



COUNTY ROAD E CORRIDOR ACTION PLAN

Summary Report and Final Recommendations

December 2022

Sponsored by:
Ramsey County
City of White Bear Lake
City of Gem Lake
City of Vadnais Heights



*Submitted by Gretchen Nicholls,
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) Twin Cities*





Above: Businesses near County Rd E and I-35E

INTRODUCTION

The cities of White Bear Lake, Gem Lake, and Vadnais Heights, with funding support from Ramsey County, enlisted LISC Twin Cities' Corridor Development Initiative (CDI) to facilitate a series of six community workshops from September to October 2022 to identify recommendations for a County Road E Corridor Action Plan. The recommendations included near, medium and long-term goals and action steps, and is intended to serve as a tool to attract private investment through development and infrastructure improvements. While originally planned to occur in 2020, the community process was delayed until social distancing restrictions were lifted to enable a richer opportunity to engage the community through interactive exercises and discussions. Approximately 100 community members representing all three cities participated in the workshops, with over half of them attending two or more workshops. The final County Road E Corridor Action Plan recommendations will be presented to the participating jurisdictions for their consideration in December 2022 and January 2023.

The Corridor Development Initiative offers a way for the community to inform and guide future development in a proactive way. The collaboration among the cities along County Road E, along with the partnership with Ramsey County, provides a unique and powerful opportunity to coordinate strategies and resources for greater impact and success in reaching shared goals.



Above: Key sites that were explored along County Rd E; Vadnais Heights (A & B), Gem Lake (C & D) and White Bear Lake (E).

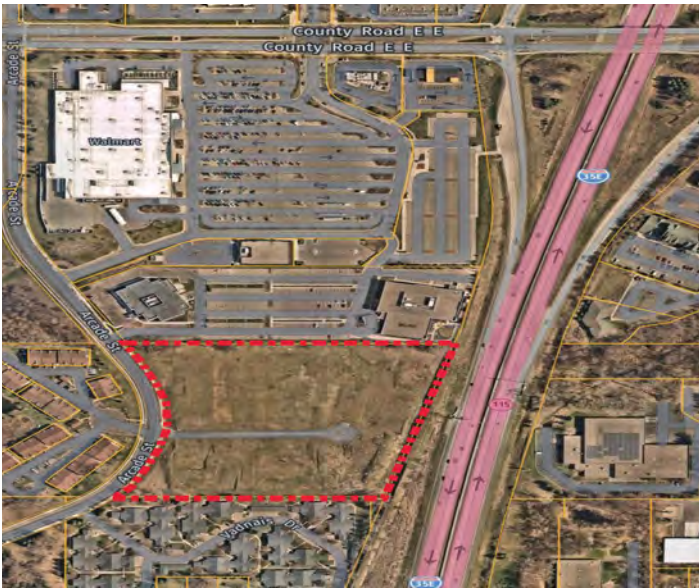
BACKGROUND

The County Road E Corridor between Centerville Road and Highway 120 has significant potential for revitalization, place-making and serves as a catalyst for future development in the area. In partnership and with a grant from Ramsey County, the cities of Vadnais Heights, Gem Lake and White Bear Lake are working collaboratively to identify ways to create a more cohesive and connected corridor along County Road E and to guide future development of key opportunity sites located in each city. The geographic definition of the corridor includes a half-mile radius to the north and south of County Road E.

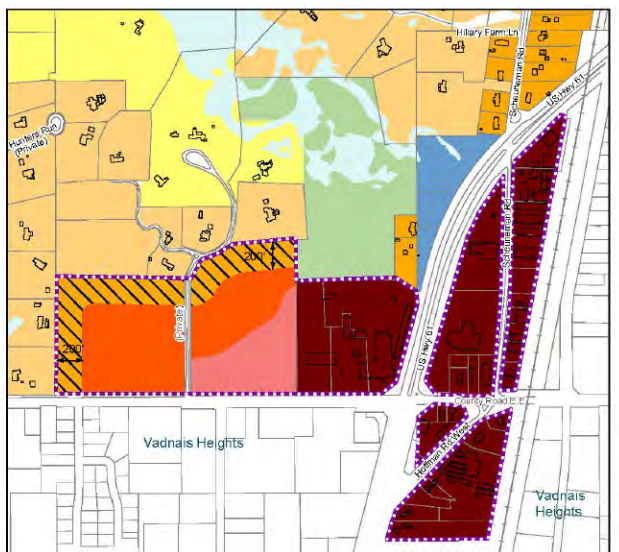
County Road E currently offers a mix of uses including multi-family residential, single family detached and attached residential, retail, industrial, service, public and agricultural. The corridor serves as a direct access point to major traffic arteries including Interstate 35E, U.S. Highway 61, and Century Avenue North (MN State Highway 120), and provides access nearby Interstate 694. According to 2020 Decennial Census, approximately 26,100 people reside in the census tracts abutting County Road E.

To invite community input and build consensus around key strategies the cities hosted a series of six community engagement workshops to inform a County Road E Corridor Action Plan designed to include near, medium- and long-term strategies. The partnering cities and Ramsey County will consider the action plan recommendations and determine what can be advanced for implementation, some of which will be executed by individual communities and others in partnership. The action plan will be a living document to help activate deeper collaboration among jurisdiction partners and allow for greater flexibility to accommodate changing trends and technologies. The plan will be used as a tool to attract private investment through development and revitalization of existing properties and businesses as well as seek regional, state and federal funding for infrastructure improvements which increase the vitality of the corridor.

The following key sites were used to explore opportunities for future development within the three cities:



Above: Vadnais Heights Site 1 (Left) and Site 2 (Right)



Above: Gem Lake Sites (Left) and White Bear Sites (Right)

Vadnais Heights

Site 1: Vacant site in the southwest quadrant at 35E and County Road E (12-acre parcel)

Site 2: Vacant site in the northeast quadrant at 35E and County Road E (44-acre parcel)

Gem Lake

Site 1: Parcel east of Daniels Farm Road and north of County Road E (18-acres)

Site 2: South of County Road E and west of Highway 61 along Hoffman Road (12-acres)

White Bear Lake

Four corners at the intersection of Bellaire and County Road E (the northeast corner site is owned by the City of White Bear Lake)

A-2511 County Road E E - .52 Acres

B-2502 County Road E E - .67 Acres

C- 3577 Bellaire Ave - .41 Acres

D- 2490 County Road E E - .33 Acres

E-2491 County Road E E - .48 Acres



Above: County Rd E near the intersection of Hwy 61

Some of the key themes that emerged through the community engagement process include:

1. Explore ways to create an overall identity and sense of place throughout the corridor to encourage travelers to frequent local shops and businesses
2. Strong desire for more comfortable, safer crossings of County Road E along the corridor at both signalized crossings and unsignalized crossings to serve people of all ages and abilities
 - Concern about pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile safety at the County Road E crossing of Highway 61 and the barrier this highway poses to travelers along the corridor, and in general to the community (especially in regard to crossings near schools)
3. Implement traffic calming measures to:
 - Improve safety
 - Reduce the speed of traffic that is in excess of the speed limit
 - Reduce the perception of the corridor as a drive-through area
 - Guard against shifting traffic to adjoining neighborhood streets
 - Acknowledge the lack of lane continuity issues east and west of Highway 61
4. Support for continuous connections and enhancements to the active transportation network along the corridor that promote walkability, safety, livability, and pedestrian and bicycle access
 - Build public/private partnerships to enhance walkability, both within larger parcels or districts, and to connect with other areas nearby (especially when new development occurs)
 - Improve lighting
5. Residential development
 - A mix of housing formats that meets the needs of the community including affordability, ADA accessible housing, housing for seniors, people who work in the area, and younger households



Above: Gem Lake site near County Rd E & Hwy 61

- On large sites, a mix of housing types is preferred on the same site

6. Commercial development

- Where feasible, retail businesses are desired to support community needs for goods and services, as well as “experience retail” destinations such as restaurants, bars and cafes
- Additional restaurant options are a particular interest
- Although it is understood that local businesses can’t always afford new construction rents, there is support for providing retail space for unique local businesses
- On compatible larger sites, there would be support for a pedestrian-oriented, storefront-style retail element

7. Mixed use development

- On larger sites a mix of land uses would be supported or preferred if feasible—such as a mix of residential and retail, or of residential and industrial
- Horizontal mixed-use (adjacent uses) verses vertical mixed-use (stacked) development is preferred by developers due to financing and property management challenges

8. Site anchors

- On well-located larger sites, there is support for anchoring the new development with a placemaking element (i.e., an outdoor plaza or park which might include walkable amenity retail and some activated outdoor space that could include patio seating for restaurants other engaging features, and programmed activities or events, or a community center)
- Consider ways to create community within a larger site, enhancing the area as a destination and/or improved walkability
- In locations with wetlands, respect those as site constraints by not encroaching on them and leverage them as natural assets that can be enhanced for neighboring development

9. Compatibility

- In locations with neighboring single dwelling homes, site development closest to those homes should be at a compatible scale and provide high quality landscaping or other buffering

10. Family friendly gathering places that help to foster a sense of community

- Create destinations that preserve the small town feel and connectedness within the community
- More green space and connections with planned amenities such as the Bruce Vento Trail

11. A mix of residential and commercial uses that enhance the vitality and market strength of the area

- Incorporate design features to buffer smaller scale uses from larger scale uses (e.g., open space, setbacks, tiered buildings, etc.)

12. Industrial buildings that serve businesses that want to be closer to the metro

- Potential for additional well-paying jobs in the area

13. The partner cities and county to coordinate efforts to attract private and public investments that will benefit the broader community



Above: Participants at a block exercise workshop

- Offer public resources to achieve community goals (e.g., revolving loan funds, tax increment financing, down-payment assistance, environmental clean-up, etc.)

Exploring development scenarios

Community members participated in three different interactive block exercise to explore different development options for sites in each of the three cities. The scenarios were run through a financial tool to assess their financial viability. Through the exercise participants gained a greater understanding about the tradeoffs that developer faces to get to a viable project. They also heard from a panel of developers and specialists in “place making”. They received feedback on their initial development thoughts, recommendation for consideration going forward, and strong support for continuing the process.

Panel Discussion

The process was also informed by a panel of development and placemaking experts that offered input on what uses the sites would attract, and insights on the challenges and opportunities of the corridor. The panel applauded the cities and county for being proactive by establishing goals and guidelines for developers to respond to and working with the community at the front end to define them. They offered the following recommendations:

- Send a signal to developers about what you want. Developers want to deal with a city that knows what they want and understands the market realities.
- Request that cities align land use codes with their comprehensive plan to help the community understand what’s allowed.
- Use programmed activities or events to create themes or an identity for the area. Do something tangible and small to get the ball rolling.
- Find ways to make housing and commercial uses compatible
- Build greater market demand for commercial/retail uses by creating more housing (disposable income for the area)



Above: Panelists at the Developer Panel discussion on October 12, 2022.

COUNTY ROAD E CORRIDOR ACTION PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the input from the community workshops, the following recommendations are proposed for the County Road E Corridor Action Plan:

Objective: Create a cohesive theme and overall sense of place for the corridor

1. Pursue corridor improvements that meet multiple objectives, including slowing traffic, improving safety, supporting bike and pedestrian movement, building a cohesive and attractive corridor identity, and improving the area to attract high quality housing and business development
2. Attract high quality development to the identified opportunity sites, which enhance the community by providing additional housing and local business options, and special places and amenities
3. Address the east/west divide of Highway 61 by reconfiguring the intersection of County Road E and Highway 61 transforming the barrier into an asset and community gateway that enhances safety, connectivity and placemaking at the County Road E node

These goals will be pursued through the following strategies:

NEAR TERM STRATEGIES

Fostering a sense of place and purpose

1. Form a coalition among the three cities (similar to the Rice Larpenteur Alliance) to pursue these recommendations
2. Initiate a working group to build out programmed events and activities that give character or personality to the County Road E corridor
3. Work with developers to incorporate privately owned public spaces into larger project sites
4. Coordinate streetscape elements (e.g., trees, banners, street light designs, flower planters or baskets, etc.) to signify connectivity and individuality among the cities



Above: County Road E at Highway 61 is not comfortable for people walking, rolling and biking.

5. Create family friendly programming and events in each of the three cities along County Road E corridor
6. Align zoning regulations in each community to match their comprehensive plans and accomplish these recommendations
7. Continue to engage community members to inform and strengthen the County Road E Corridor action plan (especially those who were not able to participate in this series of workshops)

Safety – Coordination with Ramsey County and/or MnDOT to study and address potential safety issues along the corridor and consider the traffic calming tool kit

1. Participate in the new planning process for the Ramsey County Multimodal Transportation Plan which is linked [here](#), to communicate the goals set forward in these recommendations and inform decisions surrounding the future of transportation in Ramsey County
2. Compare County Road E safety history with similar roads and gather information on actions cities have taken to address safety issues
3. Complete a speed study at select locations along County Road E to learn the current speeds, trends, and other traffic calming tool kit based on study results
4. Identify, study and implement temporary or demonstration projects at select locations along County Road E for crossing improvements to provide pedestrian refuges, two stage crossings, and reduce exposure of pedestrians to motor vehicle traffic when crossing the street
5. Consider implementing flexible delineators to tighten curb radius to slow turning motorists and reduce exposure of pedestrians to motor vehicle traffic when crossing the street
6. Begin discussions with MnDOT to address safety concerns and potential improvements at the intersection at County Road E and Highway 61 – specifically addressing the potential to modify or remove the channelized right turn lanes, long pedestrian crossings, intersection pedestrian connections and traffic signal operation
7. Consider the implementation of Flashing Yellow Arrow Left-turn Arrows at signalized intersections where appropriate

8. Add pedestrian countdown timers to the signalized intersections of County Road E at Highway 61, Linden Avenue and Century Avenue/120
9. Stripe all crosswalks at signalized intersections and midblock crossings with international markings (zebra markings)
10. Conduct an ADA walk audit to identify opportunities to improve accessibility along and crossing of County Road E
11. Review existing photometrics and recommend lighting improvements where necessary to improve safety and comfort for all travelers

Connectivity – Strengthen and promote convenient, comfortable and safe walking, rolling and biking along, across and near the corridor

1. Consider ways that development guidelines can include traffic calming measures (e.g., but reducing setbacks)
2. Add projects to capital planning to address gaps in the existing sidewalk and trail network to facilitate movement along the corridor and to desired destinations within the corridor
3. Apply for grants such as Regional Solicitation, Highway Safety Improvement Project, Safe Routes to School, Safe Streets 4 All and RAISE Grants
4. Find opportunities to pair trail gap projects with current projects to begin filling existing gaps
5. Work with existing property owners to add on-site pedestrian facilities to connect within the site and to the public sidewalks and trails through striping or small sidewalk projects to encourage park once opportunities

Development Sites

1. Market the development opportunities
 - a. Create a marketing plan for the County Road E corridor that showcases local amenities and market features, and identifies key opportunity sites for investment
 - b. Create site-specific informational materials for each site that include an area map, a site maps with neighboring land uses and known site constraints, and development objectives
 - c. Pursue a range of approaches to making developers aware of the development opportunities along the County Road E corridor, as well as the specific development opportunity sites
2. Create site-specific development objectives for each site which respond to the unique characteristics of each site and are informed by the community and developer input from this process and urban planning best practices
 - a. Promote site designs that support active transportation goals of the community
 - b. At each site, review opportunities to transform barriers – such as Highway 61, Transit, Regional Trails, Wetlands – into assets for the site, including enhanced greenspace, water features, and improved connectivity opportunities for roadways, transit and trails
 - c. Encourage and promote shared parking practices between adjacent developments. Balance parking requirements and development demands to avoid building excessive amounts of surface parking
 - d. Include on-site bike racks for customers and secure (indoor/locked) bike parking for employees and renters/owners



Electric vehicle charging stations provide customers with more sustainable options to access local businesses.

- e. Consider future on-site shared and regulated mobility options such as bike share, scooter share and car share
 - f. Consider mini roundabouts that facilitate traffic interior to development sites
 - g. Integrate electric vehicle charging stations into sites
 - h. Integrate sidewalks and bicycle paths throughout new developments and connections to public trails and sidewalks
 - i. Include lighting, art and landscaping elements that support unique programming and placemaking to enhance the viability of long-term neighborhood destinations for the surrounding community
 - j. Promote on-site landscaping that utilizes Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) treatments to effectively integrate water quality improvements while aesthetically connecting the natural environment with its community
 - k. Consider options such as community land trusts for long term affordability for commercial or homeownership
 - l. “Swapping uses”: Work with businesses to right-size their locations (e.g., relocate businesses from low- occupancy strip malls to other sites, repurpose strip malls)
 - m. Explore mixed-use options that include industrial uses that help to locate services closer to the metro (job opportunities)
 - n. Promote the Schafer Richardson Development Phase 2 out-lot as a space to support access to the Vento trail and biking
3. For sites with special redevelopment challenges related to site conditions, size constraints, etc, consider additional implementation related research that explores additional public sector actions that can position sites for high quality redevelopment



Median treatment to facilitate two-stage crossing and provide pedestrian refuge on a four-to-three lane conversion of Maryland Avenue at Greenbriar Street in Saint Paul, MN.

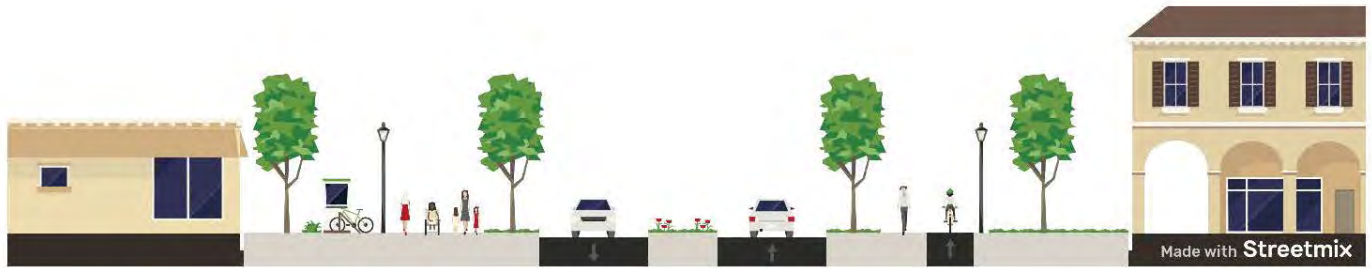
MEDIUM TERM STRATEGIES

Fostering a sense of place and purpose

1. Sustain placemaking activities and events through local organizations and business associations
2. Strengthen landscaping efforts through small grant programs or collaborations with local nurseries
3. Partner with local schools to engage youth with community-service projects
4. Consider conducting a market study for residential and commercial needs

Safety – Coordination with Ramsey County and/or MnDOT to address more permanently the areas of the greatest safety need along the corridor as an interim measure prior to reconstruction

1. Build on the Ramsey County Multimodal Transportation Plan study to understand existing and future conditions to identify feasible improvement opportunities for all modes of travel
 - a. Study to include safety, future growth, active transportation facilities, lane and corridor geometry, signal timings, public engagement and corridor visioning
2. Provide enhanced crossings of County Road E at key locations based on best practices as defined by Ramsey County Crossing Policy, [Minnesota’s Best Practices for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety](#) and [FHWA Guide for Improving Pedestrian Safety at Uncontrolled Crossing Locations](#) such as but not limited to:
 - i. Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons
 - ii. High Visibility Marked Crosswalks – International Markings
 - iii. Medians
 - iv. Curb Extensions
 - v. Street lighting
3. Consider the full range of traffic calming techniques along the corridor (e.g., roadway narrowing with striping to physical treatments such as medians and curb extensions)
4. Implement multimodal safety improvements at the intersection of County Road E and Highway 61 and address lane needs based on review of current signal operations



Complete street concept for County Road E – three lane cross section with center left-turn lane and medians between intersections east of Highway 61.

LONG TERM STRATEGIES

Fostering a sense of place and purpose

1. Engage the businesses to identify opportunities for joint marketing and promotions
2. Assess the impact of programming activities and events and make adjustments as needed

Safety – Coordination with Ramsey County and/or MnDOT to plan for major improvements as part of their capital planning processes

1. Based on results of the corridor study completed during the medium term, transform County Road E into an All-Abilities Street that includes:
 - a. The appropriate number and width of motor vehicle travel lanes based on anticipated growth – initial review suggests this results in similar lane arrangement to existing
 - b. Continuous shared-use paths along both sides to provide low-stress mobility along the corridor for people of all ages and abilities to comfortably walk, roll and bicycle
 - c. Pedestrian scale lighting for personal safety and comfort along shared-use path
 - d. Tree-lined boulevards between the path and street utilizing Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) treatments to provide shade for shared use path, stormwater treatment and reduce heat island effect
 - e. Medians at locations where possible to provide opportunities for people to cross one direction of travel at a time with space for refuge, additional areas for landscaping and GSI treatments and traffic calming
 - f. Enhanced streetscaping to create corridor identity with unique and cohesive gateway elements for partner communities along County Road E
 - g. Enhanced crossing treatments at key unsignalized crossings based on best practices as defined by Ramsey County Crossing Policy, [Minnesota’s Best Practices for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety](#) and [FHWA Guide for Improving Pedestrian Safety at Uncontrolled Crossing Locations](#), including but not limited to consideration of:
 - i. Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons
 - ii. High Visibility Marked Crosswalks – International Markings
 - iii. Medians
 - iv. Curb Extensions
 - v. Street lighting
2. Reconfigure the intersection of County Road E and Highway 61 transforming the barrier into an asset and community gateway that enhances safety, connectivity and placemaking at the County Road E node



Above: Residents at a community meeting.

OVERVIEW OF THE CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE PROCESS:

The Corridor Development Initiative consisted of six community workshops held at four different locations along the County Road E corridor (Century College, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Heritage Hall, and the Vadnais Heights Fire Station).

This community process could not have happened without the critical support of staff and officials from the three partner cities. With a deep appreciation to:

- Tracy Shimek, White Bear Lake Housing and Economic Development Coordinator
- Nolan Wall, Vadnais Heights Planning and Community Development Director
- Ben Johnson, Gem Lake City Council Member

PROJECT TEAM

A Project Team composed of jurisdictional and community representatives was established support the County Road E Corridor Action Plan community process. The role of the Project Team was to:

- Identify the goals and objectives of the community engagement process
- Assist with the creation of an outreach and communication strategy to recruit community participation, and
- Reach agreement on the final action plan recommendations through the community process.

The Project Team members include:

City of White Bear Lake representatives

- Kevin Edberg, WBL City Council Member
- Dan Jones, WBL City Council Member
- Mike Amundsen, WBL Planning Commissioner
- Jason Lindahl, WBL Community Development Director (staff)
- Tracy Shimek, WBL Housing and Economic Development Coordinator (staff)

City of Gem Lake representatives

Ben Johnson, GL City Council Member
Laurel Hynes-Amlee, GL City Council Member
Don Cummings, GL Planning Commissioner

City of Vadnais Heights representatives

Steve Rogers, VH City Council Member
Katherine Doll-Kanne, VH Planning Commissioner
Liz Moscatelli, VHEDC Board of Directors
Nolan Walls, Planning and Community Development Director (staff)
Kevin Watson, VH City Administrator (staff)

Ramsey County representatives

Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County Commissioner
Kari Collins, Ramsey County Community and Economic Development
Mario Montanari, Ramsey County Parks
Scott Mareck, Ramsey County Public Works
Martha Faust, Ramsey County Redevelopment Manager
Ella Mitchell, Ramsey County Economic Development Specialist

Metropolitan Council representatives

Sue Vento, Metropolitan Council Member
Patrick Boylan, Met Council Planning Analyst
Terri Dresen, Met Council Director of Communications (also VH Planning Commissioner)

Community representatives

Jan Johnson, WBL EDC, State Farm
Michael Wilhelmi, Xcel Energy
Tim Wald, White Bear Lake Area School District
Mike Greenbaum, Newtrax

COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP

In addition, a Community Advisory Committee was established to identify and support outreach strategies to recruit diverse representation from a range of community interests and backgrounds. The Community Advisory Committee met twice to inform and advise outreach efforts and to provide feedback and review of the draft recommendations and action plan.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

We encourage participants to attend the full series of workshops

The cities of White Bear Lake, Vadnais Heights, and Gem Lake invite you to inform and guide future development along the corridor through a series of community workshops and discussions. The process will produce an action plan to include near, medium, and long-term goals and action steps, and serve as a tool to attract private investment through development and infrastructure improvements.

Workshop I: Gather Information

Wednesday, September 14, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm

Century College, 3300 Century Ave, White Bear Lake

East Campus – Lincoln Mall, park in lot F, G or H, enter through main entrance E1

Workshop II A - C: Exploring Development Options

A. Vadnais Heights sites

Wednesday, September 28, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm

Vadnais Heights Fire Station, 3595 Arcade St N

B. White Bear Lake sites

Thursday, September 29, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm

Redeemer Lutheran Church, 3770 Bellaire Ave, White Bear Lake

C. Gem Lake sites

Wednesday, October 5, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm

Heritage Hall, 4200 Otter Lake Road, Gem Lake

Workshop III: Developer Panel Discussion

Wednesday, October 12, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm

Vadnais Heights Fire Station, 3595 Arcade St N

Workshop IV: Framing Recommendations

Wednesday, October 26, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm

Vadnais Heights Fire Station, 3595 Arcade St N

For more information, contact:

Tracy Shimek, City of White Bear Lake, at 651-762-4838 or tshimek@whitebearlake.org

Or use your phone's camera on this QR Code to go directly to the website.



ALL EVENTS ARE FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

<https://www.whitebearlake.org/e>

Above: Postcard that was mailed to residents

Community Advisory Committee members include:

- Trisha Kauffman, Solid Ground
- Katie West, Gunderson Construction
- Jeffrey Borglum, Techie Dudes
- Catherine Gnali, Century College student
- Joy Erickson, White Bear Lake Chamber of Commerce
- Charles Cook, Jimmy's Food and Drink
- Kevin Kelly, Frandsen Bank
- Lauren Lofrumento, Children's Discovery
- Richard Bosak, Gem Lake resident and past city council member

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

A variety of methods were used to notify the community about the County Road E Corridor community workshops. Information was distributed through:

- Postcard mailings
- Flyers distributed door to door to residential areas and businesses along the County Road E corridor

- Email notifications were sent out by list serves
- Facebook and other social media outlets
- City web sites
- Individual outreach/word of mouth

Participants that signed in for any of the workshops were notified in advance about upcoming sessions by email.

CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE (CDI) TECHNICAL TEAM THE LISC CDI TECHNICAL TEAM INCLUDED:

- Barbara Raye, Center for Policy Planning and Performance (Facilitator and evaluator)
- Tom Leighton, Stantec (Land use and planning consultant)
- Heather Kienitz, Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc. (Transportation consultant)
- Julia Paulsen Mullin, (Block exercise coordinator)
- Miranda Walker, U.S. Bank (Financial analysis for the block exercise)
- Dan Marckel, (Block exercise facilitator)
- Gretchen Nicholls, LISC Twin Cities (Project coordinator)

COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS

The series of six community workshops were held during September and October 2022. They included:

Workshop I: Gather information

Wednesday, September 14, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm | Century College, 3300 Century Ave, White Bear Lake

Presentations were provided by (see addendums B and C):

Tracy Shimek (City of White Bear Lake), **Ben Johnson** (City of Gem Lake), and **Nolan Wall** (City of Vadnais Heights) – an overview of the objectives and purpose of the process, highlights from the comprehensive plans, population growth projections and future land use opportunity sites.

Tom Sohrwiede (Short Elliott Hendrickson) – highlights of County Road E segments and key intersections, transportation considerations and safety review.

Tom Leighton (Stantec) – an orientation on current housing and commercial real estate market trends, and elements of the surrounding area that informs options for potential redevelopment sites.

Participants were asked to respond to four questions:

1. What's valuable, interesting or unique about this area?
2. What could be accomplished through development that would improve/enhance the area? And are there specific uses you would suggest for any of the opportunity sites?
3. What concerns for the area do you have as future development occurs?
4. How could the corridor be more connected?
5. What concerns for the area do you have as future development occurs?



Above: Photos from community meetings.

Workshop II A - C: Exploring Development Options – The Block Exercise

Community members participated in a series of interactive workshops to create development scenarios for key sites along the County Road E Corridor. Land use and design experts were on hand to share ideas and insights. Sites were divided among three workshops by city. (For block exercise summaries see addendum D.)

A. Vadnais Heights sites
Wednesday, September 28, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm
Vadnais Heights Fire Station, 3595 Arcade St N, Vadnais Heights

B. White Bear Lake sites
Thursday, September 29, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm
Redeemer Lutheran Church, 3770 Bellaire Ave, White Bear Lake

C. Gem Lake sites
Wednesday, October 5, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm
Heritage Hall, 4200 Otter Lake Road, Gem Lake



Above: Participants at the Developer Panel Discussion.

Workshop III: Developer Panel Discussion

Wednesday, October 12, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm | Vadnais Heights Fire Station, 3595 Arcade St N, Vadnais Heights

Participants explored the opportunities and challenges of potential development options and corridor revitalization strategies with panelists that bring a range of real estate and place-making expertise.

Panelists included (For discussion notes and bios see addendum E):

- Jeff Salzbrun**, Commercial Equities Group
- Todd Stutz**, Robert Thomas Homes/RT Urban Homes
- Leanna M. Stefaniak**, Esq, At Home Apartments, LLC
- Max Musicant**, The Musicant Group
- Mikeya Griffin**, Rondo Community Land Trust
- Marty O’Connell**, MWF Properties

Workshop IV: Framing the Recommendations

Wednesday, October 26, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm | Vadnais Heights Fire Station, 3595 Arcade St N, Vadnais Heights

Participants contributed to the creation of the County Road E Corridor action plan recommendations, which were submitted to the Project Team of local government and private partners for consideration.

EVALUATION SUMMARY OF THE CDI PROCESS

Participants were asked at the end of each session to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the session in meeting its goals, what participants gained during the session, if they would recommend the session to others, satisfaction level, and any additional information they would like to have at the next session. The feedback was optional as was each question on the evaluation form. Not all participants provided feedback and not everyone that did responded to each question. Overall, there were 70 forms submitted.

Participants supported the final document of recommendations. They also said that the overall project gave them insight into future design of the corridor, strengthened their relationships with each other and community leaders, provided perspective and information about development, and built a sense of community and collaboration.

Although most participants had lived in the area for several years and identified as senior/retired, there was a variety of participants ranging from less than 3 years residence to over 20 years of residence and being a young adult or non-senior/retired adult. Almost all respondents (one respondent wasn't sure about one of the sessions.) would recommend the session (and series) to other cities or communities. And finally, almost everyone expressed satisfaction to high satisfaction with each session and the overall project. (Three expressed being somewhat dissatisfied with one or more of the sessions)

CONCLUSION

The Corridor Development Initiative submits the attached County Road E Corridor Action Plan recommendations to the cities of White Bear Lake, Gem Lake, Vadnais Heights, and Ramsey County for their consideration.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. County Road E Corridor Action Plan recommendations
- B. Traffic Calming Toolkit
- C. Workshop I presentations
- D. Workshop I Summary and Themes
- E. Workshop II Development Scenario Summaries for Vadnais Heights, Gem Lake, and White Bear Lake
- F. Workshop III Developer Panel Discussion Notes and Bios
- G. Attendance list for the County Road E Corridor Action Plan CDI workshops
- H. County Road E Community Advisor Group Members
- I. County Road E Corridor Project Team Members
- J. Announcement/publicity flyer for the County Road E Corridor Action Plan CDI workshops

ATTACHMENT A. COUNTY ROAD E CORRIDOR ACTION PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS



COUNTY ROAD E CORRIDOR ACTION PLAN

Between Centerville Road and Highway 120

November 2022

What is this document? These recommendations serve as a summary of the input and reflections shared by community members from the cities of Vadnais Heights, Gem Lake, and White Bear Lake through a four-part workshop series convened by LISC Twin Cities to inform future development and improvements through a County Road E Corridor action plan. The action plan will be a living document to help activate deeper collaboration among jurisdiction partners and allow for greater flexibility to accommodate changing trends and technologies. The plan will be used as a tool to attract private investment through development as well as seek regional, state and federal funding for infrastructure improvements which increase the vitality of the corridor. The action plan findings will be submitted to the cities of White Bear Lake, Gem Lake, Vadnais Heights, and Ramsey County for their consideration.





Shopping center at County Rd E and I-35E

INTRODUCTION

The County Road E Corridor between Centerville Road and Highway 120 has significant potential for revitalization, place-making¹ and serves as a catalyst for future development in the area. In partnership and with a grant from Ramsey County, the cities of Vadnais Heights, Gem Lake and White Bear Lake are working collaboratively to identify ways to create a more cohesive and connected corridor along County Road E and to guide future development of key opportunity sites located in each city. The geographic definition of the corridor includes a half-mile radius to the north and south of County Road E.

County Road E currently offers a mix of uses including multi-family residential, single family detached and attached residential, retail, industrial, educational, service, public and agricultural. The corridor serves as a direct access point to major traffic arteries including Interstate 35E, U.S. Highway 61 and Century Avenue North (MN State Highway 120), and provides access nearby Interstate 694. According to 2020 Decennial Census, approximately 26,100 people reside in the census tracts abutting County Road E.

To invite community input and build consensus around key strategies the cities hosted a series of six community engagement workshops to inform a County Road E Corridor Action Plan designed to include near, medium- and long-term strategies. The partnering cities and Ramsey County will consider the action plan recommendations and determine what can be advanced for implementation, some of which will be executed by individual communities and others in partnership. The action plan will be a living document to help activate deeper collaboration among jurisdiction partners and allow for greater flexibility to accommodate changing trends and technologies. The plan will be used as a tool to attract private investment through development and revitalization of existing properties and businesses as well as seek regional, state and federal funding for infrastructure improvements which increase the vitality of the corridor.

¹ Place-making options include an outdoor plaza or park which might include walkable amenity retail and some activated outdoor space that could include patio seating for restaurants other engaging features, and programmed activities or events, or a community center.



Gem Lake opportunity site south of County Rd E

KEY SITES

The following key sites were used to explore opportunities for future development within the three cities (highlight parcels):

Vadnais Heights

- Site A: Vacant site in the southwest quadrant at 35E and County Road E (12-acre parcel)
- Site B: Vacant site in the northeast quadrant at 35E and County Road E (44-acre parcel)

Gem Lake

- Site C: Parcel east of Daniels Farm Road and north of County Road E (18-acres)
- Site D: South of County Road E and west of Highway 61 along Hoffman Road (12-acres)

White Bear Lake

- Site E: Four corners at the intersection of Bellaire and County Road E (the northeast corner site is owned by the City of White Bear Lake)





Vadnais Heights opportunity site in the southwest quadrant at 35E and County Road E

Some of the key themes that emerged through the community engagement process include:

1. Explore ways to create an overall identity and sense of place throughout the corridor to encourage travelers to frequent local shops and businesses
2. Strong desire for more comfortable, safer crossings of County Road E along the corridor at both signalized crossings and unsignalized crossings to serve people of all ages and abilities
 - concern about pedestrian, bicycle, and automobile safety at the County Road E crossing of Highway 61 and the barrier this highway poses to travelers along the corridor, and in general to the community (especially in regard to crossings near schools)
3. Implement traffic calming measures to:
 - Improve safety
 - Reduce the speed of traffic that is in excess of the speed limit
 - Reduce the perception of the corridor as a drive-through area
 - Guard against shifting traffic to adjoining neighborhood streets
 - Acknowledge the lack of lane continuity issues east and west of Highway 61
4. Support for continuous connections and enhancements to the active transportation network along the corridor that promote walkability, safety, livability, and pedestrian and bicycle access
 - Build public/private partnerships to enhance walkability, both within larger parcels or districts, and to connect with other areas nearby (especially when new development occurs)
 - Improve lighting
5. Residential development
 - A mix of housing formats that meets the needs of the community including affordability, ADA accessible housing, housing for seniors, people who work in the area, and younger households
 - On large sites, a mix of housing types is preferred on the same site



Coffee/ice cream shop in White Bear Lake at County Rd E and Bellaire Ave

6. Commercial development

- Where feasible, retail businesses are desired to support community needs for goods and services, as well as “experience retail” destinations such as restaurants, bars and cafes
- Additional restaurant options are a particular interest
- Although it is understood that local businesses can’t always afford new construction rents, there is support for providing retail space for unique local businesses
- On compatible larger sites, there would be support for a pedestrian-oriented, storefront-style retail element

7. Mixed use development

- On larger sites a mix of land uses would be supported or preferred if feasible—such as a mix of residential and retail, or of residential and industrial
- Horizontal mixed-use (adjacent uses) verses vertical mixed-use (stacked) development is preferred by developers due to financing and property management challenges

8. Site anchors

- On well-located larger sites, there is support for anchoring the new development with a placemaking element (i.e., an outdoor plaza or park which might include walkable amenity retail and some activated outdoor space that could include patio seating for restaurants other engaging features, and programmed activities or events, or a community center)
- Consider ways to create community within a larger site, enhancing the area as a destination and/or improved walkability
- In locations with wetlands, respect those as site constraints by not encroaching on them and leverage them as natural assets that can be enhanced for neighboring development

9. Compatibility

- In locations with neighboring single dwelling homes, site development closest to those homes should be at a compatible scale and provide high quality landscaping or other buffering



Retail destination center at County Rd E & Hwy 120

10 Family friendly gathering places that help to foster a sense of community

- Create destinations that preserve the small town feel and connectedness within the community
- More green space and connections with planned amenities such as the Bruce Vento Trail

11. A mix of residential and commercial uses that enhance the vitality and market strength of the area

- Incorporate design features to buffer smaller scale uses from larger scale uses (e.g., open space, setbacks, tiered buildings, etc.)

12. Industrial buildings that serve businesses that want to be closer to the metro

- Potential for additional well-paying jobs in the area

13. The partner cities and county to coordinate efforts to attract private and public investments that will benefit the broader community

- Offer public resources to achieve community goals (e.g., revolving loan funds, tax increment financing, down-payment assistance, environmental clean-up, etc.)



White Bear Lake High School located just south of County Rd E (transitioning to middle school, fall 2024)

EXPLORING DEVELOPMENT SCENARIOS

Community members participated in three different interactive block exercise to explore different development options for sites in each of the three cities. The scenarios were run through a financial tool to assess their financial viability. Through the exercise participants gained a greater understanding about the tradeoffs that developers face to create a viable project. They also heard from a panel of developers and specialists in placemaking. They received feedback on their initial development thoughts, recommendation for consideration going forward, and strong support for continuing the process.

Based on the input from the community workshops, the following recommendations are proposed for the County Road E Corridor Action Plan:

OBJECTIVE: CREATE A COHESIVE THEME AND OVERALL SENSE OF PLACE FOR THE CORRIDOR

- 1. Pursue corridor improvements** that meet multiple objectives, including slowing traffic, improving safety, supporting bike and pedestrian movement, building a cohesive and attractive corridor identity, and improving the area to attract high quality housing and business development
- 2. Attract high quality development** to the identified opportunity sites, which enhance the community by providing additional housing and local business options, and special places and amenities
- 3. Address the east/west divide of Highway 61** by reconfiguring the intersection of County Road E and Highway 61 transforming the barrier into an asset and community gateway that enhances safety, connectivity and placemaking at the County Road E node

These goals will be pursued through the following strategies:



TCO Sports Garden located in Vadnais Heights

Near Term Strategies

Fostering a sense of place and purpose

1. Form a coalition among the three cities (similar to the Rice Larpenteur Alliance) to pursue these recommendations
2. Initiate a working group to build out programmed events and activities that give character or personality to the County Road E corridor
3. Work with developers to incorporate privately owned public spaces into larger project sites
4. Coordinate streetscape elements (e.g., trees, banners, street light designs, flower planters or baskets, etc.) to signify connectivity and individuality among the cities
5. Create family friendly programming and events in each of the three cities along County Road E corridor
6. Align zoning regulations in each community to match their comprehensive plans and accomplish these recommendations
7. Continue to engage community members to inform and strengthen the County Road E Corridor action plan (especially those who were not able to participate in this series of workshops)

Safety – Coordination with Ramsey County and/or MnDOT to study and address potential safety issues along the corridor and consider the traffic calming tool kit

1. Participate in the new planning process for the Ramsey County Multimodal Transportation Plan which should soon be linked [here](#), to communicate the goals set forward in these recommendations and inform decisions surrounding the future of transportation in Ramsey County
2. Compare County Road E safety history with similar roads and gather information on actions cities have taken to address safety issues



County Road E at Highway 61 is not comfortable for people walking, rolling and biking.

3. Complete a speed study at select locations along County Road E to learn the current speeds, trends, and other strategies from the traffic calming tool kit based on study results
4. Identify, study and implement temporary or demonstration projects at select locations along County Road E for crossing improvements to provide pedestrian refuges, two stage crossings, and reduce exposure of pedestrians to motor vehicle traffic when crossing the street
5. Consider implementing flexible delineators to tighten curb radius to slow turning motorists and reduce exposure of pedestrians to motor vehicle traffic when crossing the street
6. Begin discussions with MnDOT to address safety concerns and potential improvements at the intersection at County Road E and Highway 61 – specifically addressing the potential to modify or remove the channelized right turn lanes, long pedestrian crossings, intersection pedestrian connections and traffic signal operation
7. Consider the implementation of Flashing Yellow Arrow Left-turn Arrows at signalized intersections where appropriate
8. Add pedestrian countdown timers to the signalized intersections of County Road E at Highway 61, Linden Avenue and Century Avenue/120
9. Stripe all crosswalks at signalized intersections and mid-block crossings with international markings (zebra markings)
10. Conduct an ADA walk audit to identify opportunities to improve accessibility along and crossing of County Road E
11. Review existing photometrics and recommend lighting improvements where necessary to improve safety and comfort for all travelers

Connectivity – Strengthen and promote convenient, comfortable and safe walking, rolling and biking along, across and near the corridor

1. Consider ways that development guidelines can include traffic calming measures (e.g., reducing setbacks)
2. Add projects to capital planning to address gaps in the existing sidewalk and trail network to facilitate



The Barnum located on County Rd E in White Bear Lake

movement along the corridor and to desired destinations within the corridor

3. Apply for grants such as Regional Solicitation, Highway Safety Improvement Project, Safe Routes to School, Safe Streets 4 All and RAISE Grants
4. Find opportunities to pair trail gap projects with current projects to begin filling existing gaps
5. Work with existing property owners to add on-site pedestrian facilities to connect within the site and to the public sidewalks and trails through striping or small sidewalk projects to encourage park once opportunities

Development Sites

1. Market the development opportunities
 - a. Create a marketing plan for the County Road E corridor that showcases local amenities and market features, and identifies key opportunity sites for investment
 - b. Create site-specific informational materials for each site that include an area map, a site map with neighboring land uses and known site constraints, and development objectives
 - c. Pursue a range of approaches to making developers aware of the development opportunities along the County Road E corridor, as well as the specific development opportunity sites
2. Create site-specific development objectives for each site which respond to the unique characteristics of each site and are informed by the community and developer input from this process and community planning best practices
 - a. Promote site designs that support active transportation goals of the community
 - b. At each site, review opportunities to transform barriers – such as Highway 61, Transit, Regional Trails, Wetlands – into assets for the site, including enhanced greenspace, water features, and improved connectivity opportunities for roadways, transit and trails
 - c. Encourage and promote shared parking practices between adjacent developments. Balance parking requirements and development demands to avoid building excessive amounts of surface parking



Electric vehicle charging stations provide customers with more sustainable options to access local businesses.

- d. Include on-site bike racks for customers and secure (indoor/locked) bike parking for employees and renters/owners
 - e. Consider future on-site shared and regulated mobility options such as bike share, scooter share and car share
 - f. Consider mini-roundabouts that facilitate traffic interior to development sites
 - g. Integrate electric vehicle charging stations into sites
 - h. Integrate sidewalks and bicycle paths throughout new developments and connections to public trails and sidewalks
 - i. Include lighting, art and landscaping elements that support unique programming and placemaking to enhance the viability of long-term neighborhood destinations for the surrounding community
 - j. Promote on-site landscaping that utilizes Best Management Practices (BMPs) and Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) treatments to effectively integrate water quality improvements while aesthetically connecting the natural environment with its community
 - k. Consider options such as community land trusts for long term affordability for commercial or homeownership
 - l. “Swapping uses”: Work with businesses to right-size their locations (e.g., relocate businesses from low- occupancy strip malls to other sites, repurpose strip malls)
 - m. Explore mixed-use options that include industrial uses that help to locate services closer to the metro (job opportunities)
 - n. Promote the Shafer Richardson Phase 2 out-lot as a space to support access to the Vento trail and biking
3. For sites with special redevelopment challenges related to site conditions, size constraints, etc, consider additional implementation related research that explores additional public sector actions which can position sites for high quality redevelopment



Median treatment to facilitate two-stage crossing and provide pedestrian refuge on a four-to-three lane conversion of Maryland Avenue at Greenbriar Street in Saint Paul, MN.

Medium Term Strategies

Fostering a sense of place and purpose

1. Sustain placemaking activities and events through local organizations and business associations
2. Strengthen landscaping efforts through small grant programs or collaborations with local nurseries
3. Partner with local schools to engage youth with community-service projects
4. Consider conducting market studies for residential and commercial needs

Safety – Coordination with Ramsey County and/or MnDOT to address more permanently the areas of the greatest safety need along the corridor as an interim measure prior to reconstruction

1. Build on the Ramsey County Multimodal Transportation Plan study to understand existing and future conditions to identify feasible improvement opportunities for all modes of travel
 - a. Study to include safety, future growth, active transportation facilities, lane and corridor geometry, signal timings, public engagement and corridor visioning
2. Provide enhanced crossings of County Road E at key locations based on best practices as defined by Ramsey County Crossing Policy, [Minnesota’s Best Practices for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety](#) and [FHWA Guide for Improving Pedestrian Safety at Uncontrolled Crossing Locations](#) such as but not limited to:
 - a. Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons
 - b. High Visibility Marked Crosswalks – International Markings
 - c. Medians
 - d. Curb Extensions
 - e. Street lighting

3. Consider the full range of traffic calming techniques along the corridor (e.g., roadway narrowing with striping to physical treatments such as medians and curb extensions)
4. Implement multimodal safety improvements at the intersection of County Road E and Highway 61 and address lane needs based on review of current signal operations

Long Term Strategies

Fostering a sense of place and purpose

1. Engage the businesses to identify opportunities for joint marketing and promotions
2. Assess the impact of programming activities and events and make adjustments as needed

Safety – Coordination with Ramsey County and/or MnDOT to plan for major improvements as part of their capital planning processes

1. Based on results of the corridor study completed during the medium term, transform County Road E into an All-Abilities Street that includes:
 - a. The appropriate number and width of motor vehicle travel lanes based on anticipated growth – initial review suggests this results in similar lane arrangement to existing
 - b. Continuous shared-use paths along both sides to provide low-stress mobility along the corridor for people of all ages and abilities to comfortably walk, roll and bicycle
 - c. Pedestrian scale lighting for personal safety and comfort along shared-use path
 - d. Tree-lined boulevards between the path and street utilizing Green Stormwater Infrastructure (GSI) treatments to provide shade for shared use path, stormwater treatment and reduce heat island effect
 - e. Medians at locations where possible to provide opportunities for people to cross one direction of travel at a time with space for refuge, additional areas for landscaping and GSI treatments and traffic calming
 - f. Enhanced streetscaping to create corridor identity with unique and cohesive gateway elements for partner communities along County Road E



Complete street concept for County Road E – three lane cross section with center left-turn lane and medians between intersections east of Highway 61.

g. Enhanced crossing treatments at key unsignalized crossings based on best practices as defined by Ramsey County Crossing Policy, Minnesota's Best Practices for Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and FHWA Guide for Improving Pedestrian Safety at Uncontrolled Crossing Locations, including but not limited to consideration of (as identified in medium term strategies - Safety #2):

- a. Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons
- b. High Visibility Marked Crosswalks – International Markings
- c. Medians
- d. Curb Extensions
- e. Street lighting

2. Reconfigure the intersection of County Road E and Highway 61 transforming the barrier into an asset and community gateway that enhances safety, connectivity and placemaking at the County Road E node

ATTACHMENT B. TRAFFIC CALMING TOOLKIT

County Road E Corridor Action Plan Traffic Calming Toolkit


What is Traffic Calming?

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) defines traffic calming as a way to “support the livability and vitality of residential and commercial areas through improvements in non-motorist safety, mobility, and comfort.” On roadways where the speed, traffic, and/or safety are a concern, traffic calming measures can help change driver behavior through education measures or by implementing visual or physical changes to the road environment. These measures can include education campaigns, changes to the pavement marking and signing, horizontal and vertical deflections, lane narrowing, and other features.


Traffic Calming Toolkit

This toolbox is provided as a quick reference guide to traffic calming device options feasible for some segments or intersections along County Road E. Information was obtained primarily from the FHWA ePrimer online resource: <https://highways.dot.gov/safety/speed-management/traffic-calming-eprimer>

Category 1 – Base Measures

| Measure | Description | |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| Education | Education campaigns can help remind speeding drivers or non-local traffic the effects of their actions. The education elements may include reminders of speeding fines, school zones, nearby pedestrian/bicycle generators, and safety tips. | |
| Dynamic Speed Display Sign | A speed display sign provides the same information but is mounted permanently to a regulator speed limit sign and requires a solar or hard-wire power source. Effective at temporarily reducing speeds but may not receive long-term compliance unless paired with period enforcement. |  <p><i>Photo source: FHWA Speed Management</i></p> |
| On-Street Parking | A variety of on-street parking options can be used to narrow the travel lane width. This strategy is most effective when on-street parking activity is relatively high and consistent. | |
| Transverse Pavement Markings | Adding or revising pavement markings such as edge lines and centerlines may add clarity to the roadway conditions, such as defining the lane widths. | |
| Traffic Signage | Installing traffic signs may improve driver awareness of specific conditions such as sharp curves, turn restrictions, school zones, and turn restrictions. Restricting turns with signage may mitigate cut-through traffic or redirect traffic to other streets. | |

Category 2 – Physical Measures

| Measure | Description | Photo Example |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Mini-Roundabout | Using modern roundabout design principles, a mini-roundabout is a raised, traversable island placed at an unsignalized intersection to encourage slower speeds entering the intersection and looks to reduce the number of angle or turning collision crashes. Designs include splitter islands to direct traffic from all directions. |  <p><i>Photo source: SEH Inc.</i></p> |

County Road E Corridor Development Initiative
Traffic Calming Toolkit

| Measure | Description | Photo Example |
|---|---|--|
| Raised Crosswalk | A raised crosswalk is a variant of a speed table when signed and striped as a pedestrian crossing and could be implemented at trail crossings of cross streets. |  <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">Photo source: SEH Inc.</p> |
| Corner Extension | Also known as curb extensions, bulbouts or bump-outs, a corner extension is a horizontal extension of the sidewalk at an intersection into the street to narrow the roadway width. |  <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">Photo source: SEH Inc.</p> |
| Median Island | A raised island located along the centerline of the roadway to specifically narrow the travel lanes at that location. |  <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">Photo source: SEH Inc.</p> |
| Road Diet | A conversion of a 4-lane undivided roadway to include fewer or narrower lanes for vehicular traffic. Typically, a road diet converts a four-lane roadway to a three-lane section that includes two through lanes and one center two-way left-turn lane. The additional width can be used for a variety of features such as bike lanes, sidewalks, or on-street parking. |  <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">Photo source: SEH Inc.</p> |
| Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon (RRFB) | An RRFB consists of two, rectangular-shaped yellow signs with LED lights that emit alternating flashes when activated. An RRFB may be applicable to improve the safety and visibility of pedestrian crossings at key locations. |  <p style="font-size: small; text-align: center;">Photo source: SEH Inc.</p> |

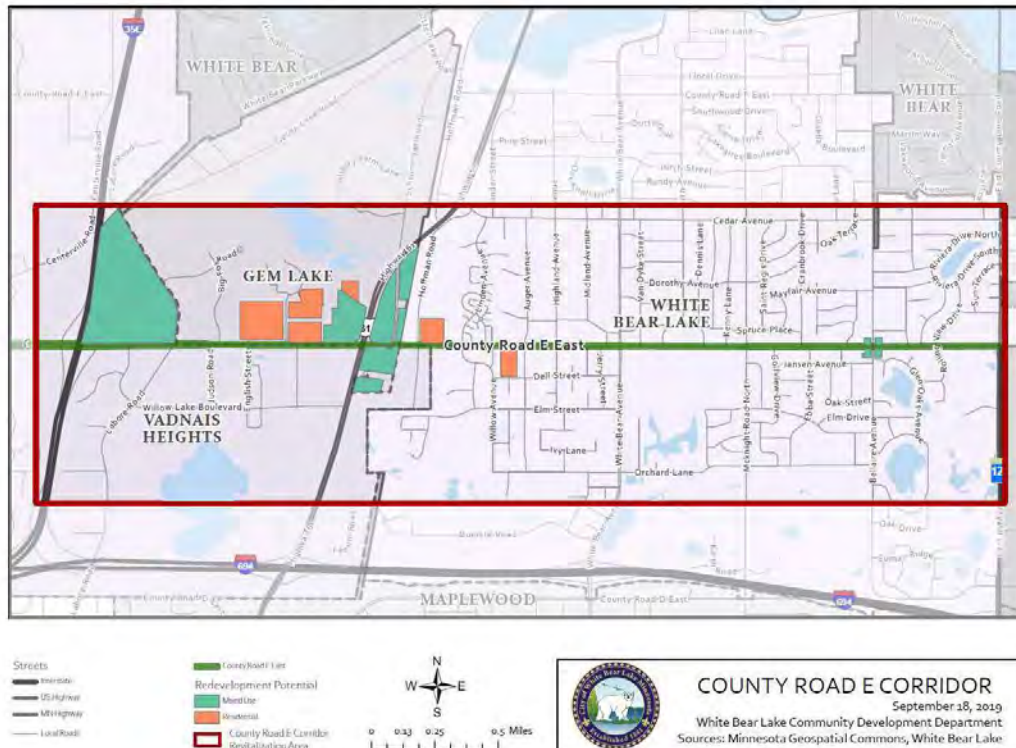


County Road E Corridor Action Plan Corridor Development Initiative

Workshop 1: September 14, 2022
 Workshop 2: Sept 28 (VH), Sept 29 (WBL), Oct 5 (GL)
 Workshop 3: October 12, 2022
 Workshop 4: October 26, 2022



County Road E Corridor



Project Team

- **Kevin Edberg**, WBL City Council
- **Dan Jones**, WBL City Council
- **Mike Amundsen**, WBL Planning Commission
- **Steve Rogers**, VH City Council
- **Terri Dresen**, VH Planning Commission
- **Katherine Doll-Kanne**, VH Planning Commission
- **Ben Johnson**, GL City Council
- **Laurel Hynes-Amlee**, GL City Council
- **Don Cummings**, GL Planning Commission
- **Victoria Reinhardt**, Ramsey County Commissioner
- **Kari Collins**, Ramsey County CED
- **Mario Montanari**, Ramsey County Parks
- **Scott Mareck**, Ramsey County Public Works
- **Martha Faust**, Ramsey County
- **Ella Mitchell**, Ramsey County
- **Sue Vento**, Metropolitan Council Member
- **Patrick Boylan**, Met Council
- **Terri Dresen**, Met Council
- **Jan Johnson**, WBL EDC/ State Farm
- **Michael Wilhelmi**, Xcel Energy
- **Tim Wald**, WBL Area Schools
- **Mike Greenbaum**, Newtrax

Citizen Advisory Group

- **Trisha Kauffman**, Solid Ground
- **Katie West**, Gunderson Construction
- **Jeff Borglum**, Techie Dudes
- **Catherine Gnali**, Center College student
- **Joy Erickson**, WBL Chamber
- **Charles Cook**, Jimmy's
- **Kevin Kelly**, Frandsen Bank
- **Lauren Welch Lofrumento**, Children's Discovery
- **Donna and Curt Anderson**, residents
- **Rick Bosak**, Past GL City Council member

CDI Technical Team Members

- **Barbara Raye**, facilitator, Center for Policy Planning and Performance
- **Tom Leighton**, Stantec
- **Heidi Kientiz**, SEH
- **Julia Paulsen Mullin**, Block Exercise Coordinator
- **Miranda Walker**, financial analysis
- **Gretchen Nicholls**, CDI coordinator, LISC Twin Cities

City Staff

- **Tracy Shimek**, City of White Bear Lake
- **Nolan Wall**, City of Vadnais Heights

Workshop I: Gathering Information

Presenters:

- **White Bear Lake, Gem Lake, Vadnais Heights Collaboration**

- Tracy Shimek, City of White Bear Lake
- Nolan Wall, City of Vadnais Heights
- Ben Johnson, City of Gem Lake

- **Getting the Conversation Started**

- Tom Leighton, Stantec

- **Access and Complete Street Design**

- Tom Sohrweide, Short Elliott Hendrickson, Inc. (SEH)

Facilitation:

- **Barbara Raye**, Center for Policy Planning and Performance

Upcoming Workshops

Workshop II: Development Scenarios – The Block Exercise

Vadnais Heights – Wednesday, Sept 28, Vadnais Heights Fire Station

White Bear Lake – Thursday, Sept 29, Redemer Lutheran Church

Gem Lake – Wednesday, October 5, Heritage Hall

Workshop III: Developer Panel

Wednesday, October 12, Vadnais Heights Fire Station

Workshop IV: Framing the Recommendations

Wednesday, October 26, Vadnais Heights Fire Station

All workshops will be 6:30 – 8:30 pm

COUNTY ROAD E CORRIDOR ACTION PLAN WORKSHOP SERIES



September 14 - October 26, 2022

WHAT?



- 2019 Ramsey County Launches Critical Corridor pilot project
- White Bear Lake & Vadnais Heights with support from Gem Lake apply for grant
- Goal: community driven vision that transforms corridor into a place fosters a sense of community & connects people to economic opportunities

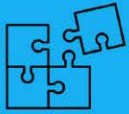
WHY?



- Gain perspectives on community needs and wants along the corridor



- Improve understanding of what is viable and realistic



- Attract investment to the corridor to maintain and improve vitality



- Improve quality life for County Road E Residents & Stakeholders

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING



- Each city in metro area required to update every 10 years (current cycle is 2040 Comprehensive Plan)



- Defines the vision, goals and aspirations for the long-term development and redevelopment of the community



- Intended to shape land use & transportation patterns, conserve natural resources, & identify needs for utilities, housing and parks and open space



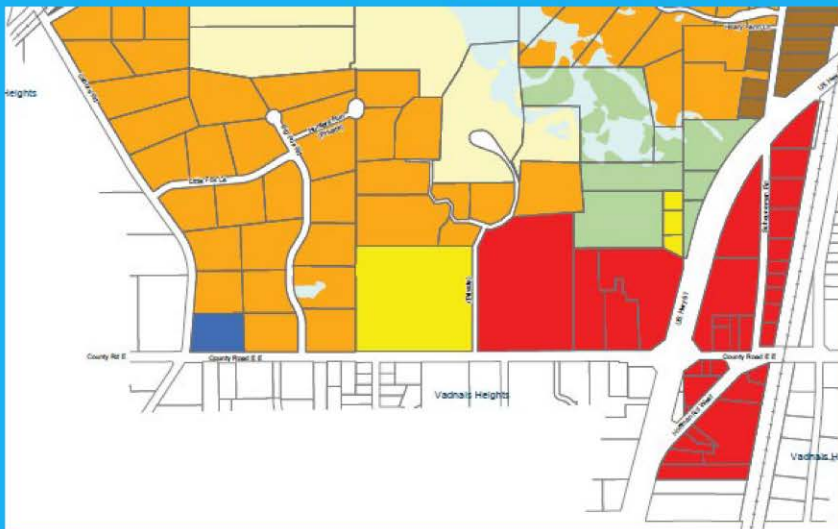
- Guides decisions on both public and private investments in infrastructure and facilities

PROJECTED GROWTH BY 2040

| City | Population (change from 2021 population estimates) | Households (change from 2021 population estimates) |
|-----------------|--|--|
| Gem Lake | 530 (-4) | 250 (+48) |
| Vadnais Heights | 14,100 (+1020) | 6,300 (+786) |
| White Bear Lake | 25,800 (+733) | 11,200 (+1104) |

Source: Metropolitan Council Community Profiles

FUTURE LAND USE: GEM LAKE

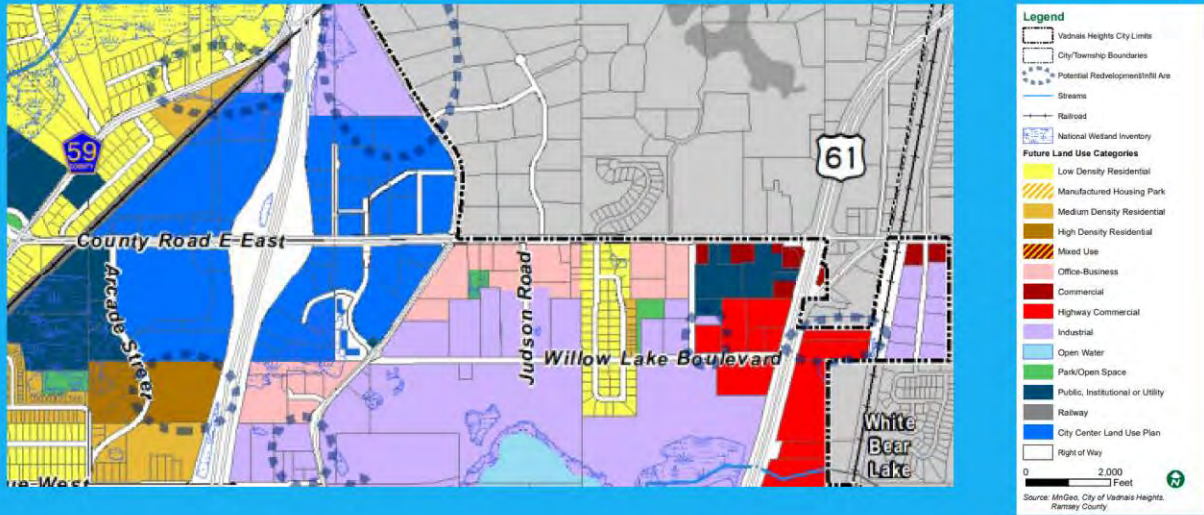


LEGEND

Proposed Land Use

- Mixed Use
- Open Space
- Public / Institutional
- Recreational Open Space
- Single Family Estate
- Single Family Executive
- Single Family Residential
- Single Family Residential (1-Acre)

FUTURE LAND USE: VADNAIS HEIGHTS



FUTURE LAND USE: WHITE BEAR LAKE



Corridor Development Initiative – County Road E Vadnais Heights, Gem Lake, White Bear Lake

Presentation by Tom Leighton, Stantec
September 14, 2022

DEVELOPER, COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Developer Requirements

- In tune to demand trends
- Cost sensitive
- Finds efficiencies in density, scale
- Reduces risk by:
 - Following the pack
 - Specializing on one development type
- Community impact

Community Values

- Serves needs of existing community
- Provides homes for employees of local businesses, seniors, families
- Provides jobs, places to shop & eat
- Compatible with character of area
- Visually appeal

DEVELOPER, COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES

Developer Requirements

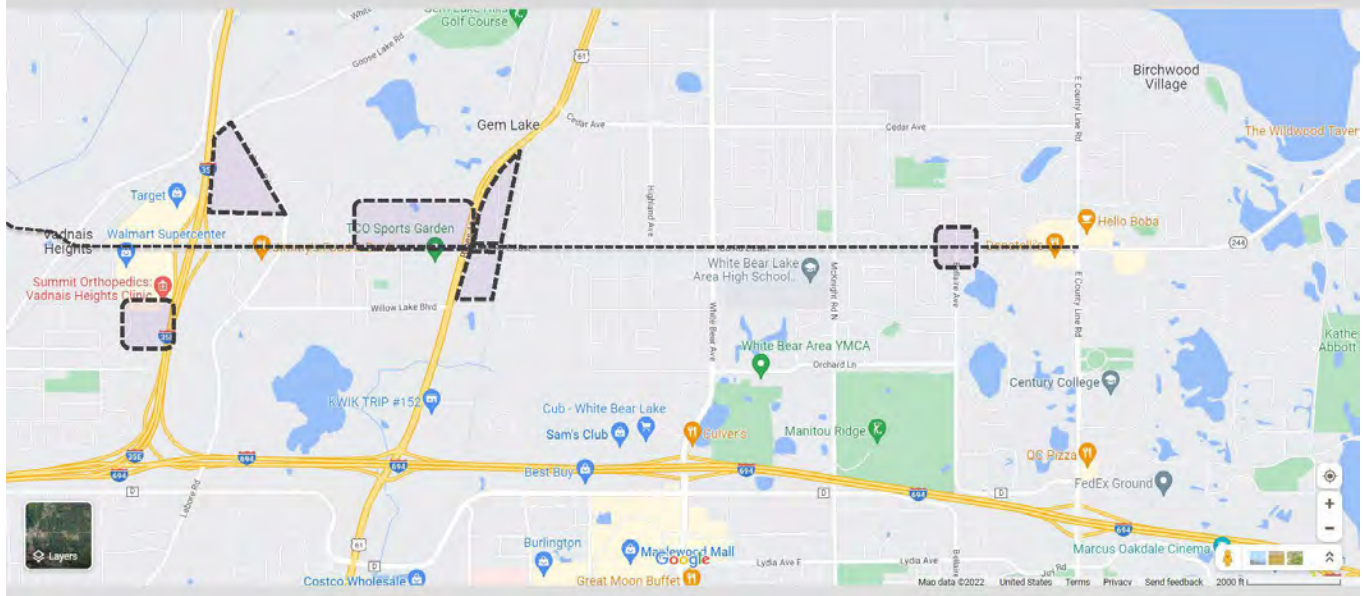
- In tune to demand trends
- Cost sensitive
- Finds efficiencies in density, scale
- Reduces risk by:
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Whose Community Values?

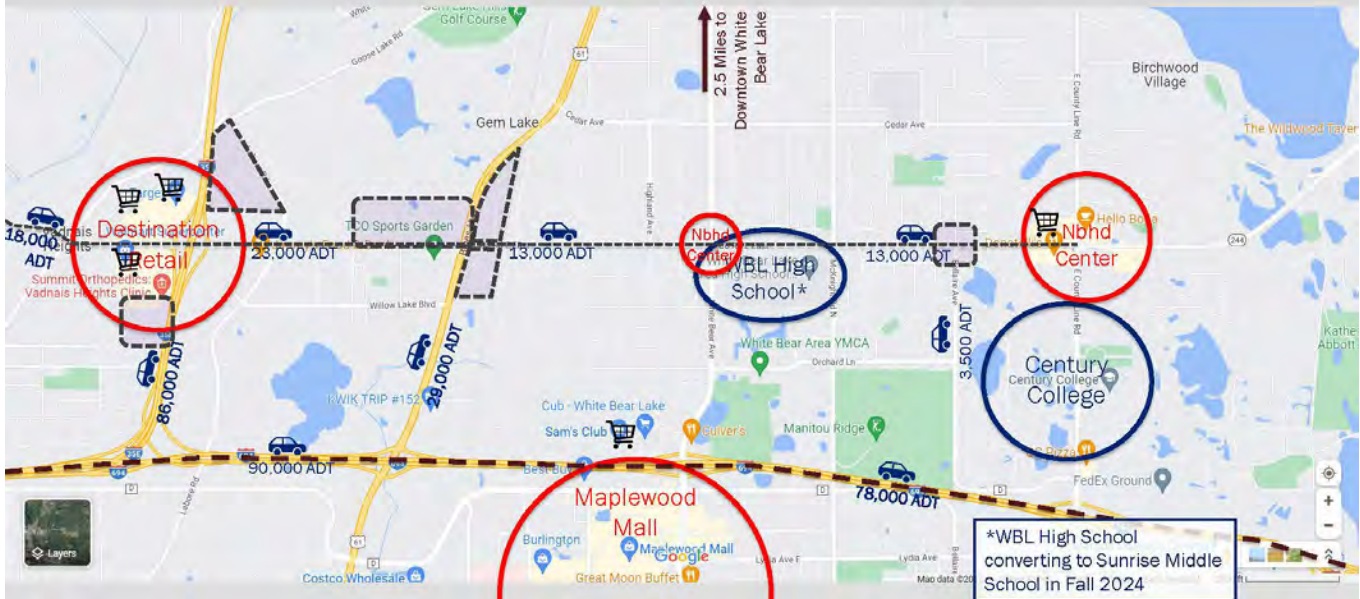
Yours and Others

- Yours
- Nearby residents
- Households across your community
- Future residents or business owners

FOCUS AREAS

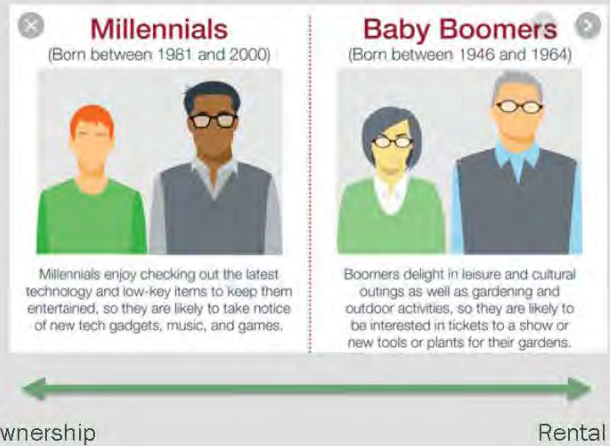


MARKET CONTEXT

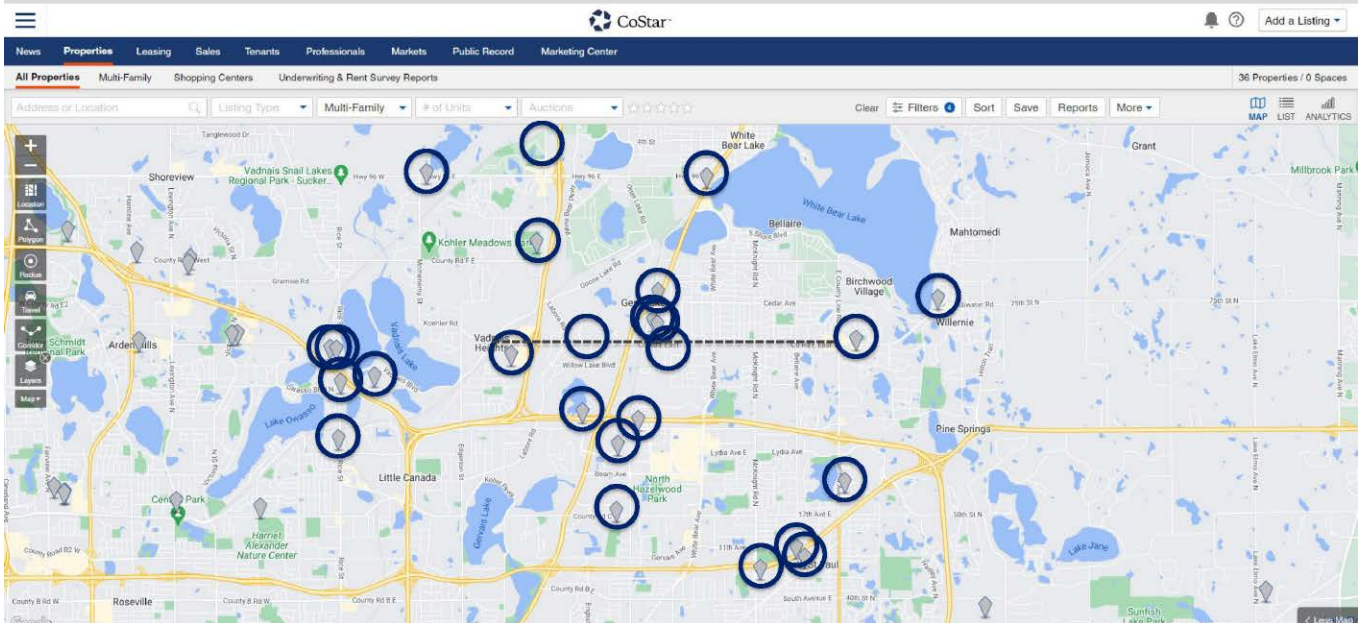


HOUSING MARKET TRENDS

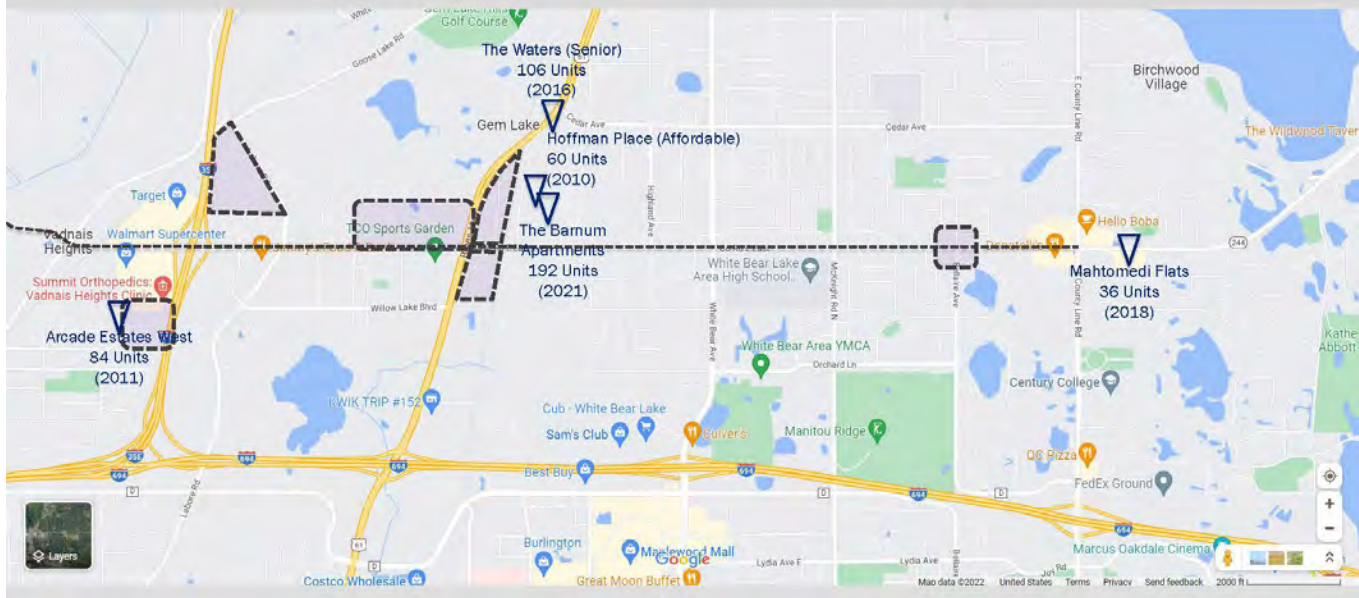
- Seniors, Retirees & Millennials are driving the market
- Shifting preferences toward Rental Housing
- Senior housing tries to meet a mix of needs (mini-continuum means independent living, assisted living and memory care)
- There is strong demand for new multifamily housing development – including in the VH/GL/WBL area – rents have increased and vacancies have remained very low



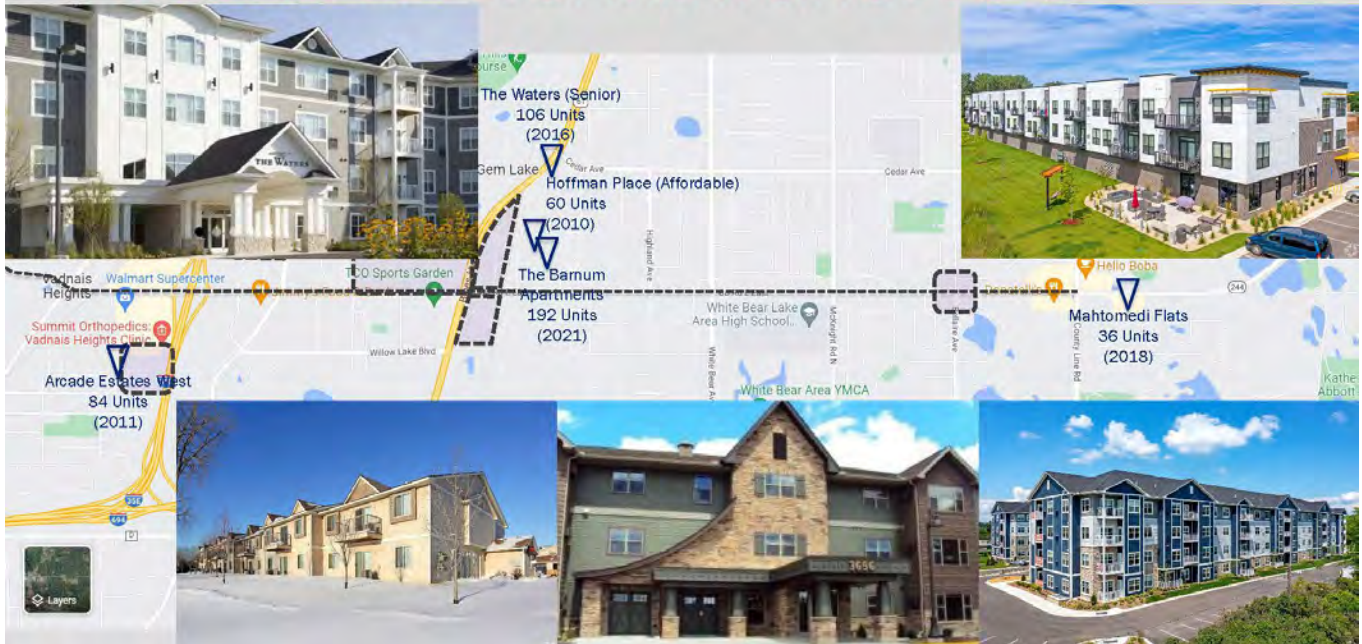
HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SINCE 2010



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MULTIFAMILY HOUSING DEVELOPMENT Design matters



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

What are we talking about?

- Housing is considered affordable to a family or household if it costs 30% or less of the total household income
- Households making 60% of the Area Median Income are still earning around \$50,000 per year
- New affordable housing usually looks just the same as market rate housing

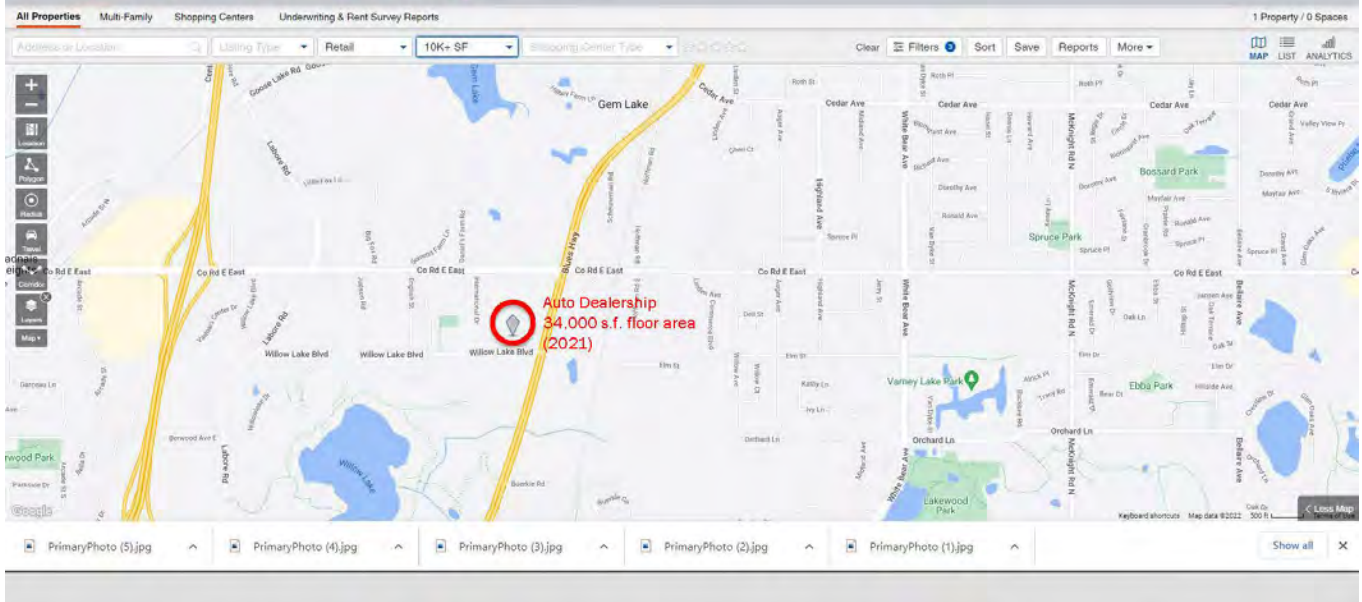


RETAIL MARKET TRENDS

- Retail is rebounding from the pandemic, but the long-term trend for retail stores is flat to downward, as internet shopping displaces store-based retail
- Weaker shopping centers are declining and closing, while stronger centers are holding their own
- One of the stronger retail types right now is “*experience retail*”
 - Using events, store-based experiences
 - Food/Bev. Businesses are inherently experience-based
- Retail development needs ample traffic volumes, visibility
- Retail developers will be overall cautious about new retail development



RETAIL DEVELOPMENT SINCE 2010 (over 10,000 s.f.)



OFFICE MARKET TRENDS

- Office use has been upended by the COVID pandemic
 - There is lots of vacant office space in the metro area
 - Adjustments will have to happen before office demand recovers
- New office development is unlikely in the short to medium term
- Medical office has not been impacted by the pandemic



Kennard Professional Building
(for sale)

INDUSTRIAL MARKET TRENDS

- The industrial market is strong at the moment
 - There is strong demand for warehousing and distribution
 - Demand for manufacturing as well
- Industrial facilities appreciate good access to the regional transportation networks
- Large sites are desirable because they provide flexibility

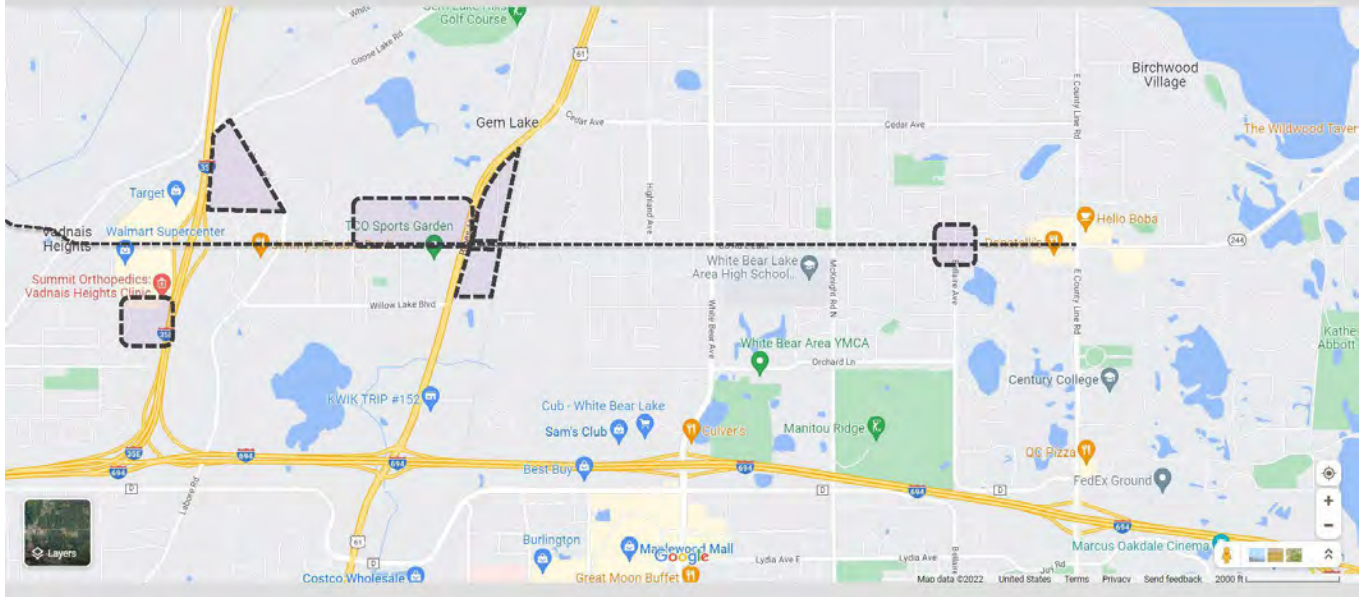


Warehouse, 3235 Labore Road
(17,000 s.f., built 2021)

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT SINCE 2010

The screenshot shows the CoStar website interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for News, Properties, Leasing, Sales, Tenants, Professionals, Markets, Public Record, and Marketing Center. Below this, there are filters for 'All Properties', 'Multi-Family', 'Shopping Centers', and 'Underwriting & Rent Survey Reports'. The main area is a map showing an industrial corridor with several red circles highlighting specific properties. The map includes labels for 'Vadnais Heights', 'Gem Lake', 'Lakewood Park', 'Birchwood Village', 'Willernie', and 'Pine Springs'. At the bottom, there is a row of photo thumbnails labeled 'PrimaryPhoto (6).jpg' through 'PrimaryPhoto (1).jpg'.

FOCUS AREAS





COUNTY ROAD E CORRIDOR ACTION PLAN TRANSPORTATION CONSIDERATIONS

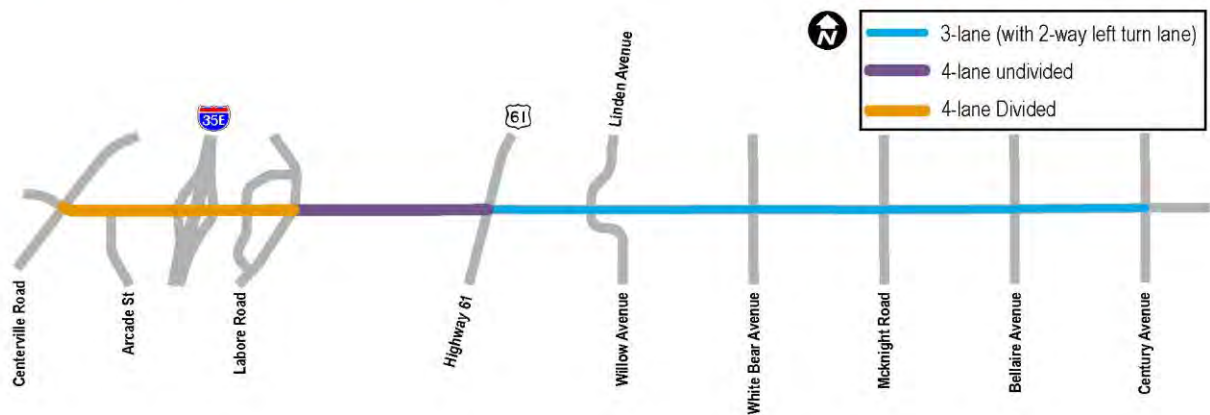
COMMUNITY WORKSHOP #1 – September 14, 2022
Vadnais Heights, Gem Lake, White Bear Lake

Tom Sohnrweide, PE



Building a Better World for All of Us®

County Road E – 3 Segments



Building a Better World for All of Us®

County Road E – Centerville Road to Labore Road



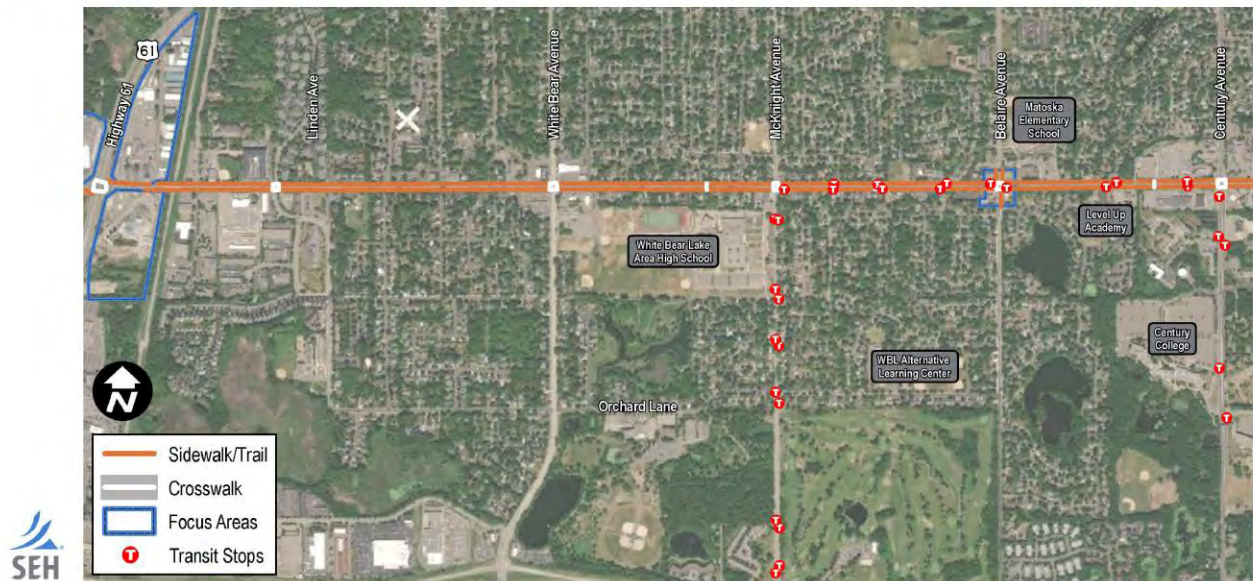
County Road E – Labore Road to Highway 61



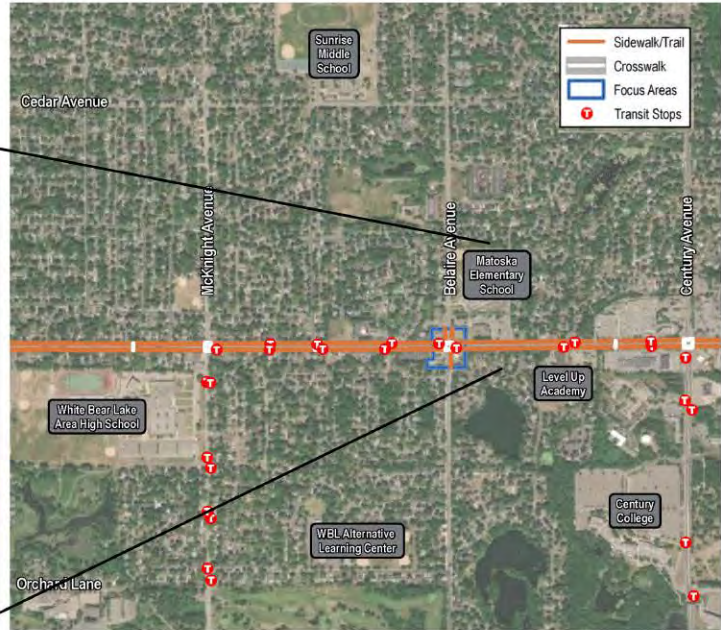
Intersection of County Road E and Highway 61



County Road E – Highway 61 to Century



County Road E at Bellaire



Building a Better World for All of Us®

High-Level Safety Review: 2017 – 2021

- 428 Total Crashes
- 9 Serious Injury Crashes
 - 2 involving pedestrians or bicyclists
- 3 Bicycle Crashes
 - 1 serious injury
- 9 Pedestrian Crashes
 - 1 serious injury



Thank you



Building a Better World for All of Us®

County Road E Corridor Action Plan

September 14, 2022

Century College

Small Group Discussion Notes

1. What's valuable, interesting or unique about this area?

Corridor wide:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Businesses/commercial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locally owned businesses • Access to many business types – cool downtown, small town • Shopping isn't far • Sport complexes <p>Streets/access/parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plowed first in the winter because it's a County Road. • Parking is a challenge • Can bike throughout area • Car access • Easy access | <p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homes are set back from County Rd E <p>Characteristics of the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great schools/place to raise a family • Three communities collaboration, coordination • Great city staff • Feel close to metro area • Blend of suburban/urban living • Small city atmosphere • Churches in all • Homes are set back from County Rd E • Variety of uses • Can we maintain/create green space? |
|---|---|

White Bear Lake:

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Businesses/commercial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grocery on east end • Good commercial at White Bear Ave • Shopping/restaurants <p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single family homes <p>Streets/Access/parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to access amenities • Walkability • More pedestrian friendly | <p>Characteristics of the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixture of residential and commercial • Some sizeable parcels for development • Parks close by • Bellaire and E is a mess • Great downtown • Fire/Safety in middle • Safe • School/playground • Access to stores, freeways • Quiet residential areas • Worse visibility by high school • Building set back from streets |
|---|--|

Gem Lake:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Business/commercial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Trax <p>Streets/access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to 694 | <p>Characteristics of the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green open space • Cleared southeast corner of Hwy 61/CR • Hidden gem • Golf course • Safe |
|--|--|

Vadnais Heights:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Business/commercial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shopping • Major retail there • Medical clinics • Retail • Food options <p>Streets/access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to access amenities | <p>Characteristics of the area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-stop shopping experience • Safe |
|--|--|

2. What could be accomplished through development that would improve/enhance the area? And are there specific uses you would suggest for any of the opportunity sites?

Corridor Wide:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Mobility/traffic/safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative to increase in traffic is public transit • Safe walkability • Mid-block crosswalks • Flashing lights at crosswalks • Make walking more appealing (gardens, sitting areas) • Bike lane • Lower speed limits • Similar road structure to connect the communities • Enhance green space in the median areas | <p>Commercial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More food establishments – west side of White Bear Lake portion (lost Stadium, Mad Jacks, and Black Sea) • Capture tourism – drive by traffic • Attractions at key sites • Sports complex • Multi-use – retail/residential (e.g. nails, fitness, casual take-out food) <p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller multifamily/condos • More one-level, handicap accessible homes <p>Open/green space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New buildings set back from streets • Garden at southeast corner of Hwy 61/E |
|--|--|

White Bear Lake:

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Mobility/traffic/safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower speed limit on County Road E if we want it walkable or to bike • Electric Vehicle station • Bellaire/McKnight – think about walkers crossing for school • Better pedestrian crossings <p>Open/green space/recreation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pickle ball courts • Have park at city-owned site • “Community” center/ sports center | <p>Commercial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bellaire – professional office (dental, etc.) • Positive use of real estate at Bellaire (e.g. yoga/workout site) <p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Corner of E & Bellaire – vet and handicapped access (one-level small homes) • Sound barrier wall for residents |
|--|---|

Gem Lake:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Mobility/traffic/safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foot bridge over Hwy 61 • Bridge at Hwy 61/CR E • Trouble with connection from County Road E from/to over 61 for cars changing from 4 to 3 lanes | <p>Commercial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music venue, amphitheater • Corner of Hwy 61 and CR E is key location for key attraction |
|--|--|

Vadnais Heights:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Mobility/traffic/safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better walking/biking <p>Commercial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address crime at Walmart | <p>Open/green space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A true city center/gathering place • Maybe community park with Vadnais Commons (vs. Stadium). Place to have drink and meal and watch games. |
|---|---|

3. What concerns for the area do you have as future development occurs?

Corridor wide:

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Traffic/speed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speed of car traffic (traffic calming through better design) • Traffic • Speed control • Purple Line traffic • Additional traffic • No roundabouts • More traffic (left turns) • Fast traffic • Increased traffic <p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ? Do we need more apartments? | <p>Community character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of “small town” feel, “Missing middle” • Setbacks and loosing character of area • Loss of green and pleasant environment • On street parking (less is more) Loss of small town feeling <p>Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No globe lights shine down, only power lines in the way of trees/lights, etc. • Wider pedestrian crosswalks |
|---|--|

White Bear Lake:

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Traffic/speed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize Bike/pedestrian: Convert unused parking lanes to off-street bike/walk path to separate car traffic from people. • Provide alternative sides street parking where possible to compensate • Traffic • Increased traffic • Increased traffic • Speed of traffic • Limit bus traffic | <p>Community character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of building • Taking away “community” (i.e. the Stadium) <p>Potential options</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop E & Bellaire • Bring stable businesses to northeast corner of E & 120. • 2360 County Road E is boarded up <p>Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • County Road E & Bellaire – ice on the road (uphill) • Safety for pedestrians/students |
|---|--|

Gem Lake:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Mobility/access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No platform for Purple Line • Make 61 & CR E easier – better for cars and pedestrians | |
|--|--|

Vadnais Heights:

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Mobility/access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bike traffic and pedestrian by Walmart | <p>Community character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of Stadium – took away long-time community location • No center or heart of town |
|--|--|

4. How could the corridor be more connected?

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Street design/signage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot more crosswalks and sidewalks on both sides of County Road E (specifically between Fox and Daniels), like by the school for safety with a safety island in the middle. Preferably with a “stop traffic” or “warning” button • Street scape continuity • Location direction • More bike/ped access and connect ability • Provide boulevards with crosswalks that are safe – may need bridge over roadway • Roundabouts • Connect with a wide walking/biking path from Century to Target | <p>Branding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give it a nifty name like “Miracle Mile” to emphasize the union of communities <p>Elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public art • Bus/tram with a route just on County Road E • Unified lighting, decorative elements like plantings and banners. • Not broken – just needs some development at few sites • Reduce business to control traffic • Electric recharge stations at 61/E plus E & Bellaire |
|--|--|

5. What additional information would you like to have in order to assess the redevelopment opportunities for the County Road E corridor?

- Electric charging stations?
- Avoid city-owned residential property (no tax revenue)
- Add higher-end multifamily housing, also assisted living – turnkey
- Lots of empty space available for rent just east of 120
- Competition for businesses at east end of corridor
- What is the budget for this?
- How many high density units built since 2010?
- What other cities have done about a project like this
- “Net-Net” – This table thinks that creating “community” for this development is to reduce/eliminate development.
- Statistics, statistics, statistics – traffic/accidents/crime
- Symbiotic businesses – survey businesses
- Think about community character and interactions with zoning
- Transparency from city staff
- Rezone?

ATTACHMENT E. WORKSHOP II DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO SUMMARIES FOR VADNAIS HEIGHTS, GEM LAKE, AND WHITE BEAR LAKE

COUNTY ROAD E VADNAIS HEIGHTS Corridor Development Initiative (CDI) Workshop

September 28, 2022
6:30 - 8:30 pm
Vadnais Heights Fire Station

Community members gathered for a hands-on workshop to create potential redevelopment scenarios for two sites at the intersection of Highway 35E and County Road E. Participants spent time, in groups, considering each area and planning for its redevelopment - new housing, commercial space, light industrial space and community amenities. Groups created and named development scenarios and our housing finance expert provided feedback on the proposed development's financial feasibility, offering strategies a developer might pursue to create a successful development.

This report summarizes the ideas, questions, and concerns of participants and is intended to inform city officials as they engage in future planning for these sites.

Table 1: Southwest Quadrant Sites - 12 acres



Scenarios

| | Scenario 1: Vahnais Lights District | Scenario 2: Arcade Plaza/Medical Mecca |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| Housing Units | 500 apartment units Surface parking | 120 units 48 apartments 48 assisted living 20 townhomes |
| Housing Unit Mix | 3 stories of apartments above 1 story of retail 50% rental 50% owned 50% market rate 50% affordable | Rental 50% market rate 50% affordable |
| Commercial Space | 100,000 sf Retail, restaurant, office | 10,000 sf Bakery, coffee, restaurant (for medical offices, patients, and neighbors) |
| Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create least amount of parking possible; Summit Ortho has a lot • Want less parking overall • Create shared arrangements • Create full pedestrian orientation • Model on Gas Lamp District in San Diego | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create housing transition to the south • On the north side a "medical Mecca" • Retail along Arcade • Easy drop-off for medical patients • Small Fresh Thyme, Hyvee |

Discussion Themes

- Want less parking in this area overall.
- Get creative with parking: add the least amount necessary; Summit Orthopedics has a lot of parking); share parking.
- Make connections to transit and park and ride.
- Develop with full pedestrian orientation - a pleasant walking district; pedestrians are the priority, tables, outdoor dining.
- Serve users of medical uses too.
- Considered the Gas Lamp District in San Diego and Woodbury outdoor site (lifestyle center) as models.
- Develop bike infrastructure.
- County Road E is dangerous for bikes and pedestrians: some use Edgerton instead; create grade separation and a path for pedestrians and bikes; see Wheelock Parkway.

- View the site as two parts: a medical use focus on the north and residential that transitions into surrounding neighborhoods on the south.
- Do a mix of residential types.

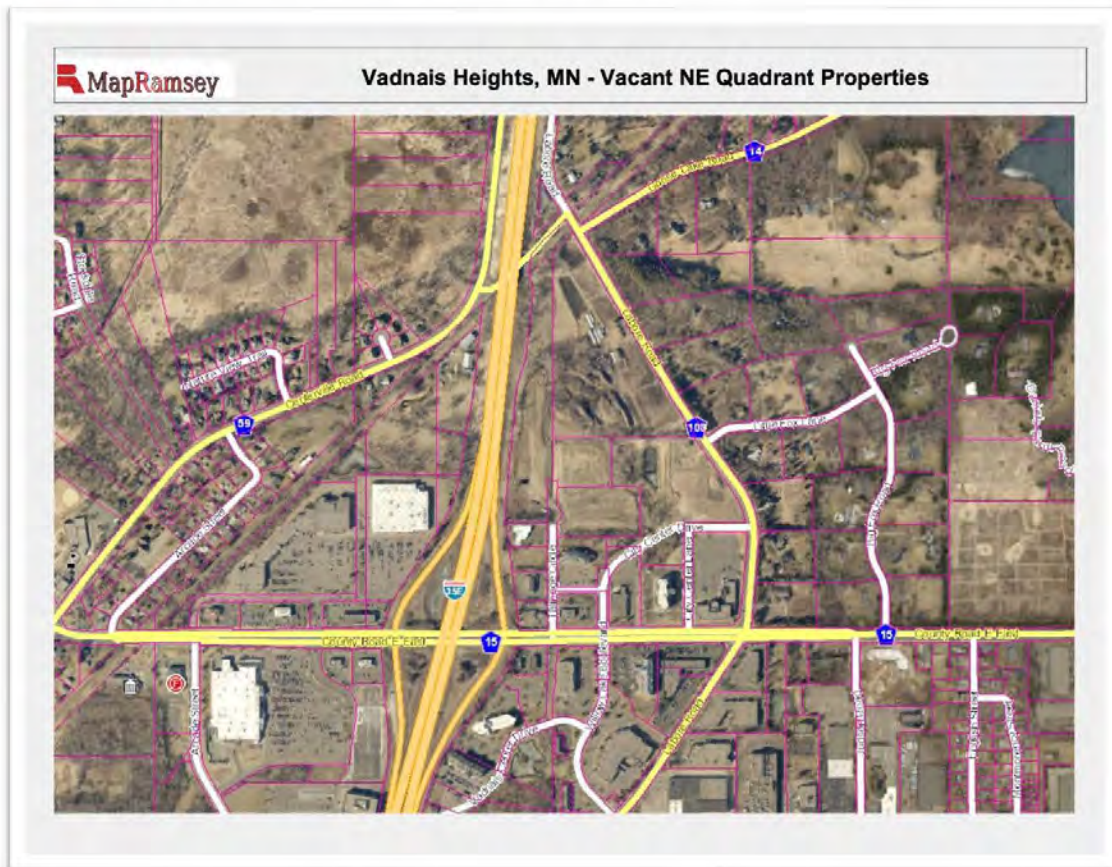
Financial Feasibility

Scenario 1: Feasible. There is less than a 10% gap between developer costs and income. Caveat: this is true if the retail spaces are contracted with well-known A+ credit tenants (usually national businesses).

Scenario 2: There is a significant gap. Housing units would need to sell for \$450,000. The gap could possibly be addressed by long-term, well-paying tenants and possible Tax Increment Financing (TIF) from the City.



Table 2: Northeast Quadrant Sites - 44 acres



Scenarios

| | Scenario 1: Willow Center Neighborhood | Scenario 2: Downtown Vadnais Heights |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Housing Units | 282 units | 111 units 76 apartments 35 townhomes |

| | Scenario 1: Willow Center Neighborhood | Scenario 2: Downtown Vadnais Heights |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| Housing Unit Mix | 250 apartment units 32 townhomes 80% rental 20% owned 80% market rate 20% workforce housing | 100% market rate Apartments rental Townhomes owned 3-4 story apartments with parking underneath Townhomes behind, wetlands/water is amenity |
| Commercial Space | 60,000 sf Three pockets of retail (SW, SE, and NE corners of site Restaurant, grocery store | 26,000 sf Retail along the street |
| Light Industrial Space | 21,200 sf Storage along 35E; visibility | 125,000 sf "Amazon" warehouse |
| Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 150,000 sf of park and open space • A destination park and community center with athletic fields • Place housing around wetlands and green space | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place industrial on land that is contaminated • Create Downtown Vadnais Heights at City Center Drive and CR 108 with mix of retail and apartments |

Discussion Themes:

- Add a bike lane along CR 108.
- Purple Line/transit along County Road E would make the parcel more attractive to a developer and would support multifamily housing.
- Make area at City Center Drive and CR 108 walkable, with retail at the street, parking behind, and housing behind.
- Create park/open space on the contaminated land with trails that connect to new housing and existing neighborhoods.
- Keep the housing and retail concentrated.
- Multifamily housing is needed in the area and it supports retail.
- Housing should be a mix of senior and work force.
- Start with features such as open space, water, grocery store and build off of them.
- Create a sense of place.

Financial Feasibility:

Scenario 1: There is lots of greenspace and low housing density. Feasibility would be difficult because the cost of the greenspace is carried by too few homes and too little commercial space. Need more revenue-producing sources.

Scenario 2: Not feasible. The housing would need to sell for approximately \$900,000 per unit. These are “luxury unit” rents that are not supported by the market. The green space and cost of acquiring the site must be balanced with revenue from the development.



COUNTY ROAD E WHITE BEAR LAKE Corridor Development Initiative (CDI) Workshop

September 29, 2022
6:30 - 8:30 pm
Redeemer Lutheran Church

Community members gathered for a hands-on workshop to create potential redevelopment scenarios for parcels at the intersection of Bellaire Avenue and County Road E. Participants spent time, in groups, considering each area and planning for its redevelopment - new housing, commercial space, and community amenities.

Groups created and named development scenarios and our housing finance expert provided feedback on the proposed development's financial feasibility, offering strategies a developer might pursue to create a successful development.

This report summarizes the ideas, questions, and concerns of participants and is intended to inform city officials as they engage in future planning for these sites.

The Site

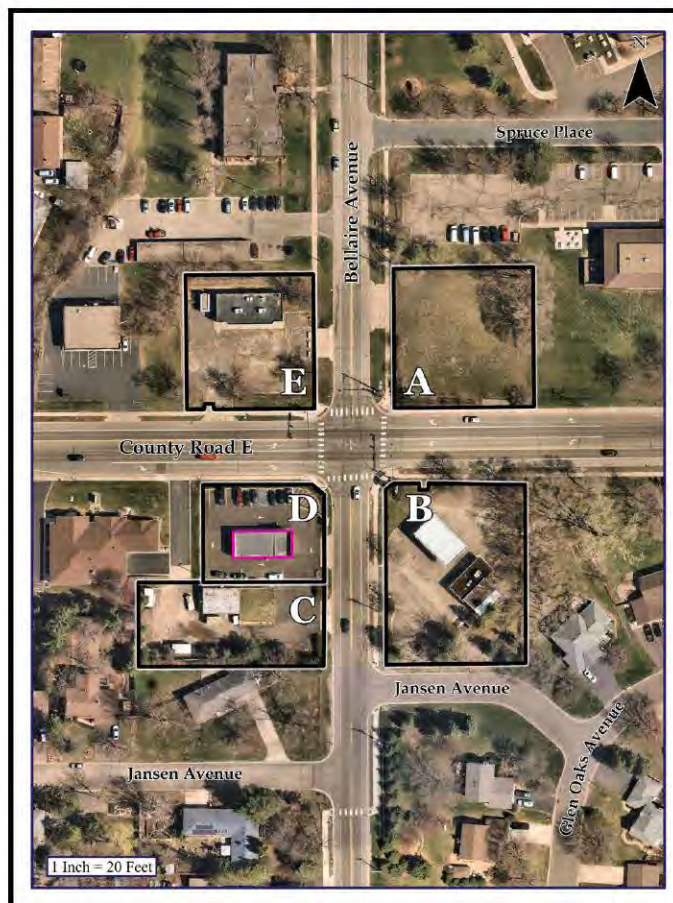


Table 1

| | Scenario 1: Destination White Bear | Scenario 2: School-friendly | Scenario 3: Bellaire Gardens |
|-------------------------|---|--|---|
| Housing Units | 12 units | 36 units | 16 units |
| Housing Unit Mix | 8 condos 4 townhomes All owned | 16 condos 20 townhomes | 4 condos 8 townhomes |
| Commercial Space | 20,000 sf Retail plaza Wine bar Courtyard | 10,000 sf Retail Restaurant | 15,000 sf Storefront retail |
| Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flashing lights for crosswalk to west of site | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a retail identity Need ownership townhomes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boulevard with trees along Co Rd E Bring buildings to the street |

Discussion Themes

- Create pedestrian-oriented intersection
- Buildings placed at the street with parking in back
- Need ways to cross Co Rd E safely
- Create a destination here for White Bear Lake

Financial Feasibility

Scenario 2: Worth pursuing. Housing would need to sell for \$430,000 or more. Watch diminishing green space related to parking (for commercial). The commercial components will likely cause a gap as financing for “distinctive retail” will be difficult.

Scenario 3: Not feasible. This scenario would result in very high cost of housing, \$750,000 or more for each unit.

(Due to time constraints, Scenario 1 was not analyzed.)



Table 2

| | Scenario 1: Lake Heights | Scenario 2: Three out of Four | Scenario 3: Walkable Intersection |
|-------------------------|--|--|---|
| Housing Units | 12 units | 44 units | Discussed how to improve the intersection |
| Housing Unit Mix | 8 townhomes 4 apartment units (4-plex) | 12 townhomes 32 apartment units | |
| Commercial Space | 9,000 sf | 11,000 sf | Restaurants, ice cream |
| Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add bike lane on Bellaire and connect it to lake trail | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add the northwest parcel to the development • Talked about apartments above retail on Lexington Pkwy as model | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Textured crosswalk • Flashing crosswalk • Separated lanes on Co Rd E and Bellaire for bikes, scooters • Mixed use trail • Benches on sidewalk • Model: downtown White Bear Lake/Manitou Station; Ford Pkwy and Cleveland in St. Paul |

Discussion Themes

- There are several large apartment buildings that have recently been developed nearby: Stadium, DQ, and The Myth.
- Need housing in smaller buildings.
- Need one-level housing for veterans and seniors.
- Need to improve pedestrian experience of crossing Bellaire: overpass for pedestrians, traffic circle, separated bike lane
- Ideas for an improved intersection could be included in any Development Agreement between a developer and the City.

Financial Feasibility

Scenario 1: Not financially feasible; housing (rent and sale prices) would need to be too high, around \$750,000 or more.

Scenario 2: Poor financial performance even with \$400,000 housing sales price. Commercial space and low density drives down the financials.



Table 3

| | Scenario 1: The Heights | Scenario 2: The Experience | Scenario 3: Practical Plan |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| Housing Units | 54 units | 14 units | 4 units |
| Housing Unit Mix | 12 affordable senior rental 42 owner-occupied | 6 senior (\$300,000) 8 apartments 100% owner occupied | 4 units at southeast corner |
| Commercial Space | 5,000 sf | 0 sf | |
| Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Place units at all corners • Expand the northern parcels • Long term senior housing • Starter homes for young families | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seniors need a place to move from existing homes • Include community space | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surface parking lot |

Discussion Themes

- This is the second highest point in Ramsey County - take advantage of this amenity..
- Rooftop dining
- A mix of uses catering to residents - get a manicure then go to the rooftop for a meal with a view!
- Want commercial space that provides an experience rather than just retail.
- Design is important; housing units must fit with the intersection.
- There is a need for senior housing (for residents moving out of single family homes, starter homes, and homes accessible to veterans.
- Want apartment development with fewer units.
- Expand the parcels for more opportunity.
- County Road E is busy and needs improvements.

Financial Feasibility

Scenario 1: Sales price would be under \$400,000. Could be feasible with commercial space rented and a detailed housing plan. Retail tenants with track record and ability to pay higher rents would help make this feasible.

Scenario 2: For sale housing prices would need to top \$650,000 to cover cost of land and construction and to provide a reasonable profit to the developer.

Scenario 3: Not feasible. Housing sales prices would be too high. Cost of land (low estimate of \$10/sf) divided among four homes (1,500 sf each) plus construction costs - too high. Greater density of housing helps the financials because it lowers the cost of land per housing unit.



COUNTY ROAD E GEM LAKE Corridor Development Initiative (CDI) Workshop

September 28, 2022
6:30 - 8:30 pm
Gem Lake City Hall

Community members gathered for a hands-on workshop to create potential redevelopment scenarios for two sites along County Road E. Participants spent time, in groups, considering each area and planning for its redevelopment - new housing, commercial space, light industrial space and community amenities. Groups created and named development scenarios and our housing finance expert provided feedback on the proposed development's financial feasibility, offering strategies a developer might pursue to create a successful development.

This report summarizes the ideas, questions, and concerns of participants and is intended to inform city officials as they engage in future planning for these sites.



The Sites

Site 1: Parcel east of Daniels Farm Road and north of County Rd E (18 acres)

Site 2: South of Co Rd E and West of Hwy 61 (12 acres).

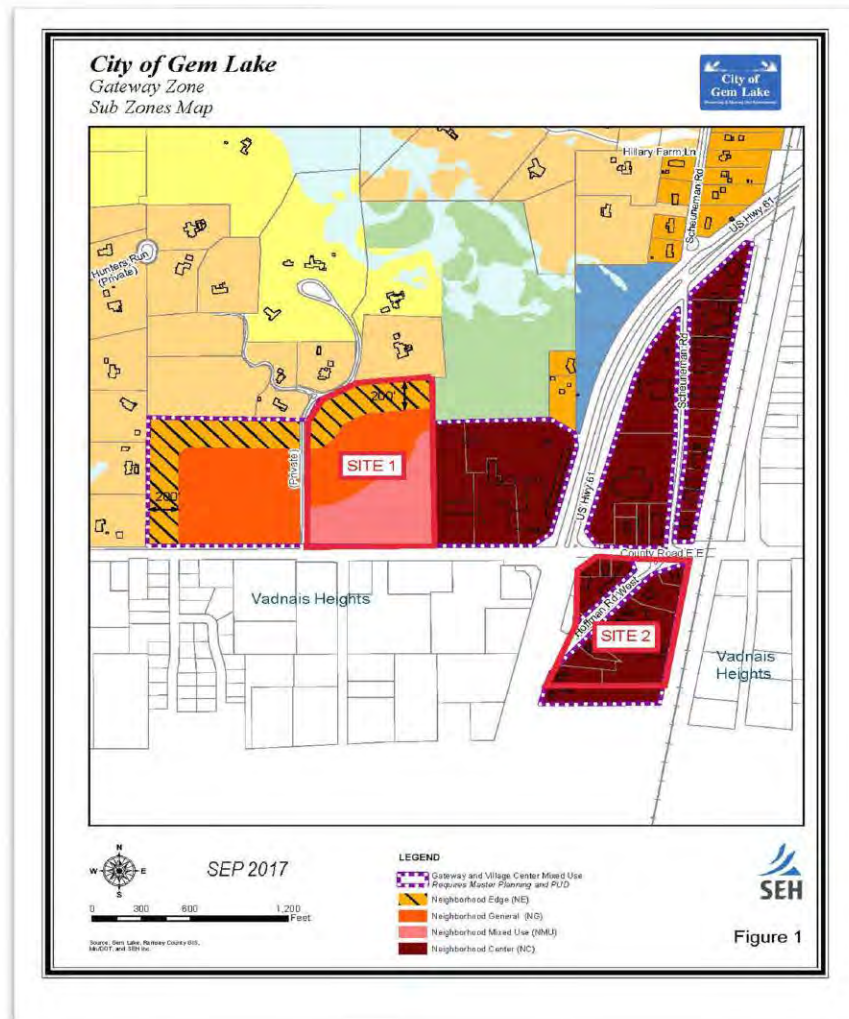


Table 1

| | Scenario 1: The Crown of Gem Lake | Scenario 2: Community Center | Scenario 3: The Village at Gem Lake |
|-------------------------|--|---|---|
| Housing Units | 68 units | 72 units | 136 units |
| Housing Mix | 48 apartments, rental 20 townhomes, owned | 48 apartments 24 townhomes | 80 apartments 16 twin homes 8 single families 32 townhomes |
| Commercial Space | 26,500 sf retail 21,200 sf light industrial | 21,200 sf light industrial 10,000 sf community center | 13,250 sf retail 10,600 sf restaurant |
| Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plant trees along Co Rd E to mitigate noise Use berms Transition the housing from multifamily along Co Rd E to single family further north | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place light industrial with parking along Co Rd E Create cul de sac for housing Build trails through wetland Preserve lilacs along Daniels Farm Rd | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a stadium with restaurant as a destination Retail on Co Rd E with apartments above Caribou, Aveda Spa, organic grocery Place townhomes by wetlands to enjoy trails and views Pickle ball, softball |

Discussion Themes

- How will Purple Line on Co Rd E impact this parcel? Make it more desirable to a developer?
- Does Gem Lake and surrounding area need senior housing?
- Wetlands are an amenity for housing; add trails
- Focus retail along Co Rd E; place apartments above it
- Create a destination
- Adding density can make the use of existing infrastructure more efficient



Financial Feasibility

Scenario 1: Not financially feasible. For-sale housing units would need to be priced over \$600,000. Not enough housing units and commercial revenue is uncertain - depends on tenants.

Scenario 2: Better than Scenario 1 but still not feasible. Community is a use that needs funding and has ongoing maintenance expenses. Need clear funding sources and income stream.

Scenario 3: Could be feasible. Housing prices at \$400,000 per unit. The retail could aid the development's feasibility if it is dependable and pays strong rent.



Table 2

| | Scenario 1: The Hyvee Ruby at Gem Lake | Scenario 2: The Reserve at Gem Lake | |
|-------------------------|---|---|--|
| Housing Units | 116 units | 194 units | None |
| Housing Unit Mix | 44 townhomes - owned 24 apartments - rental 48 condos- owned 75% market rate 25% affordable | 24 townhomes 72 apartments 72 condos - owned 26 single family 1/8 of units affordable | |
| Commercial Space | 125,000 sf 100,000 sf Hyvee 2,500 sf outlots | 20,000 sf 5,000 coworking space 15,000 commercial/retail | 50,000 sf community center 15,000 sf brewery |
| Details | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grocery store, CVS, Starbucks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community center • Pickle ball • Pool/splash pad • Provide services nearby for the new residents | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pickle ball • Swimming • Courts • Meeting rooms • Reception/event space • Hoffman stays as is |

Discussion Themes

- Create a place where people want to come to
- Bike rental/support and bike lanes on Co Rd E
- Would a new community center compete with existing facilities? Like the YMCA, hockey center.

Financial Feasibility

Scenario 1: Possibly feasible. Nationally-known retailers like CVS, HyVee, Starbucks aid in feasibility. The challenges: for-sale housing must cost \$525,000 plus per unit in order to subsidize the other development. Infrastructure to support the development adds cost.

Scenario 2: Sizable but possibly solvable gap (approx 20%). For sale housing prices would need to be over \$425,000. Commercial uses would need to be strong enough to be financially feasible (points to national chains). Government subsidy (for example, TIF) likely needed for feasibility.

Scenario 3: Either completely feasible if design-build (not on spec) with well leveraged and capitalized project. Or completely not feasible because community uses need a guaranteed income.



**County Road E Corridor Action Plan
Corridor Development Initiative
Session III: Panel Discussion**

Wednesday, October 12, 2022

6:30 – 8:30 pm

Vadnais Heights Fire Station

3595 Arcade St N, Vadnais Heights

Panel Discussion

Facilitated by Barbara Raye, Center for Policy Planning and Performance

Panel Members (bios are provided in addendum):

- **Jeff Salzbrun, Commercial Equities Group**
- **Todd Stutz, Robert Thomas Homes/RT Urban Homes**
- **Leanna M. Stefaniak, Esq, At Home Apartments, LLC**
- **Max Musicant, The Musicant Group**
- **Mikeya Griffin, Rondo Community Land Trust**
- **Marty O'Connell, MWF Properties**
-

Opening Questions:

1. Provide a brief overview of your organization and development or consultant expertise.
2. Do you have any feedback on the block exercise development scenarios?
3. What would be your advice regarding the opportunity sites in White Bear Lake, Gem Lake, and Vadnais Heights along County Road E?
4. What would you consider to be the greatest challenges and opportunities for the corridor?
5. What are your suggestions for creating a more cohesive, connected corridor while preserving uniqueness of each city?

Jeff Salzbrun, Commercial Equities Group (JS)

Jeff is a commercial real estate broker specializing in commercial and industrial properties. He has decades of experience in development and building management. Jeff's background provides expertise on commercial property uses and placement.

Todd Stutz, Robert Thomas Homes/RT Urban Homes (TS)

Todd is President and CEO of Robert Thomas Homes and RT Urban Homes. Robert Thomas Homes has built 400K – 700K single family to for-sale townhomes. RT Urban Homes creates 500 – 700 single family and townhome rental properties per year. Todd is a resident of the area, and lived in Vadnais Heights for 30 years

Leanna M. Stefaniak, Esq, At Home Apartments, LLC (LS)

Leanna is with At Homes Apartments since 2007, providing multifamily housing that is locally owned and managed. At Home Apartments is a long-term owner of apartment buildings and townhomes. They own and manage 5000 unit the Twin Cities metro area and in St. Cloud. They have developed over 1,000 units in suburban communities such as Minnetonka, Eagan, Mendota Heights, Vadnais Heights and White Bear Lake.

Max Musicant, The Musicant Group (MM)

Max is the founder of The Musicant Group, helping to create places where people want to be. They work across all types of communities, supporting events and activities that enhance communities and commercial uses. Some examples include: 50th and France Business Association events, Rice and Larpenteur, and Vadnais Heights (placemaking activation).

Mikeya Griffin, Rondo Community Land Trust (MG)

Rondo Community Land Trust is the first community land trust in the state of Minnesota, providing a shared equity model of permanently affordable homeownership and affordable commercial property. Our geography includes all of Ramsey County. One of our most recent projects is a mixed-use development that includes commercial space for local businesses and affordable senior housing. Community land trusts provide place-based solutions for small businesses to stay in business (offering spaces that would be \$25 per square foot at \$7 per square foot). Rondo CLT is currently working with the City of Shoreview to provide townhomes at 80% AMI (area median income).

What is AMI?

It stands for area median income which is a metric against which affordability is measured. The federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) measures median income every year and set measures for family size. It represents a regional average of income, not by neighborhood. The average income levels in many neighborhoods are lower than the regional average. The area median income (AMI) in the Twin Cities as of May 2022 for a family of four is \$118,200.

What is a CLT?

A community land trust (CLT) removes land from the speculative market and places it in community control forever. The land is put in trust, and the owner only pays for the building. Typically, a household will pay \$500 less for a monthly mortgage payment. If the owner decides to sell their home, 75% of the increased equity goes back into the property so that it can be resold to another owner whose incomes make homeownership more challenging.

Marty O’Connell, MWF Properties (MO)

MWF Properties was founded in 1999 to provide affordable multifamily housing. They own 2,200 units of affordable workforce housing at 60% AMI or less. Marty provides market analysis and construction management. They also have an in-house management company for their properties. Their properties are located in Vadnais Heights, Hugo, and Moundsview, among others.

Do you have any reactions or feedback on the block exercise development scenarios for the sites in each of the three cities?

MO The Vadnais Heights southwest quadrant site would be a great site for higher density housing, with scaled down design to buffer it from the surrounding residential area. Commercial uses will be difficult for access. It doesn't all need to be apartments. You could also include townhomes and single family with higher and medium density multifamily.

The Vadnais Heights northeast quadrant is large with 44 acres and will require soil remediation. It's another great housing site, or may also be commercial given that it's more visible from County Road E.

The White Bear Lake sites are smaller and would be tough to make into apartments. It's hard to work at such a small scale because of parking requirements. Retail is a great opportunity. Potentially convert the gas station into an upscale restaurant.

Gem Lake sites – Housing and mixed-use would work well on these sites, but would need to be buffered from Highway 61,

MG What are the goals for the corridor long-term? How do you want to do affordable housing and provide an economic mix? Today it is difficult for people to get into homeownership. A community land trust is a tool that would allow the community to hold permanently affordable housing to be available in the community. Shared equity models help to pay it forward – providing stewardship for assets through the generations. What do we want for commercial development, and the desire to preserve cultural destinations? Help people move through the economic continuum, and for business owners to own their own locations. With community land trusts, no businesses closed, and no foreclosures happened through COVID. CLTs help to stabilize people through economically challenging times.

MM What are the goals for each community? What's missing? How can sites help to achieve those goals? The desire for walkability and bike-ability to be a positive experience is hard to do along a busy arterial road. It's difficult to cross County Road E. How can you create internal walkability on larger parcels that allow people to feel safe, and comfortably connect to areas that fan out from the area? Take Southdale as an example. Even with the additional development in the area people don't feel comfortable crossing the main streets. Unless the road is downsized it will be difficult to have enjoyable walkability. The corners of key intersections are the most hostile locations within the corridor. Mendota Heights worked to preserve a "Main Street feel" by creating a synergy between

parcels rather than living as separate parcels. Notice how sidewalks dead-end at driveways. Encourage privately owned sidewalks to be connected to each other.

When thinking about public spaces, decide if it will be:

- Natural settings with woods/prairie, or
- Active uses (include ten or more things to do).

Public spaces don't work if you try to do both at once.

LS The block exercise scenarios show thoughtful consideration about what could go into these sites. Thank you for these great ideas. All housing types are important to create a vibrant community, and community input is critical. The Vadnais Heights sites are more housing driven. The 44-acre site is an exciting opportunity – it could include a variety of uses and housing types. The closeness to retail is also an advantage. The southwest site screams housing. You can also include open space or park that can be programmed. There is a lot of housing in the area and not many parks. Creating an active spot for community services as a quasi-public/private spot could be interesting. The Gem Lake sites are likely to be mixed-use commercial and housing. Vertical (stacked) mixed-use is hard to manage. Horizontal (separate buildings) is an easier option.

TS The southwest site is a good fit for mixed-use with 3 – 4 story apartments or townhomes (20 – 40 units per acre) with horizontal mixed-use. The northeast site size offers an opportunity for mixed use (also at 20 – 40 housing units per acre) with office and retail uses. The White Bear Lake quad will attract independent retailers similar to the existing use. Gem Lake sites are an exciting size and could manage a little more density. Why does Hoffman Road exist? Open up the site for a more significant development opportunity that includes rental and for-sale housing and office/retail. The northern site is a great opportunity to provide rental and for-sale housing at a \$500K price range. It's not a strong retail or office site. This a great area – strong market potential.

JS I represent people selling sites, and this input is great. When cities are approached by developers it's important for community members to identify what they would like to see. The Vadnais Heights sites are housing. We've had experience working with out-lots such as these (e.g., around the Sports Complex) and after trying lots of things finally figured out what's possible.

The Bellaire parcels are tight sites and will be difficult to find the right fit.

Industrial buildings are some of the nicest businesses in town, yet most people are afraid of being next to them. They provide excellent jobs. Rates are finally moving on the leasing side, making them more viable options. We need incubator spaces for businesses. Many businesses that serve the metro area have to come in from far-flung areas. They need locations to be closer to their customers. Where are there places for these businesses to go? We continue to convert industrial areas into housing, pushing these businesses further and

further out. Things are moving fast. We do need housing. We also need to get behind the developers that are trying to bring projects and investments into your communities. The time it takes to overcome the hurdles of community push-back often make projects unravel. Too much unpredictability will cause developers and investors to go elsewhere.

QUESTION AND ANSWER

Mayor Gretchen Artig-Swomley, Gem Lake Clarified that Hoffman Road was the old Highway 61 (historic). Gem Lake has planned for its possible demise. The future Cadillac site flanks both Vadnais Heights and Gem Lake. The frontage road dead-ends in Gem Lake and could provide opportunities to reconfigure the access to the area.

Commissioner Victoria Reinhardt, Ramsey County Environmental concerns: Ramsey County has an Environmental Response Fund that developers can access through the cities. Suburbs have great opportunities to get access to these funds. The Ramsey County Housing Redevelopment Authority (HRA) also has housing funds available. The County has created processes to streamline access to these resources.

With the White Bear Lake four corners it sounds like there is a consensus of likelihood that it will be commercial, but the commercial uses there haven't been successful for 15 – 20 years. What is the future for small scale office/retail? There are more vacancies than in-fill.

JS There are a number of older strip malls that need rehab that are future redevelopment sites. Could the businesses getting pushed out of the strip malls build on these smaller sites? Creating smaller buildings for their businesses?

LS Lots of commercial space is not occupied. To redevelop these areas cities need to work together and support each other. More housing is needed to increase the spending power to support the businesses. Creating more housing is the first step toward attracting businesses to the area. Parcel swaps are also a good idea to right-fit commercial uses. Think about it as a regional strategy.

JS An example is the Bremer Bank site in St. Anthony.

Is there activation and place-making strategies that could be supported by the three cities?

MM Does County Road E have a community vision? Can it be a cohesive district? What experience does County Road E deliver to the people that use it? What are the pieces? Once you have answers to those questions, get the messages out through marketing. Rice and Larpenteur is largely suburban that borders three cities. It had a negative narrative (e.g., strip clubs, abandoned

area). The [Rice and Larpenteur Alliance](#) engaged businesses, put on events, marketing to create a new narrative to fill the void with positive things. Create a vehicle to collect a new narrative and share it out to the community. The way people think about things affects their behavior. The narrative can be amplified through events and programs, creating places to congregate, places to bring kids and that are family focused.

Build a narrative that helps to activate the corridor, something that the businesses want to buy in to, a vision that expands what's possible. There is an organizational piece of working together to create value without displacing people or businesses.

Retail below housing (vertical mixed-use) is so successful in Europe. Why is it hard to accomplish here?

LS The amount of density is so different here. If we are dependent on people to drive to retail, the spaces need to support parking. The Bellaire sites aren't big enough to allow all that to happen.

Parking is an issue. Europe isn't a car-oriented place. Cities need to make sure that their land use codes match their comprehensive plan. The result is antiquated parking codes that don't match the needs of today.

Are there MN Housing Finance Agency resources available for community land trusts?

MG It's getting better for people to get community land trust mortgages. The landscape is changing which allows for more opportunity. Also, for commercial spaces. Community land trusts can leverage subsidies to make homeownership and commercial properties viable.

Lake Links – a 10-mile path that goes around the lake and connects to Bellaire beach. Connecting the Bellaire/County Road E intersection to that path could attract a bike shop to one of the parcels.

Have there been steps taken to assist potential businesses (incentives, tax breaks) for the Bellaire sites? Are there ways the city can assist?

Tracy Shimek, City of White Bear Lake Steps have been taken to spur investment. The city is approached often with potentially viable proposals. When the community has strong push-back on development proposals it creates a stigma that White Bear Lake is not receptive to developers/investors. To make development easier the city purchased the northeast corner parcel at Bellaire, and we took out the tanks for the gas station site. The sites haven't appealed to retailers at this point. The visibility isn't desirable.

The city did help Bean Co. They used a revolving loan and grant program that the city offers for businesses to reinvest. It's a low-interest loan with a small façade improvement grant.

We are looking for community consensus on what higher and better uses that serve the whole community. This process is meant to inform the three cities on what the community thinks would be positive uses for the sites. A developer will often sink over \$100K in predevelopment expenses to provide a proposal for a site. They don't want to waste their time and money if they think it would get shut down. It's also important for the community to support small businesses in the area if that is what they think adds value to the community.

Kevin Edberg, WBL City Council Three of the Bellaire sites had contamination. The city would almost certainly partner with a developer for remediation of the site (we've already cleaned one site). Do residents want an active corner or an unblighted corner? A wine bar was suggested as a destination. Do we want something that doesn't attract activity but improves the blight?

There is a transition going on south of County Road E. An influx of younger families is happening, but there are no activities in the area for children. We need recreational areas. Most parks are old.

The intersection and parcels at Bellaire and County Road E probably isn't a safe place for a children's recreational area.

There are ways to create a landing zone in the middle of the street to make it easier to cross. You can put a boarder around the site to stop children from running into the street. Kids cross the street to get to school.

The area south of County Road E is bussed because County Road E is not considered safe for students to cross.

JS When developers come with concepts, they need support behind them. It's impossible to please everyone, but it really helps if people are willing to come out in support. Figure out how to encourage opportunities rather than obstruct them.

Has there been any thought to giving County Road E its own identity? Softening or greening it? Creating a theme might give all areas along the corridor a boost.

Heather Kiem, SEH Ramsey County just started a multi-modal transportation network planning process to identify what is needed for people with all-abilities for safety, prioritizing walking, biking and transit. The future of County Road E will be different. Go to the [Ramsey County "Building an All-Abilities Transportation Network](#) for more information on how to get involved.

There are many ways to calm traffic. Lyndale Avenue in Minneapolis has three times the volume of traffic, yet through landscaping, trails, and altering the character of the roadway it is much calmer and friendlier.

Commissioner Reinhardt, Ramsey County Road design has been all about cars and truck traffic. We want designs that include access to those who wish to walk, bike or use a wheelchair, in addition to traffic movement on our roads. As physical changes are considered to the road, how do we incorporate place-making and soften the identity?

It's unusual to have three cities come together to collaborate in this way. Three cities plus the support of Ramsey County to align efforts while maintaining distinct identities.

There's no safe way to get across County Road E. Kids need to cross the road to get to Matoska playground.

LS Landscaping the boulevard can make it more inviting for pedestrians and bikers. How we take care of the roads indicate how we take care of our communities. Trees and walkways are appealing to businesses. Work with potential developers to create improvements.

MO The theme is connection. An example is Richfield's 66th Street (also a county road). They incorporated round-a-bouts, median protected crosswalks, landscaped bike lanes, sidewalks, etc. Now there's a ton of revitalization going on in the area.

The Petrowash has graffiti, and they aren't mowing the grass.

City staff response: The code officer is working with the owner who is selling the property.

MM Food with break people out of habits. With public spaces you can operate them out of a bad design, but you can't design your way out of bad operations.

MG Arts and culture also drive people to come to places. For example, the Selby Jazz Festival on Selby Avenue attracted new businesses to locate there (Two Scoops ice cream, and a barbershop). People walk to the area to visit places that tie into what the community wants and needs.

MM Think about "what do you want to do" rather than "what do you want to see". What to do causes you to solve for the right answer. Sometimes you need to activate a space before the built environment exists.

What are the challenges to moving a vision forward? What can the cities start doing?

TS Define the guidelines, scope, and goals. Articulate what the community wants. Developers want to deal with a city that knows what they want and understands the market realities.

LS This is a great start to come together. I'm impressed with what you are doing and wish more communities would do this. Send a signal to developers about what you are trying to create. Also, consistency between codes and comp plan. Help the community understand what's allowed (compliant to policy). Too much community push-back can be problematic. Developers talk. They will go elsewhere.

MM The challenge is to build demand. Do something tangible and small. Programming is a good way to build demand. Show up for what you do want – advocate for something. Don't just show up to oppose.

MG Create a scorecard to assess the degree in which a project aligns to the community values, while taking into account the realities of the cost of development. Provide a framework that identifies what the community wants. Support is needed to help the developer achieve it.

It was noted by a community member that they knew someone living in a land trust property and it was a great situation for the family.

MO Knowing what is and isn't feasible. To achieve a brewery, you need to find a brewery business that wants to locate there. Find ways to make housing and commercial uses compatible (e.g., shared access, site connections, etc.). Residential density and scale are important to make commercial uses financially feasible. Be open to higher density by creating a buffer for the transition to lower density housing. Lastly, be open to all types of housing (senior, market rate, workforce, etc.).

Interest was also expressed about incorporating solar panels, geothermal heating, and other benefits that can be impactful for the long-haul.

Next Steps: Community members are encouraged to attend the fourth workshop (October 26th, 6:30 – 8:30pm at the Vadnais Heights Fire Station, 3959 Arcade Ave N, Vadnais Heights) to review and refine the final recommendations for the County Road E Corridor Action Plan, to include short-, medium- and long-term strategies.

Adjourn

ADDENDUM:

Panelist Bios:

Jeff Salzbrun
Commercial Equities Group



Jeff, an Army Airborne Veteran, knows the market and can help with any Twin Cities commercial space requirements. Jeff fully understands the physical asset and the complexities of the entire sale and lease process. In his Airborne unit, there was no room for error or guess work. "I will be sure always" was the motto. So, you can trust Jeff to help you make the jump. Jeff knows the business.

Commercial Equities Group, Inc. is a veteran-owned real estate brokerage headquartered in Minneapolis, MN. A network of brokers, investors and other professionals, CEG assists clients in the leasing, buying and selling of commercial properties. Led by owner Jeff Salzbrun, our group is made up of industry greats who provide the best service and most beneficial insight to effectively get your deal done. CEG brokers deal in the Minneapolis and St. Paul metropolitan area along with other major cities in the Midwest. Although we have worked with most product types, our focus is on industrial, office, mixed use and land. We will work tirelessly on your behalf to find the right fit for you.

Todd Stutz
President
Robert Thomas Homes and
RT Urban Homes



Todd Stutz is serving as President of Robert Thomas Homes, Inc. and RT Urban Homes, Inc. He leads the companies overall vision, strategic planning, and

policymaking. Todd has over thirty years of experience in the homebuilding and development industry.

Todd has been instrumental in establishing the company's brand through a commitment to architectural excellence, innovation, and long-term relationships with our clients and partners. He holds a BS degree from his hometown school of Minnesota State University, Mankato. Todd is passionate about creating homes and neighborhoods for families across the Twin Cities.

Leanna M. Stefaniak, Esq
President
At Homes Apartments



Leanna M. Stefaniak is President of Real Estate and Development for At Home Apartments, L.L.C. She also serves as the company's General Counsel. At Home Apartments is a privately owned, Minneapolis-St. Paul based property management and development company that owns and manages over 5000 apartment units and various commercial properties located in the Twin Cities, St. Cloud, and Kansas City areas.

Outside of At Home Apartments Leanna serves on the CommonBond Housing Board and also the Board of Directors for Spare Key. Leanna is also very active within Minnesota Multi Housing Association (MHA) serving on the Board of Directors and through her position as a member of MHA's Executive Committee as well as her involvement with the Government Affairs and Legal Advisory committees.

Before joining At Home Apartments, Leanna worked for the State of Minnesota as an Analyst for the Center for Health Care Purchasing Improvement and also as a Legislative Liaison for the Department of Health.

Leanna has a BA in Political Science from Arizona State University and is a graduate of Hamline University School of Law.

Max Musicant Principal and Founder The Musicant Group



As Principal, Max (he/him) leads the placemaking practice of The Musicant Group. Under his leadership, the firm has pioneered a holistic and organic approach to the creation of place that integrates design, events, and management systems all through the lens of the user experience. Since its founding the firm has demonstrated that community and commercial interests all benefit from more humane, inviting, and lively places for people.

Prior to founding The Musicant Group, Max began his career at the Greater Jamaica Development Corporation (GJDC) in Queens, NY. While there he worked with one of the early leaders of the Bryant Park Corporation to devise and implement placemaking strategies for the GJDC, one of the oldest and largest community development corporations in New York City. He received an M.B.A. from the Yale School of Management and a B.A. in Political Science from the University of Wisconsin – Madison.

Mikeya Griffin Executive Director Rondo Community Land Trust



Mikeya Griffin became Executive Director of the Rondo Community Land Trust in Fall 2021. In this role she oversees *all facets of the organization, setting strategic direction to effectively meet mission, grow impact and realize a bold vision for the future.*

Prior to joining Rondo Community Land Trust, Mikeya served as Executive Director of Minnesota's largest homeowner association and only private city in the state of MN. During her five-year tenure, she successfully increased member participation, established strong governance, and streamlined operations.

Mikeya's career spans the public, private and non-profit sectors, including in roles at HUD and Land Bank Twin Cities. *Mikeya has more than 20 years of*

experience in organizational leadership, business development, affordable housing, and community development. In that time, she has created and championed many affordable housing and economic development initiatives centering BIPOC and low-wealth communities.

Growing up in the historic Rondo community, her family instilled values that reflected community, incredible strength, courage, and resiliency. These values have guided Mikeya's robust career and will serve as north stars for her work at Rondo CLT.

Marty O'Connell
Development Associate
MWF Properties, LLC



Marty O'Connell is a development associate with MWF Properties. In his role, Marty helps to oversee the development of new construction multi-unit housing from start to finish, which includes market analysis, site selection/acquisition, entitlements, financial underwriting, construction management, and project turnover. Marty graduated from the University of Wisconsin - Madison with a BBA in Real Estate/Urban Land Economics.

MWF Properties is a multifamily housing developer based in Richfield, MN. The firm was established in 1999 and, since that time, has developed over 2,200 apartment units across Minnesota, Iowa, and Illinois. MWF has experience in developing both affordable workforce and market rate housing. The company's project success is based upon exceptional market selection and site acquisition. We pride ourselves on developing aesthetically pleasing projects that are known for quality construction.

ATTACHMEN G. ATTENDANCE LIST FOR THE COUNTY ROAD E CORRIDOR ACTION PLAN CDI WORKSHOPS

County Road E Corridor Action Plan Attendance

| First Name | Last Name | Address | City | Zipcode | Organization | Session 1 | Session 2 | Session 3 | Session 4 |
|------------|---------------|---------------------------|-----------------|---------|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Gretchen | Artig-Swomley | | Gem Lake | | Mayor, Gem Lake | | 1 | 1 | |
| Lilli | Bauman | 3760 Grand Ave | WBL | | | | 1 | 1 | |
| Nick | Berthiaume | 3788 Hoffman Rd | | | Dandillon Daycare | 1 | | | |
| Patrick | Boylan | | | | Metro Council | 1 | 1 | | |
| Carole | Brower | 2344 Spruce Place | WBL | | | | 1 | | |
| Quentin | Carlson | 3897 E County Rd E | WBL | 55110 | | 1 | | | |
| Myrna | Carlson | 3897 E County Rd E | WBL | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Nan | Carlson | 2521 Blomquist | WBL | | | | 1 | | |
| Colleen | Chermak | 3549 Bellaire | WBL | | | 1 | | | |
| Charles | Cook | 1132 E County Rd E | Vadnais Heights | 55110 | Jimmy's | 1 | | | 1 |
| Curt S. | Cooper | 4177 Hemlock Lane | Vadnais Heights | 55127 | VH Planning Commission, Vice Chair | | | 1 | |
| Andrea | Cowell | 3701 Rolling View Dr. | WBL | | | | 1 | | |
| Ben | Crary | 3795 Grand Ave | WBL | 55110 | | | 1 | | |
| Sam | Crosby | 4853 Division | | | | 1 | 1 | | 1 |
| Jan | Crowley | 3450 Willow Ave | WBL | 55110 | | 1 | | | |
| Candace | Davis | 3519 Oak Terrace | | | | 1 | 1 | | |
| Linda | Demeny | 1970 Lake Aires Blvd | WBL | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Darwin | Demeny | 1970 Lake Aires Blvd | WBL | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | |
| Teresa | Dippel | 2405 Jansen Ave | WBL | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Katherine | Doll Kanne | | | | Vadnais Heights Planning Commission | | | | 1 |
| Terri | Dresen | | | | Vadnais Heights Planning Commission | 1 | 1 | | |
| Kevin | Edberg | | WBL | | WBL City Council | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Daniel | Epelboim | 33 Summit Farm LN | Gem Lake | 55110 | | 1 | | 1 | |
| Joy | Erickson | 1284 County Rd E East | Vadnais Heights | | Edina Realty | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Eileen | Foley | 3520 Oak Terrace | WBL | | | 1 | 1 | | |
| Bren | Froseth | 2002 1/2 County Rd E East | WBL | | Flicker Meats Company/White Bear Butchery | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Jen | Greene | 3587 Glen Oaks Ave | WBL | 55110 | | | 1 | | |
| Chris | Greene | 3587 Glen Oaks Ave | WBL | 55110 | | | 1 | | |
| Solomon N. | Haile | 2000 East County Road E | | | | | 1 | | |
| Shelly | Hauge | 1 Willow Rd | North Oaks | | | | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Matt | Heimann | 807 Blair Ave | St. Paul | | | | 1 | | |
| Janis | Henry | 3618 Cranbrook Dr. | WBL | 55110 | | 1 | | | |
| Joyce | Hinzle | 2359 East County Rd E | WBL | | | 1 | 1 | | |
| Julie | Honsa | 2460 E County Rd E | WBL | | Honsa Family Funeral Home | 1 | | | 1 |
| Terry | Honsa | 2460 East County Rd E | WBL | 55110 | Honsa Family Funeral Home | 1 | 1 | | 1 |
| Joshua | Hosek | 2002 1/2 County Rd E East | WBL | 55110 | Flicker Meats Company/White Bear Butchery | 1 | | | |
| David | Hosek | 2002 1/2 County Rd E East | WBL | | Flicker Meats Company/White Bear Butchery | | 1 | | 1 |
| Mark | Hosfield | 3730 Highland | WBL | | | | 1 | | |
| Peter | Hosmer | 2051 County Road E | WBL | 55110 | A+ Driving School | | 1 | | |
| Laurel | Hynes-Amle | 3524 Hwy 61 | Gem Lake | | Gem Lake City Council | | | 1 | 1 |

| | | | | | |
|-----------|-------------|-------------------------|-----------------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| Jim | Jacobson | 2293 County Rd E E | WBL | 55110 | |
| Kathy | Jacobson | 2293 County Rd E E | WBL | 55110 | |
| Amy | Jents | 2450 Hillside Rd | WBL | 55110 | |
| Jan | Johnson | 2481 County Rd E | WBL | 55110 | State Farm |
| Ben | Johnson | | Gem Lake | | Gem Lake City Council |
| Tom | Johnson | 2540 Dorothy Ave | WBL | 55110 | |
| Martin | Jokinen | 4297 Green Hunter Court | Vadnais Heights | 55127 | Vadnais Heights Planning Commission |
| Steve | Jorissen | 157 Cottonwood Drive | Vadnais Heights | 55127 | |
| Kelly | Jozwowski | 3762 Thomas Ct | Vadnais Heights | 55127 | |
| Stephanie | Karp | 2316 Spruce Place | WBL | 55110 | |
| Kevin | Kelly | 3585 Highway 61 | Vadnais Heights | | |
| Caroline | Kostroski | 2227 Birch St | WBL | | |
| Jennifer | Kostroski | 2485 Gisella Blvd | WBL | 55110 | |
| Becki | Kurtad | 3704 Medleved Ave | WBL | 55110 | |
| Jim | Kurtad | 3704 Medleved Ave | WBL | 55110 | |
| Kathy | Lair | 3740 Highland Ave | WBL | | |
| Greg | Lees | 3666 McKnight Rd N | WBL | 55110 | |
| Anita | Leighton | 3672 Sun Terrace | WBL | 55110 | |
| Greg | Lundberg | 3240 Orchard St | WBL | | |
| Dina | McKaley | 2546 Dorothy Ave | WBL | 55110 | |
| Ryan | McKilligan | 1110 Raymond Ave | St. Paul | 55108 | Element DB |
| Ella | Mitchell | | | | Ramsey County |
| Mario | Montanari | 811 Millwood Ave | Rosesville | 55113 | Ramsey County Parks and Rec |
| Liz | Moscattelli | 800 East County Rd E | Vadnais Heights | | VHEDC Board of Directors |
| Carol | Mulder | 786 County Rd E | Vadnais Heights | | |
| Isaac | Nelson | 1270 Goose Lake Rd | Gem Lake | 55110 | City of Gem Lake |
| Anita | Olson | 3947 Bellaire Ave | WBL | 55110 | |
| Steve | Parenteau | 3744 Hoffman Rd | WBL | | |
| Colleen | Parenteau | 3744 Hoffman Rd | WBL | | |
| Joshua | Patrick | 1270 Goose Lake Rd | Gem Lake | 55110 | City of Gem Lake |
| Judy | Peters | 3452 Willow Ave | WBL | 55110 | |
| Karen | Prettyman | 3397 Glen Oaks Ave | | | |
| Victoria | Reinhardt | | | | Ramsey County Commissioner |
| Al | Rivard | 3590 Glen Oaks Ave | WBL | | |
| Steve | Rogers | | Vadnais Heights | | Vadnais Heights City Council |
| Sharon | Roland | 49 Summit Farm Ln | Gem Lake | 55110 | |
| Kevin | Rooney | 1800 E County Road E | WBL | | |
| Karen | Scheib | 3870 Crestwood Place | WBL | | |
| Josh | Schlicting | 3539 Rolling View | Vadnais Heights | | |
| Gary | Schroeher | 2410 Hillside Rd | WBL | 55110 | |
| Maureen | Shepard | 2394 E County Rd E | WBL | 55110 | |
| John | Skupa | 2455 County Road E | | | |
| Neil | Skupa | | | | |
| Michele | Stafki | 1854 East County Rd E | WBL | 55110 | |
| Fred | Stafki | 14505 - 43rd Ave N | Plymouth | 55446 | |

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| Sharon | Telschow | 3756 Hoffman Rd | WBL | | |
| Stan | Telschow | 3756 Hoffman Rd | WBL | | |
| Susan | Vento | 390 Robert St N | St. Paul | | Metropolitan Council |
| Andy | Voorhees | 4250 White Bear Lake Pkwy | WBL | 55110 | Ancora Title |
| Tim | Wald | 2530 Oak Court | WBL | | WBL Schools |
| Ami | Wazlawik | | | | Ramsey County |
| Mike | Wilhelmi | 1700 East County Rd E | WBL | | Xcel Energy |
| Cynthia | Wilson | 3444 Willow Ave | WBL | | |
| Jim | Wilson | 42 Summit Farm Ln | Gem Lake | 55110 | VOGL |
| Chris | Witzmann | 3612 Willow Lane | | | |

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| TOTAL ATTENDANCE: | 43 | 60 | 29 | 29 |
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ATTACHMENT H. COUNTY ROAD E COMMUNITY ADVISORY GROUP MEMBERS

County Road E Community Advisory Group

White Bear Lake

| | | | |
|-----------|----------|-------------------------|--|
| Trisha | Kauffman | Solid Ground | tckauffman@solidgroundmn.org |
| Katie | West | Gunderson Construction | katiew@gundersonconstruction.com |
| Jeffry | Borglum | Techie Dudes | jborglum@techiedudes.com |
| Catherine | Gnali | Century College student | catherine.gnali@my.century.edu |
| Joy | Erickson | WBL Chamber | joyerickson@edinarealty.com |

Vadnais Heights

| | | | |
|--------------|------------|------------------------|--|
| Charles | Cook | Jimmy's Food and Drink | charles@visitjimmys.com |
| Kevin Thomas | Kelly | Frandsen Bank | KKelly@frandsenbank.com |
| Lauren | Lofrumento | Children's Discovery | lauren@childrensdiscoveryacademy.com |

Gem Lake

| | | | |
|---------|-------|-------------------------|--|
| Richard | Bosak | resident/past CC member | nrbosak@gmail.com |
|---------|-------|-------------------------|--|

ATTACHMENT I. COUNTY ROAD E CORRIDOR PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS

Project Team Members:

White Bear Lake representatives

Email

| | | | |
|-------|----------|--|--|
| Kevin | Edberg | White Bear Lake City Council | Ward4@whitebearlake.org |
| Dan | Jones | White Bear Lake City Council | ward3@whitebearlake.org |
| Mike | Amundsen | White Bear Lake Planning Commission | mike.r.amundsen@gmail.com |
| Jason | Lindahl | White Bear Lake Community Development Director | jlindahl@whitebearlake.org |
| Tracy | Shimek | White Bear Lake Housing and Economic Development Coordinator | tshimek@whitebearlake.org |

Vadnais Heights representatives

| | | | |
|-----------|------------|---|--|
| Steve | Rogers | Vadnais Heights City Council | Steve.Rogers@cityvadnaisheights.com |
| Terri | Dresen | Vadnais Heights Planning Commission | terridresen@gmail.com |
| Katherine | Doll-Kanne | Vadnais Heights Planning Commission | dollkanne@gmail.com |
| Liz | Moscatelli | VHEDC Board of Directors | lizmoscatelli@vhedc.com |
| Kevin | Watson | Vadnais Heights City Administrator | kevin.watson@cityofvadnaisheights.com |
| Nolan | Wall | Vadnais Heights Planning and Community Development Director | nolan.walls@cityofvadnaisheights.com |

Gem Lake representatives

| | | | |
|--------|-------------|------------------------------|--|
| Ben | Johnson | Gem Lake City Council | ben.johnson@gemlakemn.org |
| Laurel | Hynes-Amlee | Gem Lake City Council | rebelneil12@gmail.com |
| Don | Cummings | Gem Lake Planning Commission | djc.msp@gmail.com |

Ramsey County

| | | | |
|----------|-----------|---|--|
| Victoria | Reinhardt | Ramsey County Board | Victoria.Reinhardt@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US |
| Kari | Collins | Ramsey Community and Economic Development | Kari.Collins@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US |
| Mario | Montanari | Ramsey County Parks | mario.montanari@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US |
| Scott | Mareck | Ramsey County Public Works | Scott.Mareck@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US |
| Martha | Faust | Ramsey County Redevelopment Manager | martha.faust@co.ramsey.mn.us |
| Ella | Mitchell | Ramsey County Economic Development Specialist | Ella.Mitchell@CO.RAMSEY.MN.US |

Metropolitan Council

| | | | |
|---------|--------|--|--|
| Sue | Vento | Metropolitan Council Member | susan.vento@metc.state.mn.us |
| Patrick | Boylan | Met Council Policy Analyst | Patrick.Boylan@metc.state.mn.us |
| Terri | Dresen | Met Council Director of Communications | terri.dresen@metc.state.mn.us |

Community Reps

| | | | |
|---------|-----------|------------------------------|--|
| Jan | Johnson | WBL EDC/State Farm | jan.johnson.ceu6@statefarm.com |
| Michael | Wilhelmi | Xcel | Michael.S.Wilhelmi@xcelenergy.com |
| Tim | Wald | White Bear Lake Area Schools | Tim.Wald@isd624.org |
| Mike | Greenbaum | Newtrax | mikeg@newtrax.org |

ATTACHMENT J. ANNOUNCEMENT/PUBLICITY FLYER FOR THE COUNTY ROAD E CORRIDOR ACTION PLAN CDI WORKSHOPS

COUNTY ROAD E CORRIDOR ACTION PLAN: COMMUNITY WORKSHOP SERIES JOIN US FOR A SERIES OF COMMUNITY WORKSHOPS TO GUIDE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT ALONG COUNTY ROAD E

Between Centerville Road and Highway 120

The County Road E Corridor has enormous potential for revitalization, placemaking and serves as a catalyst for future development in the area. The cities of White Bear Lake, Vadnais Heights, and Gem Lake invite you to inform and guide future development along the corridor through a series of community workshops and discussions. The process will produce an action plan to include near, medium, and long-term goals and action steps, and serve as a tool to attract private investment through development and infrastructure improvements.



Mark your calendars. We encourage participants to attend the full series of workshops.

The series will be held in-person due to the interactive design of the sessions.

WORKSHOP I: Gather Information

Wednesday, September 14, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm

Century College, 3300 Century Ave, White Bear Lake

East Campus – Lincoln Mall, park in lot F, G or H, enter through main entrance E1

What is important and unique about County Road E Corridor? What are the concerns about future development, and what can be achieved? Presentations will be provided by land use and transportation planning experts.

WORKSHOP II A - C: Exploring Development Options - The Block Exercise

Join your neighbors in an interactive workshop to create development scenarios for key sites along the County Road E Corridor. Land use and design experts will be on hand to share ideas and insights. Sites are divided among three workshops by city.

A. Vadnais Heights sites

Wednesday, September 28, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm

Vadnais Heights Fire Station, 3595 Arcade St N

B. White Bear Lake sites

Thursday, September 29, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm

Redeemer Lutheran Church, 3770 Bellaire Ave, White Bear Lake

C. Gem Lake sites

Wednesday, October 5, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm

Heritage Hall, 4200 Otter Lake Road, Gem Lake

Workshop III: Developer Panel Discussion

Wednesday, October 12, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm

Vadnais Heights Fire Station, 3595 Arcade St N

Explore the opportunities and challenges of potential redevelop options with a panel of developers that bring a range of expertise.

Workshop IV: Framing Recommendations

Wednesday, October 26, 2022; 6:30 – 8:30pm

Vadnais Heights Fire Station, 3595 Arcade St N

Contribute to the creation of the County Road E Corridor action plan recommendations, which will be submitted to a Project Team of local government and private partners for consideration.

For more information, visit

whitebearlake.org/e or contact:

- **Tracy Shimek**, City of White Bear Lake, at 651-762-4838 or tshimek@whitebearlake.org
- **Nolan Wall**, City of Vadnais Heights, at 651-204-6027 or Nolan.wall@cityvadnaisheights.com
- **Ben Johnson**, Gem Lake City Council Member, at ben.johnson@gemlakemn.org
- **Gretchen Nicholls**, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, at 612-327-2149 or gnicholls@lisc.org



All events are free and open to the public

THE CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE IS A PROGRAM OF:



SPONSORED BY: City of White Bear Lake | City of Vadnais Heights | City of Gem Lake | Ramsey County

