

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

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

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

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

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

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

<p>Mobility/traffic/safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Better walking/biking</li></ul> <p>Commercial</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Address crime at Walmart</li></ul>	<p>Open/green space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A true city center/gathering place</li><li>• Maybe community park with Vadnais Commons (vs. Stadium). Place to have drink and meal and watch games.</li></ul>
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**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"> <li>• Speed of car traffic (traffic calming through better design)</li> <li>• Traffic</li> <li>• Speed control</li> <li>• Purple Line traffic</li> <li>• Additional traffic</li> <li>• No roundabouts</li> <li>• More traffic (left turns)</li> <li>• Fast traffic</li> <li>• Increased traffic</li> </ul> <p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ? Do we need more apartments?</li> </ul>	<p>Community character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of “small town” feel, “Missing middle”</li> <li>• Setbacks and loosing character of area</li> <li>• Loss of green and pleasant environment</li> <li>• On street parking (less is more) Loss of small town feeling</li> </ul> <p>Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No globe lights shine down, only power lines in the way of trees/lights, etc.</li> <li>• Wider pedestrian crosswalks</li> </ul>
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**White Bear Lake:**

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

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

<p>Mobility/access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bike traffic and pedestrian by Walmart</li> </ul>	<p>Community character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Loss of Stadium – took away long-time community location</li> <li>• No center or heart of town</li> </ul>
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**4. How could the corridor be more connected?**

<p>Street design/signage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 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</li> <li>• Street scape continuity</li> <li>• Location direction</li> <li>• More bike/ped access and connect ability</li> <li>• Provide boulevards with crosswalks that are safe – may need bridge over roadway</li> <li>• Roundabouts</li> <li>• Connect with a wide walking/biking path from Century to Target</li> </ul>	<p>Branding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give it a nifty name like “Miracle Mile” to emphasize the union of communities</li> </ul> <p>Elements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public art</li> <li>• Bus/tram with a route just on County Road E</li> <li>• Unified lighting, decorative elements like plantings and banners.</li> <li>• Not broken – just needs some development at few sites</li> <li>• Reduce business to control traffic</li> <li>• Electric recharge stations at 61/E plus E &amp; Bellaire</li> </ul>
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**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?