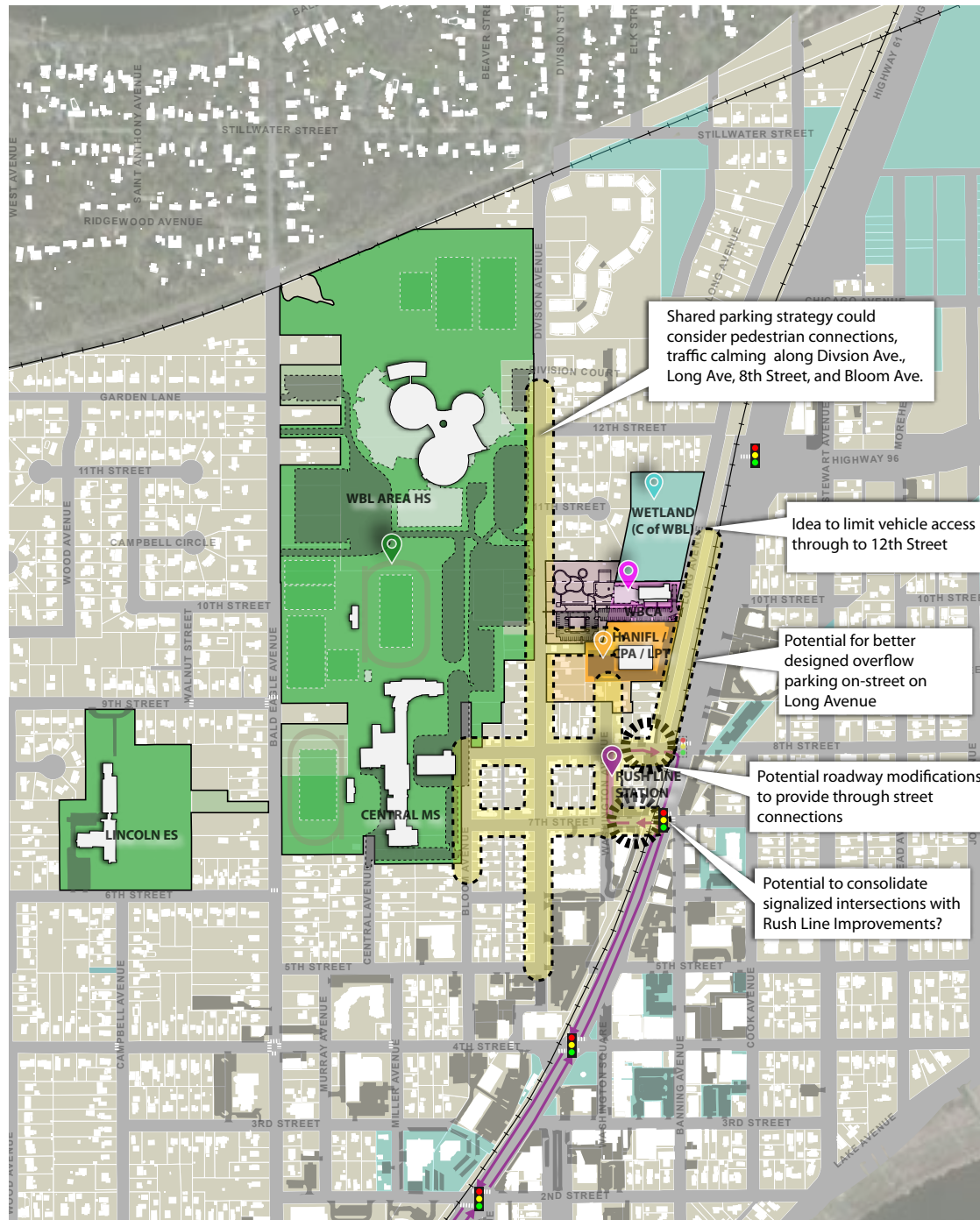
Opportunities for Connection

## Priority considerations

- Connections to Downtown - including crossing Highway 61
- Connections between partner campuses
- Connections to adjacent residential neighborhoods



# OPPORTUNITIES VEHICLE CIRCULATION



## KEY

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Lakeshore Players Theater/  
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- Rush Line BRT / Station

ACE Study Partner Properties

Existing Parking

Future Parking

Marked Crosswalks

■ ■ ■ Signalized Intersection

Areas of consideration for shared parking strategy

Potential future roadway modifications

## Priority considerations

- Concern for vehicle congestion at parking areas during school arrival and dismissal
- Long vehicle queues at Long Avenue and 8th Street occur after performances/special events
- Potential roadway modifications at 7th and 8th Streets
- Shared parking between campuses



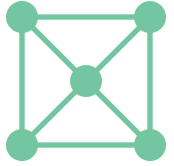




# POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

# POTENTIAL STRATEGIES

A set of four strategies were identified as a framework for organizing actions that could be taken towards the making of a creative district:



## 1: NETWORK AND CIRCULATION



## 2: PLACEMAKING



## 3: LAND USE + REDEVELOPMENT

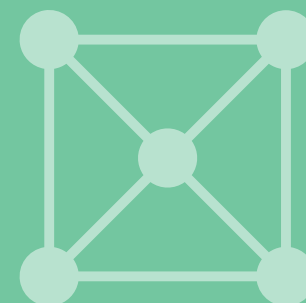


## 4: ORGANIZATION FRAMEWORK

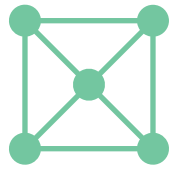




# STRATEGY 1: NETWORK AND CIRCULATION



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 1) Improve east-west connections for pedestrians

- » Through WBL HS campus
- » Connect to Bruce Vento Trail
- » Connections to and through arts organizations
- » Mid-block crossings on Division and Bald Eagle



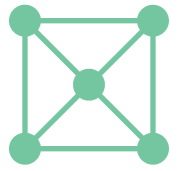
RRFB  
signal



Scholar's Walk



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS

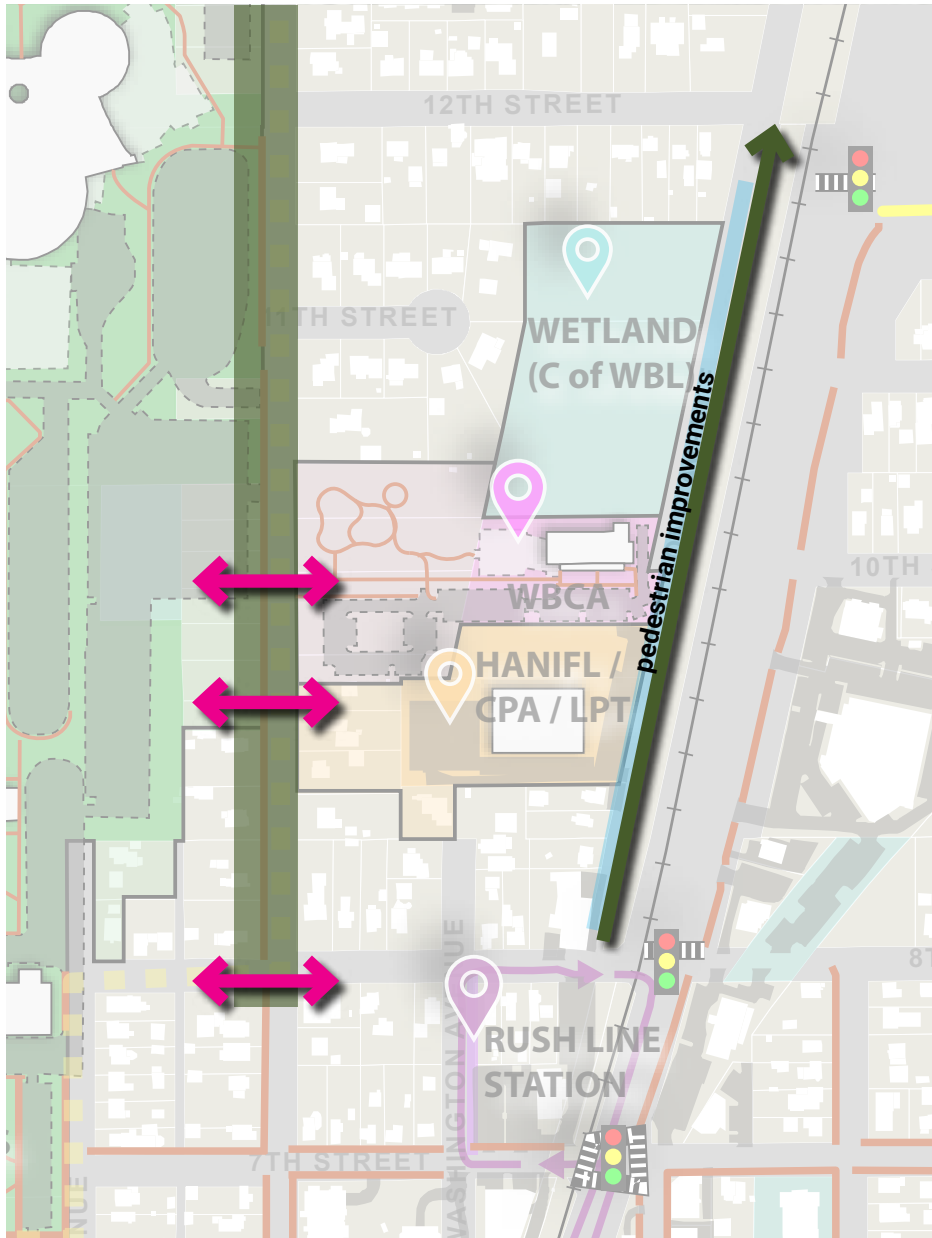
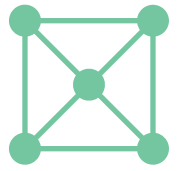


## 2) Focus traffic calming along north/south corridors

- » Curb extensions / bump-outs
- » Narrow roadway width where applicable to slow vehicle traffic
- » Use of colorful / artistic / creative pavement markings; create space for visual art, installations



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



3a) Modify roadway circulation to provide more space for pedestrians on Long Ave

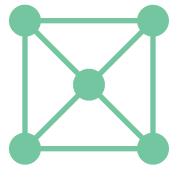
3b) Prioritize pedestrian crossing on Division Street by exploring curb extensions, surface treatments, and raised crosswalks



*A wide crosswalk area with decorative paving creates a space that signals priority for pedestrian movement*

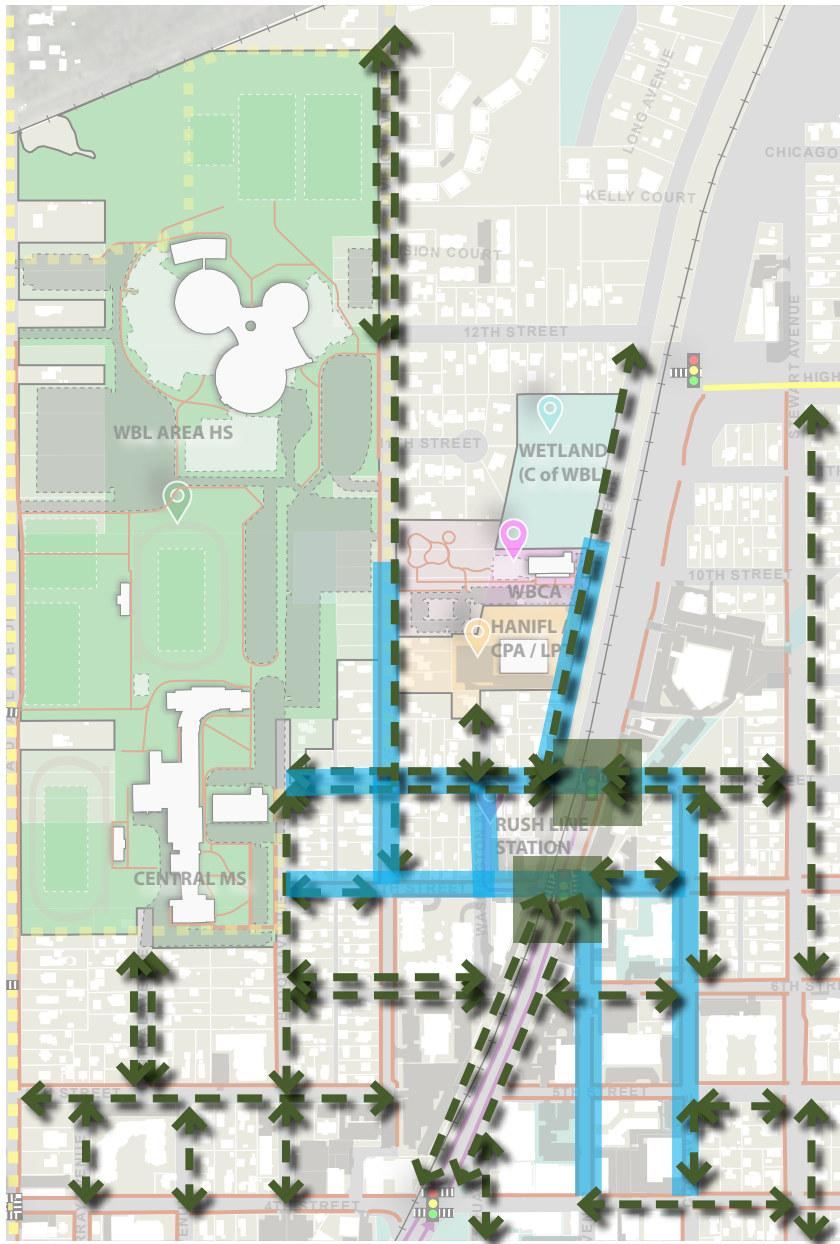


# POTENTIAL ACTIONS






## 4) Address pedestrian continuity and connection on both sides of Highway 61

- » Promote and collaborate on pedestrian crossing improvements across Highway 61
- » Fill existing gaps in the sidewalk network - ensure improvements occur on both sides of Highway 61



### KEY

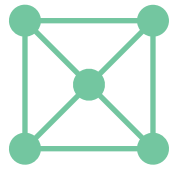
-  Gaps in the existing pedestrian (sidewalk/trail) network to be filled
-  Primary pedestrian routes
-  Opportunities for crosswalk improvements across Hwy 61



Speed table crosswalk with pedestrian refuge island

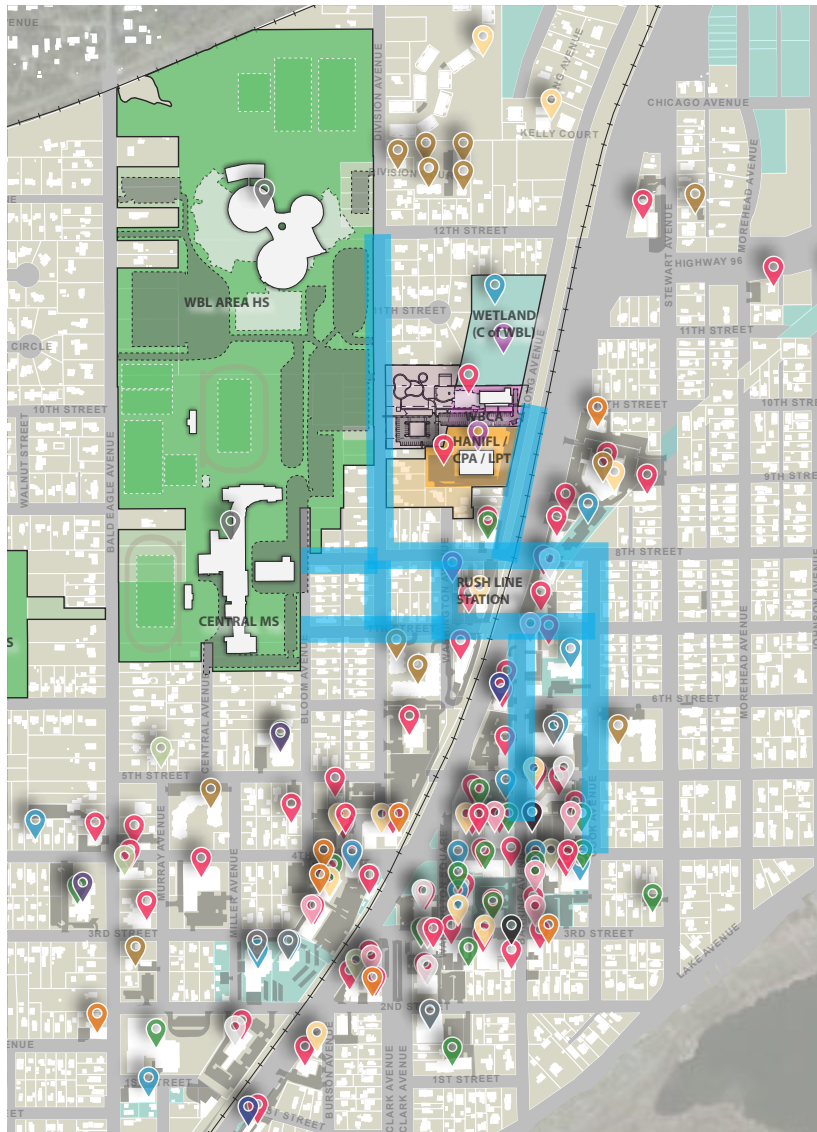


# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 5) Develop a wayfinding plan for the area

- » Direct people at both pedestrian and vehicle scales
- » Consider wayfinding that uses landmarks (such as the Rush Line Station) with time/distance to destination
- » Consider how to add/modify to the wayfinding system as destinations and pathways change



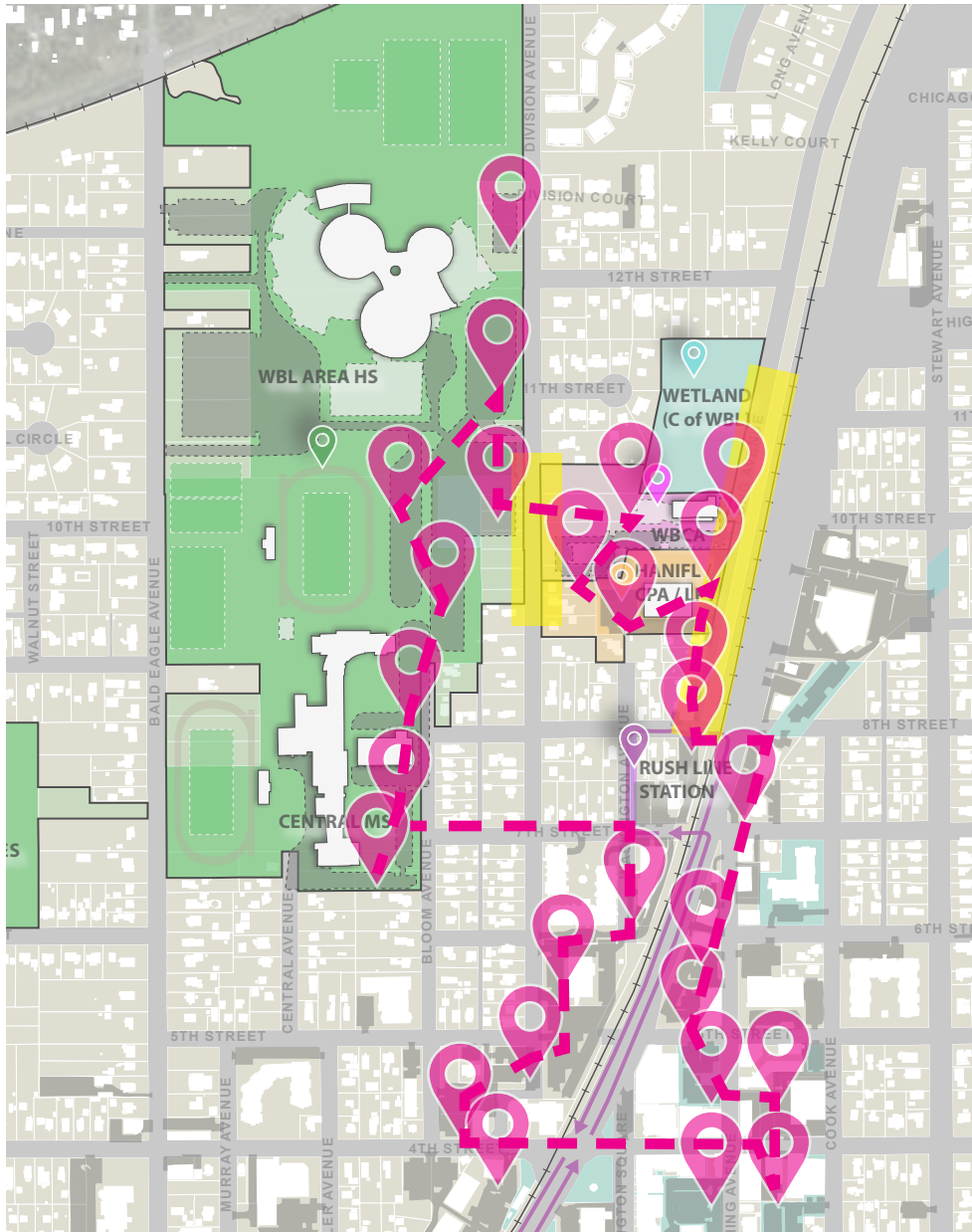




## STRATEGY 2: PLACEMAKING



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 1) Activate parking lots, streets, and other 'in-between' spaces for events or gathering spaces

- » Streets such as Division or Long Ave can be closed for special events. Streetscape design can provide a landmark for this.
- » Use parking lots to link spaces and create an “art walk” or “cultural trail”

*Manassas Street crosswalk (Memphis) is designed to prioritize pedestrian and bicycle movement and can be closed to vehicle traffic for special events*



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS

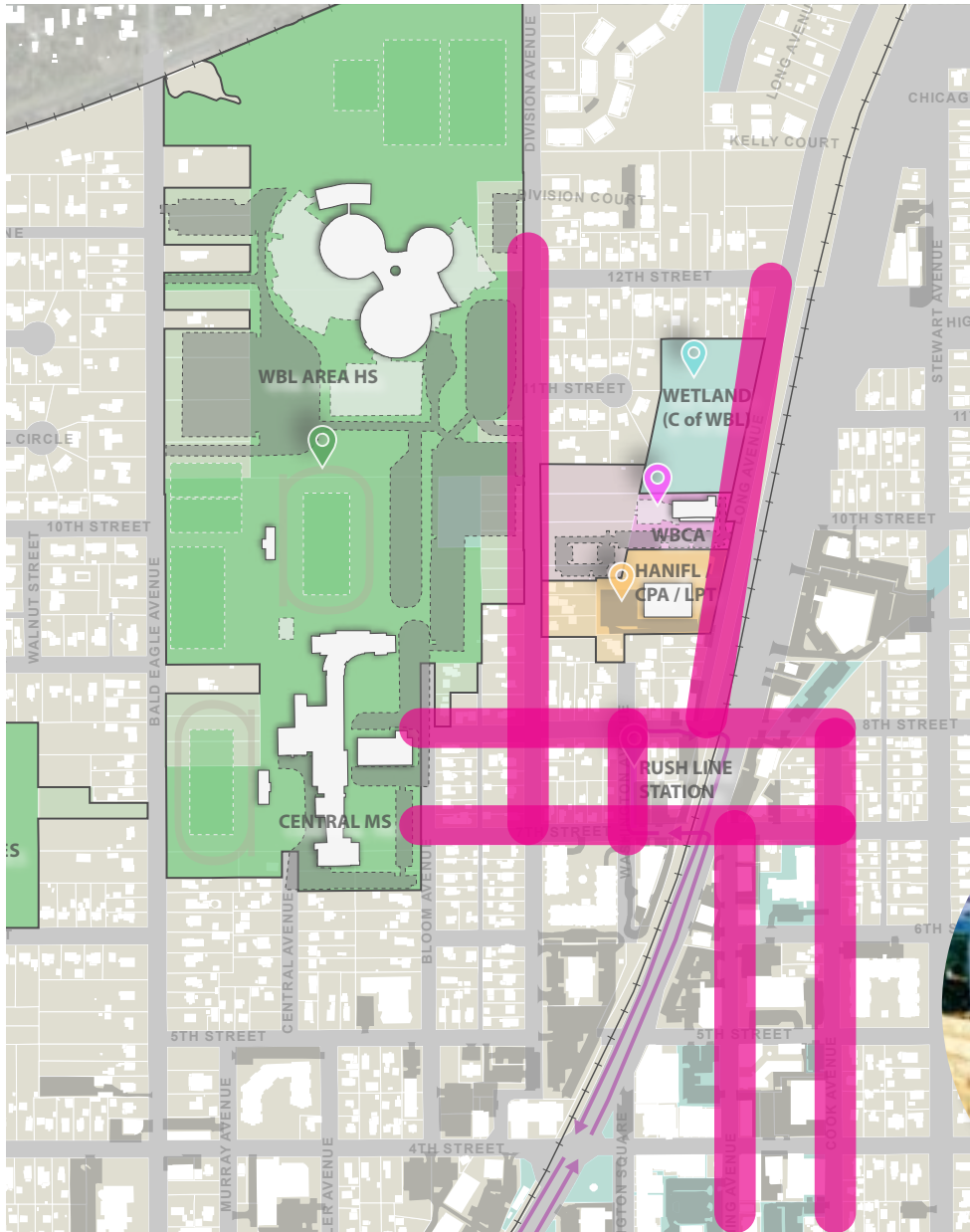


## 1) Activate parking lots, streets, and other 'in-between' spaces for events or gathering spaces

- » Create pocket park or parklets on unused spaces for gathering, installations, performances
- » Integrate art or plaza into the Rush Line Station
- » Consider how outlets, wifi stations, movable furniture in these spaces can help with activation or support temporary uses
- » Use vertical surfaces, such as building facades with murals to frame spaces that can be activated for special events



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 2) Enhance the streetscape along key corridors to create shared streets that consider:

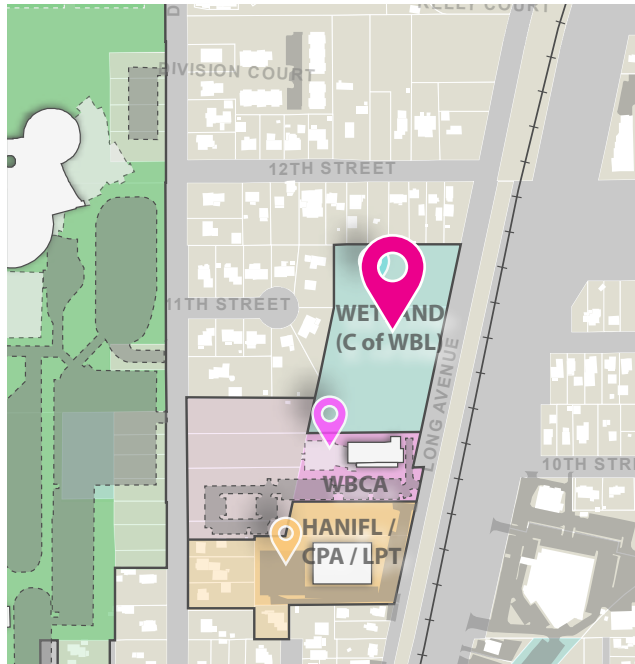
- » Pedestrian lighting
- » Pavement / surfaces
- » Seating and gathering
- » Landscaping
- » Crosswalks
- » Conversion as an event space or festival space



# EXAMPLE OF STREETScape TO SUPPORT EVENTS



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 3) Create public access to wetland area

- » Explore potential design/use of this space with students, artists, ecologists
- » Explore boardwalk or other low-impact means of providing access
- » Larger-scale sculptural art (seen at a distance)
- » Soundscapes, self-guided audio tours
- » Artist-designed bird blind / wildlife-viewing platform



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 4) Develop a district branding effort

- » Artist / student-led graphic design
- » Symbol, graphics, tag-lines that can be represented at multiple scales
- » Website/social media development
- » Combine with wayfinding plan to call out gateways, landmarks
- » Storefront, mural, or facade improvement program



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 5) Create an artist-in-residence program focused on placemaking

- » Focus on enlivening windows, streets, buildings with performances and displays of their own making
- » Residency program could focus on the design / plan / implementation of pop-up art spaces, temporary art displays, poetry readings, performances







# STRATEGY 3: LAND USE + REDEVELOPMENT



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 1) Create overlay district for this area that allows flexibility for certain provisions

- » Modify setback limitations to allow specific accessory uses like patios, decks, public art
- » Explore accessory dwelling units, artist-in-residency housing within existing neighborhood
- » Modify home occupation requirements specific for this district to make it easier for artists to live/work here
- » Require development/redevelopment in the district to include semi-public gathering areas, public art, replacement of affordable housing units
- » Ensure signage requirements reflect the unique character of the area



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 2) Explore adaptive re-use opportunities, such as:

- » Former commercial spaces converted to maker-space or studio space
- » Commercial storefront additions to existing housing (accessory commercial unit)
- » Modifications to existing housing to accommodate live/work with retail/studio/gallery space
- » Development of a permanent or semi-permanent market space



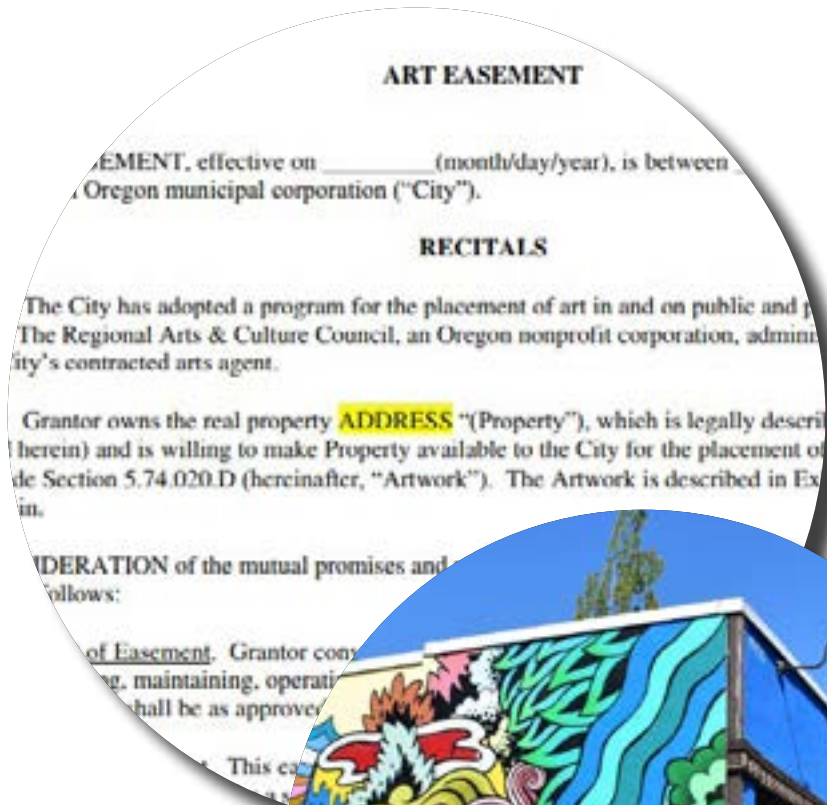
# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 3) Explore creative ways to use larger yards along streets for public realm improvements

- » Create an art easement to activate the public realm at the street level

- Portland, OR
- Oklahoma City, OK
- Beaverton, OR

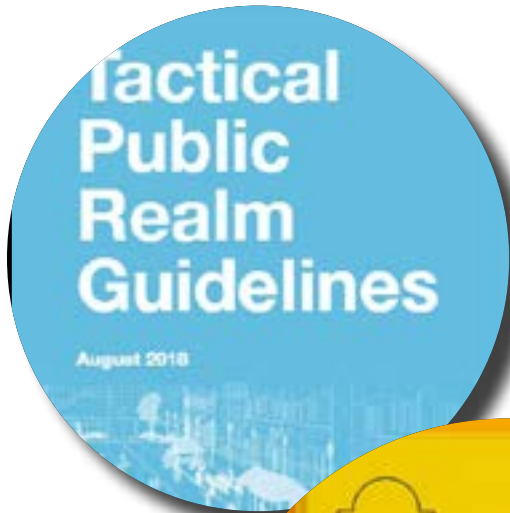


# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 4) Develop tools to encourage mixed-use and creative spaces

- » City to develop information and train staff to better assist artists and supportive businesses with zoning and permitting
- » Explore simplifying the number of zoning districts in the area





# STRATEGY 4: ORGANIZATION FRAMEWORK



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 1) Create an organization dedicated to the creation and on-going program / event planning for the District

- » Include representatives from arts organizations, school district, students, residents, artists, the City, Explore White Bear (CVB), Chamber of Commerce, business owners, historical society
- » Use organization as a means to develop branding effort
- » Identify near, medium, and long-term plans for the District
- » Use organization as a means to seek funding for District initiatives/ events
- » Create and promote a year-round schedule that addresses a variety of times, days, seasons and audiences
- » Develop one or more “art” appreciation months that focus on activities around art (e.g. For the Love of Art Month in Las Cruces)
- » Explore how to build off but not compete with existing community events – particularly those downtown



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 2) Develop a social media + branding campaign to gather excitement or ideas for the District

- » Remember that you may have to provide information/frameworks for different audiences – locals, tourists, and artists/organizations/individuals who want to organize and present activities.
- » Consider developing post cards, t-shirts, etc., that can be sold as part of events





# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 3) Organize one or more public events that involve collaboration between all partner organizations

- » Annual events could be organized around already established national or regional events, such as PARK(ing) Day, Open Streets, National Night Out
- » Organize an art walk, art crawl, studio open house, etc.
- » Create a “Day in the District” marketing for some weekends that help show visitors what could be done throughout the weekend



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS



## 4) Connect downtown business resources to this area

- » Connect local artists to property or business owners to create pop-up storefront displays, pop-up shops or pop-up restaurants, etc.



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS

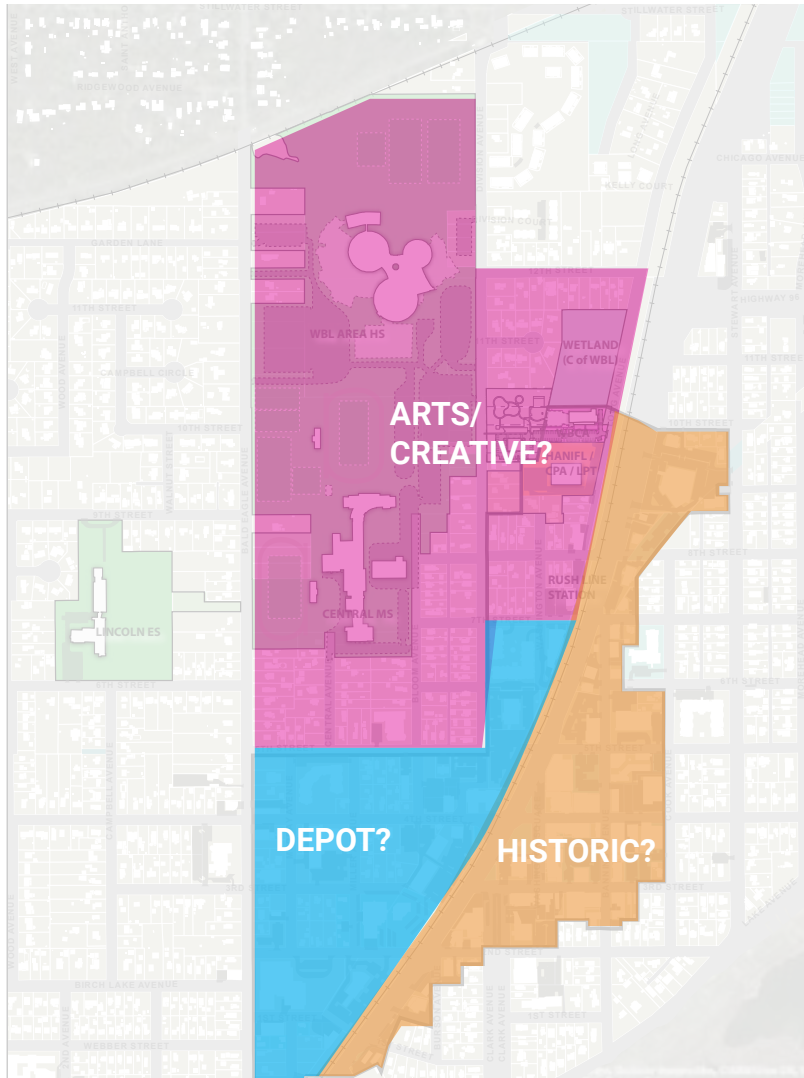


## 5) Explore funding and partnership opportunities beyond White Bear Lake

- » Develop relationships with national art centers and other public art programs to participate in art-on-loan programs and explore opportunities to co-commission new works
- » Explore grant opportunities



# POTENTIAL ACTIONS

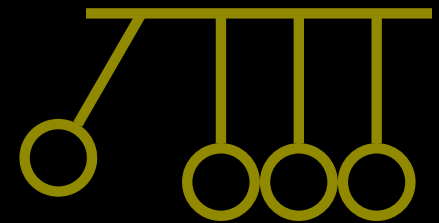


## 6) Create subdistricts within the larger Downtown District:

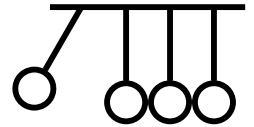
- » Historic
- » Depot
- » Arts/Creative District
  
- » Explore idea through community engagement
  
- » Marketing/Branding District boundary should not be overlay zoning district boundary



# NEXT STEPS



# TAKEAWAYS & NEXT STEPS



- The Study was undertaken to facilitate conversations between the partners
- Discussions found many common values included the importance of creating a welcoming, pedestrian friendly neighborhood that integrates art in physical improvements
- Beyond additional community conversations, **no** specific next steps have been identified - possible steps could include:
  - » Collaborating on special events in District
  - » Sharing of ideas in upcoming planning (Downtown Mobility Study, Rush Line Advanced Station Area Planning, etc.)
  - » Small area master plan
  - » Exploring potential zoning changes

## NEXT STEPS

**Neighborhood Meeting  
Monday, November 1st  
6:00 to 8:00 p.m.  
WBL District Center  
Board Room (Rm 1112)  
4855 Bloom Ave**

**Presentation to WBL  
School Board on  
Monday, November 8th**



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Thanks!

Questions?

