



CITY OF SOUTH ST. PAUL MEETING AGENDA

PLANNING COMMISSION

Council Chambers
125 3rd Avenue North
South St. Paul, MN 55075

Wednesday, June 4, 2025
7:00 PM

- 1. ROLL CALL**
- 2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**
- 3. MINUTES:**
 - A. 05.07.2025 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
- 4. NEW BUSINESS:**
- 5. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**
- 6. OTHER BUSINESS:**
 - A. South Concord Corridor Small Area Plan
- 7. STAFF UPDATES:**
- 8. ADJOURNMENT**

**MINUTES OF MEETING
SOUTH ST. PAUL PLANNING COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY MAY 7, 2025**

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY CHAIR FEHRMAN AT 7:00 P.M.

1) Roll Call

Present: Tyler Fehrman
Tim Felton
Geoff Fournier
Tracy Haye
James Hart
Andrew Hoffman
Brianne Miller
Michael Healy, Planning Manager

Absent: None

2) APPROVAL OF AGENDA – Chair Fehrman proposed to add an item to the agenda to discuss adding a new permanent agenda item- Motion to approve the agenda as amended– Fehrman/ Miller (7-0).

3) APPROVAL OF MINUTES –April 2, 2025 –Motion to approve as presented– Fournier/ Miller (7-0).

4) NEW BUSINESS

None.

5) PUBLIC HEARINGS

A. Comprehensive Plan Amendment to Update Future Land Use Map Guidance for City-Owned Facilities

Mr. Healy presented the staff report. There are several city-owned parcels whose comprehensive plan guidance on the future land use map does not match the existing zoning or use of the parcel. Per State Law, the City is supposed to always be working to address inconsistencies between its future land use map and its zoning map. City Staff and the City Attorney have identified four inconsistencies between the future land use map and the zoning map for City-owned facilities. These four facilities include: a parcel next to Wentworth Avenue that hosts a drinking water well and radium treatment plant, a parcel next to I-494 that hosts a drinking water well and a pumphouse building, the Public Works building, and the Doug Woog Ice Arena. Staff recommend that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

Commissioner Haye asked if the comprehensive plan amendment at the water treatment site on Wentworth Avenue could open up the site to redevelopment and the loss of the archery range. Mr. Healy explained that the archery range reconstruction and upgrades are a part of the water treatment plant project. Mr. Healy added that the site is not being rezoned and would still have zoning that would allow a municipal use and a public park. Commissioner Hart echoed Commissioner Haye's question. Mr. Healy explained that the zoning of the parcel was not changing but the guiding of the parcel on the Future Land Use Map would be changing to match the zoning of the property.

Commissioner Hart asked if split guidance might be appropriate for the site. Mr. Healy explained that split guidance is unusual for a single parcel. The property that today has split guidance, the Doug Woog Arena, would change to have one consistent guidance if the comprehensive plan amendment was approved. The Doug Woog Arena has four separate parcels and that is why the guidance is split.

Commissioner Miller asked Mr. Healy to elaborate on why a Comprehensive Plan Amendment can take 4-6 months and if the Met Council has a mandated deadline for reviewing comprehensive plan amendment requests. Mr. Healy explained that when the City or a developer decides to do a Comprehensive Plan Amendment, the City has to send notice of this to several public or governmental agencies and offer them 60 days to provide comments on the project. After the comment period, the City then submits a request for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to the Met Council. From there, the Met Council has 15 days to deem it complete. If they deem it complete, the Met Council then has 60 days to review the request and can extend the review of the request by an additional 60 days. After the Met Council approves the Comprehensive Plan Amendment, the amendment has to go back to the City Council for enactment, which can take another two weeks.

Chair Fehrman opened the public hearing.

No correspondence was received prior to the meeting and no one was present at the meeting to comment.

Chair Fehrman closed the public hearing.

Motion to recommend approval of a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to Update the Future Land Use Map Guidance for City-Owned Facilities- Hoffman/Fournier (7-0).

B. Interim Use Permits for a Temporary Concrete Batch Plant for AVR LLC

Mr. Healy presented the staff report. The Applicant is AVR LLC and they are requesting several Interim Use Permits (IUPs) for a temporary concrete batch plant at 843 Hardman Avenue South which is owned by the Danner Family Limited Partnership. The development team at the Danner Family Limited Partnership is actively putting together plans for City approval to redevelop 22 acres of their site into an office-warehouse industrial park. The City has been working with the Danner Family and has received various grants to help the development come to fruition. The concrete plant is part of the proposed reclamation plan for the site as opposed to just a stand-alone operation. Staff recommend approval of the proposed Interim Use Permit.

Commissioner Miller asked if the fee agreement fees were a one-time fee or an annual fee. Mr. Healy explained that the agreement is annual so the fees would be paid to the City annually.

Commissioner Haye asked what would happen if the IUP was denied as the property owner already owns the property. Mr. Healy explained that Danner had indicated that the redevelopment of the site is more financially feasible if they have the concrete batch plant on site and was not sure how this would impact the project if the IUP was denied.

Commissioner Hart asked staff to confirm if the IUP could be extended. Mr. Healy stated that an IUP has a defined end date and can always be extended but this is never guaranteed. Commissioner Hart asked Mr. Healy to elaborate on the impacts of the IUP to the Mississippi River Trail. Mr. Healy stated that the close proximity of the site to the Mississippi River Trail could cause visual impacts due to the height of the structure and increase the amount of dust along a segment of the trail.

Commissioner Fournier asked if the noise ordinance would apply to the use. Mr. Healy stated that the noise standards differ depending on the location and the government agency but that the Applicant would need to comply with the City's noise ordinance regardless. Mr. Healy deferred to the Applicant on the noise level of the use.

Mr. Healy and the commissioners discussed the future redevelopment plan for the site, its proximity to the proposed concrete batch plant, and how the zoning on the site would impact future redevelopment.

Commissioner Felton asked Mr. Healy to expand more on how the IUP is related to the reclamation of the site. Mr. Healy explained that the Danner site has poor soils and needs to be reclaimed in order for the site to be buildable. Part of the reclamation process involves an on-site concrete plant. Commissioner Felton shared his concerns about the development falling through and the site being used for exterior processing for an extended amount of time. Mr. Healy stated the IUP would be terminated one full year early if the development does not move forward. Because part of the Danner redevelopment plan includes the construction of a new road through the site and the City-owned parcel that will be redeveloped, the IUP would help the road construction project move forward. Commissioner Felton summarized that the IUP helps the Applicant redevelop the area at a lower cost to Danner and the City. Mr. Healy stated that was correct and added that the City would likely not approve something like this if the site was a greenfield site.

Chair Fehrman asked Mr. Healy to confirm that the redevelopment of the Danner site would increase the City's tax base. Mr. Healy confirm it would.

Josh Edwards of AVR LLC and Bryan Chirhart of Danner Family Limited Partnership were present to speak to the application.

Commissioner Hoffman asked about anticipated timelines for removing the existing concrete plant and construction of the new plant. Mr. Edwards shared that the existing plant could be removed in about 3 days and that the new concrete plant would be operational by September 1st of this year.

Chair Fehrman asked Mr. Chirhart to explain how this IUP is different than the previous IUPs that were granted to the site for a similar use and why the concrete plant is necessary for the redevelopment. Mr. Chirhart explained that the concrete plant would make the project more convenient but that the project would move forward even if the IUP is not approved.

Chair Fehrman asked Mr. Edwards about impacts to the Mississippi River Trail. Mr. Edwards explained that most modern concrete plants have a dust collector which reduce any potential air quality impacts.

Commissioner Haye asked Mr. Chirhart about how this request is different than previous uses. Mr. Chirhart explained that the IUP would lead to increased cost savings related to the redevelopment of the site.

Commissioner Fournier asked about potential noise impacts. Mr. Edwards explained that making concrete creates little noise. The noisiest portion of the process is related to the vehicles involved in bringing materials to and from the site.

Commissioner Hart asked if the Applicant had any concerns with the hours of operation. Mr. Edwards stated they did not.

Chair Fehrman opened the public hearing.

No correspondence was received prior to the meeting and no one was present to comment on the application.

Chair Fehrman closed the public hearing.

The Commissioners discussed the request, how it relates to redeveloping the area, and their concerns about the use remaining at the site if the redevelopment does not move forward.

Motion to recommend approval of the Interim Use Permits as presented- Fournier/Hoffman (6-1) (Felton)

6) OTHER BUSINESS

A. Proposed Planning Commission Communications

Chair Fehrman suggested the creation of a new regular agenda item where the Planning Commissioners can share community events or items of interest with the public. This would be similar to the “Council Communications” that are part of the City Council agenda.

Commissioner Miller asked if this would be within the scope of the duties of the Planning Commission. Mr. Healy stated that it would be slightly unusual for the Planning Commission to offer this type of agenda item.

Commissioner Felton stated that he felt this did not fall within the scope of the Planning Commission’s role.

Commissioner Haye shared her concerns about this type of agenda item being used to elevate a political platform or personal agenda.

Commissioner Hoffman echoed the points made by Commissioner Haye and Commissioner Felton.

Based on the feedback, no motion was brought forward to permanently add a new agenda item.

7) STAFF UPDATES

Mr. Healy shared that the zoning preemption bill that was proposed by the State Legislature does not appear to be moving forward so local zoning authority should remain as-is for at least another year.

7) ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn- Hoffman/Miller (7-0)



PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA REPORT

DATE:

June 4, 2025

DEPARTMENT:

Planning & Zoning

PREPARED BY:

Michael Healy

AGENDA ITEM NUMBER:

6.A.

MEETING TYPE

Regular Meeting

AGENDA ITEM

South Concord Corridor Small Area Plan

ACTION TO BE CONSIDERED OR DESIRED OUTCOME

A motion recommending approval of the South Concord Corridor Small Area Plan.

OVERVIEW

Purpose of the Proposed South Concord Corridor Small Area Plan

A small area plan is a focused planning effort that provides a detailed vision and guidance for a specific, smaller geographic area within a larger community. Small area plans typically address issues such as land use, infrastructure, transportation, economic development, and urban design. The act of adopting a small area plan does not have any immediate effect on zoning or change the way that property owners can use their properties. Adopting a small area plan does not commit the City to making any specific zoning changes. Rather, a small area plan is a visionary document that provides a framework for the City to look at updating its comprehensive plan, zoning map, zoning code, and subdivision ordinance to help achieve the vision for the small area. When both the Planning Commission and the City Council sign off on a small area plan, City Staff is then able to take the approved plan and use it as a roadmap to prepare ordinances and comprehensive plan amendments to implement the plan's goals. Each zoning ordinance amendment and comprehensive plan amendment still needs to be brought to the Planning Commission and City Council for a case-by-case review and there are still ample opportunities to wrestle with individual policy issues and develop the right zoning solution.

The proposed small area plan for the South Concord Corridor establishes a vision for the corridor and provides recommendations for creating a new zoning framework to implement that vision. The vision is firmly rooted in the results of the market study that was completed in 2024 during the first phase of the South Concord Corridor Study. The project team feels confident that the market will respond well to the vision and that the vision accurately reflects what is realistically the "highest and best use" of the land in the South Concord Corridor. Making some or all of the recommended changes to the City's zoning ordinance will hopefully lead to the private sector making meaningful investments along this corridor.

If the proposed South Concord Corridor Small Area Plan is fully implemented, it will have the added benefit of helping the City's "Hardman Triangle Redevelopment Plan" come to fruition. One of the last remaining heavy industrial uses on the Hardman Triangle, the Long Cheng slaughterhouse/butcher shop, is currently looking to relocate somewhere that will allow their business to expand and modernize its operation in a new 21st century facility. Long Cheng is a unique small-scale butcher shop where members of the public are allowed to participate in slaughtering and butchering their own live animals. This practice is very culturally significant for some ethnic groups in the Twin Cities and the Minnesota State Legislature has directed significant resources towards this business to assist it with modernizing its facilities to continue to serve those ethnic groups for many years to come.

Long Cheng currently operates out of an 80-year-old office building on the Hardman Triangle that was converted into a slaughterhouse in the 1980's/1990's when an earlier version of the City Code still allowed animal processing uses in that area. There do not appear to be any other urban or suburban communities in the metro that have zoning districts that are able to accommodate Long Cheng's needs, so they have remained on the Hardman Triangle much longer than expected, operating under their "grandfather" rights. The South Concord Corridor's heavy industrial business area directly south of Interstate 494 has existing agricultural-industrial businesses, such as a cow hide processing plant and a tannery. The zoning in this area already allows most forms of animal product processing, but it does not currently allow the processing of live farm animals. If the zoning code and animal ordinance were updated to allow live farm animals to be brought into some part of this existing heavy industrial area far away from residential uses and commercial retail uses, and if Long Cheng agreed to fully modernize their operation and stop storing live farm animals in outdoor pens, the South Concord Corridor's heavy industrial area could potentially be a good fit for their relocation. It is unlikely that any type of meaningful redevelopment will occur on the Hardman Triangle until there is a clear timeline for Long Cheng to relocate and stop bringing live farm animals to the Hardman Triangle area. A link to the Hardman Triangle Redevelopment Plan's webpage is included at the end of this Staff Memo for reference.

Background

The "South Concord Corridor" refers to land that is in the southeastern corner of South St. Paul between Interstate 494 and the community's southern border with Inver Grove Heights. The corridor sits at the bottom of a 100-foot-tall river bluff. The bluff forms the corridor's western boundary, and the Mississippi River forms its eastern boundary. The backbone of the corridor is Concord Street, a north-south arterial road that is owned by Dakota County and was the main thoroughfare in the region until the construction of US-52 in the 1970's. There are two steeply graded local roads that provide connectivity between the South Concord Corridor and the residential neighborhoods at the top of the bluff. A large part of the South Concord Corridor consists of industrial properties located between Concord Street and the river which are served by a small network of low-amenity local roads. The local road network serving the industrial businesses is punctuated by multiple at-grade railroad crossings.

South St. Paul adopted its 2040 Comprehensive Plan in October of 2020. The adopted

comprehensive plan identifies the South Concord Corridor as a future redevelopment area and calls for a study of the corridor to take place within 5-10 years. The City's official zoning map and the 2040 Comprehensive Plan's future land use map are not currently in alignment when it comes to many of the parcels on the South Concord Corridor. State Statute requires that the zoning map and future land use map be brought into alignment, but this task cannot be completed until the City completes its study and determines what the long-term vision is for this corridor.

Comprehensive Plan's Current High-Level Vision for the South Concord Corridor

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan (approved in 2008) and the 2040 Comprehensive Plan (approved in 2020) have both included a very similar high-level vision for the South Concord Corridor. Per both plans:

- Most of the land directly fronting Concord Street is guided to be "mixed-use."
- The industrial areas near Interstate 494 are guided to be "light industrial."
- All the other industrial areas are guided to be general "industrial."

Both the 2030 Comprehensive Plan and the 2040 Comprehensive Plan acknowledge that the existing zoning on the corridor is not in alignment with this high-level vision. Both plans have called for a corridor study to refine the vision. The corridor study would be followed by comprehensive plan updates, zoning code updates, and zoning map updates to implement the community's goals once the goals have been identified.

Selection of Swanson Haskamp Consulting, LLC as Project Consultant

The City released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the corridor study in June of 2024. The City received four proposals and selected a proposal from Swanson Haskamp Consulting, LLC with Michael Lamb Consulting, LLC as a subcontractor. This same team of consultants assisted the City with the successful North Concord Mixed Use Zoning District Update project in 2021.

Overview of South Concord Corridor Study Project Scope

The project consists of three main tasks:

1. Complete a market study for the South Concord Corridor. *This task is complete, and the market study was presented to the City Council and Planning Commission at a Joint Worksession on November 25, 2024. The market study is included as a link at the end of this Staff Memo.*
2. Develop a corridor vision. *The project team presented a conceptual framework for the proposed South Concord Corridor Small Area Plan to the City Council and Planning Commission at a Joint Worksession on March 10, 2025. The Planning Commission and City Council expressed general support for the conceptual framework and directed the project team to move forward with preparing a full small area plan for review and approval.*
3. Implement the corridor vision. *This task will begin after the corridor vision has been formally adopted. Implementation will include updates to the future land use map, updates to the zoning map, and updates to the zoning code.*

Highlights of the Proposed South Concord Corridor Small Area Plan

Planning Commissioners should read the proposed small area plan in its entirety. The following is a summary of the three key recommendations that are contained within the plan:

1. The existing residential neighborhood at the south end of the corridor is currently zoned GB-General Business and all the existing residential buildings are lawful nonconforming ("grandfathered"). The proposed South Concord Corridor Small Area Plan calls for creating a new mixed-use zoning district for this neighborhood which will legalize the existing residential buildings and allow new residential development as well as some types of commercial businesses that can coexist within a mixed-use neighborhood. This area is already guided "mixed-use" in the comprehensive plan, so no comprehensive plan amendment is needed to implement this recommendation.
2. There are currently several medium-sized parcels on the east side of Concord Street that consist of small buildings with poor aesthetics and extensive exterior storage. These properties are mostly zoned GB-General Business today, although some properties right by Interstate 494 are zoned I-Industrial. The proposed South Concord Corridor Small Area Plan calls for creating a new "Business Flex" zoning district for this area which will allow both commercial uses and light industrial uses as long as there is an appropriately sized permanent building on the property and each site is configured to have good curb appeal along Concord Street. Parcels in this area

are currently guided as either "mixed-use" or "light industrial" in the comprehensive plan and this area will need to be re-guided to "Commercial" in order to implement the small area plan's recommendation. This area is not a good candidate for mixed-use development that involves residential uses due to its proximity to heavy industry, so a comprehensive plan amendment is appropriate. The commercial and light industrial "Business Flex" area will function as a buffer between heavy industry to the east (i.e. the existing hide processing plant and tannery) and residential areas to the west and to the south.

3. The proposed South Concord Corridor Small Area Plan calls for creating a new "Industrial Flex" area just south of Interstate 494 which would not include any properties with Concord Street frontage. This area would include the existing Twin City Hide and Tanning cow hide processing plant and tannery, and it would likely be the one part of the city that will continue to allow agricultural-industrial uses with a conditional use permit. Depending on how the zoning code update is handled, this area could potentially accommodate the relocation of the Long Cheng slaughterhouse/butcher shop as discussed earlier in this memo. The City will need to exercise caution when developing performance standards for this area to ensure that animal processing businesses are not causing any type of public nuisance such as odor problems. The "Industrial Flex" area will either be an overlay zoning district or an entirely new zoning district and the specifics will be worked out as ordinance amendments are being written to implement the small area plan. This area is mostly guided "light industrial" in the comprehensive plan today, and it will need to be re-guided to "Industrial" to implement this recommendation.

Recommended Action

City Staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the South Concord Corridor Small Area Plan.

Links

[South Concord Corridor Market Study](#)

[South Concord Corridor Study Project Webpage with Maps and Historical Documents](#)

[Hardman Triangle Redevelopment Plan Webpage](#)

SOURCE OF FUNDS

This project has a \$60,000 "not to exceed" budget. A Redevelopment Incentive Grant (RIG) from the Dakota County Community Development Agency (CDA) is covering \$25,000 of that cost. The remaining \$35,000 is being covered by the South St. Paul Economic Development Authority's Redevelopment Fund.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Map of the South Concord Corridor
2. Proposed Small Area Plan

ATTACHMENT 1
MAP OF THE SOUTH CONCORD CORRIDOR



ATTACHMENT 2
PROPOSED SMALL
AREA PLAN

CITY OF SOUTH SAINT PAUL

S CONCORD CORRIDOR

SMALL AREA PLAN





CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	3
<i>Figure 1. Study Area</i>	
II. DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT	7
<i>Figure 2. Corridor Subareas</i>	
<i>Figure 3. Lots Anticipated to Remain Unchanged</i>	
<i>Figure 4. Lots Owned by City and Danner Family</i>	
<i>Figure 5. Potential Redevelopment Sites</i>	
<i>Figure 6. Development Vision Highlights</i>	
<i>Figure 7. South Concord Street Idealized Concept Plan</i>	
<i>Figure 8. Wakota Crossing Area Idealized Concept Plan</i>	
<i>Figure 9. Proposed Urban Standards: Business Flex Zoning District</i>	
<i>Figure 10. Proposed Urban Standards: Business Flex Zoning District</i>	
<i>Figure 11. Potential Residential Development</i>	
III. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN + ZONING	20
<i>Figure 12. Land Use Changes</i>	
<i>Figure 13. Adopted Zoning and Proposed Zoning</i>	



I. INTRODUCTION

The “South Concord Corridor Study Area (Study Area)” refers to land that is in the southeastern corner of South St. Paul between Interstate 494 and Inver Grove Heights. The corridor sits at the bottom of a 100-foot-tall river bluff that forms the corridor’s western boundary, and the Mississippi River its eastern boundary. Concord Street is the “backbone” of the corridor, a north-south arterial road that is owned by Dakota County. Dale Place and Popular Street East are two steeply graded local roads that provide connectivity between the South Concord Corridor and the residential neighborhoods at the top of the bluff. A large part of the South Concord Corridor Study Area consists of industrial properties located between Concord Street and the river which are served by a small network of local roads that include multiple at-grade railroad crossings.

Figure 1. Study Area





1.1 LAND USE & ZONING IN THE STUDY AREA

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan (approved in 2008) and the 2040 Comprehensive Plan (approved in 2020) both included similar high-level visions for the South Concord Corridor. Per both plans:

- Most of the land directly fronting Concord Street is guided “mixed-use.”
- The industrial areas near Interstate 494 are guided “light industrial.”
- All the other industrial areas are guided general “industrial.”

Both the 2030 Comprehensive Plan and the 2040 Comprehensive Plan acknowledge that the existing zoning within the corridor does not align with the adopted vision. Both plans called for a corridor study to refine the vision which then may require comprehensive plan, zoning code and zoning map amendments and/or updates.

In 2010, Dakota County reconstructed Concord Street to significantly improve aesthetics and pedestrian connections through the corridor. There are now sidewalks and pedestrian-scale streetlights on both sides of the roadway in South St. Paul and there are sidewalk and trail connections that extend along Concord Street to the intersection with US-52 in Inver Grove Heights.

In 2011, both South St. Paul and Inver Grove Heights undertook corridor studies with the goal of using the improved roadway to spur redevelopment along Concord Street. The two communities coordinated efforts and there was a general understanding that Concord Street itself would be steered towards walkable “mixed-use” development. In February of 2012, a 63-page “South Concord Corridor Plan” was presented to the City Council which called for eliminating all industrial uses from the corridor in five phases and redeveloping all land on the corridor as a high-density mixed-use walkable neighborhood, which the City Council ultimately did not approve. In October of 2020, the City Council approved the 2040 Comprehensive Plan which contains a “future land use map” which affirms that the City expects a large part of the South Concord Corridor to remain industrial in use and will continue to contribute to the community’s employment base.

The existing zoning districts in the South Concord Corridor Study Area were assigned in 1992. Most of the land directly adjacent to Concord Street is zoned GB-General Business which allows a wide range of commercial and industrial uses. Parcels off of Concord Street within the corridor are zoned I-Industrial which allows a wide range of light and heavy industrial uses. The mobile home park and Lincoln Park Townhomes have residential zoning, but other residential buildings on the corridor have become lawful nonconforming uses due to the commercial zoning designations that have been assigned. Inconsistencies between Zoning and Land Use cause confusion and can disincentivize investment or reinvestment of properties. This process is intended to bring land use and zoning into alignment with the refined vision for the Study Area.



1.2 KEY STUDY AREA CONSIDERATIONS

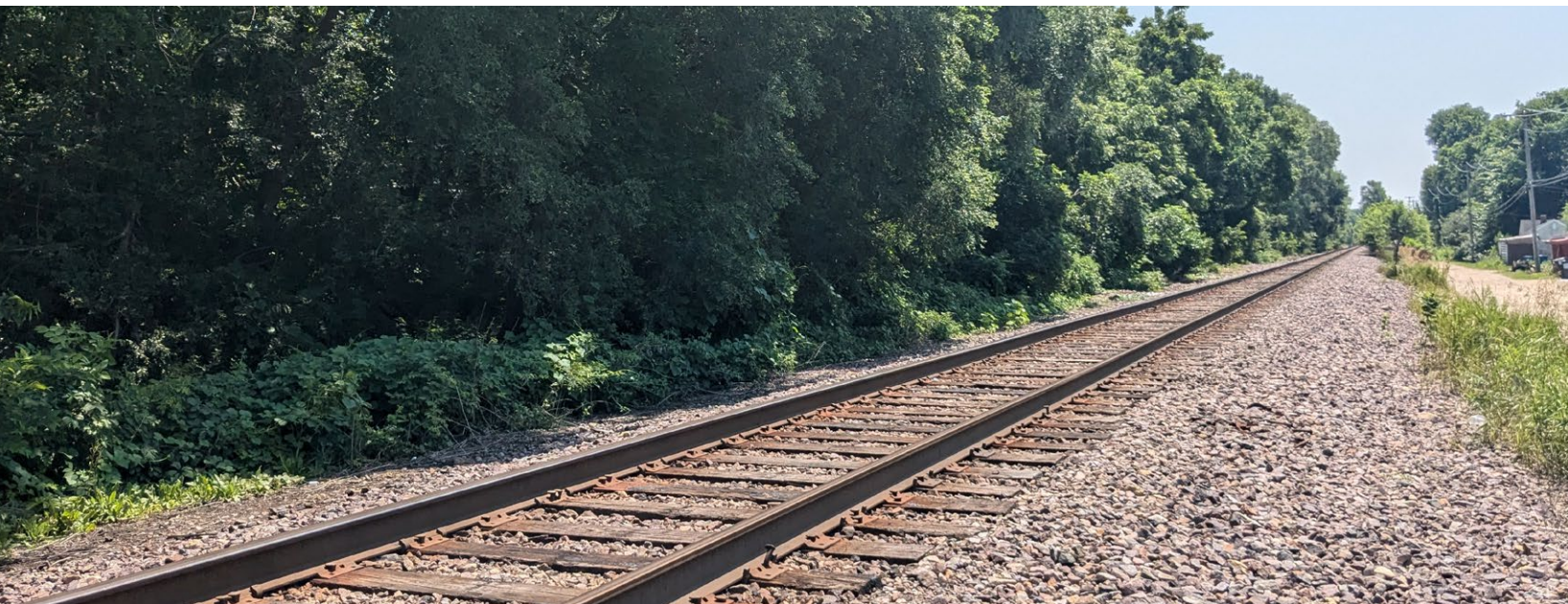
Some existing conditions, assumptions and changes in the South Concord that are important for understanding the context in this Visioning process include:

- In 2012, the City only had one industrial zoning district which was the “I-Industrial” zoning district. In 2019, the City created the new “I-1 Light Industrial” zoning district which has similar site design and building design requirements but a different list of allowable uses. The City rezoned all industrial properties north of Interstate 494 to I-1 Light Industrial but none of the properties located in the South Concord Corridor.
- In 2012, the Engineering Department commissioned a consultant team to study the feasibility of extending the levee system to protect the South Concord Corridor to improve its redevelopment potential. They completed a two-phase study of the corridor and concluded that a levee project is technically feasible, but the estimated costs will greatly outweigh the anticipated benefit to land values.
- In 2017 the City approved a PUD for Twin City Hide and Twin City Tanning to allow them to rebuild their campus on their existing site. They have constructed several new buildings with state-of-the-art odor mitigation systems integrated into the buildings and have invested many millions of dollars into redeveloping the site, and it is likely no longer cost-effective for them to relocate.
- The entire South Concord Corridor study area is in the Mississippi River Critical Corridor Area (MRCCA) which is subject to environmental protections that are codified in the City Code as required by State Statute. The City’s MRCCA ordinance was comprehensively updated in 2023 as required by the adopted 2040 Comprehensive Plan and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources.





- The City now has a better understanding of what it means that a significant part of the South Concord Corridor is located in the 100-year floodplain. Several property owners have made flood-proofing improvements to their properties and the City conducted a levee extension study that analyzed what it would take to “officially” flood proof the entire corridor and have it removed from flood hazard maps.
- Some of those ‘flood proofing’ improvements included bringing elevations up through the import of fill. This occurred on both the MCES property and adjacent Danner properties and the quality of the fill is unknown which may impact the type and economic viability of intense development on these sites.
- It is assumed that many of the properties operating today as industrial uses will continue to do so in the foreseeable future including: Cemstone, Dakota Bulk Terminal, Twin City Hide & Tanning, River Country Cooperative, Lutheran Warehouse and the SSP Gun Club.
- The City’s Economic Development Authority (EDA) has acquired many of the properties on the Hardman Triangle located north of the Study Area to encourage and plan for future redevelopment. In November of 2024, the EDA entered into a preliminary development agreement with a private developer, ZAS LLC, to build a two-phase development at the corner of Grand Avenue and Concord Street North which will consist of almost 200 units of market-rate housing, a destination indoor recreation use and a restaurant. In March of 2025, the EDA and the City Council took the next step with the redevelopment plan and approved a Master Plan and District Stormwater Guide which will serve as a basis for subdividing property on the Hardman Triangle and creating a new street system and utility system to serve the development.
- As a component of the Hardman Triangle Redevelopment Plan, the Long Cheng business is anticipated to move, and there is potential to move this business south of 494 onto the city owned former MCES site. The move would allow the Hardman Triangle Redevelopment Plan to move forward into a market-based implementation phase, while providing a viable site development opportunity to the long-standing community business.





II. DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT

2.1 TURNING THE VISION INTO A DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Vision for the South Concord Corridor Study Area refines the 2040 Comprehensive Plan policy guidance (Subsection 2.2), responds to market dynamic and conditions (Subsection 2.3), and plans for anticipated changes/investments (Subsection 2.4) in the Study Area. This process resulted in general consensus of the policymakers to embrace the predominance of existing industrial land uses in the Study Area and to leverage the strength of the industrial market to leverage and encourage a higher level of investment and development over the coming years in the corridor. Critical to this expectation is the need to calibrate zoning standards to better respond to the current market conditions to yield greater investment and tax base on a lot by lot basis.

To fully realize this development concept approach and vision the City can:

- Develop a new, or add-to the public works building/site. The good news is that there are several options that the City can consider for the new Public Works development within the Study Area including the current site, the “Thompson Motors” parcel (at the corner of Richmond & South Concord St) or developing a portion of the MCES site. The remaining unused parcels would be made available for private investment and redevelopment with favorable terms and incentives to encourage investment.
- Facilitate the construction and installation of a new public street that would connect Verderosa Avenue south of 494 through the MCES site and west through the Danner property to intersect with Hardman Avenue South. The new roadway connection is a functional necessity to encourage and support (re)development in the corridor and the City has the opportunity through its plat process to acquire the necessary right-of-way to bring this to fruition.
- Recognize that the Danner Family property development plans include industrial/warehouse use and allow for a range of development intensity and use of the property to meet market expectations.
- Support a move of the Long Cheng operation from the Hardman Triangle to the South Concord Study Area and consider relocation onto a city owned parcel, potentially the MCES site.
- Continue to engage the local land and business owners with a focus on understanding the proposed vision.
- Approve this Vision and Development Concept so that the applicable Comprehensive Plan amendments and Zoning amendments can be made to support a more efficient development and entitlement process for developers, landowners and stakeholders.



2.2 2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GUIDANCE & PRINCIPLES

Many of the City's adopted 2040 Comprehensive Plan goals and principles support the South Concord Corridor Study Area Vision created as part of this Study process. Instead of a wholesale change from the vision and goals that guide the community today, this Vision builds on several key principles to provide refinement of the future land use and development opportunities in the Study Area.

The City's adopted goals and guiding principles address small town character, neighborhood protection and revitalization, housing, the natural environment, transportation and circulation, economic development, education, public facilities, fiscal health and redevelopment.

A few key Principles supported by the South Concord Corridor Study Area Vision include:

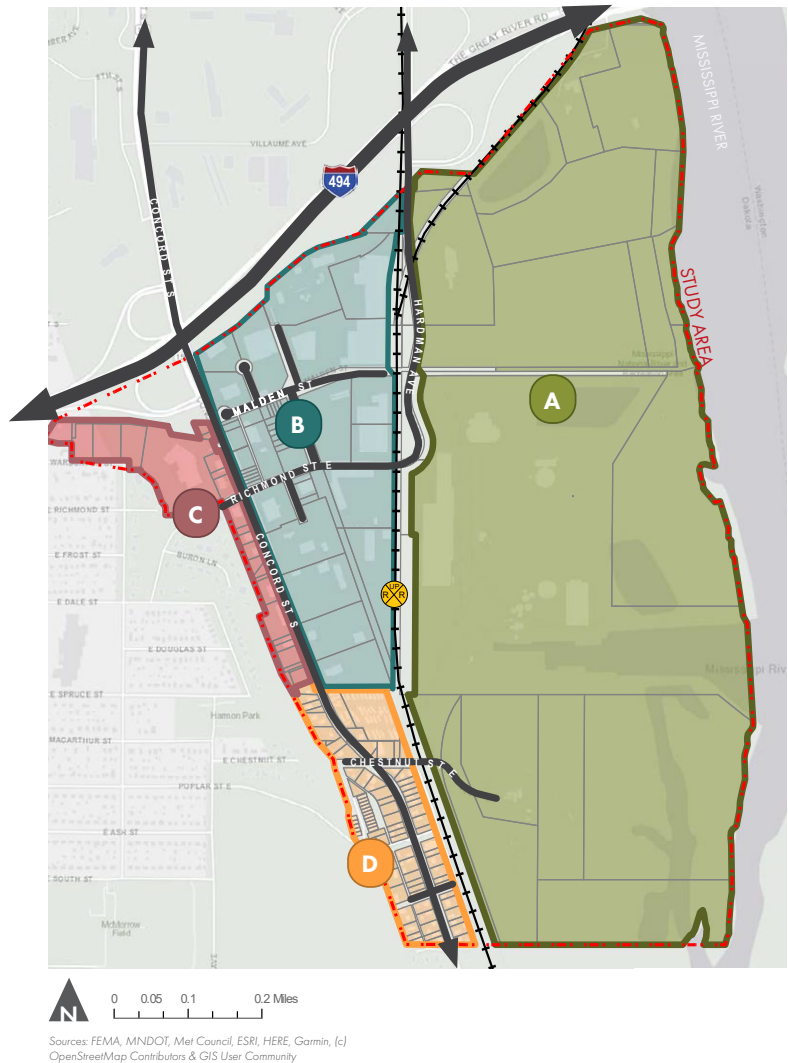
- Housing, Neighborhood Protection and Revitalization
 - » *The Study Area Vision is to support existing residential uses in the south end of the corridor and to permit neighborhood scale commercial uses where appropriate. Reinforcement of the existing residential pattern will be accomplished through supportive zoning to promote investment and reinvestment in the corridor.*
- Transportation and Circulation
 - » *Through the visioning process it was clear that there is an expectation of greater connectivity within the Corridor particularly to industrial uses adjacent to the river. Improving connections north and west of the railroad corridor are essential to the redevelopment and reinvestment vision.*
 - » *Enhancement of the streetscape through landscaping of the Concord Corridor will not only support the transportation network but promote marketability and redevelopment of properties adjacent to the corridor.*
- Economic Development
 - » *The Development Concepts focus on creating a flexible but defined edge on Concord to support and promote redevelopment and economic investment on property adjacent to the frontage. For example building frontage and build-to standards will help define the corridor and establish uniform standards for future users.*
 - » *Opportunities for varying levels of development intensity are strategically assigned to support a diverse mix of businesses and uses.*
 - » *New, clear standards are intended to improve land use and development patterns thereby improving property values within the corridor.*

2.2 MARKET STUDY SUMMARY

A South Concord Corridor Market Study was initiated prior to this visioning process to understand market expectations and potential opportunities within the corridor. Previous corridor visioning and plans did not align with market realities and therefore no substantive development or redevelopment has occurred in the corridor. The lack of development and investment in the corridor over the past several decades prompted the City to incorporate market considerations into this visioning process to hopefully result in better outcomes this time around.

The Market Study findings and recommendations, in combination with the Comprehensive Plan policies and principles, form the foundation for the Vision and Development Concepts described in subsequent sections. Key Highest and Best Land Use/Development Market Study findings are organized by Subareas which are described in Subsection 2.3:

Figure 2. Corridor Subareas



- *Subarea A – Large Land Parcels:* Opportunity sites provide locations for large scale/footprint industrial development and redevelopment. This subarea has adequate land area to support targeted redevelopment with multi-tenant industrial development that exceeds 100,000 square feet. Industrial uses, including modern clear heights, are best suited to this area. A range of development intensity and building sizes should be evaluated given physical site constraints of the parcels. Considerations for access, including rail crossings, should be evaluated in subsequent sections of this Study.
- *Subarea B – Balanced Land + Building Parcels:* Opportunities for development or redevelopment within the subarea may require consolidation and/or combinations to create adequate land area. Existing parcel configurations may support redevelopment for single-tenant industrial uses for buildings with 10,000 to 50,000 square feet and opportunities for outdoor storage. Demand for this type of industrial development is high and there is a lack of supply within the market.

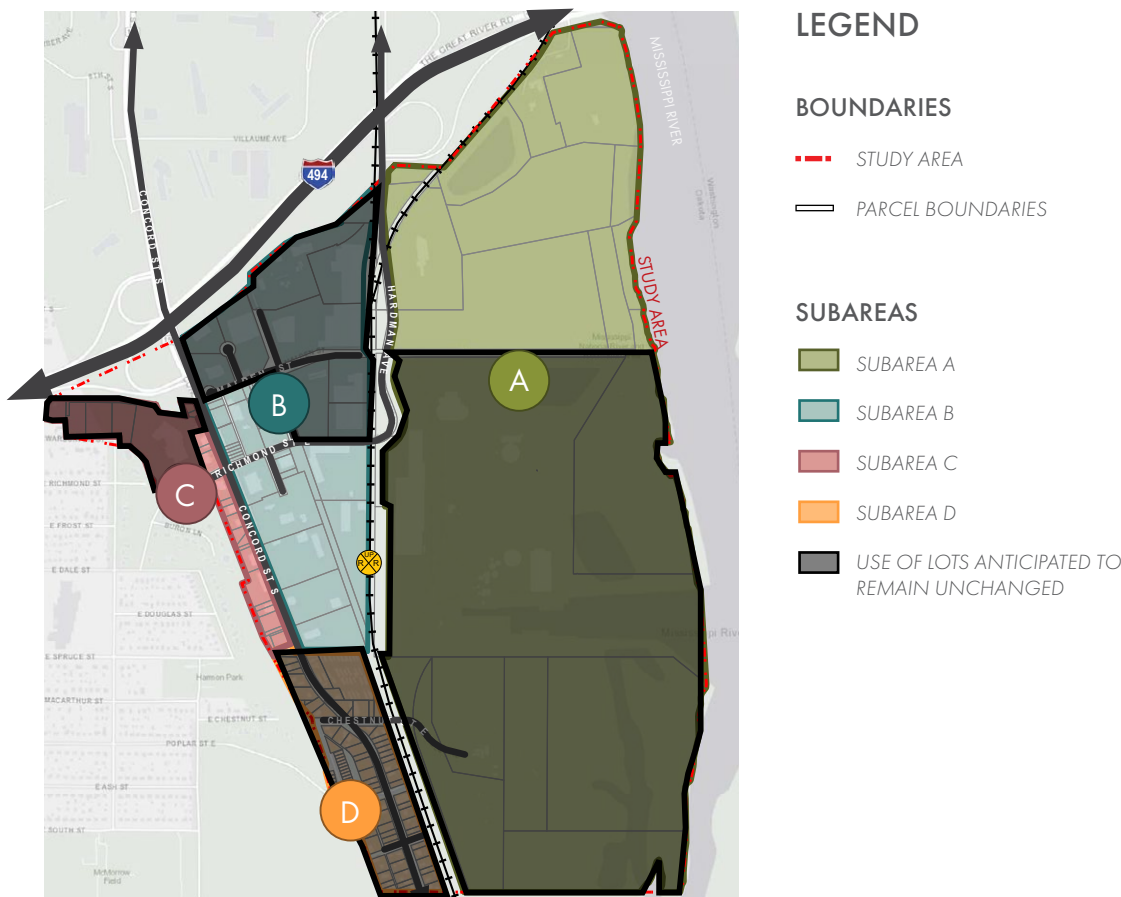


- *Subarea C – Bluff Constrained Parcels:* The highest-and-best use for the subarea is similar to the existing development pattern. Continued support for a mix of uses will promote infill and redevelopment that responds to market demand. Wholesale redevelopment is unlikely due to the expense associated with consolidation, demolition and the presence of multiple owners within the subarea.
- *Subarea D – Small Dominant Residential Parcels:* The highest-and-best land use for the subarea is similar to the existing development patterns. Residential uses in the corridor support continued opportunities for more affordable home ownership, and this can be protected and reinforced within this subarea. The character of the subarea is different from the other subareas, which makes the continuation of residential uses reasonable.

2.4 IDENTIFYING PARCELS RIPE FOR CHANGE

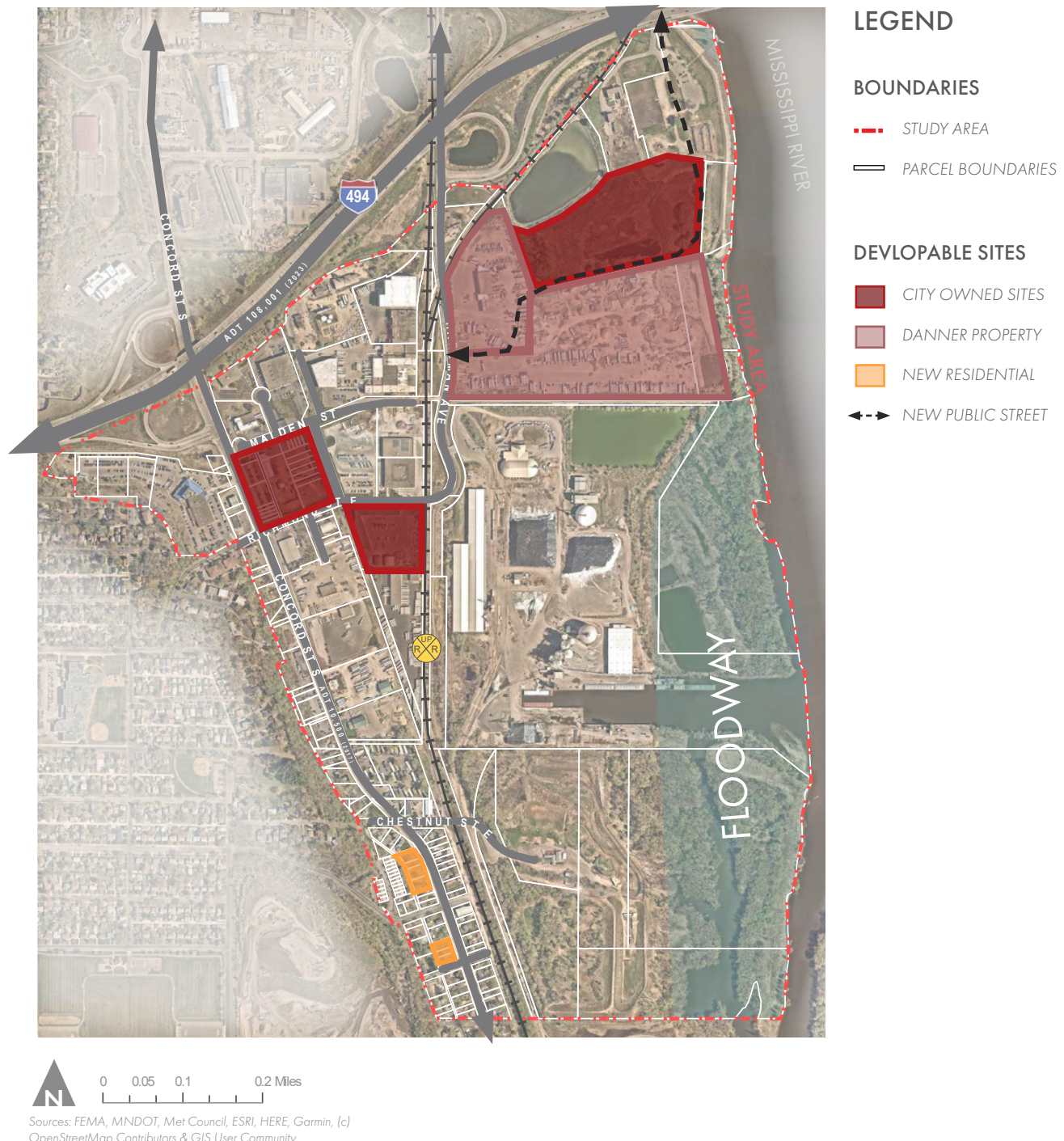
The South Concord Vision anticipates that a majority of the Study Area will remain largely unchanged for the foreseeable future. Strategic lots and sites fronting South Concord St., the Danner property and City owned parcels are the most likely opportunity sites that may benefit from better positioning to capitalize on the prevailing market influences. The shaded areas shown in Figure 3 are expected to see little, if any, change in use.

Figure 3. Use of Lots Anticipated to Remain Unchanged



There are particular areas in public and private ownership that have potential to yield greater value both in land use and tax base. Key to these sites are the current city public works site, the “Thompson Motors” parcel (under city ownership), the city -owned MCES site and over 30 acres owned by the Danner family (Figure 4). Other parcels south of Richmond on South Concord that extend to the mobile home park contain the potential for greater value generation over time.

Figure 4. Lots Owned by City and Danner Family





2.5 POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT SITES

A number of parcels fronting South Concord (outlined in black in Figure 5) have the potential to realize greater development and value based on market conditions with some modified land use policy guidance from the Comprehensive Plan and through zoning. Updated zoning and development standards should allow these parcels greater flexibility and direction to realize more value and investment in the long term as owners decide to respond to market demand and site specific users.

Figure 5. Potential Redevelopment Sites



Sources: FEMA, MNDOT, Met Council, ESRI, HERE, Garmin, (c) OpenStreetMap Contributors & GIS User Community



2.6 DEVELOPMENT VISION

The proposed ‘Development Vision’ is graphically depicted on Figures 6 through 11. The vision is based on strategic assumptions within the subareas based on current users, development patterns and the ability to:

- Reinforce the established industrial/employment base of the South Concord Corridor;
- Leverage the ongoing changes in development, shifting ownership and public improvements;
- Respond to subregional market conditions that may yield more intensity, greater land use diversity and higher investment in targeted parcels and sites;
- Adopt elevated standards and regulations that will encourage greater value on parcels fronting South Concord Street while providing greater development flexibility on parcels east of the RR corridor to accommodate a broader range of users and uses.

A brief summary of each Figure is provided:

- Figure 6: Development Vision Highlights
 - » *A comprehensive overview of the development vision by subarea including key opportunity sites, streetscape improvements and recommended zoning/dimensional standards modifications. This figure identifies a new local road connection to serve key redevelopment sites within Subarea A and B.*
- Figure 7: South Concord Street Idealized Concept Plan
 - » *This figure focuses on building frontage standards, minimum building coverage requirements and streetscape improvements primarily within Subarea B. The intent of the recommended changes is to encourage redevelopment within the corridor with higher intensity uses and increased building values to create a more dynamic business corridor.*
- Figure 8: Wakota Crossing Area Idealized Concept Plan
 - » *This figure focuses on key redevelopment sites within Subarea A. Larger parcels within this subarea include the MCES site owned by the City and the Danner properties.*
- Figures 9 and 10: Proposed Urban Standards: Business Flex Zoning District
 - » *This figure graphically depicts the recommended changes to incorporate within the Zoning Amendment (See Section III of this report.*
- Figure 11: Potential Residential Development
 - » *This figure shows potential residential infill options for existing vacant parcels or potential redevelopment parcels on the south end of the Study Area. This Study recommends reinforcement of the existing residential pattern and allowing for compatible infill redevelopment.*

Figure 6. Development Vision Highlights

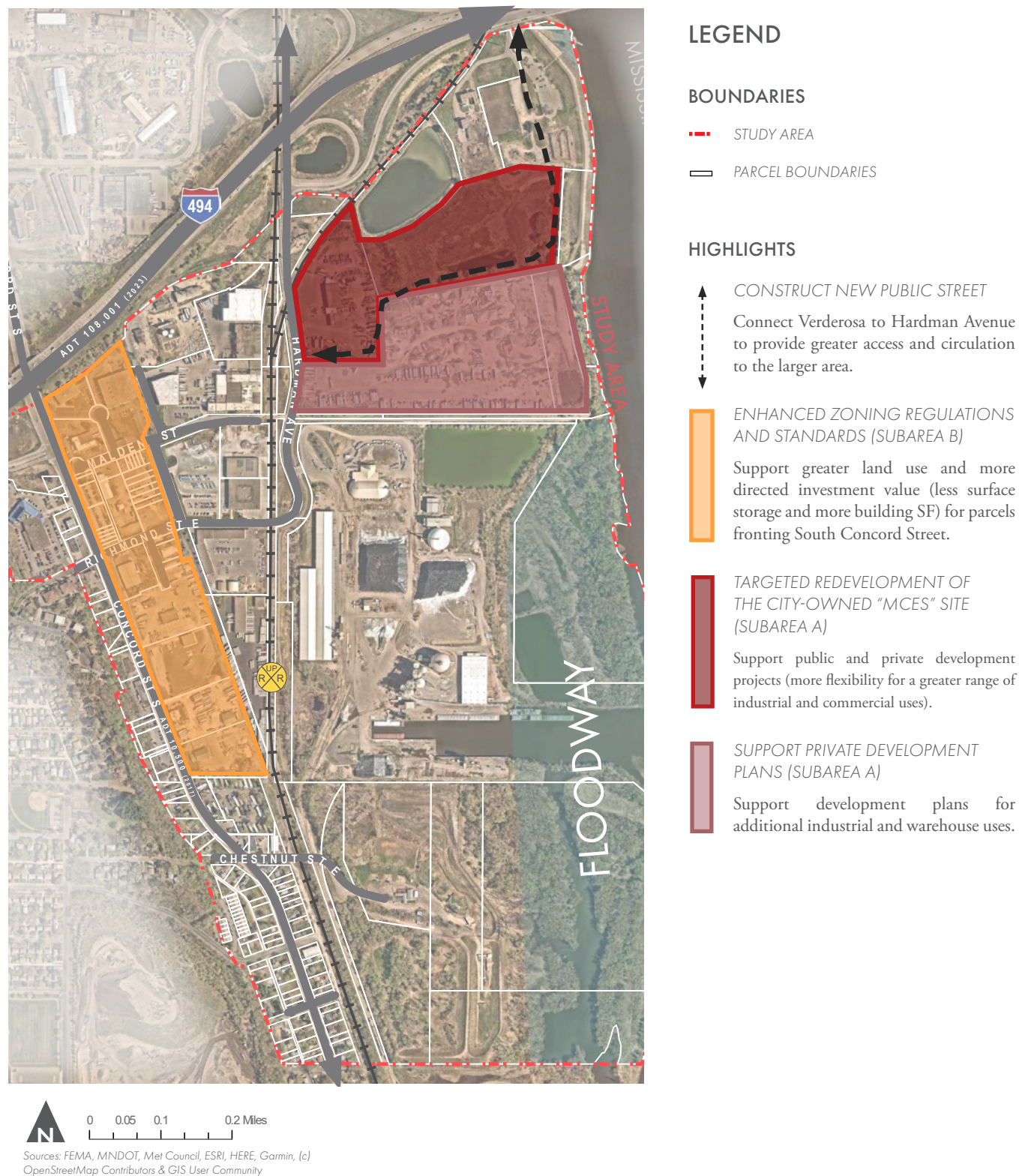




Figure 7. South Concord Street Idealized Development Plan

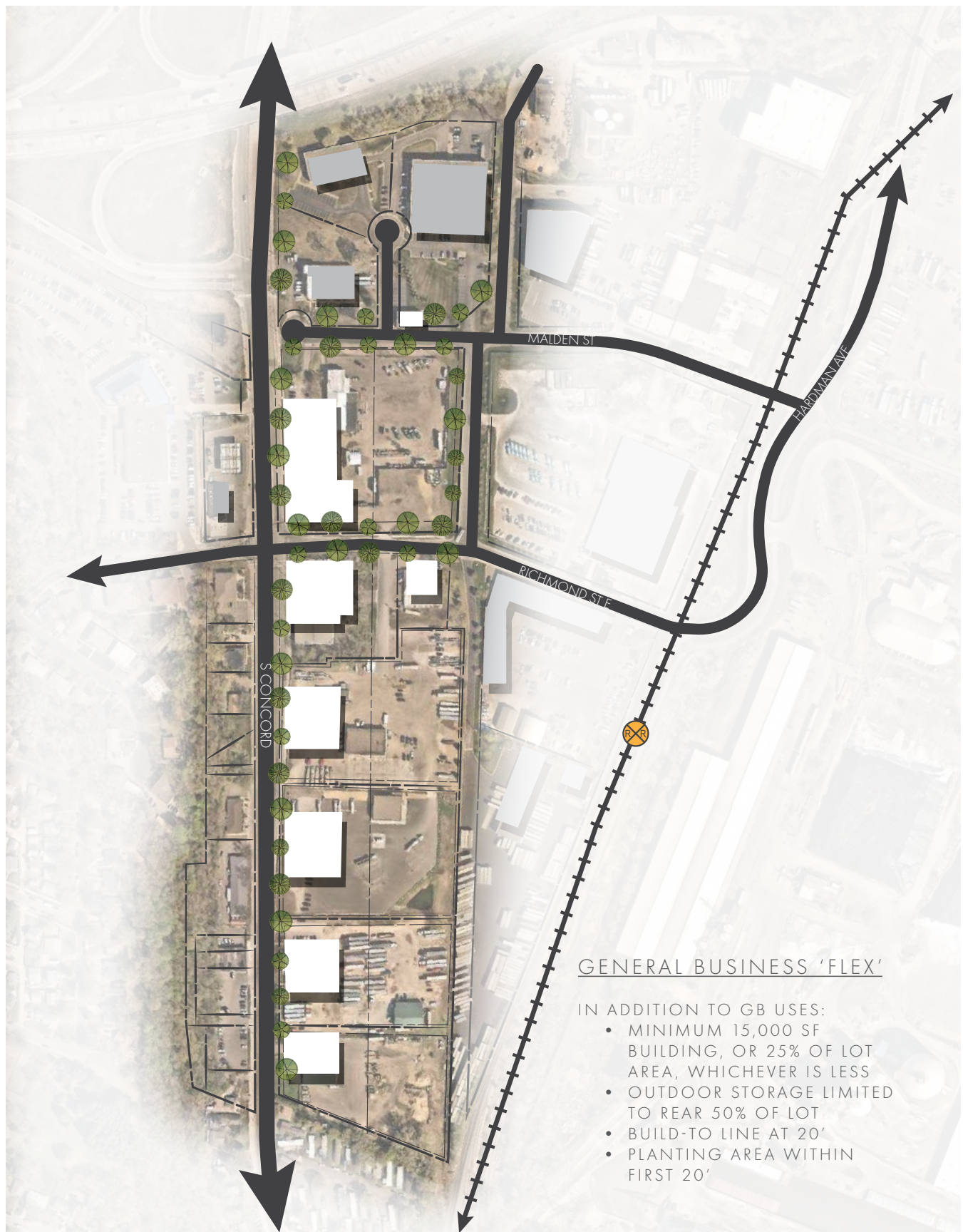


Figure 8. Wakota Crossing Area Idealized Development Plan





Figure 9. Proposed Urban Standards: Business Flex Zoning District





Figure 10. Proposed Urban Standards: Business Flex Zoning District

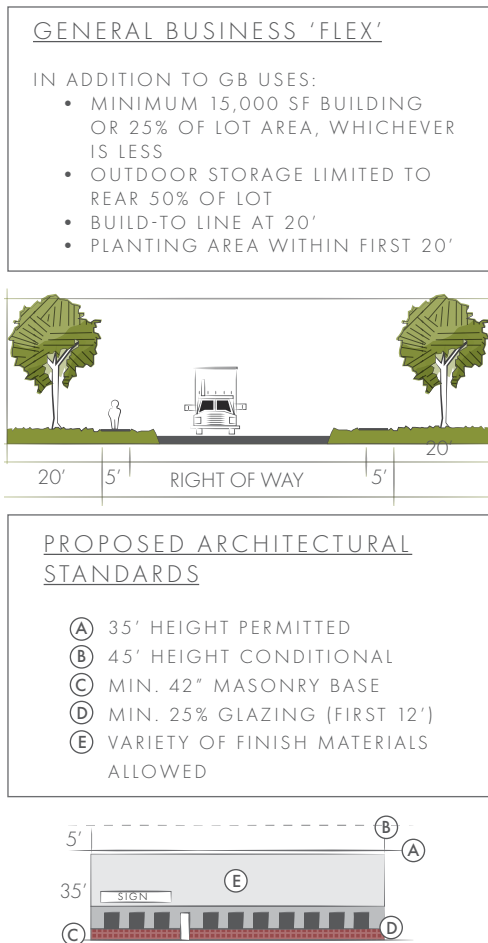




Figure 11. Potential Residential Development

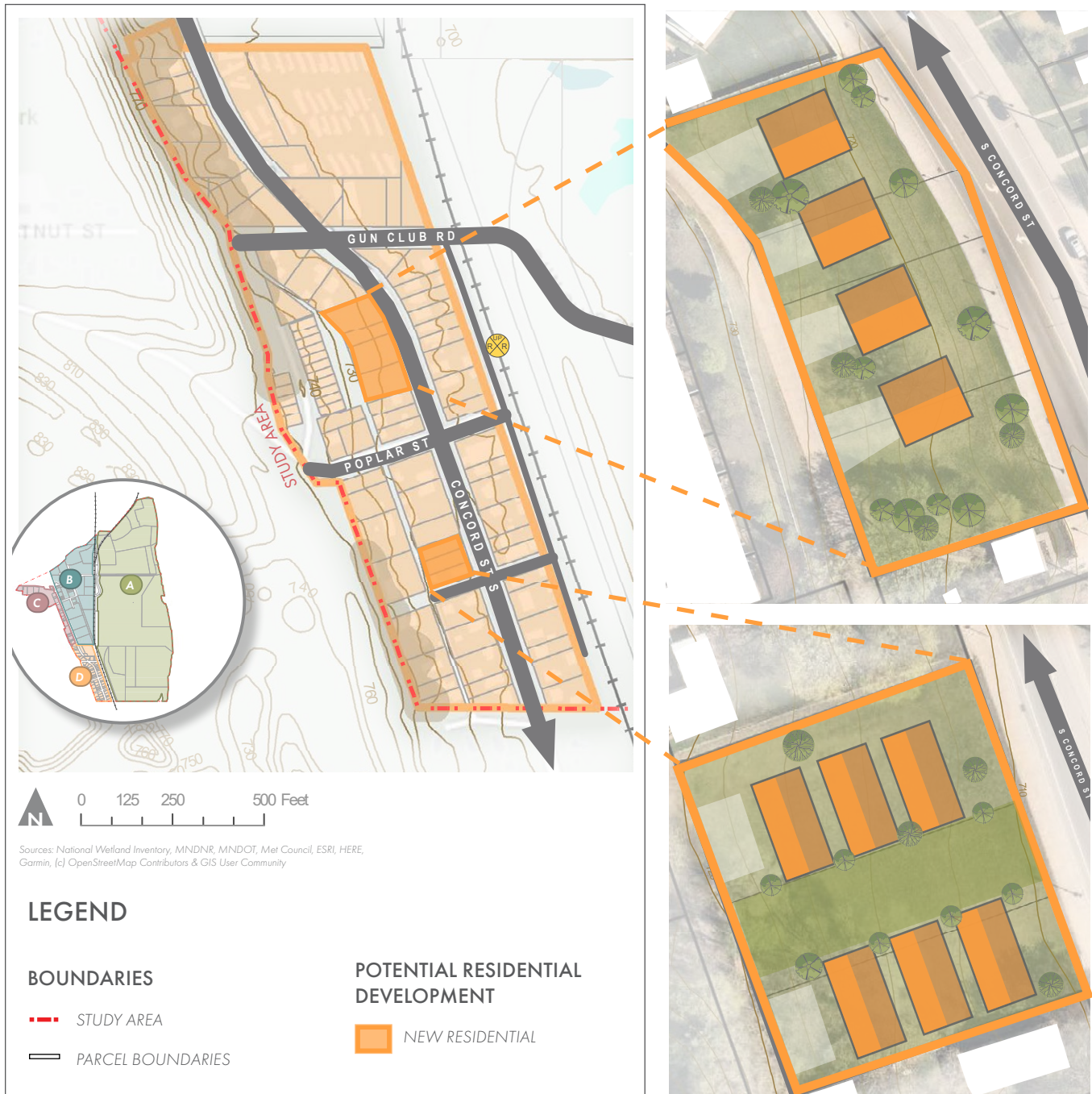
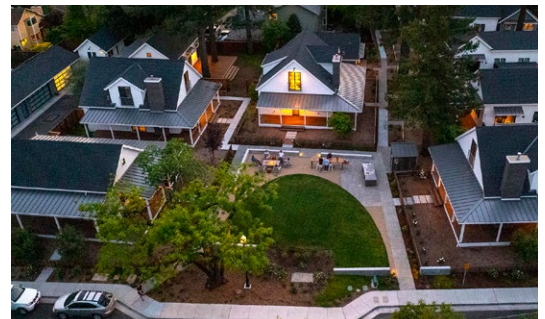


Photo: Riverhouse, Healdsburg, CA
Source: <https://jzmkpartners.com/project/riverhouse/>





III. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN & ZONING MODIFICATIONS

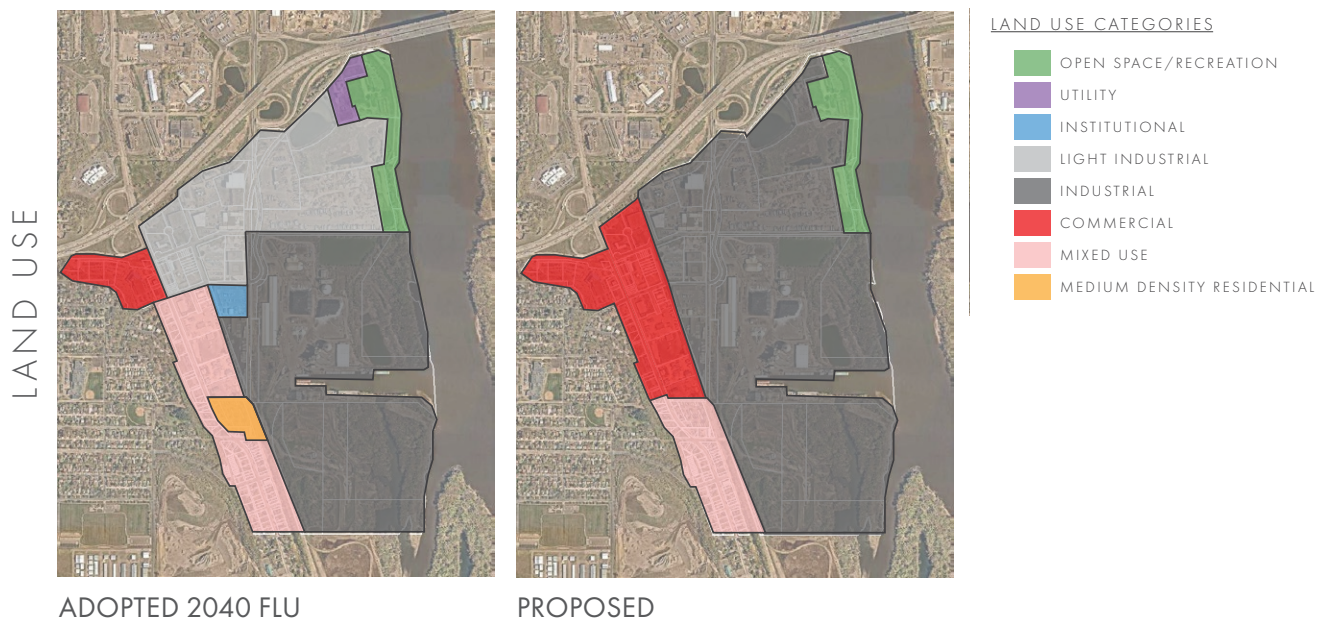
To bring the Development Vision to fruition some modifications and updates to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code will be required. The changes and modifications will bring the City's vision for the corridor into alignment with its adopted policies and ordinance and will reinforce and support existing users while promoting future redevelopment. Creating a more streamlined entitlement and development process is one way to encourage and support landowners and developers because they do not have to spend valuable time and resources on comprehensive plan or land use changes. To that end, the Vision requires some minor changes to the Comprehensive Plan and slightly more significant changes to the Zoning Code. The recommendations are provided in summary in the following sections.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN MODIFICATIONS

A few changes will be needed relative to comprehensive plan guidance and the Development Vision anticipates minor language and mapping changes to be consistent. A summary of anticipated changes includes:

- *Map Changes:* See Figure 12. The Vision contemplates removal of Light Industrial Zoning in favor of a mix of Industrial and Commercial Uses. Commercial uses will continue to allow for a mix of light industrial and general business uses.

Figure 12. Land Use Changes





- *Policy/Goal Modifications.* There are several adopted goals and policies that are correlated to the South Concord Corridor Study Area. Some goals and policies may need to be amended to align with the Vision. A list of adopted goals and policies is provided for reference on the following pages.
- *Land Use Categories.* The following land use categories are from the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and are mapped within the Study Area on Figure 13. Minor text amendments to the definitions may be needed and should be evaluated to ensure that the definitions support the Development Vision.
 - » *MDR - Medium Density Residential*
 - » *Mixed Use*
 - » *COM - Commercial*
 - » *I - Industrial*
 - » *LI - Light Industrial*
 - » *ROW - Right of Way*
 - » *P - Parks and Recreation*
 - » *IN - Institutional*
 - » *UTL - Utility*
 - » *OS – Open Space*
 - » *RR - Railroad*

The following goal and policy statements from the 2040 Comprehensive Plan apply specifically to the South Concord; some may need revisions or additions.

- *Industrial/Employment Area Goals and Policies*
 - » *Policy 4.14.5: Revisit the work from the South Concord Corridor planning and transportation studies and consider updated land uses for the area south of Interstate 494 and east of Concord Street.*
 - » *Policy 4.14.6: Provide high quality architectural and site design standards to underscore the quality of development for the area.*
 - » *Policy 4.14.7: Explore zoning changes to encourage areas for high quality office and industrial development.*
 - » *Goal 4.15: Establish enhanced design and site development standards for the 494 Corridor Area (from the edge of the residential areas above the bluff to the Mississippi River and from Armour Avenue to Richmond Street) to present a positive image from the community's "front door."*
 - » *Policy 4.15.1: Develop zoning regulations to apply to this corridor to ensure that development will be high quality office/ industrial/retail comparable to the development standards set by the nearby cities of Saint Paul and Cottage Grove.*



- » *Policy 4.15.5: The Danner property and excess portion of the adjacent MCES site together provide approximately 40 acres of property which could be the cornerstone for the redevelopment of the 494 Corridor area. Work with the owners of the Danner property to ensure that property is developed consistent to the new standards.*
- » *Goal 4.28: Create a clear long-term vision for the planned mixed-use area for the South Concord Corridor area along Concord Street from Interstate 494 to the City's southern border.*
- » *Policy 4.28.1: Establish a new small area plan for the South Concord Corridor and develop zoning regulations to ensure that the area is developed consistent with that plan.*
- » *Policy 4.28.2: Explore a mixture of residential, office, retail, and service uses along South Concord Street and encourage uses that can provide improved bicycle and pedestrian connections to recreational amenities along the river, takes advantage of the proximity of the area to the Interstate system, can act as a buffer from industrially guided properties east of Concord Street and exhibits a high level of architectural and site design.*
- » *Policy 4.28.3: Build off of the information from previous South Concord planning efforts (2009) which identified challenges for the development of this area, including: properties on the west side of Concord Street are very shallow due to the bluffs which limits available space for development, access to some properties to the east can be interrupted for up to 20 minutes at a time due to the location of property road access and location of the rail line, most of the properties south of 494 and east of Concord Street are not protected by the levee and some may be subject to occasional flooding, adjacent heavier industrial uses can limit the appeal of properties in the area.*
- » *Policy 4.28.4: Explore using Interim Use Permits (IUP's) or Nonconforming Use Permits as a way to allow uses that may not be consistent with the long-term plans for the area, but can coexist in this area while it transitions toward the planned Mixed-Use area identified in the small area plans.*
- **Economic Development Goals and Policies**
 - » *Goal 5.3: Identify key community redevelopment and revitalization opportunity areas.*
 - » *Policy 5.3.6: Encourage creative concepts that will enhance the Concord Exchange, Hardman Triangle, and South Concord Corridor (the area along Concord from 494 to the City's southern border). Explore new design standards for Concord Exchange, Hardman Triangle and the South Concord Corridor. Study and plan for development/redevelopment of these areas.*
- **Housing Goals and Policies**
 - » *Policy 6.1.3: The City and South St. Paul EDA/HRA, will continue to work collaboratively with Dakota County Community Development Authority (CDA) and other agencies to improve the residential neighborhoods through selective redevelopment and through programs such as the home rehabilitation loan program that is run by the CDA.*
 - » *Policy 6.8.6: Explore opportunities for Mixed-Use Housing. This may include the vertical integration of mixed uses within a building (first floor commercial, offices or residential above) or a horizontally*

integrated mixture of uses on the block. Concord Exchange, Southview Hill, North and South Concord Street, and the properties east and west of Central Square Park are possible locations for these type of developments.

- Parks, Trails, and Open Space Goals and Policies
 - » *Goal 9.7: Work with public owners of land to develop additional recreational facilities within the Critical Area/MRCCA corridor:*
 - » *Policy 9.7.1: Convert the portion of the former Metropolitan Council Environmental Services (MCES) land along the Mississippi River into recreational facilities or open space for the City, per the standards and guidelines of Executive Order 79-19. This shall include working with MRCCA to improve and restore natural habitat and restore natural vegetation.*
 - » *Policy 9.8.1: Convert the portion of the former MCES land along the Mississippi River for recreational purposes or open space.*
 - » *Policy 9.8.6: Develop the Wakota Trailhead and Overlook at the DNR Boat Launch site and adjacent trail property. Include a multi-purpose park building with restrooms, information kiosk at the DNR boat launch. The building could serve as a southern trailhead for the Mississippi River Regional Trail (MRRT).*
 - » *Goal 9.9: Continue to develop recreational facilities along and with access to the river.*
 - » *Goal 9.10: Recognize the importance of the river as a key community asset and important part of the City's identity and use parks and recreation to connect people to the river.*
 - » *Policy 9.10.3: Maximize the value of, and access to, natural and scenic areas along the Mississippi River and other natural greenway corridors defined by the system plan. Acquire and improve a continuous band of public parkland along the Mississippi River between the City's northern and southern borders. Policy 9.10.4: Work to achieve a continuous band of public riverfront parkland and river based recreational opportunities between the City's borders, and establish new trailhead facilities at the southeast corner of the City adjacent to the DNR Boat Launch. Work to establish better trails and linkages between the riverfront parks/ trails and the residential neighborhoods west of Concord Street where possible.*



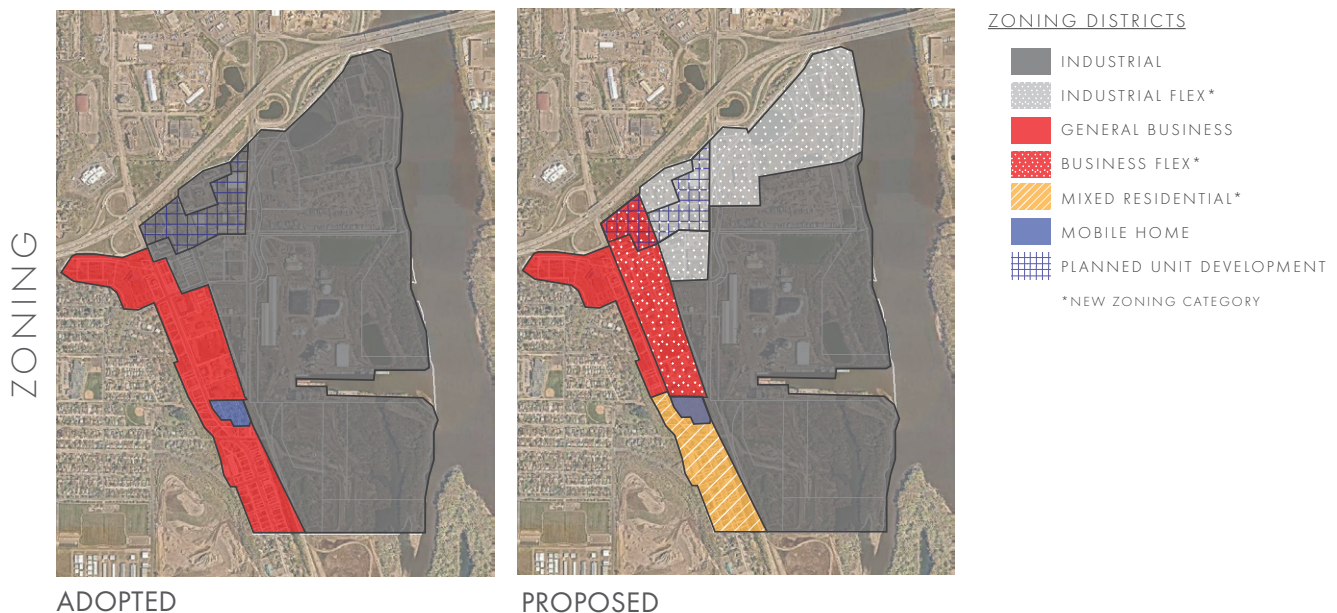


ZONING ORDINANCE MODIFICATIONS

To support and encourage the Development Vision it will be necessary to modify and update the Zoning Ordinance and Official Zoning Map. The recommended changes are intended to support the City's objective to promote redevelopment within the corridor and to provide business owners, landowners and developers with clear direction with respect to site layout and potential uses. The following summary of recommended changes is provided:

- *Map Changes:* See Figure 13. The Official Zoning Map should be updated to reflect new Zoning Districts and standards. Possible additions could include Business Flex, Light Industrial Flex (which may be accomplished as a new zoning district or an overlay zoning district) and Mixed Residential Zoning. The new districts or overlay districts will allow for tailored dimensional and use standards to support the Development Vision.

Figure 13. Adopted Zoning and Proposed Zoning



- *Add Zoning or Overlay District Standards and Language to Code.* As depicted in the Development Vision (Figures 9 and 10) new site standards including landscaping, building coverage, etc., are proposed for new districts and corridors within the Study Area. The Code should be updated to reflect the proposed standards.
- The elevated set of standards and regulations for new “Business Flex” (placeholder title for now) and “Industrial Flex” (placeholder title for now) should directly align with the map modifications and the updated Comprehensive Plan. As part of the implementation of this vision, the City will explore the best approach, whether a new zoning district or an overlay district, to address uses and standards contemplated for the area designated “Industrial Flex.”