

AGENDA

1. CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION CALLED TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL: Blackledge, Greenberg, Parisian, Wagner, Mayor Sutton
3. DISCUSSION
 - A. CCX Media - Funding and Policy Updates
 - B. Light Rail Transit - Blue Line Extension Updates
 - C. Water Tower 1 - Lighting Policy
4. STAFF UPDATES
5. COUNCIL UPDATES
 - A. Humane Pet Store Ordinance - Mayor Sutton
6. ADJOURNMENT



TO: Mayor and City Council
PREPARED BY: Tim Sandvik, City Manager
APPROVED BY: Tim Sandvik, City Manager
DATE: March 11, 2025
RE: CCX Media - Funding and Policy Updates

Background:

Shannon Slatton Schwartz, Executive Director, and Dave Kiser, Government and Community Affairs Liaison, both of CCX Media and NWSCC will present an update on Policy and Funding.

Analysis:

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. CCX one-pager



FUNDING AND POLICY NEEDED TO SAVE COMMUNITY MEDIA

CCX Media provides comprehensive media services and creates, helps others create and disseminates high-quality local content by serving our communities with honesty, professionalism, and integrity.

▶ What does CCX Media provide the community?

- 1,250+ news stories published each year
- 660+ sports stories published each year
- 140+ hours of media training to public each year
- 120 live high school games streamed each year
- 39 parades, graduations and events streamed each year
- 3 channels programmed with locally produced content

Also: Access to free studio or podcast space for all residents, stories about businesses, schools, the arts, documentaries about local history, plus interviews with legislators, lawmakers

▶ What does CCX Media provide local cities?

- 400+ city council meetings recorded annually
- 20+ forums streamed annually during election years
- 365 days a year programming Channel 16s
- 300+ promotional stories about cities each year
- 76+ candidate statements recorded in-studio

Also: Hiring, managing city council crews, troubleshoot city council chambers technical problems, consult with cities on city council revamps, promotion of city events, programs, and more

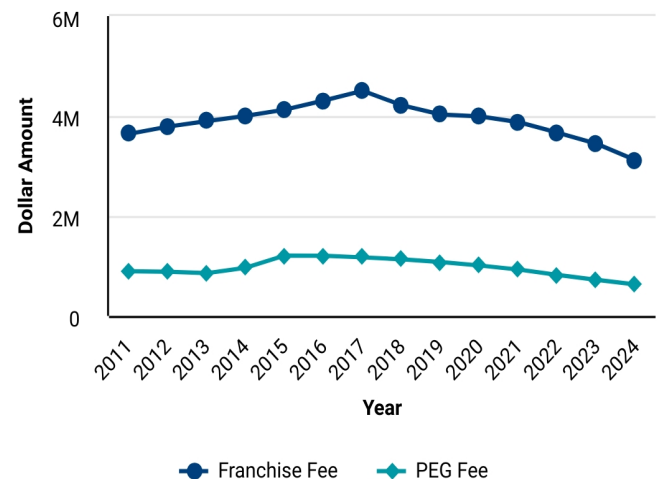


▶ CCX Media is available just about everywhere - for free

- Website (2 sites)
- Facebook (3 pages)
- Twitter / X (3 accounts)
- Apps/OTT (Amazon Fire, Android, AppleTV, iOS, and Roku)
- YouTube (2 pages)
- Instagram (3 accounts)
- Comcast Channels (12/799, 20/859, nine 16s)

▶ How is CCX Media funded?

The 40-year funding stream for community television using cable franchise fees and PEG fees is in decline due to a direct impact by cord cutting. Since 2017, CCX Media's revenue has been decreasing. The nonprofit has absorbed more than \$1.8 million in lost revenue by cutting positions and cutting back expenses as well as bringing in additional revenue from sponsorships, production services and online ad sales. But the amount CCX Media can make and still fulfill its mission will not replace what will be lost.



▶ Efforts to modernize funding model

CCX Media has worked legislatively to promote measures that would help provide meaningful revenue and protect community television.

- Continue to protect franchise fees on cable television service still in public right-of-way
- Impose a modest fee on companies using the public right-of-way for delivery of digital/video streaming services collected by local city authority with allocation to community television stations
- Budget a state general fund line item for support of community television stations across the state
- Implement annual funding similar to state support of public radio, public television
- Support digital equity efforts through franchising
- Advocate for changes in federal law, like the Protecting Community Television Act, to codify current community television funding in franchise agreements
- Protect against federal threats to local city authority of public rights of way compensation (HR 3557)



TO: Mayor and City Council
PREPARED BY: Tim Sandvik, City Manager
APPROVED BY: Tim Sandvik, City Manager
DATE: March 11, 2025
RE: Light Rail Transit - Blue Line Extension Updates

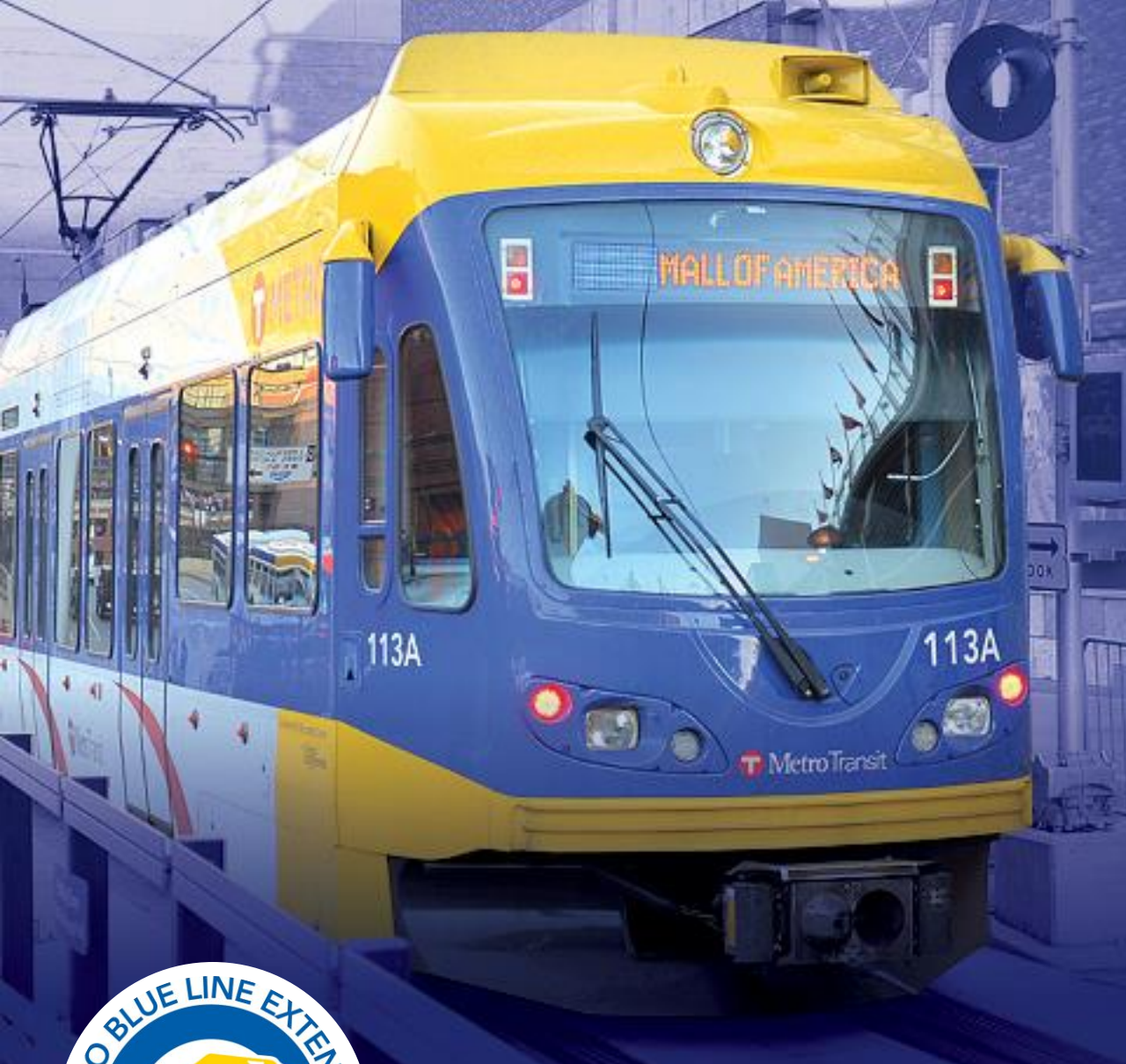
Background:

Analysis:

Recommendation:

Attachments:

1. BLE Robbinsdale City Council Update Presentation
2. Metro Blue Line Extension : Downtown Robbinsdale Station Area Recommendations



Robbinsdale City Council Update

March 11, 2025



BROOKLYN PARK | CRYSTAL | ROBBINSDALE | MINNEAPOLIS



Today's Topics

- Project Overview
- Robbinsdale Design Updates
- Environmental Update
- Q & A
- Next Steps

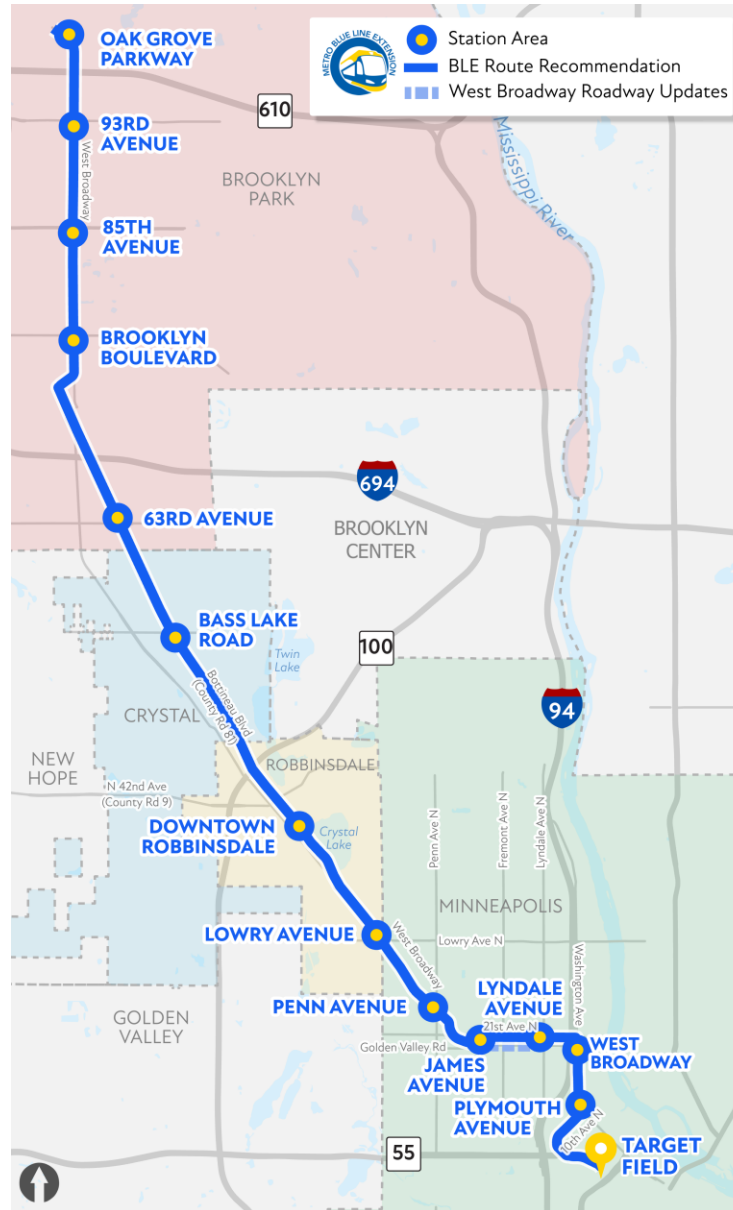


Project Overview



Blue Line EXTENSION

- 13.4 miles & 13 new stations
- Connecting Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, Brooklyn Park and surrounding communities to fast, frequent, all-day service across the METRO system
- Single seat ride to existing Blue Line stops downtown, MSP Airport, and Mall of America
- Focus on building community prosperity through anti-displacement strategies before, during, and after construction



Next steps

- ✓ Supplemental Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Spring 2024
- ✓ Municipal Consent : Summer 2024
- Updated 60% cost estimate: Summer 2025
- Supplemental Final EIS and Amended Record of Decision: Summer 2025
- Final Design: 2024-2026
- Major construction: 2027-2030

All schedules are subject to change

Project Timeline

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ANTI-DISPLACEMENT

WE'RE HERE

EVALUATION 1.5 – 2 YEARS

October 2022

- ✓ Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement process initiated
- ✓ Analysis on route options continues

Summer 2024

- ✓ Municipal Consent Process

DESIGN 1.5 – 2 YEARS

2024–2026

- Final Design

2025

- SFEIS and Amended ROD

2026

- Federal Funding/
Construction Bidding

CONSTRUCTION 3 – 4 YEARS

2027–2030

- Major Construction

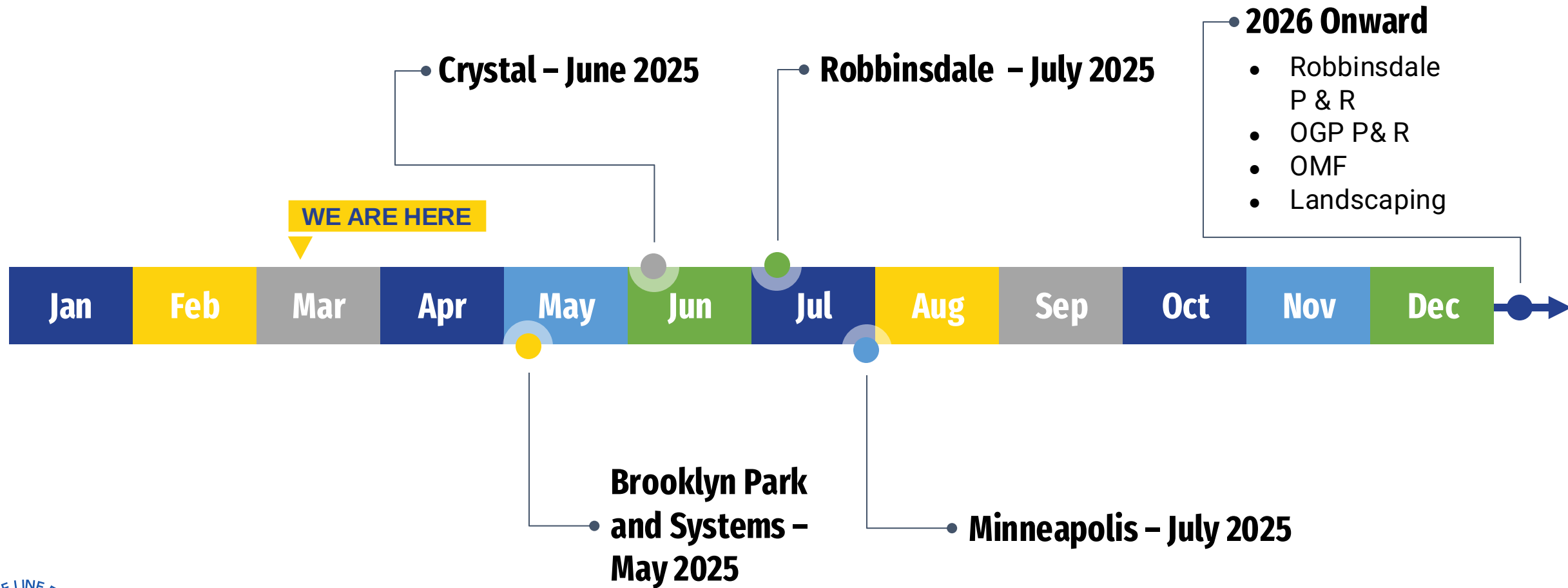


All schedules are subject to change

Robbinsdale Design Update



60% Design Release



Approximate dates for 60% completion and sent to cities. Comments will be incorporated in the 90% design plans.



Design Process

- Successfully completed Municipal Consent process with four cities and Hennepin County(2024)
- Currently advancing design to 60% design level (2025)
- Beginning Cultural Placekeeping design work with community (2025)
- Advancing Park & Ride - Transit Center design (2025)
- Reaching 90% + 100% design level milestones (2026)



Status of Major City Design Comments

Comment	Status
Address concerns from North memorial Hospital of gated crossings/Hospital access at Lowry Ave	To be included in 60% design of Lowry area package (separated from Robbinsdale civil package)
Relocate downtown Robbinsdale Station to North of 40th Avenue	To be included in 60% design
Reduce Robbinsdale park-and-ride to include no more than 290 public parking spaces	To be included in 60% design, coordination ongoing
Implement enhanced intersection design at 40th, 41st, & 42nd Avenues	To be included in 60% design
Reconstruct 40th Avenue from CR81 to Hubbard Avenue	To be included in 60% design



Lowry Avenue Station Design



Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholder	Option A - At-grade Station with LRT Crossings (Municipal Consent & SDEIS Feedback)	Option H – At-grade Station with grade-separated LRT Crossings
Community	Concerns about parkway continuity due to LRT crossing	Supportive of grade separation of LRT from Parkway to maintain Parkway continuity
City of Minneapolis		
Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board		
City of Robbinsdale	Concerns about a new gated crossing with LRT, and negative impacts to emergency response times	Supportive of grade separation of LRT from Lowry Ave to maintain and further enhance emergency response access routes
North Memorial Hospital		



Continued Design Coordination

- In the last 6 months
 - 4 stakeholder workgroup design workshops
 - 2 public open houses with 90+ attendees
 - Online survey

Timeline	Activities
July – October 2024	Preliminary Design Plans published for public feedback through SDEIS and Municipal Consent
October – December 2024	Project Team evaluated 8 potential alternatives to the original concept (9 station concepts total)
December 2024 – January 2025	Solicited public and stakeholder feedback on the 9 options at open houses
February 5, 2025	Presented Station Concepts to MPRB
February 13, 2025	Discussed Station concepts at CMC
February 19, 2025	Request direction from PDB on path forward



Public Engagement Summary

Most discussed options:

- **Option A** – at grade station/LRT crossing parkway/Lowry
- **Option H** – at grade station/No crossing parkway/Lowry

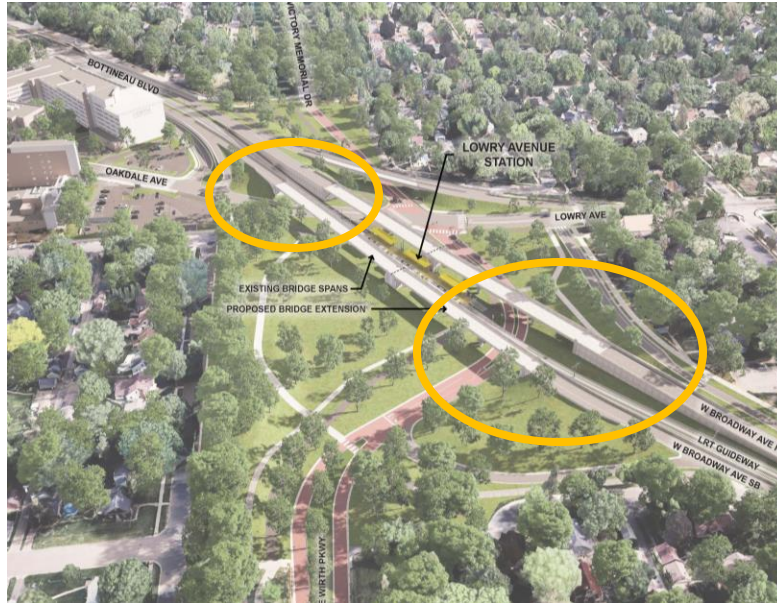
Option H: mixed opinions on parkway not connecting to Lowry Ave

Overall Concerns:

- Gates at parkway and Lowry
- Construction disturbance, duration, noise and vibration
- Maintaining parkland
- Safety and security
- Traffic impacts on CR 81



Most Favored Options



Option A (Municipal Consent/SDEIS Concept)

- At-grade Station
- At-grade, gated and signalized crossings with Theodore Wirth Pkwy and Lowry Ave
- Minimized impact to exiting bridges and infrastructure
- Assumed in current project base cost and schedule



Option H (Most favored alternative concept)

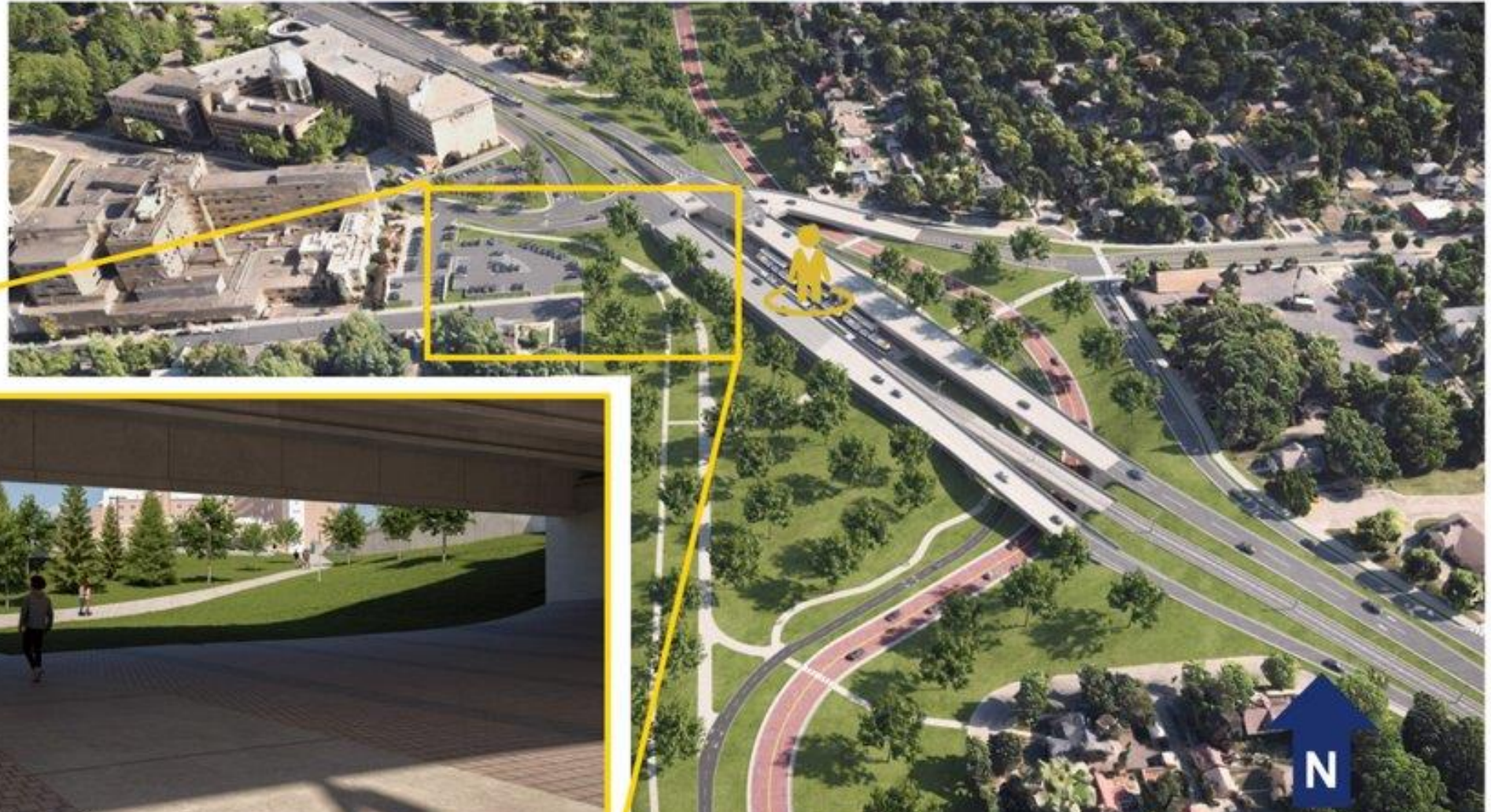
- At-grade Station
- Grade separated crossings with Theodore Wirth Pkwy and Lowry Ave
- More complex construction, with replacement of 2 bridges, modification of 1 bridge, and 2 new bridges
- Adds \$50M to the project base cost, and 1 year of additional construction time at this location.



Pedestrian Circulation



Option H – looking west from station

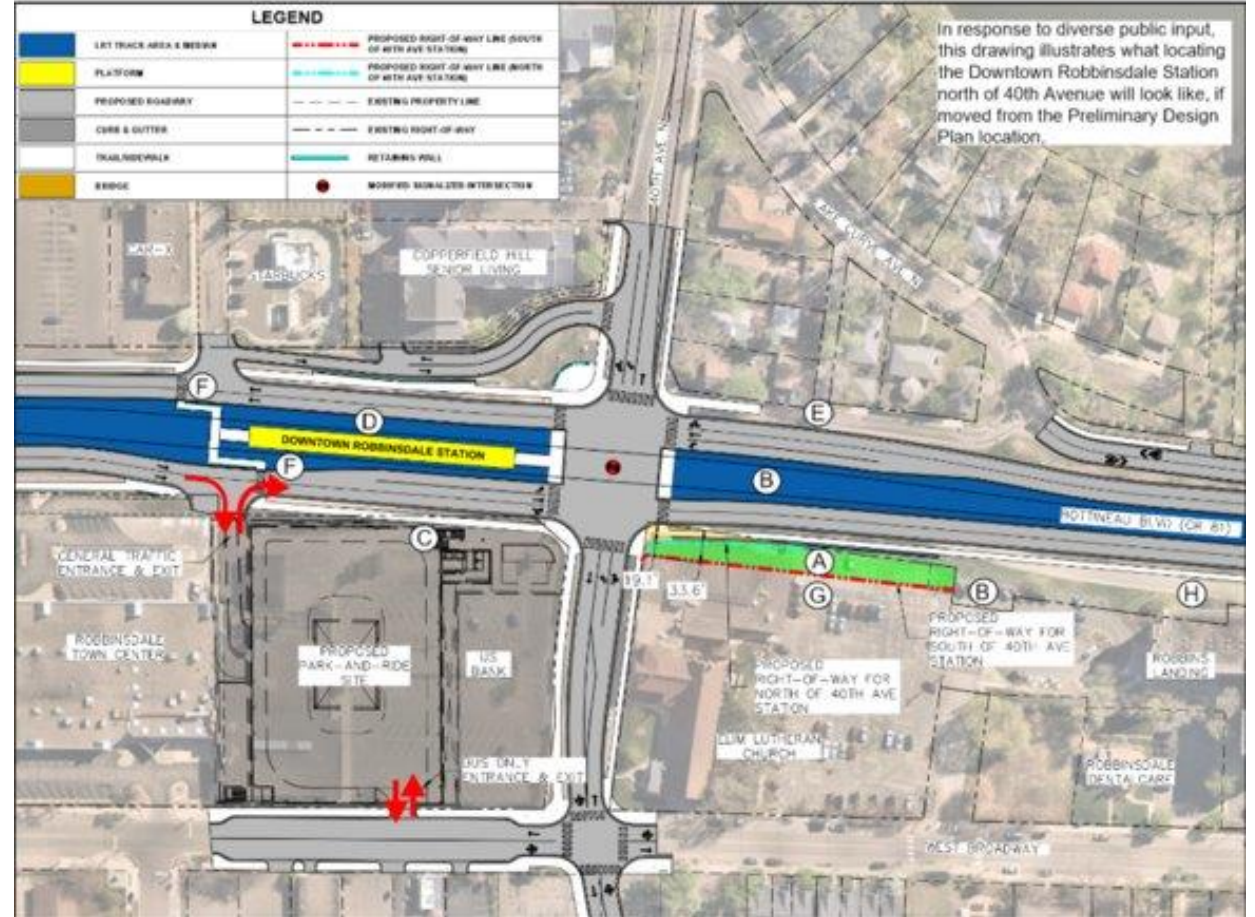


Downtown Robbinsdale Station



Downtown Robbinsdale Station

- Project commits to relocating Downtown Robbinsdale Station from south of 40th Ave to north of 40th Ave

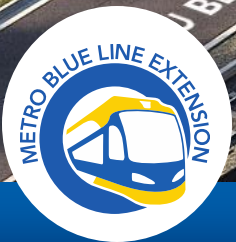


PARK AND RIDE
TRANSIT CENTER
(UNDER DEVELOPMENT)

U.S. BANK SITE

DOWNTOWN ROBBINSDALE STATION

40TH AVENUE



DRAFT – Work in Process

PARK AND RIDE TRANSIT CENTER
(UNDER DEVELOPMENT)

DOWNTOWN ROBBINSDALE STATION



DRAFT – Work in Process

DOWNTOWN
ROBBINSDALE
STATION

PARK AND RIDE TRANSIT CENTER
(UNDER DEVELOPMENT)



DRAFT — Work in Process

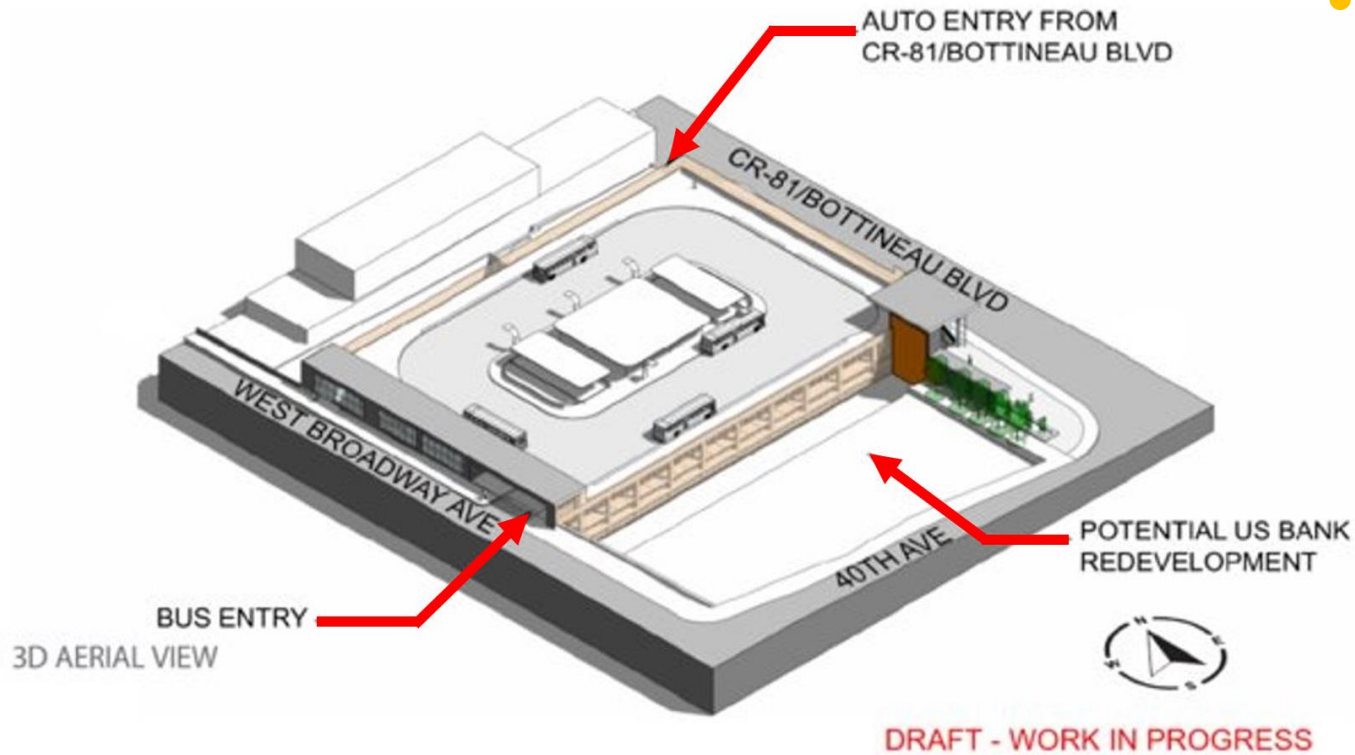
DOWNTOWN ROBBINSDALE STATION

PARK AND RIDE TRANSIT CENTER
(UNDER DEVELOPMENT)



DRAFT – Work in Process

Park & Ride

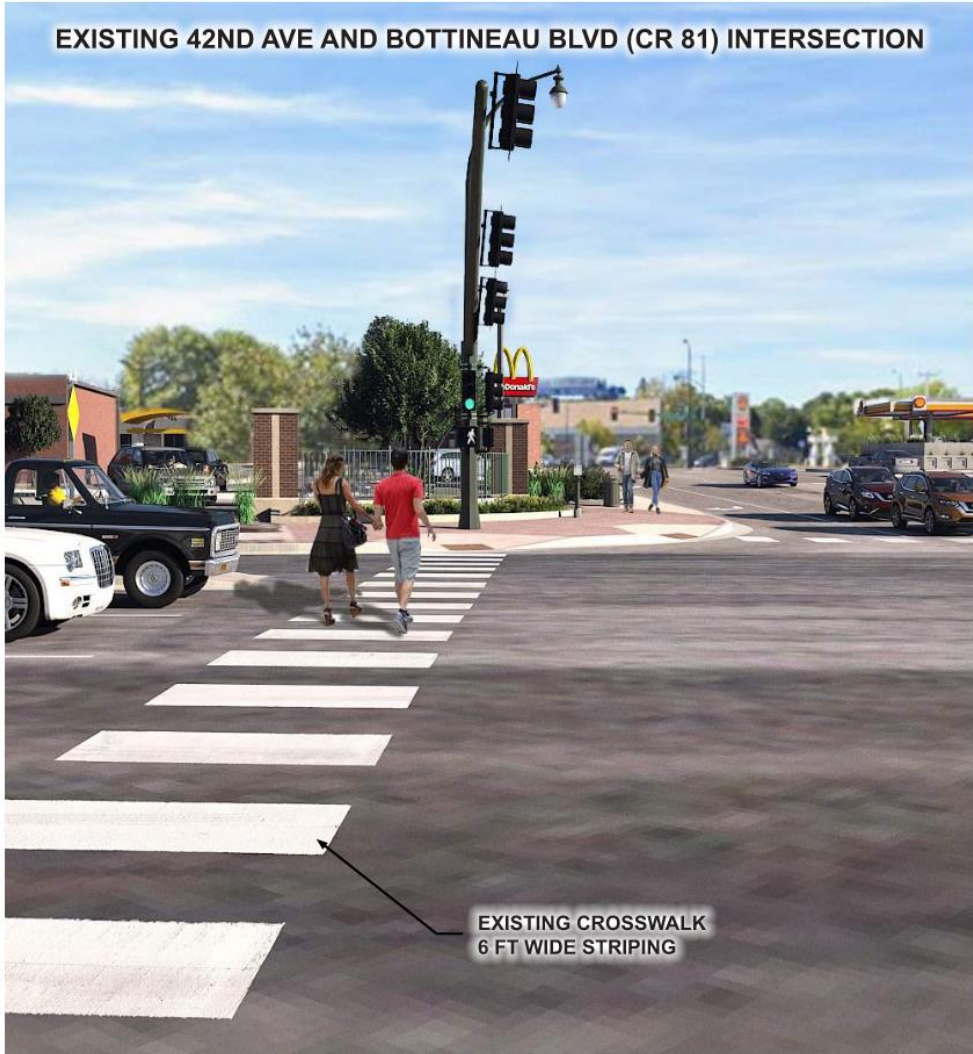


- Project commitments:
 - No more than 290 public parking spaces
 - Bus traffic ingress and egress will be restricted to West Broadway
 - All car ingress and egress will be restricted to Bottineau Blvd
 - Inclusion of a Metro Transit Police substation within the park-and-ride

Pedestrian Safety



Pedestrian Safety

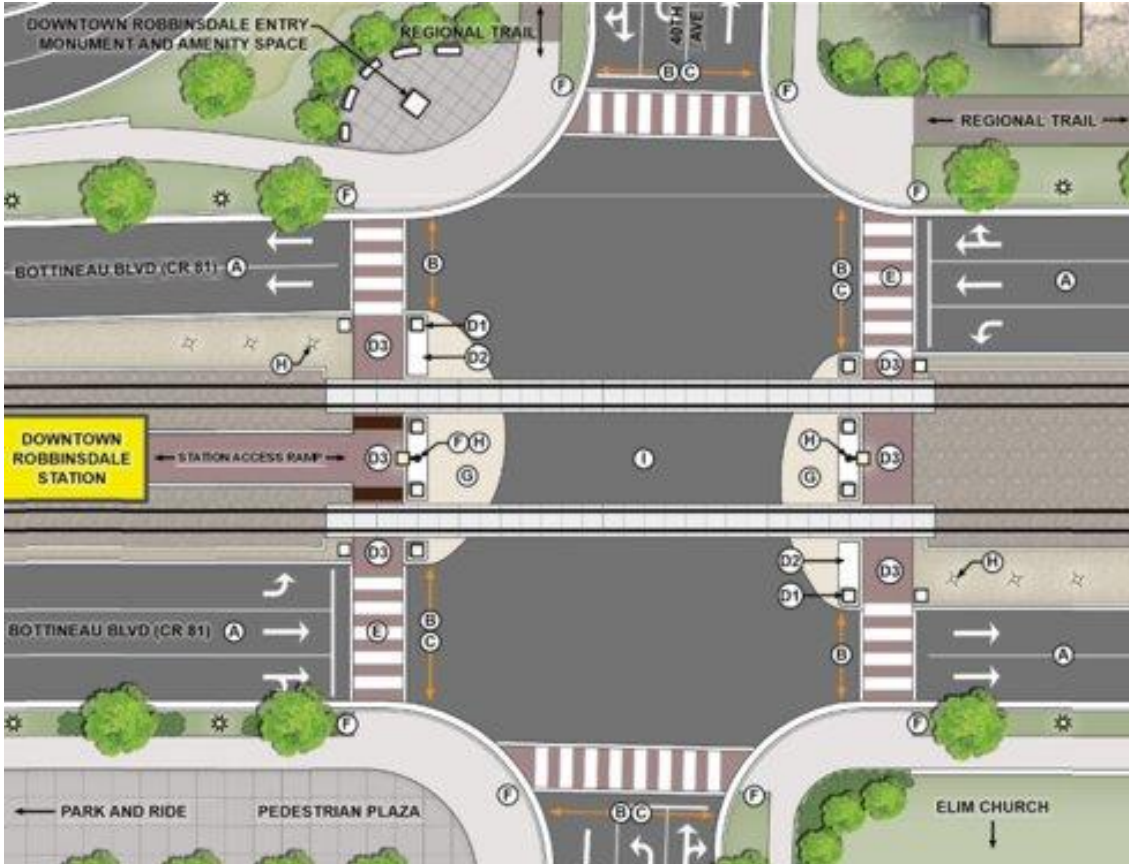


This visualization illustrates what significantly enhanced intersection design with pedestrian safety elements will include at Bottineau Blvd and 42nd Ave.

DRAFT - WORK IN PROCESS
SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS DESIGN ADVANCES



Pedestrian Safety



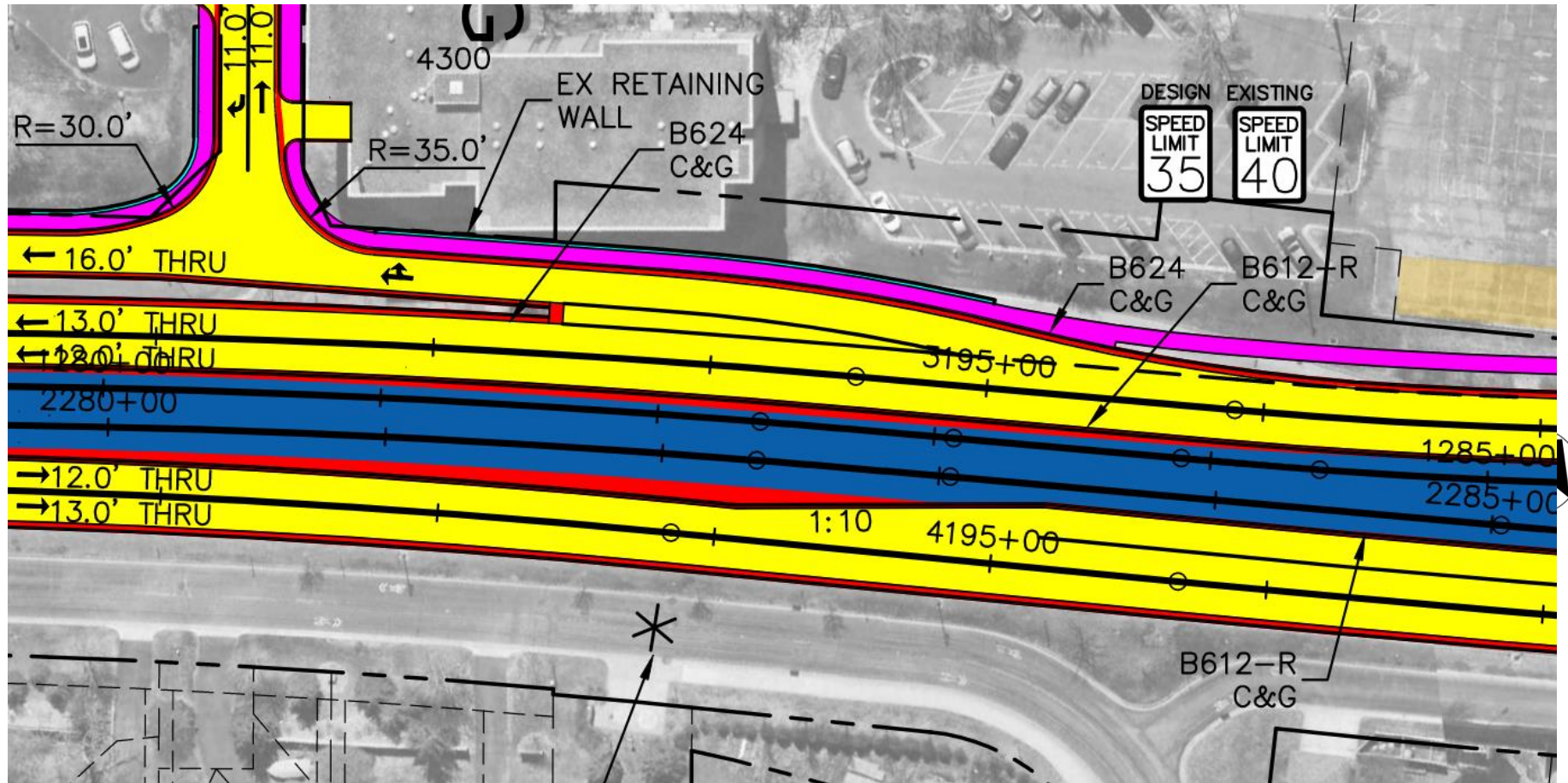
- Project commits to additional safety measures:
 - Reduce speed on CR 81
 - Protective bollards and concrete curbs at 40th, 41st, and 42nd avenues
 - Fencing between light rail tracks
 - Enhanced traffic signals with visual and auditory crossing countdown timers
 - Includes adequate “walk” and flashing “don’t walk” time for pedestrians to safely cross the entire width of CR 81

Pedestrian Safety

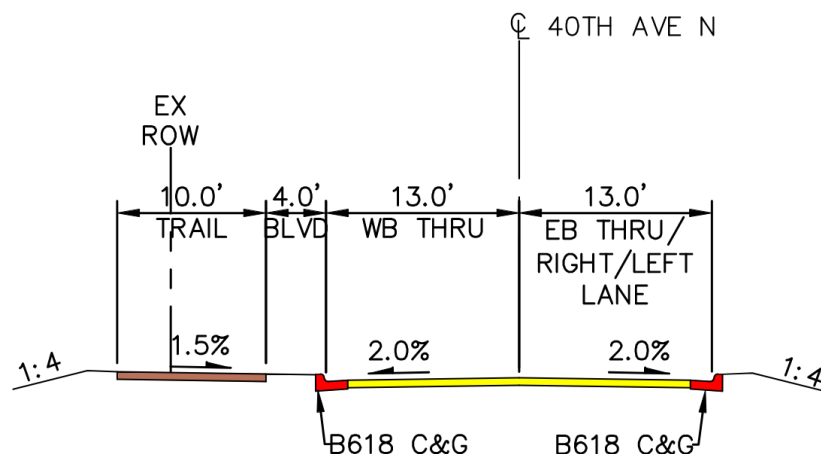
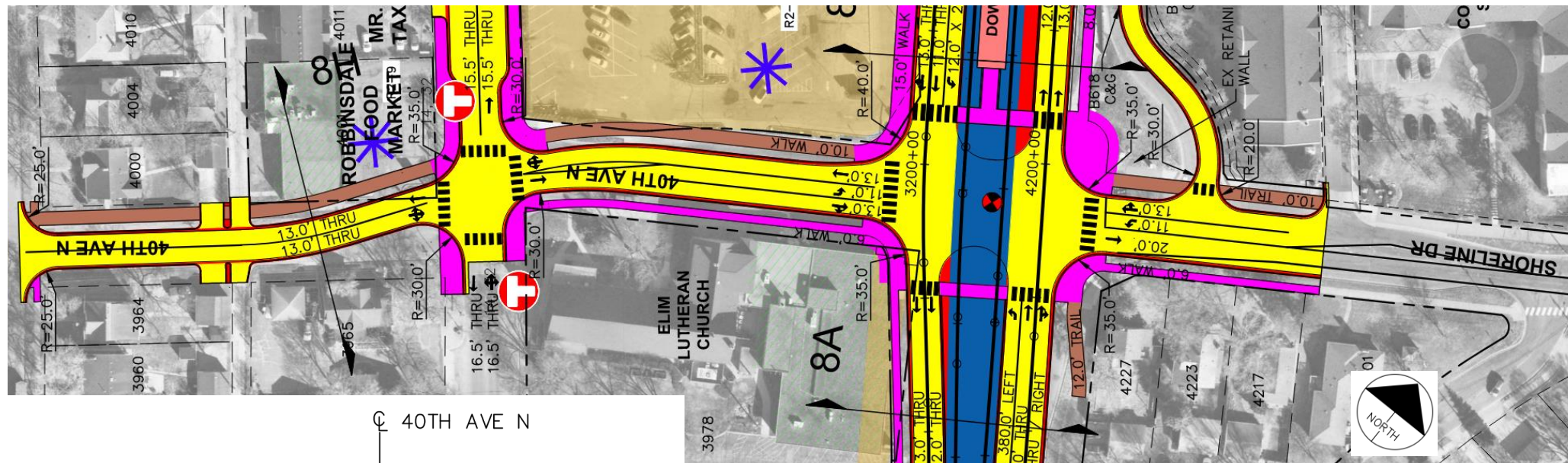
- Project commits to additional safety measures:
 - Enhanced pedestrian lighting levels
 - Remove 5 right turn lanes through Downtown Robbinsdale to reduce vehicle-pedestrian conflict points
 - Enhanced pedestrian signage to alert turning vehicles to pedestrian presence
 - Wider crosswalks



Connection to Lakeland Ave & 39th Ave

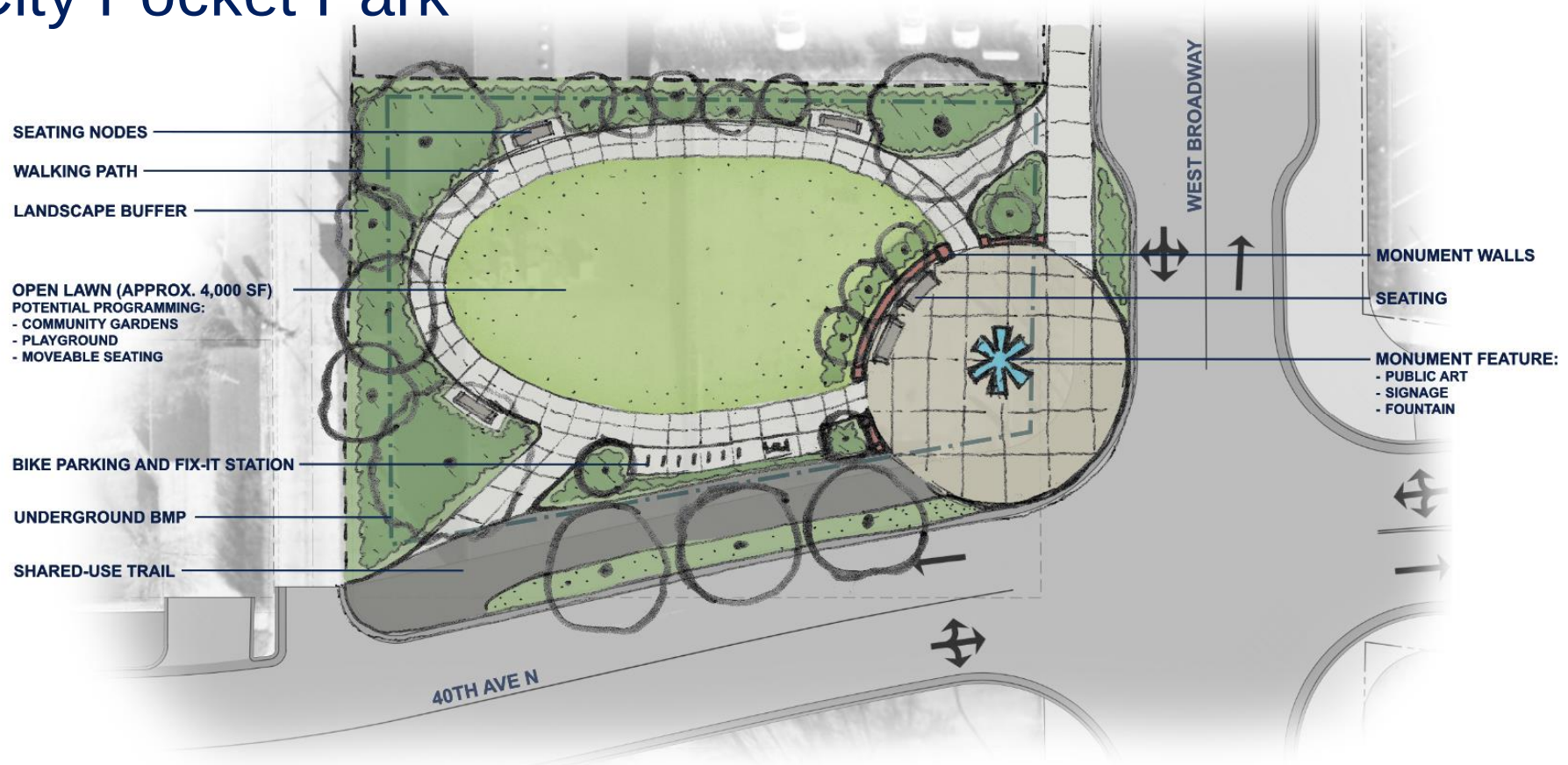


40th Ave Improvements



40th Ave Underground BMP Concept

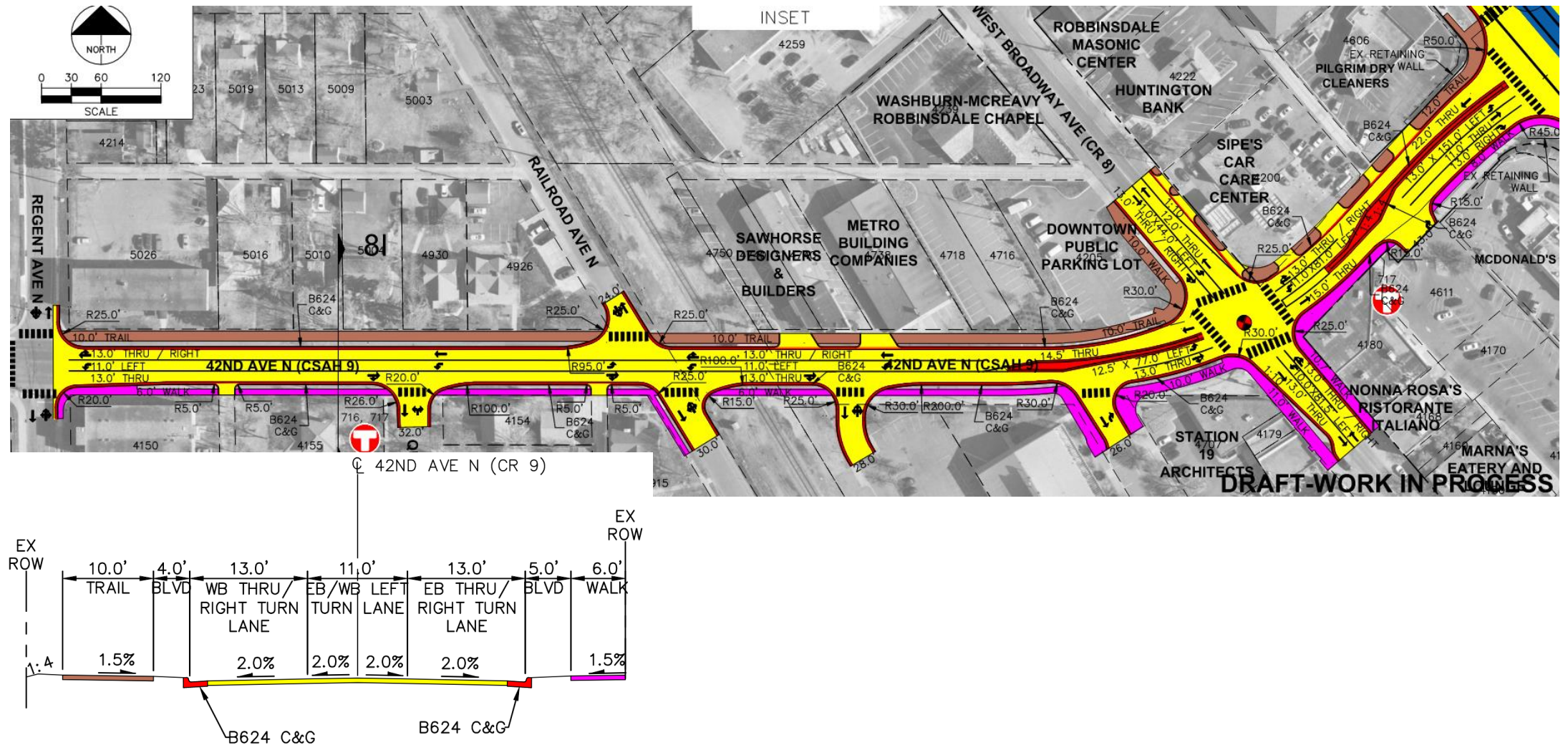
- Potential City Pocket Park



DRAFT-WORK IN PROCESS



42nd Ave Improvements



Environmental Update



Topics Studied in the Environmental Process



Changes to land use, and how the project fits with existing or planned land uses



Effects on the community or communities surrounding the project



What property needs to be purchased and what residences or businesses may need to be moved



Business impacts



Impacts to historic properties



Impacts to parks



Visual impacts



Safety



Transportation impacts – bicycle, pedestrian, transit, vehicles (including parking), freight rail, aviation



Water resource impacts – wetlands, floodplains, stormwater, groundwater, water quality



Impacts to soils and geologic resources



Impacts to plants and animals, including threatened and endangered species



Noise impacts, and for transit and rail projects, vibration impacts



Contaminated properties and hazardous



Air Quality and Emissions

Environmental Documentation Overview



1. Prepare Draft Environmental Documentation (SDEIS)



2. Public Hearing on Draft Environmental Documentation (SDEIS)

- 45-day public comment period in Summer 2024



3. Prepare Final Environmental Documentation (SFEIS)

- Publication of SFEIS mid-2025

WE ARE HERE

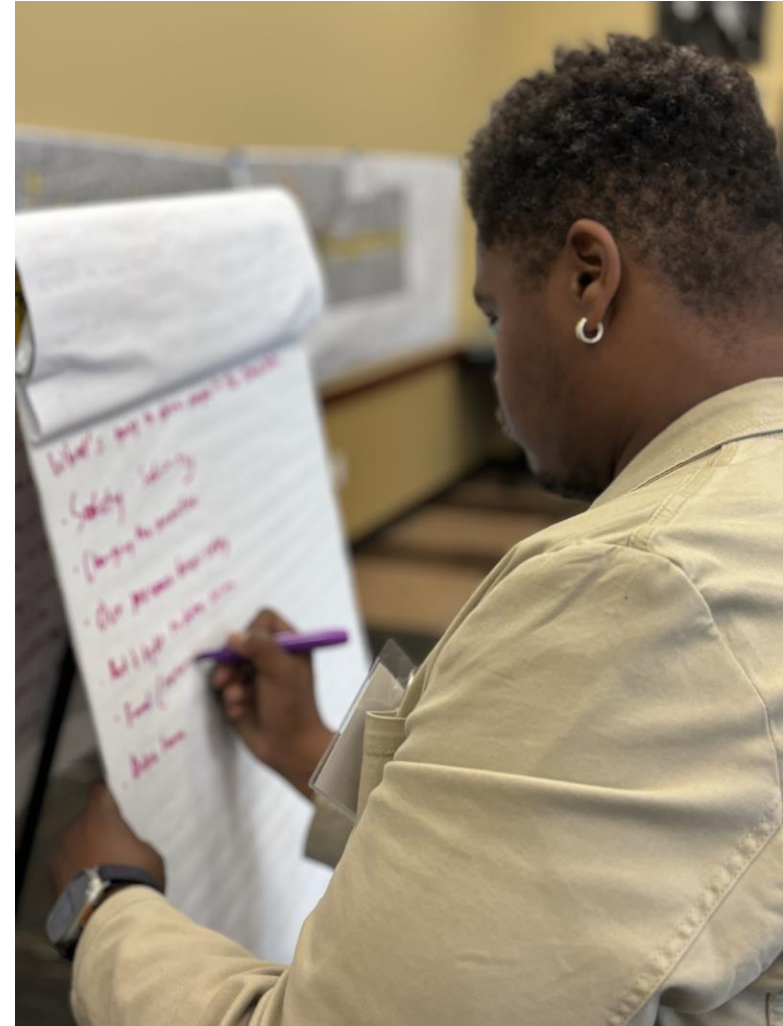


4. Amend the Project Record of Decision



Supplemental Final EIS Next Steps

- Analysis for design changes related to 30% design and informed by comments received
- Development of mitigation commitments – Mitigation Workplan
 - Additional technical analysis
 - Additional outreach
 - Additional design development
- Outreach around mitigation in Fall 2024 – Spring 2025
- Anticipated SFEIS publication mid-2025



Engagement Update



Current Surveys

- Business Owner & Resident Inventory Survey



www.surveymonkey.com/r/F297QZ8

- Community & Environmental Impact Topics



www.surveymonkey.com/r/JSSZFN3



Cultural Placekeeping Design Group

- Staff are seeking individuals to serve in small groups to guide the cultural placekeeping design for the Blue Line Extension project in the cities of Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Crystal, and Brooklyn Park.
- The project is looking for people who live or work in the corridor or have direct connections to the corridor.



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SL7VDRY>



Robbinsdale

Event Name	Location	Day	Time
Robbinsdale Academy Highview Resource/Job Fair	Sandburg Middle School	Tue, March 27	12:30-2:30pm
Bike Rodeo	Lakeview Terrace Park	Thu, May 1	6-8pm
Lakeview Terrace Farmers Market	Lakeview Terrace Park	Every Sat. from May 18-Sept. 21	9am-1pm
Whiz Bang Days	TBD	July 10-13	TBD
Pet and Wheel Parade	Sandborn Park	TBD	TBD
Wet n Wild Fun Day	Valley Place Park	TBD	TBD
Police and Fire Open House	Robbinsdale Police Station	Sat, August 9	11am-3pm
Robbinsdale Chamber of Commerce Main Street Meet and Greet	West Broadway, Robbinsdale	TBD	5-8pm



Questions?



Next steps/Stay connected

- Engagement email:
 - BLEoutreach@metrotransit.org
- **BlueLineExt.org**
 - For the latest project updates and to sign up for our newsletter
 - Connect with staff for your questions or schedule a presentation
- **Follow us:**
 - Twitter: @BlueLineExt
 - Facebook: MetroBlueLineExtension



A service of the Metropolitan Council
COUNTIES *Transit*
Improvement
BOARD

Metro Blue Line Extension : Downtown Robbinsdale Station Area Recommendations

Hennepin County, MN



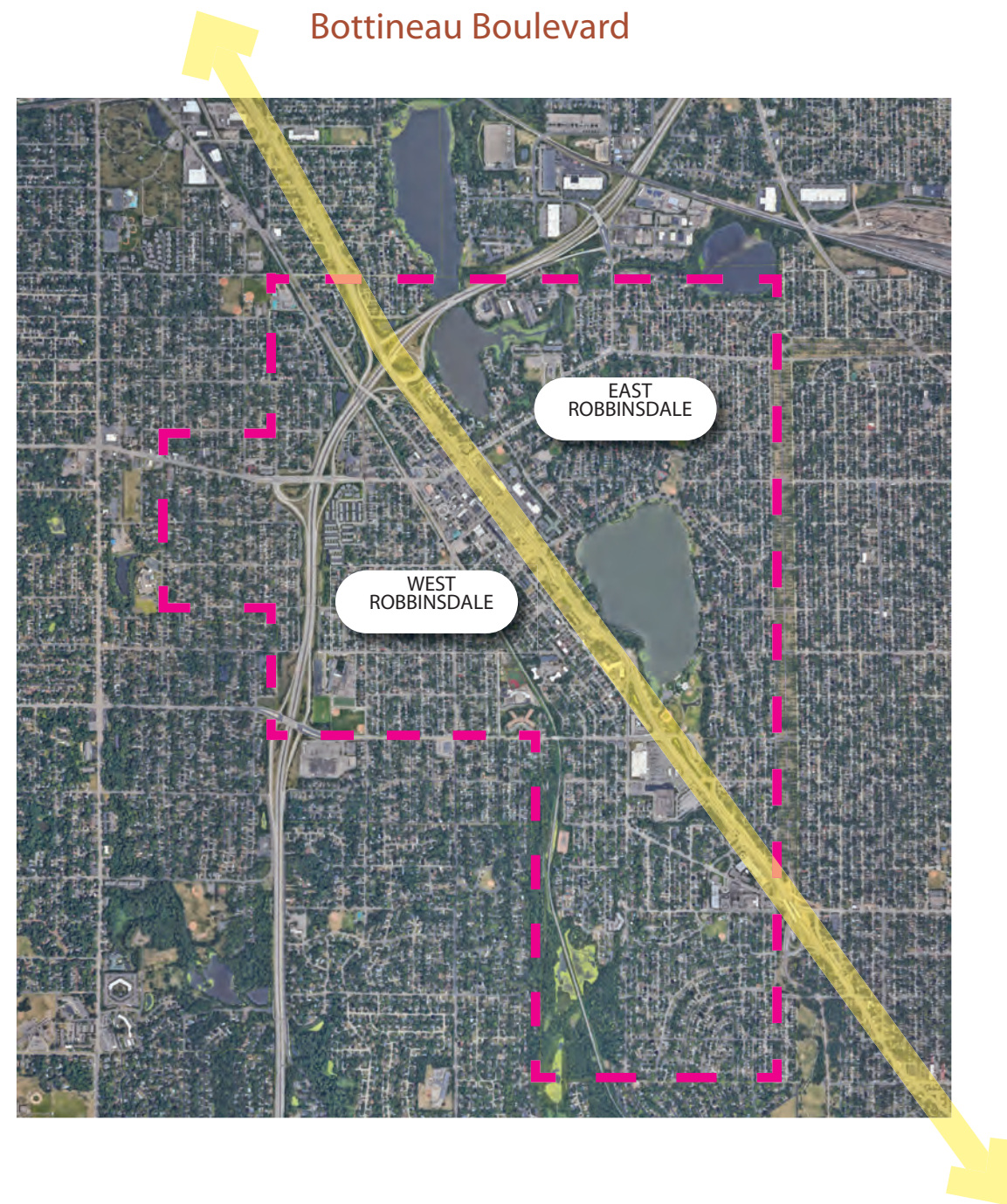
APPROACH:

Transit is not a panacea, nor will it deliver a utopia.

To get good things from it you have to work at it.

Transit is one component of a good downtown.

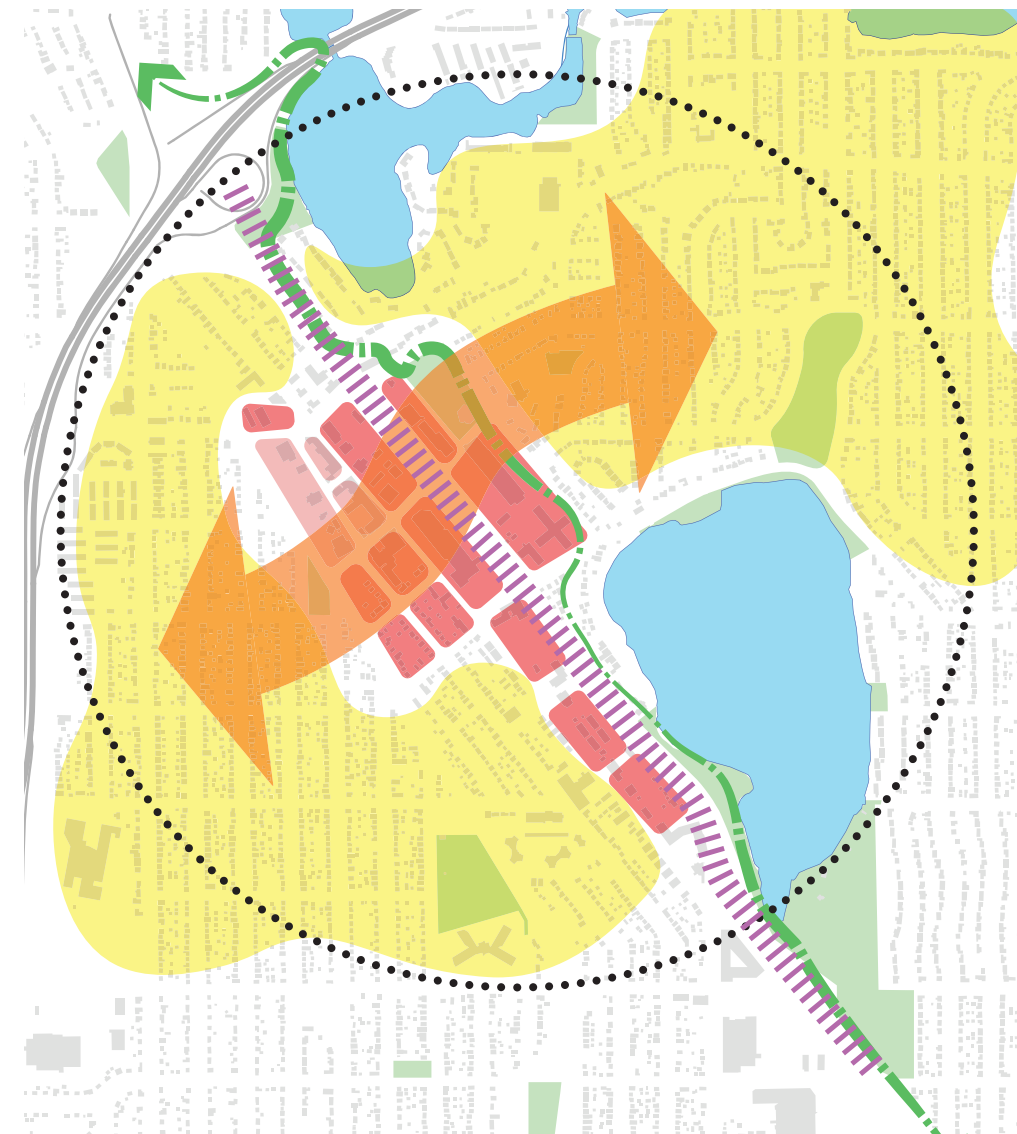
Center (all of) Robbinsdale in the LRT discussion.





“Let’s be the best “walk-up Station” in the region.”

“I want my kid to be able to bike to his friend’s house on the other side of Bottineau.”



STATION AREA PLAN GOALS

PRIMARY CITY GOALS

- Protect the human-scaled character of W Broadway Ave.
- Protect and grow the city's tax base.
- Create a 'front door' to the community along Bottineau Blvd
- Create a "walk up" station in downtown Robbinsdale that supports residential and business growth in Robbinsdale.
- Manage local traffic impacts from a park & ride.
- Enhance the safety of Bottineau Boulevard in coordination with LRT
- Explore the option of a new civic campus.

PRIMARY COUNTY GOALS

- Support transit-oriented development (TOD) in the county.
- Enhance the quality of places, prioritizing high-quality pedestrian environments.
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled, greenhouse gas emissions, and support compact redevelopment.
- Support climate and economic resiliency.
- Advance county disparity reduction efforts.
- Support the county's modal priority framework.
- Act on the county's climate action goals.

PRIMARY BLUE LINE EXTENSION PROJECT GOALS

- Expand the regional LRT transit network to improve regional connectivity.
- Deliver a feasible and safe LRT project in a timely and cost effective manner.

GOAL 1:

To grow the **diversity of experiences**, places, customers, and residents in the downtown while maintaining the authentic human scale of the core blocks of

GOAL 2

To transform Bottineau Boulevard from a barrier between east and west Robbinsdale into a **valued front door** to the community.

GOAL 3:

To ensure the introduction of LRT serves the **long term interests of Robbinsdale**.

GOAL 4:

To build an efficient and **amenity-rich public realm**.

GOAL 1:

To grow the diversity of experiences, places, customers, and residents in the downtown while maintaining the authentic human scale of the core blocks of West Broadway.

GOAL 2

To transform Bottineau Boulevard from a barrier between east and west Robbinsdale into a valued front door to the community.

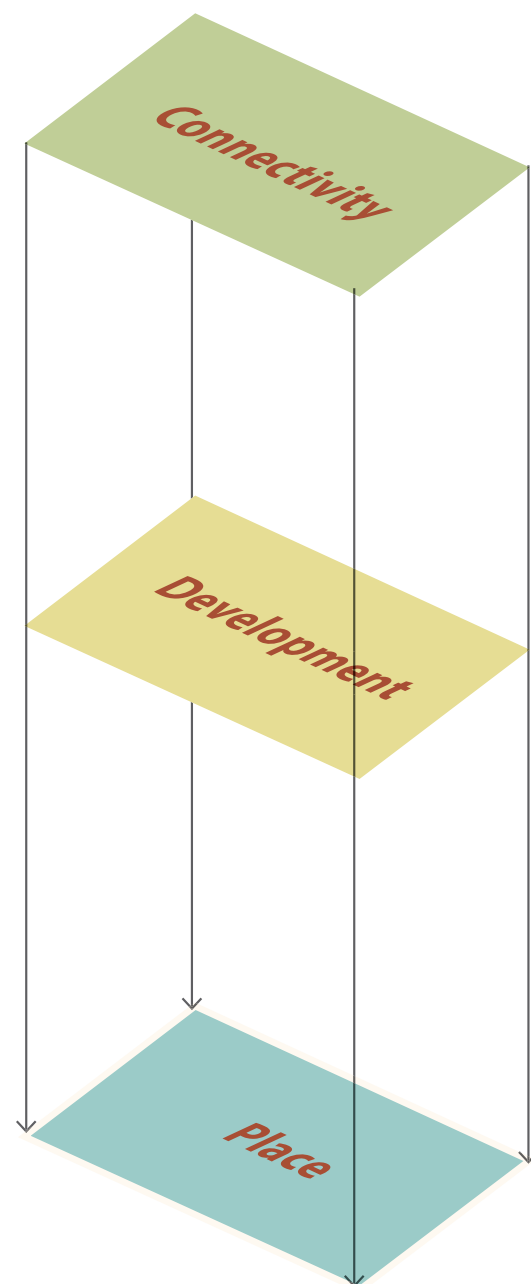
GOAL 3:

To ensure the introduction of LRT serves the long term interests of Robbinsdale .

GOAL 4:

To build an efficient and amenity-rich public realm .





1. Develop local **multi-modal connections** to and through downtown from all parts of Robbinsdale.

2. Enhance the **safety and comfort of Bottineau Boulevard** and its crossings to serve Robbinsdale businesses and residents.

3. Encourage **redevelopment on underutilized properties** in order to strengthen the broader downtown and protect its historic core.

4. Establish a **district parking system** that simplifies access to parking and allows people to park once and walk to multiple places.

5. Establish a **civic campus** that improves delivery of and access to public services.

6. Create **new public spaces** that elevate economic activity and quality of life value for all who visit, live, and work in downtown.



Connectivity

Localize Bottineau :
easier to cross, more pleasant to be on.

Urban Boulevard from 36th to 42nd, design to 35 MPH

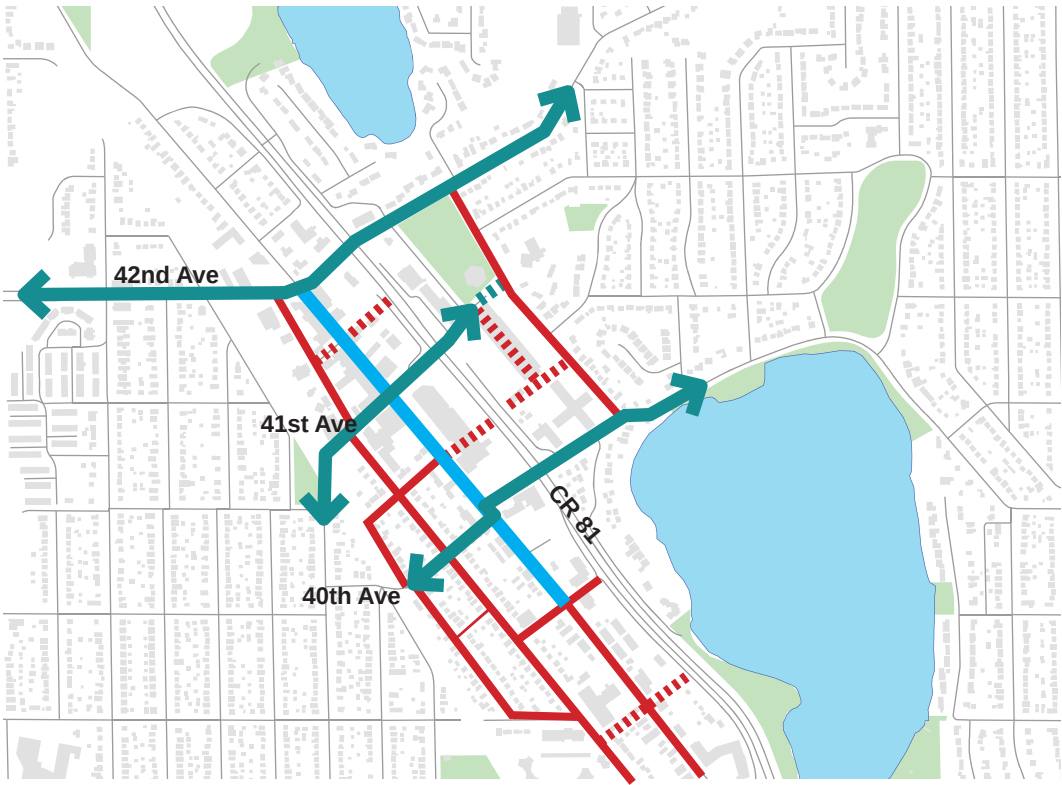
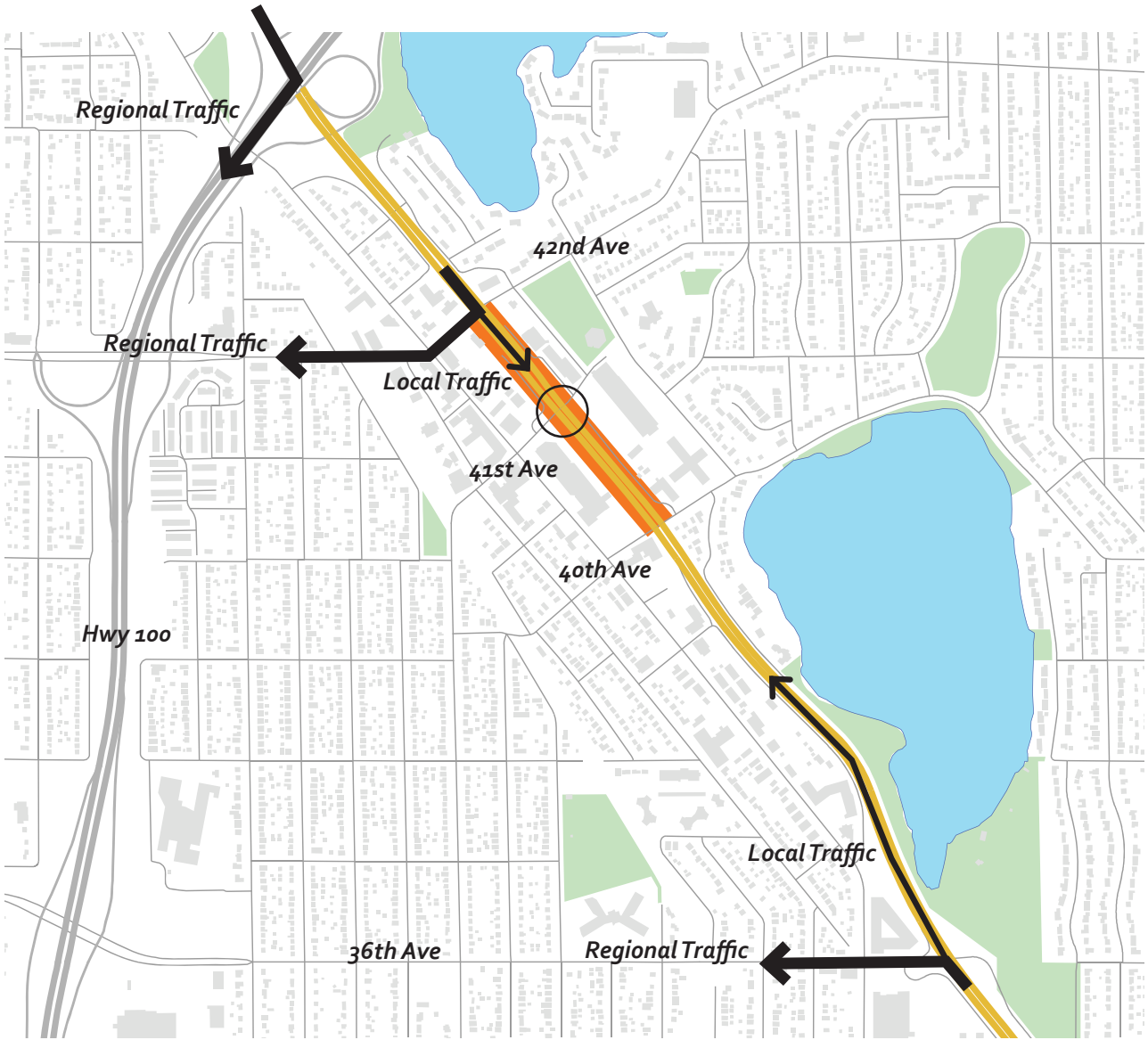
Eliminate right turn lanes and deceleration / acceleration lanes

Left turns to 36th, 40th, and 42nd

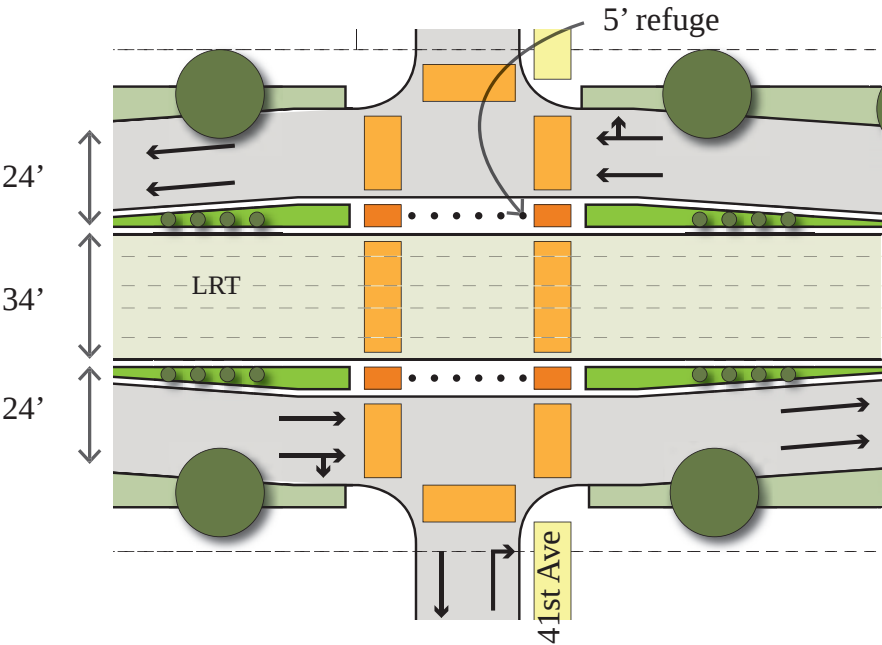
Introduce connections at the “half streets”

Eliminate frontage roads

Special Pedestrian treatment at 41st



Localize Bottineau



Redevelopment

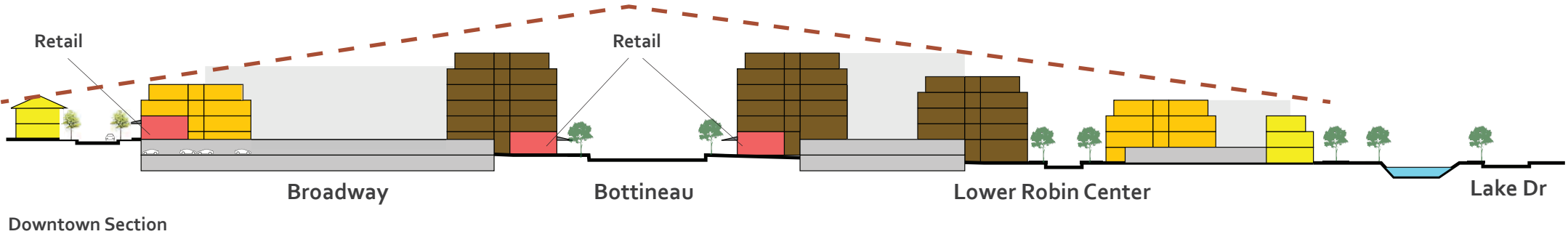
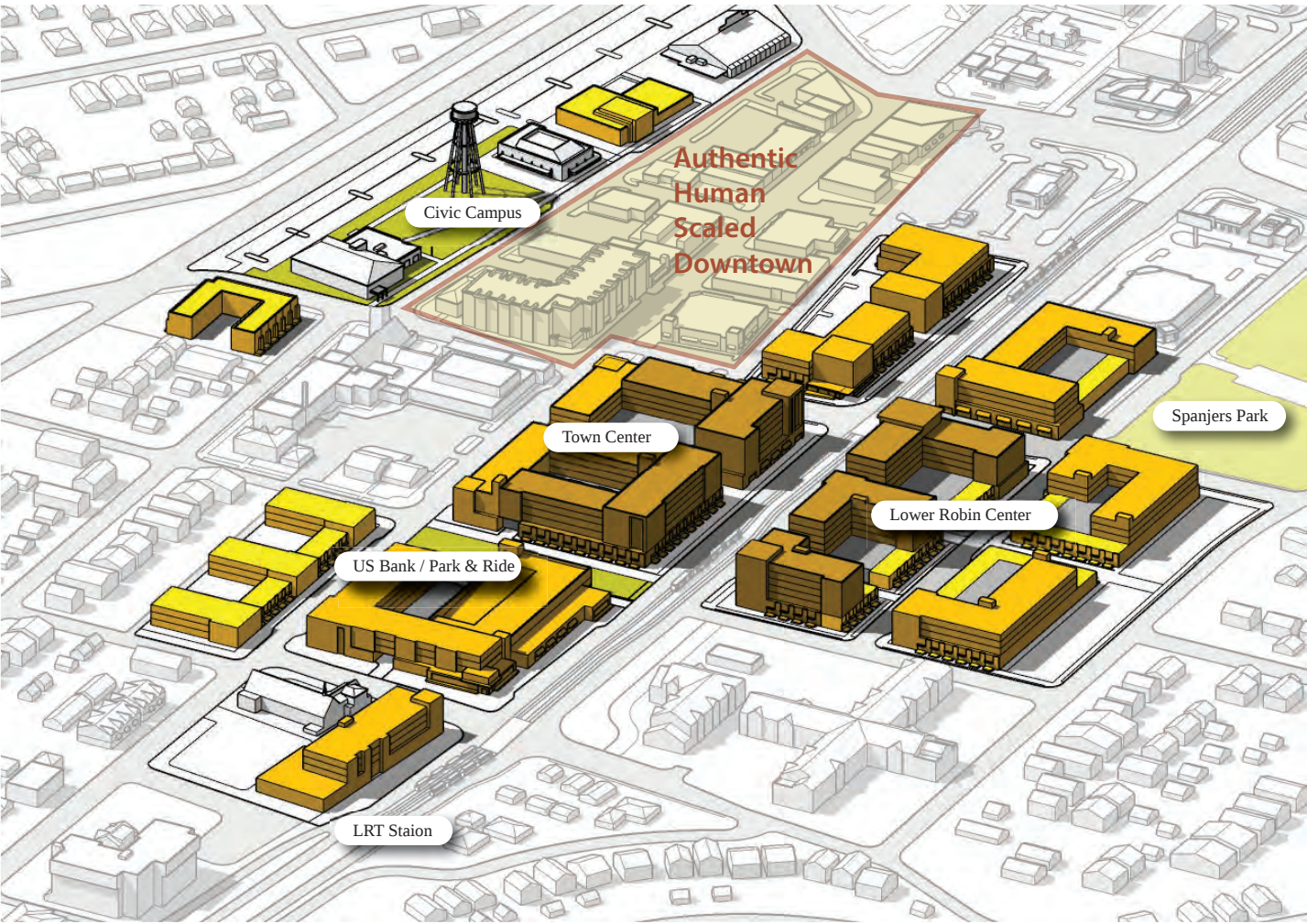
Redevelop in order to Protect:
direct growth to under-utilized properties

Scale up along Bottineau Blvd

Focus Retail at corners, away from strips

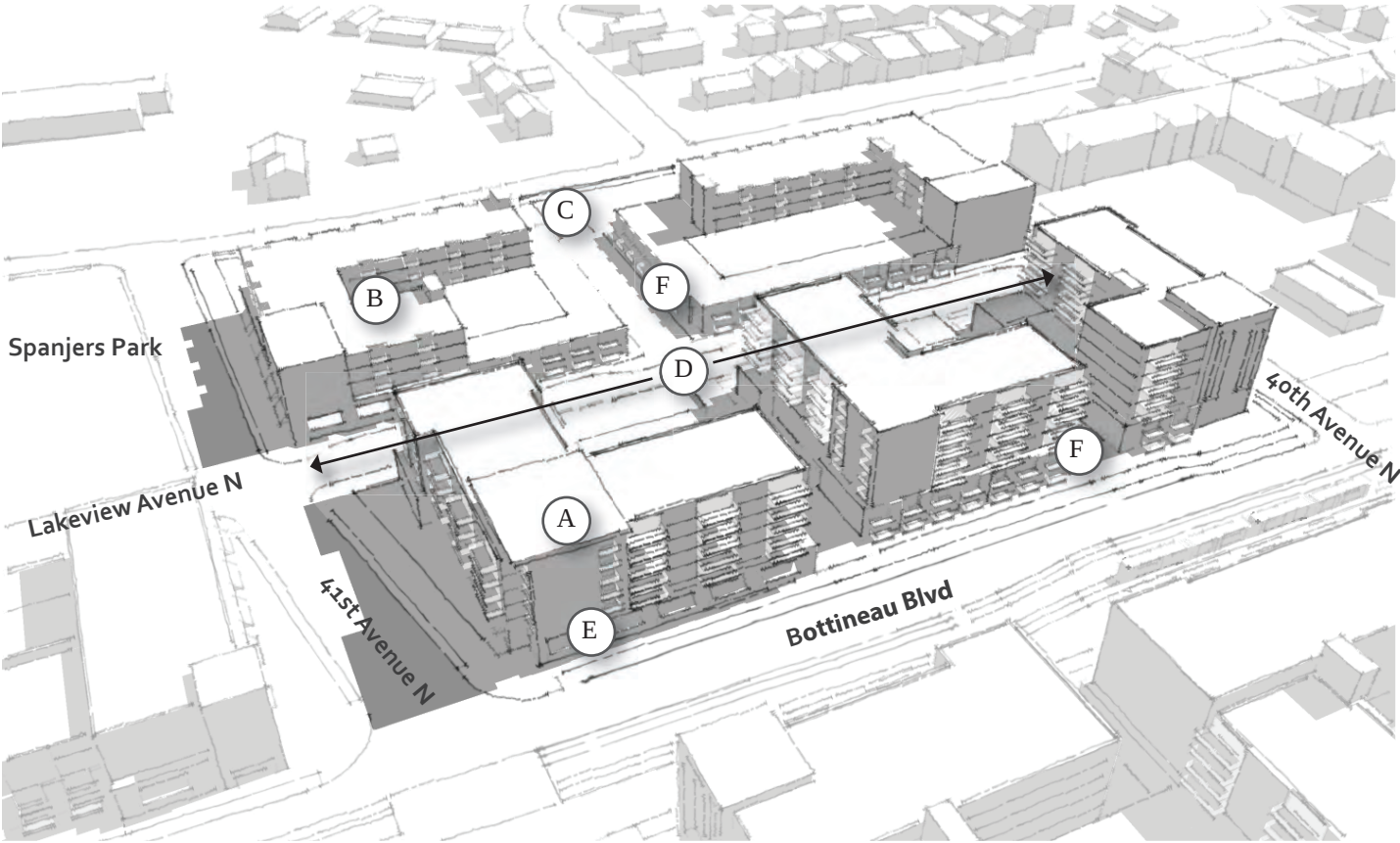
Divide the super blocks

Multiple buildings on each block



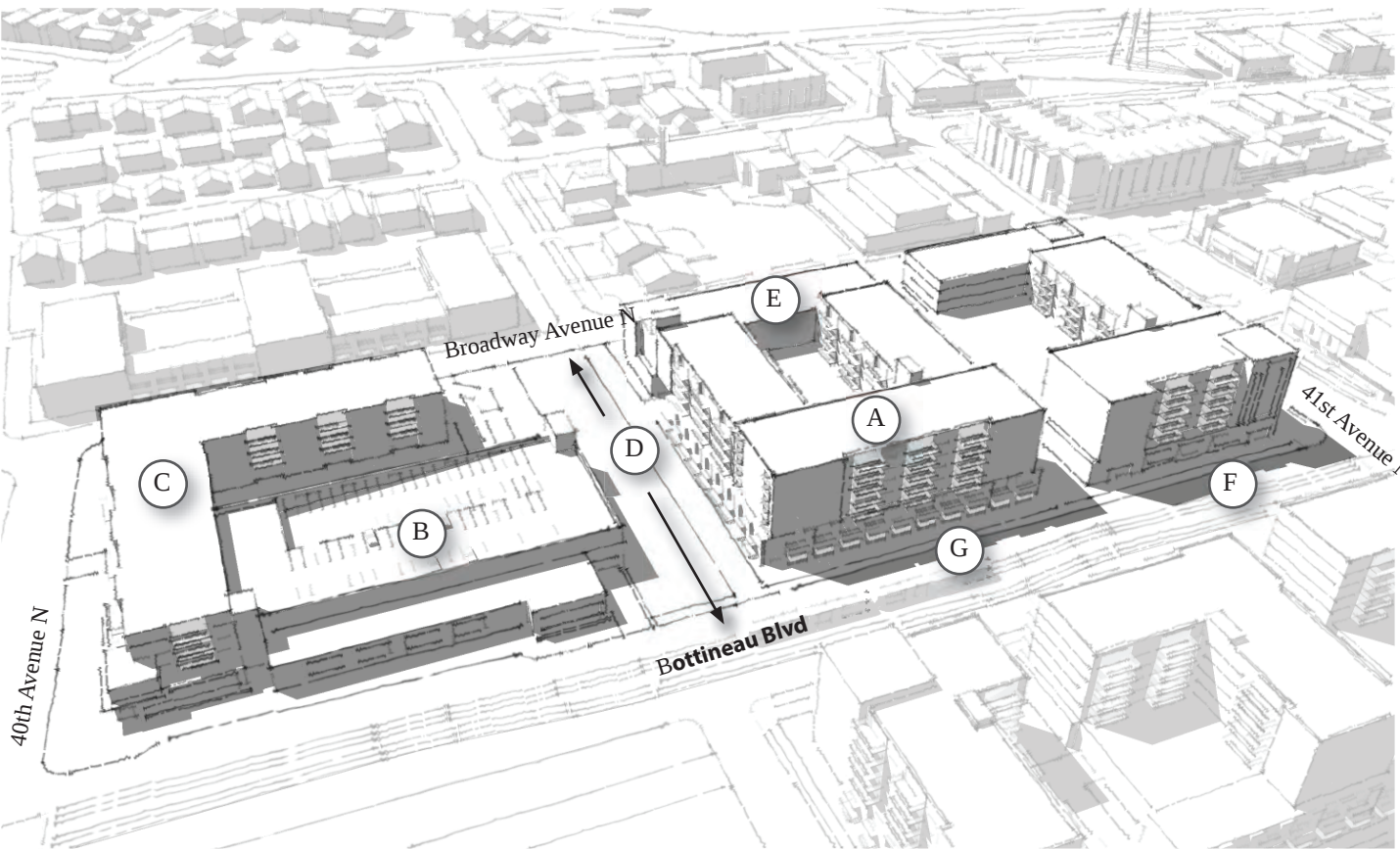
Redevelopment

Lower Robin Center



- (A) 6-7 Stories Mixed Use Development
- (B) 3-4 Stories Residential Development
- (C) Enhanced Stormwater Amenity
- (D) New Shared Street Connection
- (E) Retail Uses
- (F)

US Bank & Town Center



- (A) 6-7 Stories Mixed Use Development
- (B) Park and Ride
- (C) Park and Ride Residential Liner
- (D) Multi-Use Linear Park / Shared Street
- (E) 4 story mixed-use development
- (F) Retail uses
- (G) Walk-up residential units

Redevelopment

Tall Building Design

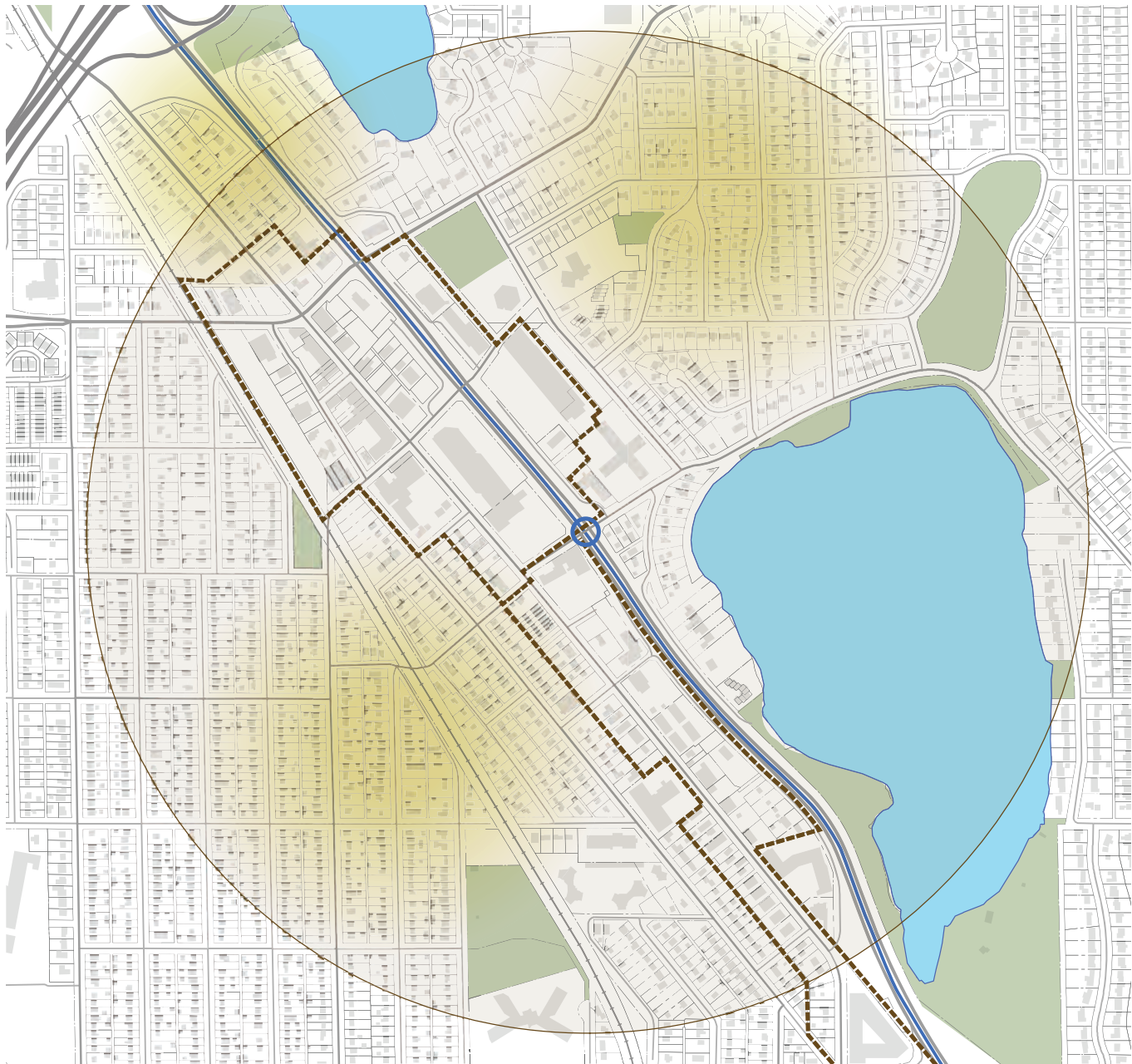


- (A) 8,000 sf maximum tower floorplate
- (B) Differentiate base vs. tower design
- (C) Coordinate base design with surrounding development
- (D) Position tower to limit shadowing on neighboring properties & public realm
- (E) Set the tower back from the public right of way

Redevelopment

Soft Growth:
growing the transit market beyond the Downtown

add transit users to neighborhoods without disturbing the existing character and perceived scale of the place



Accessory Dwelling Unit



Duplex



Cluster Development

Place

Prominent and connected public realm.

Adding public realm to meet the needs of a growing Downtown

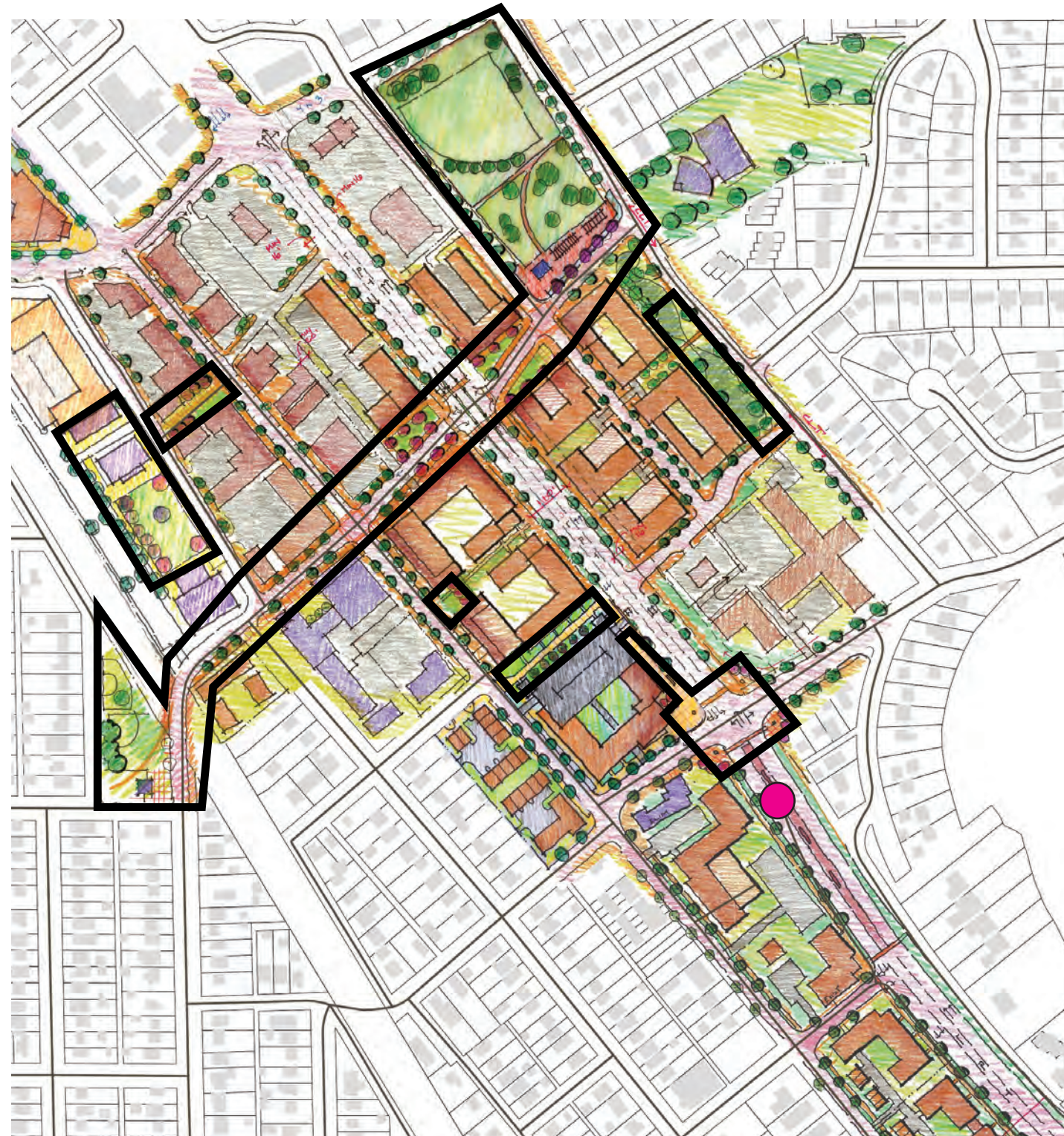
41st St Promenade

Civic Green

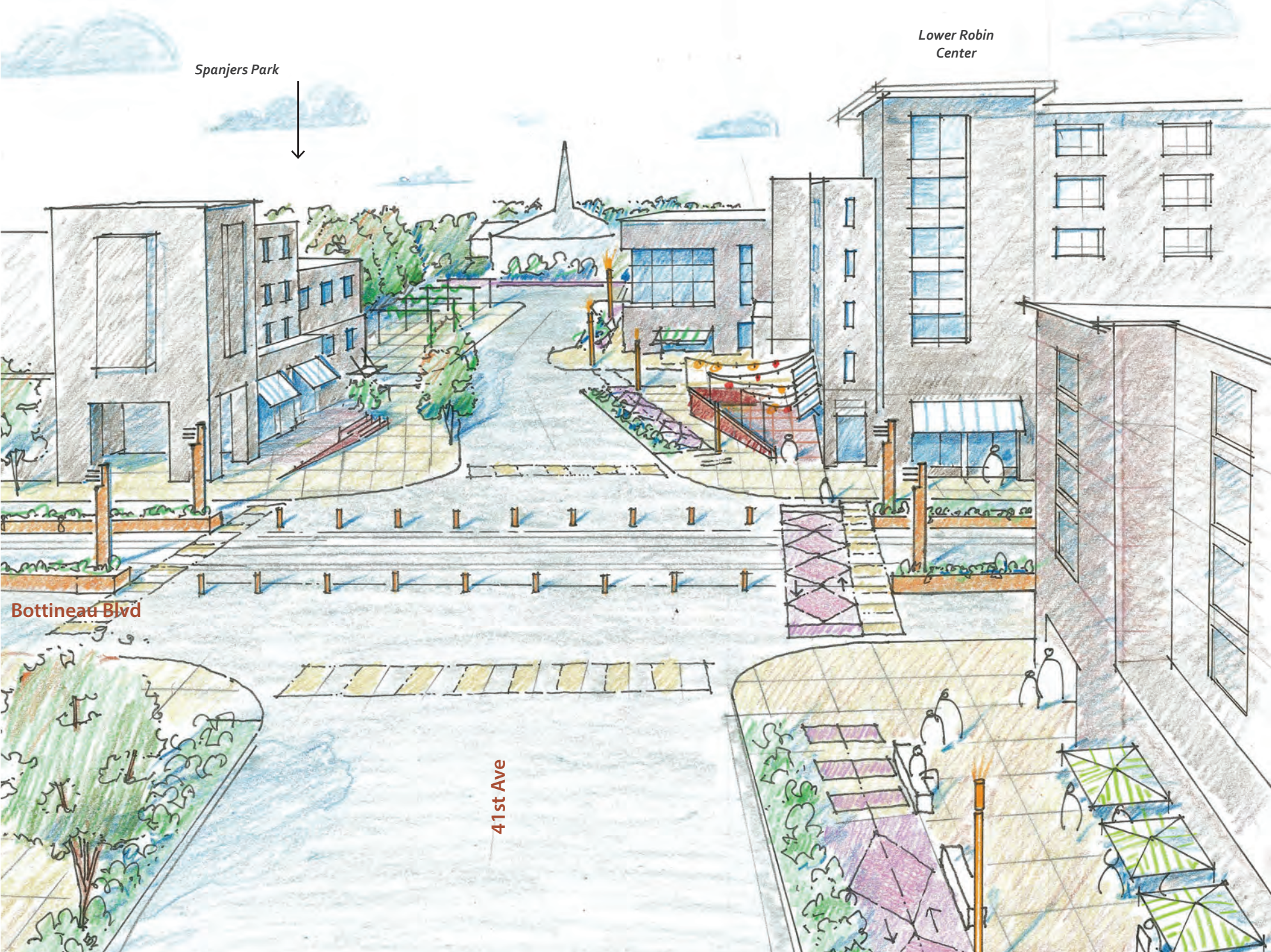
Spanjers Park

41 1/2 Street Plaza

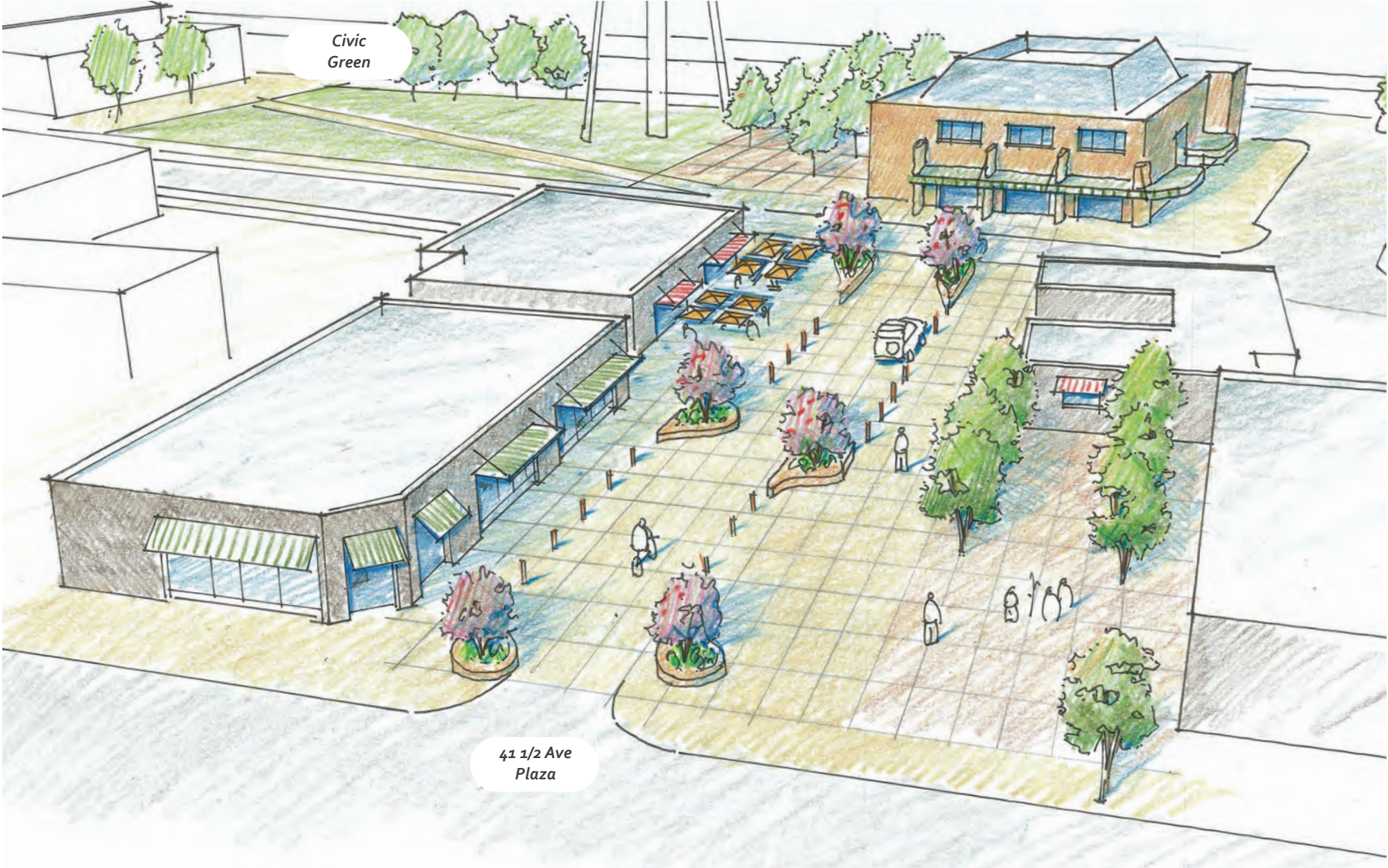
Platform and Transit Plaza



Place



Place





TO: Mayor and City Council
PREPARED BY: Tim Sandvik, City Manager
APPROVED BY: Tim Sandvik, City Manager
DATE: March 11, 2025
RE: Water Tower 1 - Lighting Policy

Background:

In the spring of 2024, the City powered the lights at Water Tower 1. Almost immediately, the City Council received feedback, including an abundance of concerns from the neighbors in the immediate area. At that time, Council and staff agreed it would be a best practice to turn lights off, until a retrofit could occur, that would allow the exterior (bowl) lights to be dimmed, and interior (pedestal) lights could be enhanced with a variety of colors and patterns.

Following, City staff tested the updated apparatus near the end of 2024, and in recent weeks, the City Council had the pleasure of hearing from residents in the immediate area.

Analysis:

As discussions continued, staff recommended that the City Council view the lights, in person, at a "test" that neighbors could also be present at - this special Council Work Session occurred on February 24th, 2025, at 8:15 pm. At that time, staff showed 100%, 25% and 10% illumination of the bowl, and shared some examples of what some color schemes on the pedestal might look like.

If Council supports the illumination of Water Tower 1, staff recommend a policy be created. Language might include:

- Bowl lighting must not exceed 25% threshold
- Lights shall only be illuminated until certain times - note, staff would recommend this change throughout the year as daylight length varies from 8 hours and 46 minutes (setting as early as 4:31pm in December) and 15 hours and 36 minutes (setting as late as 9:03pm in June)
- Special Events may be recognized with color schemes - if found appropriate, staff would request explicit directions on days/events/celebrations

Staff will provide a more formal set of proposed guidelines at the work session.

Recommendation:

Staff is looking for Council feedback on appetite of the creation of a policy, and if there is some, staff is requesting direction on details.

Attachments:

None

ORDINANCE NO. 2303

A REGULATION OF PET STORES AND THEREBY AMENDING REVISED CITY CODE - 1982 BY ADDING CHAPTER 6-900, REGULATION OF PET STORES

The City of Coon Rapids does ordain:

Section 1. Revised City Code - 1982 is hereby amended by adding Chapter 6-900,
Completion of Exterior work as follows: (additions double underlined)

CITY OF COON RAPIDS, MINNESOTA

CHAPTER 6-900

REGULATION OF PET STORES

6-901 Policy

The City Council finds that in accordance with the power granted to it by Minnesota Statutes Section 412.221, Subdivision 21 to regulate the keeping of animals, and to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the community, the City Council it is appropriate to adopt the regulations set forth below regarding the sale of dogs and cats at pet stores.

6-902 Definitions. Except where the term is expressly defined by other provisions or sections within this chapter, the following words and terms shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section:

(1) Animal Control Authority. Any governmental entity which is responsible for animal control operations in its jurisdiction.

(2) Animal Rescue Organization. Any not-for-profit organization which has tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the United States Internal Revenue Code, whose mission and practice is, in whole or in significant part, the rescue of animals and the placement of those animals in permanent homes, and which does not breed animals.

(3) Animal shelter. Any not-for-profit organization which has tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, which (1) accepts animals into a physical facility; (2) is devoted to the rescue, care, and adoption of stray, abandoned, unwanted or surrendered animals; (3) places animals in permanent homes or with animal rescue organizations; and (4) does not breed animals.

(4) Cat. A mammal that is wholly or in part the species *Felis domesticus*.

(5) Pet store. Any retail establishment, or operator thereof, which displays, sells, delivers, offers for sale, barters, auctions, gives away, or otherwise transfers companion animals in the City of Coon Rapids. This definition does not apply to animal control authorities, animal shelters, or animal rescue organizations.

(6) Pet store operator. A person or business entity who owns or operates a pet store.

6-903 Prohibition on Sales.

(1) No pet store shall sell, deliver, offer for sale, barter, auction, give away, or otherwise transfer or dispose of cats or dogs.

(2) Nothing in this section shall prohibit pet stores from collaborating with animal shelters, animal rescue organizations, and animal control authorities to offer space for such entities to showcase adoptable dogs and cats inside pet stores. Such animals shall not be younger than 8 weeks old. Dogs that are showcased for adoption shall not be kept overnight at a pet store.

6-904 Certificate of Source.

(1) A pet store shall post and maintain a Certificate of Source in a conspicuous place on or within three feet of each dog's or cat's kennel, cage, or enclosure.

(2) A Certificate of Source shall be provided to the adopter of any dog or cat.

(3) Certificate of Source records for each dog or cat shall be maintained by a pet store for at least one year from the last date that a dog or cat appeared in the store.

(4) Pet Stores shall make Certificates of Source immediately available for review upon the request of a peace officer or animal control authority, or a humane agent pursuant to Minnesota Statutes Section 343.06 acting on behalf of the City.

6-905 Inspection. Upon prior notice to the owner or occupant of a pet store, a City employee is authorized hereby to inspect the pet store for the purpose of ensuring compliance with this section.

6-906 Violation. It shall be deemed a violation of this section for any person to:

(1) Falsify a Certificate of Source.

(2) Resist, impede or hinder a City employee in the performance of his or her duties in inspecting any pet store.

(3) Violate any provisions of this section.

(4) The first violation by a person of this Chapter 6-900 is a petty misdemeanor and subsequent violations of this Chapter 6-900 within one year of a prior violation is a misdemeanor with the penalties for petty misdemeanors and misdemeanors determined by Minnesota Statutes.

Introduced this 2nd day of April, 2024

Adopted this ____ day of _____, 2024

Jerry Koch, Mayor

ATTEST:

Joan Lenzmeier, City Clerk

Pet Store-Puppy Mill Pipeline

The multi-billion dollar pet trade industry (see diagram below) includes commercial dog breeding operations, pet stores who place orders with these facilities, and other businesses that serve and profit from these sales.

There is considerable data on this industry; the following pages are meant to provide a brief overview.

NOTE:

- Not included in the diagram below are animal shelters and animal rescue organizations who often “pick up the pieces” for the pet trade, rescuing and caring for older breeding dogs, sick puppies, or unwanted or surrendered animals; these nonprofits assume the cost of care without financial assistance from the breeders or brokers.
- In Minnesota, veterinarians are mandated reporters of animal cruelty and are required, by law and rule, to report any known or suspected animal cruelty.



OVERVIEW: Commercial breeding facilities and pipeline to pet stores

Where do pet store puppies come from?

The above is a question that should be asked by consumers but rarely is.



Often, consumers go to a pet store and see a “cute” puppy. They may not even be in the market for a new pet but they buy — without knowing anything about where the puppy was born, the kennel conditions, or how the adult breeding animals (left behind in the kennels) are treated.

These pet stores are the face of high-volume breeding facilities. They are the distributor of these “products” (puppies), placing the welfare of animals at risk.

To increase sales, misleading statements are provided to consumers about the origins of the puppies and industry.

Photo above is puppy purchased from Four Paws and a Tail by Q. Moet; the puppy died shortly after purchase.

What is a puppy mill?

The term “puppy mills” has been used for decades to describe high-volume breeding facilities that mass produce (breed) puppies for the pet trade. Two definitions are provided below.

Franklin D. McMillan, DVM, in the *Mental Health of Dogs Formerly Used As ‘Breeding stock’ in Commercial Breeding Establishments*, provided the following definition of “puppy mill”:

"Any profit-centered breeding facility in which the number of dogs has exceeded the owner's ability and/or willingness to meet the physical and emotional needs of all of the animals to a degree that permits the animals to have a decent quality of life."

In January 1984, in the case *Avenson v. Zegart* (577 F. Supp. 958, U.S. District Court, Minnesota, Sixth Division, Civ. No. 6-83-903), the following definition was given:

"A puppy mill is a dog breeding operation in which the health of the dogs is disregarded in order to maintain a low overhead and maximize profits."

The term itself is often disputed by pet stores, who claim they don’t buy from “puppy mills” and yet provide no data to dispute the definitions above.

For purposes of this document, we will use the term “puppy mill,” “high-volume breeding facility,” or “industrial breeding operations.” Unlike smaller, responsible breeders with limited dogs and litters, these facilities are licensed by the USDA to sell to pet stores. There are an estimated 10,000 puppy mills mass producing puppies for the pet trade.

The number of animals: mass production

The size of a breeding kennel can vary widely based on the number of animals and breeds. Size — the number of animals within a kennel — is a critical factor, which can dictate the type of enclosures and caging needed and also the staff and costs necessary to properly observe, house, feed, exercise, socialize and medically care for the physical and emotional needs of each animal. High-volume breeding facilities “mass produce” puppies to fill the orders placed by brokers and pet stores.

To maximize sales and profits, corners are cut in many operations such as less staff to engage and enrich the animals, inadequate veterinary care, inadequate shelter or food, and other factors, resulting in harm to the animals. Considerable data over decades, including audits, investigations, consumer reports, and inspections, have documented these operational practices.

Adult breeding animals

Perhaps the most distressing concern with these high-volume breeding facilities are the adult male and female dogs left behind in the kennels. These adult breeding animals are confined in the kennel for years and bred repeatedly to produce as many litters as possible. When the female has a problem getting pregnant or starts delivering dead puppies, the animal is no longer considered of use to the breeder. The adult animal is then retired, killed, sold at auction, or given away to an animal shelter, rescue, or other entity who pays for their care at their own expense.



Photo: A mother dog with litter from a Winona County breeding operation; pet stores are known to buy from breeder(s) in this county.

The litters

Puppies are sold to pet stores, brokers or directly to consumers around 8 weeks of age. This is a critical development period for the animal and yet they are pulled from the mother and littermates and often shipped across state lines where they may be re-caged at a broker's building then shipped again to pet stores, where they will be caged until sold. Studies have documented this sudden separation and stressful transport can lead to fear, anxiety, and other lasting behavioral problems that may be difficult or impossible to treat.

Industrial breeding operations

It is rare to obtain video that shows a dog breeding operation.

Below is one video showing an example of an industrial dog breeding kennel. This video was taken by Companion Animal Protection Society (CAPS).

Breeder facility name: A.J.Angels Video date: 07/10/2019 (click on photo)

Per 10/21/2021 USDA inspection report, AJ Angels had 1,172 dogs and puppies in its kennel located in Morrison County. A recent application by this facility to the USDA for a federal breeding license reports that this breeder could have, at any one time, 2,000 dogs at the kennel.

NOTE: Breeding operations can vary in size. Lack of staff, observation, socialization, enrichment, exercise, and other factors can greatly impact the physical and mental health of the animals.



VIDEOS — Videos taken by Companion Animal Protection Society (CAPS)

BREEDER: DAVID J NISLEY — CVI data documents multiple puppies being sold to a pet store in Minnesota.
David J Nisley video on July 11, 2018 (click on photo)



BREEDER: DANIEL RAY MILLER — CVI data documents multiple puppies sold to a pet store in Minnesota.
Daniel Ray Miller video on July 11, 2018 (click on photo)



When placed on the grass, the dog freezes, unsure how to behave outside of her cage.

Physical health

The physical health of adult dogs and puppies can also be impacted by conditions in high-volume breeding facilities. Poor conditions can cause stress, disease, and injuries for the animals. Such as:

- Lack of sanitation and if animals are standing in feces or urine can spread bacteria and disease
- Contaminated water and food receptacles can harbor microorganisms
- Pests and mice droppings can spread diseases and viruses
- Overcrowded conditions, including confinement and barking, can increase stress and weaken immune systems
- Too cold or too hot temperatures (indoors or outdoors) can cause stress and death

Poor housing conditions and minimal veterinary care can contribute to a host of diseases and injuries, including inheritable disorders. Examples (*per MSVMA Veterinary Report on Puppy Mills, May 2013*):

- Lack of dental care can cause infection, pain, and emaciation (loss of eating due to lack of teeth)
- Cage/wire injuries to feet, legs, face, and body (i.e., standing for years on a wire floor in cage)
- Bacterial diseases: kennel cough, brucellosis, staph sp. infections, pneumonia
- Parasitic infections: giardia, hook worms, tape worms, round worms, whip worms, lung worms
- Viral Infection: parvo virus, distemper virus, parainfluenza type I and II
- Heritable Disorders: orthopedic problems (e.g., early hip dysplasia, luxating patella), heart abnormalities, neurological disorders, ocular abnormalities, chronic immune diseases, allergies



Of importance: Just because a kennel looks clean or caging is "modern" does not mean that the animals are doing well. (Newer caging at left from a *prelicense* USDA inspection report photo.)

This issue is about the physical, mental, behavioral, and social well-being of each animal. This is about canine health.

Questions of concern:

How often does each dog get out of the cage?

How much attention is given to every dog *every day*?

How often is each dog allowed to exercise - a full run or walk with play?

Are unhealthy dogs with inheritable diseases bred?

Are dogs allowed to "get away" from constant barking or aggressive dogs?

What is the lighting and temperature in the kennel?

What is the bedding for sleeping (i.e., cement floor causing arthritis)?

What happens to adult dogs when they can no longer breed?

Psychological health: the need for socialization and enrichment

The psychological and emotional health of dogs and puppies in dog breeding facilities is critical to the well-being of each animal — and yet this mental health is often the most neglected or misunderstood.

Breeding dogs who are not provided with basic care and attention result in animals with psychological and behavioral problems, often requiring **years of rehabilitation**.

LINK: [What to Expect When Rescuing a Puppy Mill Dog](#)

This psychological harm can be severe and is due to treatment of the dogs and exposure of the dogs to conditions in the kennels. **Dr. Franklin McMillan conducted a distinguished study** of 1,169 dogs who were formerly kept for breeding purposes in commercial breeding facilities. He found puppy mill dogs "displayed significantly higher rates of fear (both social and nonsocial), house-soiling, and compulsive staring." The fear-related behaviors included dogs who were always on alert or on edge, skittish, easily scared or spooked, frightened most of the time, sensitive to touch, and other issues.

LINK: [Mental health of dogs formerly used as 'breeding stock' in commercial breeding establishments](#)

Two explanations by Dr. McMillan:

- **Exposure to stress.** Dogs in high-volume breeding facilities can be exposed to many stressful experiences. Examples: "confinement, lack of enrichment, lack of play, inability to escape from cage-mates, lack of positive human interaction, excessive noise, noxious smells, temperature extremes, wire cage flooring, inadequate health care — all can be sources of psychological distress, suffering and trauma." Severe cases can result in stress-induced psychopathy, where the animals show stereotypical behaviors such as pacing and circling, over-grooming and self-mutilation, head-bobbing, weaving, swaying, and excessive licking.
- **Inadequate early socialization.** Inadequate socialization "during the first few months of a puppy's life leaves the social brain connections improperly configured for health and positive social relationships throughout the dog's life. With rare exceptions, puppy mill breeding dogs are themselves conceived, born, and raised in puppy mills and live in throughout their sensitive periods for socialization."

A second study by Dr. McMillan, provides findings with puppies from pet stores, including greater aggression, fear, and separation-related problems. LINK: [Differences in behavioral characteristics between dogs obtained as puppies from pet stores and those obtained from noncommercial breeders](#)

Because mental health is so important, required socialization and enrichment of each dog with adequate staffing of the facility for daily observation of the animals' well-being were specifically added to the Minnesota dog and cat breeder law (Minn. Stat. sec. 347.59). Due to lack of data transparency by the MN Board of Animal Health who administers the law, it is unknown if this language is being enforced by the state.

Photo: Dog from MN breeder who supplies puppies to stores.



What is the puppy mill-pet store pipeline?

Puppy selling pet stores, may claim “they do not buy from puppy mills” and yet stores need a wide variety of puppies available on a continual basis in order to stock their cages. To keep plenty of “inventory” on hand, stores deal with large-scale (high-volume) suppliers, such as puppy mills and puppy mill brokers.

A puppy broker is a middleman engaged in the business of re-selling puppies who were bred elsewhere. The use of puppy brokers makes it difficult for consumers to know the origin of the puppy (where the animal was bred). In Minnesota, disclosure of the original breeder is only required once the purchase of the puppy has been made. This does not allow for an informed purchase.

There are two types of pet stores in Minnesota:

1. Pet stores that do not buy and sell dogs acquired from high-volume breeding facilities and have instead chosen to sell pet supplies and services and/or use their stores to assist local animal rescue organizations and shelters with adoptions. These types of stores help unwanted and surrendered animals find permanent homes.
2. Pet stores that place orders with and buy puppies and kittens from high-volume breeding operations (puppy mills) or brokers and sell to unsuspecting consumers.

There are a few remaining pet stores in Minnesota that still obtain dogs and cats from high-volume breeding facilities and sell these animals to consumers. The vast majority of pet stores in Minnesota and nationwide have switched to a humane pet store model and are operating successfully.

Pet Store example: Making the transition to a Humane Pet Store Model



Angel Duratti, owner of Angel's Pet World in Wisconsin, transitioned to a humane pet store business model in 2010. For years, she had purchased puppies from a large commercial dog breeder in Pipestone County (still operating). Duratti no longer sells puppies and kittens from commercial breeders.

Explains Duratti: "For me, the switch was about doing the right thing. So many of the puppies we bought from this Minnesota breeder had health problems, such as kennel cough, giardia, coccidian, roundworms, skin issues, ear issues, patellas, parvo, and more.... I decided we could no longer buy from breeders — instead, I chose to go humane, which meant working with rescue groups and holding adoption days at my stores. Some people ask me how that decision impacted my sales. Within 2 years, our customer base grew about 70%. People who really care about animals and oppose puppy mills started buying their pet supplies from us. Going humane has changed everything. The reward is greater. I fully support the humane pet store model."

Do responsible breeders sell to pet stores?

Responsible breeders, by the fact that they are smaller and invest in each dog, do not sell to pet stores. These types of breeders want to know who the buyer is and if the buyer is an appropriate “fit” for the dog and family. 96% of National Breed Clubs include statements that their breeders should not and/or do not sell to pet stores.

What is a USDA-licensed dog breeder?

Federal licenses for dog breeders are required under the Animal Welfare Act (7 U.S.C. § 2133).

The license is administered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). If a breeder has more than 4 breeding females and are selling to brokers, pet stores, or sight unseen, they are required to have a federal license. ("Sight unseen" means the puppy is not literally seen and touched before a purchase.)

While puppies sold to pet stores must be licensed by the USDA, the implication (to consumers) is that this license suggests each kennel provides the highest care and welfare for each animal.

A federal license is not a stamp of approval.

The USDA has stated that their standards are minimal requirements for the handling, shelter, space, feeding, veterinary care, sanitation, and other factors for animals (licensees).

In 1985, 1992, 1995, 2005, 2010, and 2021, six major audits were conducted by the Office of Inspector General (OIG) of the USDA's Animal Care (AC) Program. Each audit identified multiple deficiencies by the USDA-APHIS-AC, and these deficiencies (in past years) were not corrected. In fact, the Inspector General cited the USDA for a "lack of clear National guidance."

Review of USDA conduct by the Office of Inspector General (OIG):

Figure 3: Dog with Excessive Ticks



The inspector required the breeder to take only eight of the numerous infested dogs to a veterinarian.³¹ However, since the inspector did not identify the dogs in the inspection report, it is uncertain if this dog was treated.

Audit - In 2010, the Office of Inspector General conducted an audit of the USDA inspection processes. Audit documented significant failures by the USDA to protect animals within these facilities.

LINK: [Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service Animal Care Program Inspections of Problematic Dealers](#)

Photo is one of many photos from the 2010 OIG audit of the USDA of licensed dog breeders. The dog is covered in ticks. Facility had been licensed and inspected by the USDA.

Audit - In 2021, the OIG conducted an audit of the USDA-APHIS. Report published June 2021.

Due to COVID, they were not able to enter the facilities; however, they found the USDA did not address complaints. Animal Care program Oversight of Dog Breeders Audit Report 33601-0002-31

LINK: [Animal Care Program Oversight of Dog Breeders Audit Report 2021](#)

Review by other sources:

Article — In October 2021, the National Geographic published a review of the USDA’s conduct over the past years, accusing the USDA of ignoring animal welfare violations in favor of business interests. “Former USDA employees say inspectors were discouraged from documenting poor welfare.”

LINK: [USDA accused of ignoring animal welfare violations in favor of business interests](#)

MN animal cruelty cases — Animal Folks has worked on numerous puppy mill cases in Minnesota. In three animal cruelty cases (where the breeder was charged and convicted of animal cruelty under state law), the facility was still operating with a federal USDA license. Minnesota breeder examples with links:

- Kathy Bauck: [Kathy Bauck](#)
- Deborah Rowell: [Deborah Rowell](#)
- Dayna Bell: [Dayna Bell](#)

DOJ Lawsuit — In September 2021, the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) filed a civil suit against Daniel Gingerich, a commercial dog breeder in Iowa, USDA 42-A-1632 for violating the Animal Welfare Act.

LINK: [Civil action lawsuit against Daniel Gingerich](#)

Among many horrors on the property, in April 2021 Golden Retriever #142 (photo below; later named Goldie) was found in a filthy barn with no water and her bones protruding. Upon return in May 2021, Goldie’s condition had worsened with no corrections. In July 2021, USDA inspectors found Goldie in an even worse condition along with dead dogs that Gingerich was hiding. The USDA did not issue penalties for this cruelty and Daniel Gingerich continued to operate. His license was suspended on September 3, 2021.

This is a stark example of the inability of the USDA to properly enforce the Animal Welfare Act (AWA).



Research — In regard to the effectiveness of the USDA and the protection of animals, a report published by The Washington Post in 2018 showed that warnings, violations, and penalties cited by the USDA plummeted. See chart below.

LINK: [USDA’s enforcement of animal welfare laws plummeted in 2018, agency figures show](#)

Another article, published in February 2019 by The Washington Post, presented additional research showing that "USDA inspectors documented 60 percent fewer violations at animal facilities in 2018 from the previous year." See diagram below. (Credit: The Washington Post. Source: Animal Welfare Institute from USDA citations.) Article describes other factors and decisions by the USDA.

LINK: [The USDA is issuing far fewer citations to zoos, labs and breeders for animal welfare violations](#)



Lawsuit – Multiple lawsuits have been filed against the USDA for its inept processes in the protection of animals in federally licensed facilities.

- In 2021, ASPCA filed a lawsuit against the USDA for its nonenforcement policy.
LINK: [ASPCA Sues USDA for its Non-Enforcement Policy on the Animal Welfare Act](#)
- In 2024, ASPCA filed a federal lawsuit against the USDA alleging that the agency acted contrary to law by issuing a dog dealer license to Steve Kruse, an Iowa cased dealer with a decades-long history of animal welfare violations.
LINK: [ASPCA Sues USDA for Enabling Cruel Puppy Mill](#)

Whistleblowers – Former USDA inspectors and veterinarians as well as animal technicians have spoken up with concerns about the USDA and its inspection practices and policies. Example of one statement made by Oregon’s former USDA Inspector Dr. Isis Johnson-Brown:

"More than once, I was instructed by a supervisor to make a personal list of violations of the law, cut that list in half, and then cut that list in half again before writing up my inspection reports. The USDA inspection system is comprised of a 'good ol' boy' network that blatantly defies federal laws which, even if they were enforced, are too ineffectual to protect the animals."

Source, article: CBS News; LINK: [Animal Cruelty Caught On Tape](#)

Various bills have been introduced in the U.S. Senate and House to try and address concerns.

Further considerations

Enforcement of the Animal Welfare Act by the USDA has been proven to be problematic, resulting in harm to animals. Additional data about the USDA and concerns, including other whistleblower statements and lawsuits, can be provided.

Stating a commercial breeding operation that sells to a pet store is “USDA licensed” is accurate; implying this license ensures the health, safety, and well-being of breeding dogs and puppies is misleading and deceptive based on numerous audits, studies, and other documentation provided throughout the past years.