



2040 Comprehensive Plan

Bethel, Minnesota

Prepared by
Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.
MSA Professional Services, Inc.



Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION 4

Community Origins	4
Regional Planning Community Designation.....	5
Issues Identification	5
Community Goals.....	6

LAND USE 9

Demographics	9
Community Designation.....	10
Definitions	11
Existing Land Use	11
Future Land Use	14
Residential Development	16
Commercial	17
Industrial.....	18
Institutional.....	18
Open Space And Parks And Recreation.....	18
Land Use Goals	19
Implementation Actions	20

DOWNTOWN 22

Redevelopment.....	22
Downtown Streetscape Components.....	22
Building Design	27
Downtown Goals.....	30
Implementation Actions	30

TRANSPORTATION 32

Roadway System Functional Classifications	32
Traffic Volumes And Forecasts.....	34
Transportation Analysis Zones.....	36
Future Transit Planning.....	36
Transportation Plan.....	38
Transportation Plan Goals And Policies	39

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT 42

Topography	42
Soils	42
Watersheds.....	49
Lakes And Streams	49

Existing Vegetation.....	51
Solar Resources	51
Cultural Resources.....	54
Aggregate Resources	54
Community Designation.....	54
Natural Resources Goals & Policies.....	55
Implementation Actions	55

WATER RESOURCES 58

Surface Water Management.....	58
Surface Water Management Goals And Policies	62
Water Supply Infrastructure And Management.....	63
Wastewater Treatment.....	63
Wastewater Treatment Goals And Policies.....	67
Wastewater Treatment Plan	67

HOUSING 70

Housing Needs and Planning for 2040	72
Projected Housing Needs	73
Housing Goals, Policies & Implementation	76

PARKS & TRAILS 79

Planned Parks and Recreation Facilities	79
Parks and Trails goals and policies	81

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT 83

Demographic Analysis.....	83
New Employment Forecast	88
Goals and Policies for Economic Development	90
Implementation Actions	90

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 92

Zoning and Subdivision Regulations	92
Site & Building Plan Review Process	93
Citizen Participation.....	93
Strategies for Plan Implementation	93



Chapter 1:

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

The Bethel Comprehensive Plan sets forth the City’s long-term vision for development, redevelopment, and general land use. It also identifies policies, projects, and other investments that will efficiently guide the City into the future. This Plan was developed through the exchange of information, analysis, and ideas between the citizens, community leaders, and public officials of Bethel through a planning process undertaken from 2016 through 2018.

Communities within the 7-County Metropolitan Area are required to complete comprehensive plans by the Metropolitan Land Planning Act. Comprehensive plans are required to be completed every ten years and reviewed by neighboring jurisdictions and the Metropolitan Council. This plan not only serves to meet these requirements but also to set forth a formal vision for the community.

The City of Bethel recognizes the need to plan and accommodate for future development. This update will use the framework put in place by the Metropolitan Council including forecasted demographics and housing projections. There is developable land and redevelopment opportunities within the City, where growth and new-development are anticipated to occur. This plan will include policies to guide this development, as well as to ensure existing quality of life for residents and to maintain the community’s independence and character.

Bethel’s residents view their community as a distinct, unique, and independent small city. Through this document, the City establishes policies intended to preserve this character while enhancing the community.

COMMUNITY ORIGINS

The origins of the City of Bethel began in 1854 with the arrival of a group of Quakers in northern Anoka County. By 1856, a church and school were built in what was known as the “Quaker Settlement.” This small village was near the intersection of the stage coach route from St. Francis and the main road to Cambridge in the vicinity of Minard and Cooper Lakes, which were named for two early settlers. By 1859 several non-Quaker families had also arrived in the area and many farms were established in the area. Many of the families left in 1862 due to conflicts with Native Americans. Shortly thereafter the settlers returned but the Quakers did not.

One legend has it that early settler James Cooper picked the name Bethel for the township from the Bible upon its organization in 1858. Another story says that an early resident named Moses Twitchell named it for his hometown of Bethel, Maine. Both the Township and the former “Quaker Settlement” village site were referred to as Bethel. In 1859 a public school was built followed by a Post Office in 1863. The aforementioned James Cooper was the first postmaster. Cooper’s house near Cooper Lake was the center of activity in the small settlement. In 1874 a new school building and a store in 1876 were built nearby. The small village was growing and attracting more settlers in its location near the intersection of present day Minnesota State Highway 65 and Anoka County Road 24.

Then in 1898, the Great Northern Railway established a right-of-way for a railroad line that would be a shortcut from Minneapolis to Duluth. This rail right-of-way was located in eastern St. Francis Township near the border with Bethel Township about two miles west of the existing Bethel townsite. In 1899 the tracks were laid , a station site selected, and construction began on a depot, stockyards, and a store. The railroad platted a townsite near the station and the U.S. Postal Service ordered the post office to be moved to a location within the new village. The new townsite also became known as Bethel. The former townsite is now referred to as Coopers Corner and is part of East Bethel.

The Railroad laid out the townsite. Many streets were named after prominent local residents. Dewey Avenue was named for Admiral George Dewey, who had just achieved fame in the Spanish-American War. The first house was built in 1900. The village was incorporated in 1902. Four hotels, stores, and a Baptist church were soon built or moved into the village. School was still conducted at the old townsite until 1902 when classes were held in the Baptist church. A bank followed in 1903. The Downtown was developed with the commercial sites on the opposite side of the tracks from the depot.

Bethel continued to grow and prosper as a rail stop in the early 1900's. It was a notable site for getting agricultural products like cattle, potatoes, and rye to the rail. Growth stalled in the 1930's and the population slightly declined from a peak of 265 in 1920 to 188 in 1940. The City again began to grow in the 1980's to today as it transitioned from a railroad town to a Metropolitan Area community with a population of almost 500 people.

REGIONAL PLANNING COMMUNITY DESIGNATION

As the Twin Cities Metropolitan Region continues to grow, the Metropolitan Council creates strategies in how local communities can fit successfully into an ever-changing regional picture. Community Designations are a way of accomplishing this by grouping communities with similar characteristics to more effectively target its policy decisions. What is necessary of a core urban community to handle the region's projected growth may not be for a community like Bethel. These community designations include: Urban Center, Urban, Suburban, Suburban Edge, Emerging Suburban Edge, Rural Center, Diversified Rural, Rural Residential, and Agricultural.

Bethel is categorized as a Rural Center, which is described by the Metropolitan Council as, "local commercial, employment, and residential activity centers serving rural areas in the region." Despite not being urban communities, Rural Centers still act as service communities for surrounding areas and tend follow similar development patterns of clustered development. In support of this goal, the Council outlines a number of requirements that the community must meet surrounding density, affordable housing, and economic development. How the City of Bethel will meet these requirements moving forward will be addressed more closely in this plan's *Land Use* and *Implementation* chapters.

ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

The City conducted a community survey and held an open house to gather comments from the community. From this feedback, the City was able to identify issues of importance to the community. Whether these issues are physical, environmental or land use related, and/or demographically or economically based, the City can use this list of issues identified in the inventory process to establish its goals and policies for the next 10 years until the next Comprehensive Plan update is necessary. Issues presented represent a broad categorization of topics. The following perceptions and issues present topic areas requiring specific attention:

Community Identity

- Safe, family friendly small town with a traditional downtown.
- Unique community within the Metro Area with identifiable character and charm.

Land Use

- Primarily focus on single family residential development while establishing sensible places for

other types of housing.

- Attract downtown retail and restaurant type businesses.
- Establish land use policies for the Downtown.
- Multi-family housing should be limited to appropriate areas.
- Investigate housing loans and/or programs to initiate reinvestment into older, established housing stock.

Transportation

- Use existing street network to make connections through new development areas.
- Improve road maintenance to avoid more expensive future costs.
- Get involved in the High-Speed Train discussions to ensure safe track crossings and a potential stop.
- Improve access to the community and to community assets.

Community Facilities

- Continue planning for City Hall facilities.
- Improve/expand library to make it more usable.
- Development should be limited to fit the City's sewer capacity.

Parks & Trails

- Strong desire for a multi-purpose trail system with connectivity to major community features, neighborhoods and adjacent communities trail networks.
- Supplemental parkland on the east side of the City in the future, as the railroad tracks and University Avenue present barriers.
- Establish a comprehensive trail network and design appropriate corridors.

Redevelopment / Development

- Upgrade existing housing with maintenance issues.
- Opportunity to reevaluate existing Zoning Ordinance language regarding outdoor storage.
- Redevelop and fill in empty spots Downtown with destination and attraction-oriented businesses.

COMMUNITY GOALS

The City of Bethel has developed a set of community wide goals to guide in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan and influence how the City will implement the plans and policies that result from this effort. Bethel, with its commitment to quality of life, will plan and provide essential services and opportunities for future growth and development.

Maintain Bethel as an independent community.

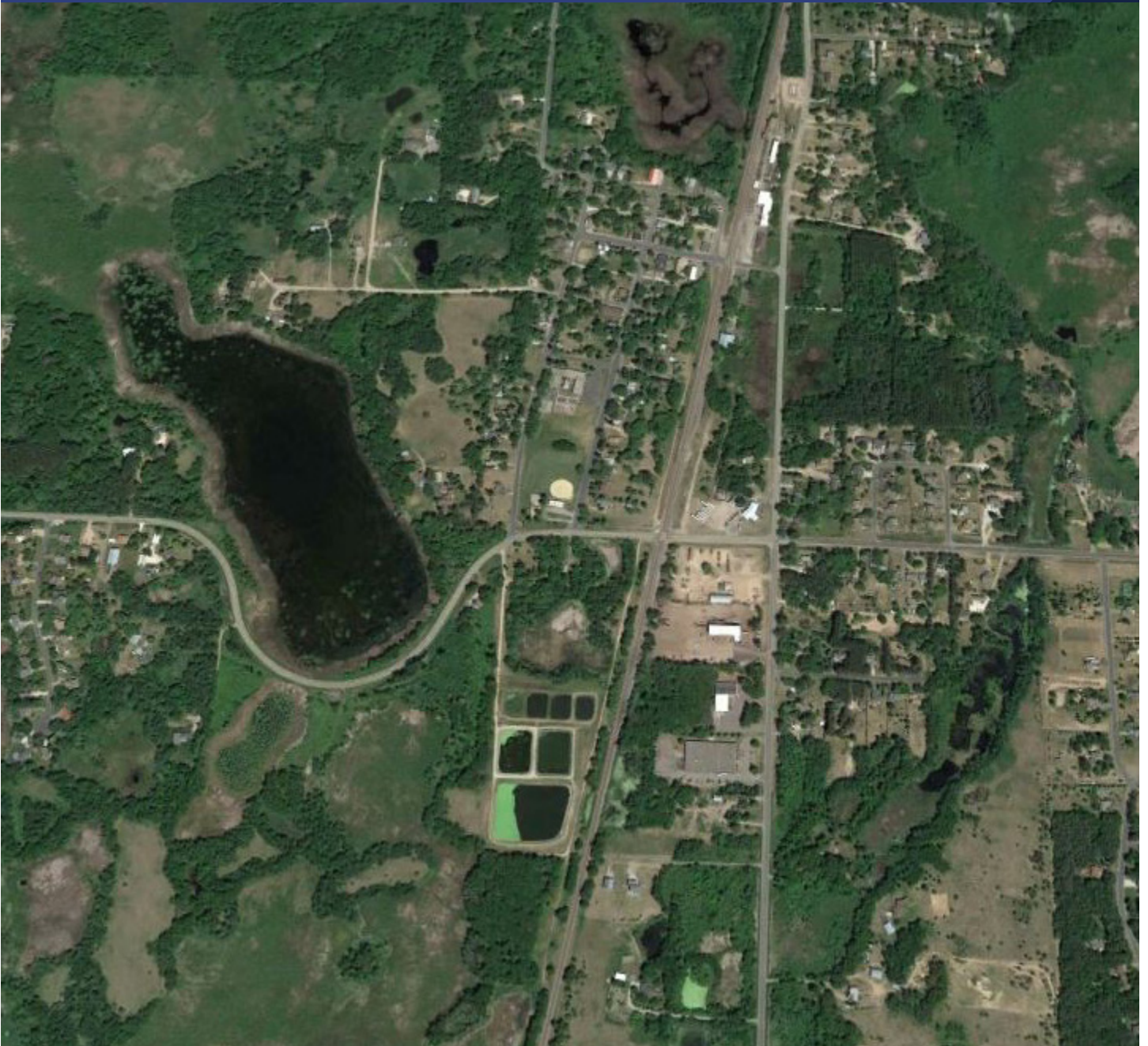
- Continue to monitor and evaluate the cost / benefits of service delivered by the City to ensure maximum cost efficiency and quality of services.
- Build on community strengths such as strong residential neighborhoods, quality local government, quality municipal infrastructure and amenities in defining the City's identity.
- Continue to exemplify fiscal responsibility.

Ensure public safety and services in Bethel.

- Contract for police service that best serves the City.
- Regularly evaluate the needs of the community and level of desired public protection service.
- Provide safe pedestrian access to City amenities.

Provide planning for future city improvements.

- Implement nuisance ordinance through effective Code Enforcement.
- Investigate economic development tools to maintain economic quality, good jobs, good public service, improve the Downtown, and broaden the tax base.
- Continue to pursue local, state and federal grants as funding sources to seek future planning efforts.
- Improve access into the community and connect important community locations.



Chapter 2:

Land Use

LAND USE

This chapter will cover the existing and proposed future land use plan for the City of Bethel, the requirements set on this plan by the city’s community designation, and a plan for new residential development outlining phasing, affordability, and proposed densities. Bethel is a Rural Center, meaning it provides housing along with retail and employment opportunities for a larger rural area. The Metropolitan Council requires that rural centers maintain an overall average density between 3-5 units per acre. Much of the city’s commercial activity is located along its historic main street. In addition, Bethel is projected to be a growing population before 2040, necessitating new housing, employment, and retail opportunities.

Forecast Year	Population	Households	Employment
2010 Census	466	174	86
2017*	499	179	98
2020	480	190	130
2030	520	220	150
2040	550	230	180

Table 1: Demographic Forecast from Metropolitan Council
 *2017 Metropolitan Council Estimate

DEMOGRAPHICS

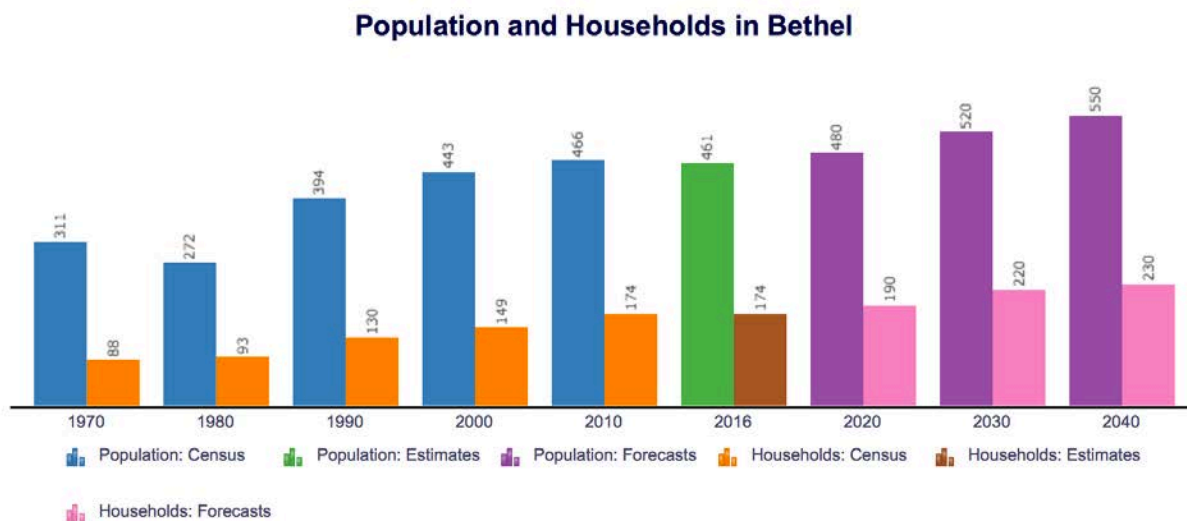


Figure 1: Population and Households, Metropolitan Council

As mentioned above, Bethel is a community which is anticipated to see moderate growth between now and 2040. The city’s largest period of growth in the last 50 years came between 1980 and 1990, adding 37 households and 122 people. Growth has otherwise been consistent, but at a slow-to-moderate pace. In large part, future growth will depend on sewer capacity and what types of households or families choose to locate or stay in the city. To understand these growth factors, we need to understand what the current residential population looks like.

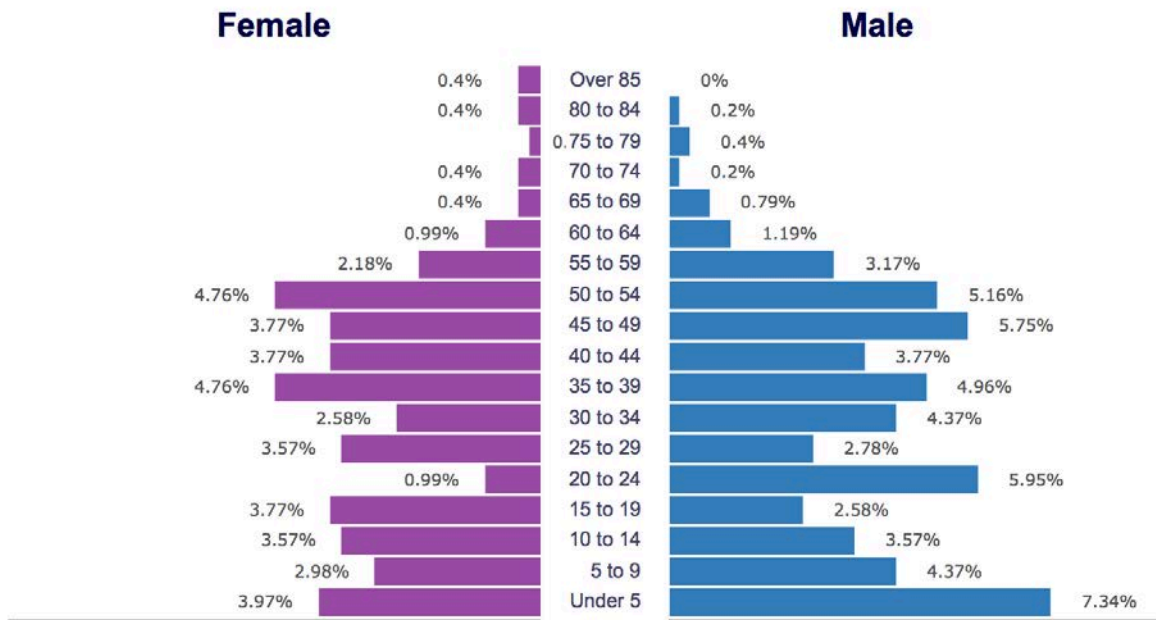


Figure 2: Population Age by Sex, Metropolitan Council

The graph above breaks down the City's population into age groups and is additionally organized by sex of resident. One characteristic of the population that stands out is the small senior population living in Bethel. Just under 6% of all residents, male and female, are aged 60 or older. In Anoka County, as a whole, people aged 60 or older make up about 18% of the population. This is important for forecast purposes because it identifies a lack of housing options and services for elderly residents. This can be addressed through providing more life-cycle housing with a coordinated attempt at finding service providers.

The City does have a fairly significant younger population. This shows that the City has been identified by some to be a good place to raise a family. Around 39% of total residents are estimated to be under 25, compared to about 32% of Anoka County. This significant portion of the population will also be adults in 2040 and keeping them in the city will be critical to Bethel maintaining and expanding its population. To this end, the city will have to not only provide housing affordable to many different household types, but also amenities like parks and desirable businesses to keep people from moving elsewhere.

COMMUNITY DESIGNATION

Rural Centers have six responsibilities outlined by the Metropolitan Council in support of Orderly and Efficient Land Use:

- Plan for forecasted population and household growth at overall average densities of at least 3-5 units per acre.
- Strive for higher-density commercial and compatible higher-density residential land uses in the commercial core of the community to ensure efficient uses of existing infrastructure investments.
- Work with adjacent jurisdictions to execute orderly annexation agreements where forecasted growth exceeds land capacity within existing city boundaries.
- Work to focus forecasted growth in areas with existing infrastructure capacity to protect existing farm land and prime agricultural soils for the long term.
- Adopt ordinances that coordinate development with infrastructure availability.
- Identify areas that will accommodate post 2040 growth forecasts and implement strategies to preserve these areas for future growth. Plan for necessary infrastructure improvements.

DEFINITIONS

The following are definitions for the land use categories that make up the existing and proposed land use plan:

Single Family Residential: Residential purposes, including mostly one-family homes and manufactured homes. May include some two-family homes, and open space with or adjacent to a residential development.

Multi Family Residential: Residential purposes, including duplexes, triplexes, townhomes, apartment buildings and condominiums. May include open space within or adjacent to a residential development.

Commercial: Provision of goods or services.

Light Industrial: Primarily constituting the processing and/or storage of products or operation of small warehousing facilities.

Industrial: Manufacturing and/or processing of products; could include light or heavy industrial uses and large warehouse facilities.

Institutional: Primarily religious, governmental, educational, social or healthcare facilities (excluding clinics).

City Park: Public active recreation areas, can include playfields or exercise equipment.

Open Space: Land used for resource protection or as a natural buffer area. Can be used for unorganized public recreational activities including trail hiking, picnic areas, fishing or hunting in certain cases.

Railway: Public or private passenger or freight rail activities.

Utility: Public or Private land occupied by a power plant or substation, electric transmission line, oil or gas pipeline, water tower, municipal well, reservoir, pumping station, water treatment facilities, communications tower or similar use.

Vacant: land not in active use available for re/development.

EXISTING LAND USE

Bethel is a community with a total area just under a square mile at 625 acres, but accounting for water and wetlands, there are closer to 447.5 acres of net developable land. Currently, the developed portions of the city are largely split between residential, commercial, and industrial uses. In addition, there are a number of large lots, currently listed as rural/agricultural land which are the areas for planned development. There are also about 113 acres of open lands that are owned and preserved by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The table on the next page gives a fuller breakdown of existing land uses.

	Total Acreage		Net Developable Acreage	
	Existing	Percent of Total	Existing	Percent of Total
Total Residential	435.8	70%	323.5	72%
Rural Residential	233.1	37%	156.7	35%
Single Family Residential	201.6	32%	165.7	37%
Multi Family Residential	1.1	<1%	1.1	<1%
Commercial	3.1	<1%	3.1	1%
Industrial	20.2	3%	20.2	5%
Institutional	5.0	1%	5.0	1%
City Park	2.2	<1%	1.5	<1%
Open Space	113.0	18%	51.4	11%
Railway	19.7	3%	19.7	4%
Utilities	19.3	3%	16.2	4%
Vacant	6.9	1%	6.9	2%
Total	625.0		447.5	

Table 2: Existing Land Use Breakdown

Rural Residential is the largest existing land use category at around 233 acres. These large lots are primarily how the City of Bethel will be able to grow and provide areas for future urban development.

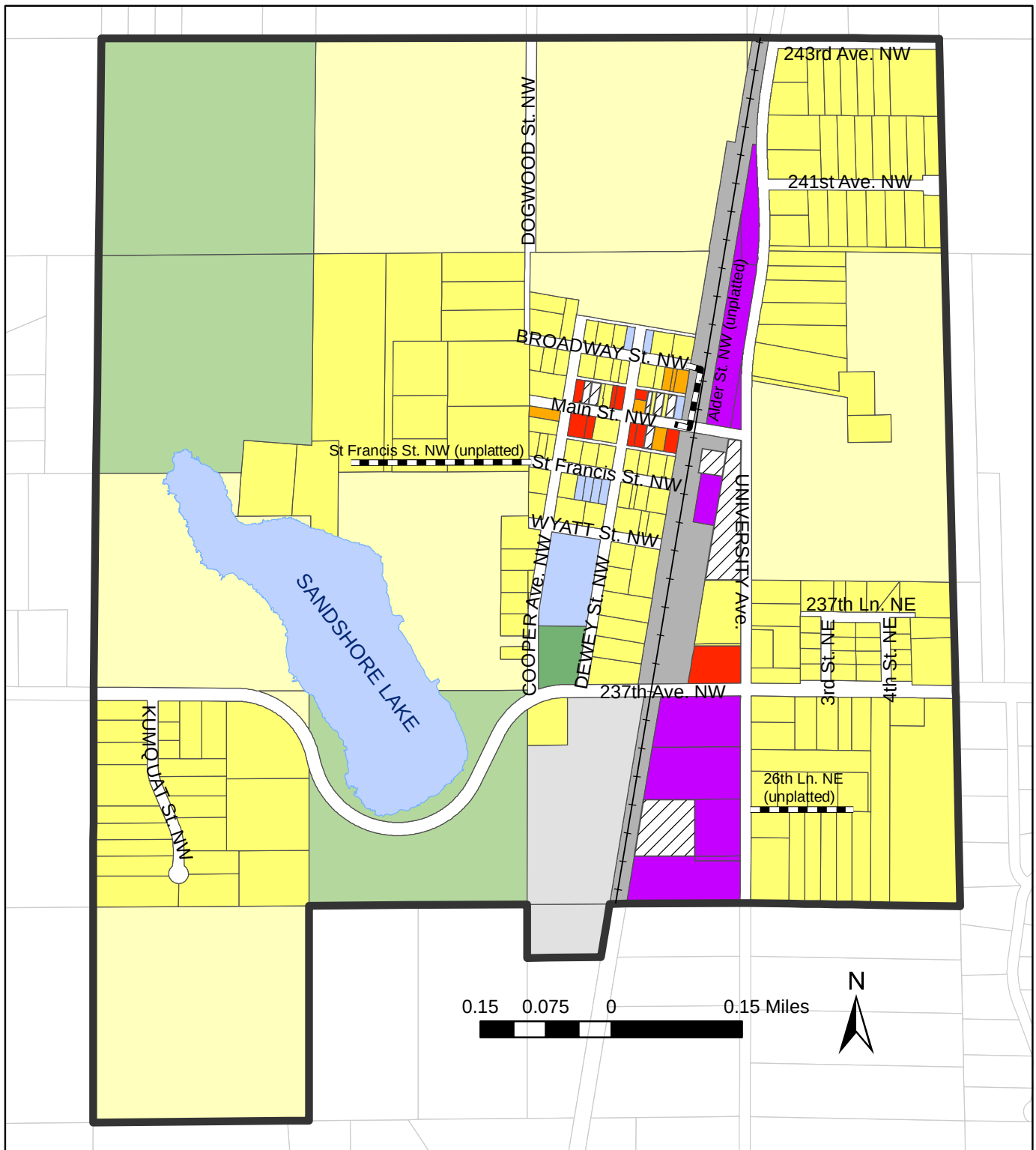
Single Family Residential is the second largest category just above 200 acres. This category comprises most of the city's housing stock and includes a wide range of densities and lot sizes. This category includes traditional small lots in the older portions of the City as well as new suburban-style subdivisions.

113 acres of Open Space are owned by the state of Minnesota through the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Around 36 acres are school trust lands south of Sandshore Lake, the remainder is a section of the larger Bethel Wildlife Management Area. These are not taxed by the city and will not be considered for future development; however, trails could be considered along existing public right-of-way on the school trust lands.

Industrial uses cover just over 20 acres, and includes businesses such as *LePage & Sons*, *Pattern Mold & Design*, and *Chandler Industries*. Manufacturing is a major employment sector for the city and the surrounding area, so preserving existing industrial uses is an important goal for the city.

Other significant land uses include Railway, which covers the land owned by Burlington Northern Inc. for their rail line. The other land use that makes up more than 1% of total acres is the Utilities land use, which encompasses the city's water treatment plant south of 237th Ave NW.

Multi Family Residential, Commercial, Institutional, City Park, and vacant lands all make up 1% or less of the total acreage. These categories may see some growth in the proposed land use plan.



Legend

	Rural Residential		City Park
	Single Family Residential		Open Space
	Multi Family Residential		Railway
	Commercial		Utilities
	Industrial		Vacant
	Institutional		

Bethel, MN - Existing Land Use 2018

Source: Anoka County, MnDNR & Northwest Associated Consultants



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

4150 Olson Memorial Highway, Ste. 320, Golden Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nacplanning.com

FUTURE LAND USE

Bethel's future land use plan reflects its community designation as a rural center. The phasing of this development will be important to ensure effective scaling of the public services and infrastructure.

	Total Acreage		Net Developable Acreage	
	Proposed	Percent of Total	Proposed	Percent of Total
Total Residential	432	69%	319.4	71%
Single Family Residential	429.7	69%	317.1	71%
Multi Family Residential	2.5	<1%	2.5	1%
Downtown Commercial	3.8	1%	3.8	1%
Highway Commercial	8	1%	8	2%
Industrial	41.3	7%	38.7	9%
Institutional	4.8	1%	4.8	1%
City Park	2.2	<1%	1.5	<1%
Open Space	113	18%	51.4	11%
Railway	19.7	3%	19.7	4%
Total	625		447.5	

Table 3: Proposed Land Use Breakdown

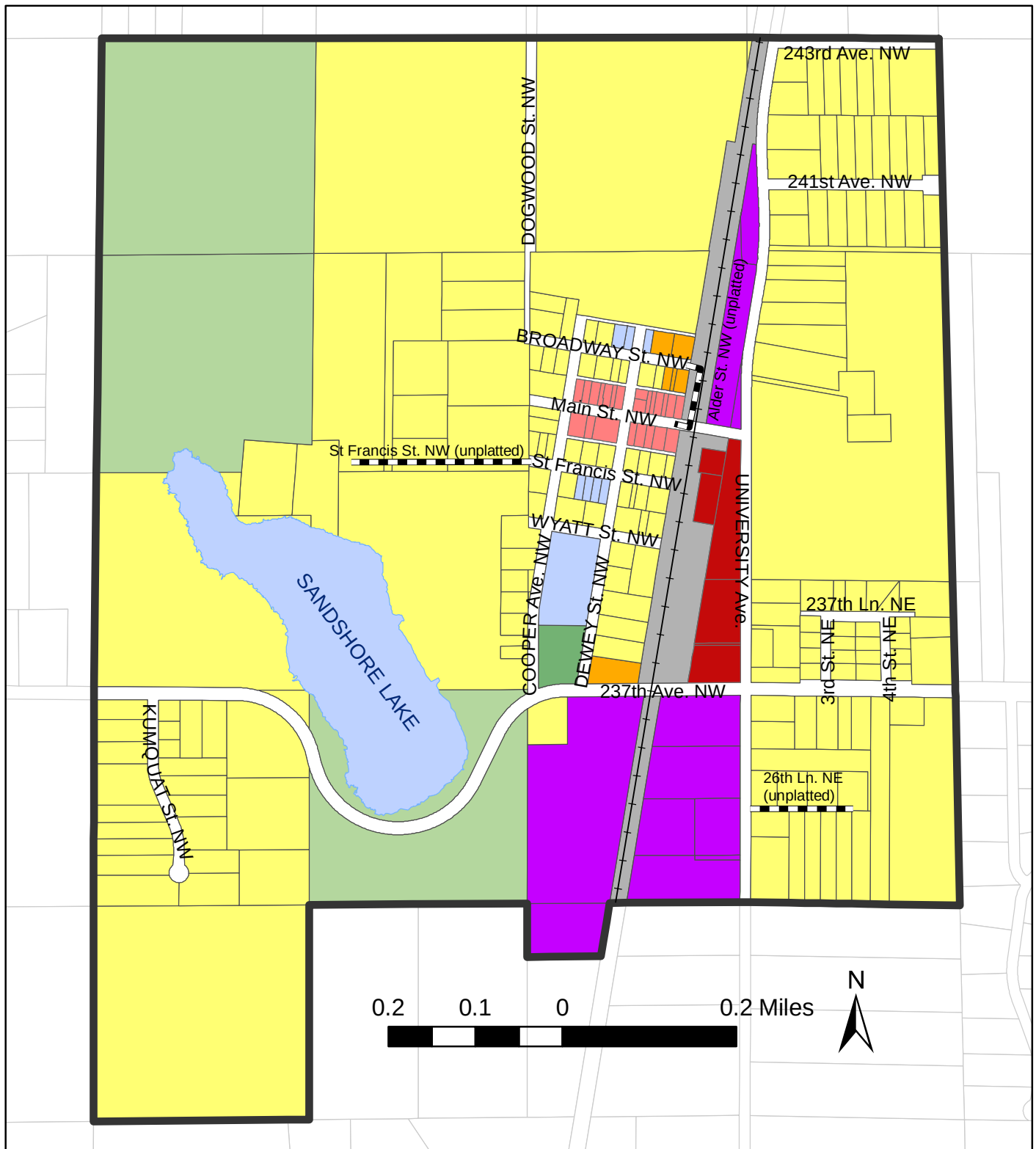
Density and Growth Plans

Rural Centers typically aim for a density range of 3-5 units per acre. This is unfeasible for Bethel for a few reasons. In the meantime, the city will aim to have new development within an overall range of about 2-3 units per acre.

The city's wastewater systems are currently operating near full-capacity. Higher density and/or larger amounts of new development would first require significant improvements. The Metropolitan Council has no plans to include the community into its regional wastewater management systems. Growing in a manner that emphasizes waste water efficiency, such as redevelopment of existing properties that would require no new infrastructure investment or limiting development potential of existing properties, will be critical for the City's planning moving forward. Through this plan, the City will continue to limit single family development to a minimum of 2 units per acre, allow for mixed use development in the Downtown, and allow for targeted areas of higher density development.

Bethel has a number of larger lot properties that may provide land for future development. Some of these large lots will be examined for subdivision in the 20-year plan, however this will again be largely dependent on how the rest of the city's infrastructure scales. Those properties that wish to develop prior to expansion of the City's sewer capacity will have to do so at the proposed densities.

The City is also providing for almost 2 acres of land for multi-family development at 8 units per acre. This will allow for targeted parcels of higher density development in appropriate locations and provide for affordable housing. It will also ensure that such development is limited and not overburden the City's sewer capacity. As these units are included in the forecasted growth, this increases the density of planned development to about 2.6 units per acre during this planning period.



Legend

 Single Family Residential	 Institutional
 Multi Family Residential	 City Park
 Downtown Commercial	 Open Space
 Highway Commercial	 Railway
 Industrial	

Bethel, MN - Proposed Land Use 2018

Source: Anoka County, MnDNR & Northwest Associated Consultants



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

4150 Olson Memorial Highway, Ste. 320, Golden Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nacplanning.com

Bethel currently has no plans to turn over its wastewater treatment plant to Metropolitan Council. If in the future, Bethel requests the Metropolitan Council to take over the local wastewater treatment plant, the City understands it will need to meet the requirements of the system plans for wastewater resources. At that point, the City may examine a wider range of densities for development.

Commercial designation is found along Main Street and University Avenue. The lots along University Avenue are larger and would allow for community businesses that are more auto-oriented that wouldn't fit the historic, traditional character of the Downtown. Downtown development shall be primarily entertainment, with restaurant, retail, and service opportunities that build upon the businesses already present.

Industrial makes up about 41 acres. Production and manufacturing work are desirable employment types and should continue to be critical to the economic vitality of the region.

The Commercial and Industrial development opportunities will provide employment opportunities that provide for the forecasted employment growth.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Bethel has been effective in defining and planning residential neighborhoods. The neighborhoods are designed to promote compatible land use patterns with a local street network that discourages through-traffic, and increases the privacy and safety within the City's residential areas. The Bethel City Park provides neighborhood recreational opportunities where residents can meet and find active outdoor space.

As a mature community, maintenance of the City's neighborhoods is essential. The City has prioritized enforcing zoning and building codes, promoting private reinvestment and providing community education and information to local property owners on home maintenance, repair and assistance opportunities.

Single Family Residential

The single family residential areas exhibited on the Proposed Land Use map are reflective of residential neighborhoods having a low density of 2 - 3 units per acre (net acres do not include right-of-way, wetlands or water bodies). These areas in Bethel are comprised of single family detached and attached homes (Figure 9). As mentioned above, several properties have changed designation from rural residential to single family residential in effort to entice development opportunities. As discussed in the Comprehensive Task Force workshops, the City may wish to pursue innovative low impact development (LID), as an incentive to attract a higher level of new residential homes while protecting the complex network of wetland complexes.

Overall, the City's single family housing stock is generally well maintained and in good condition. The single family housing stock is a combination of older, established homes and new construction within the last 20 years. Much of the City's more recent single family housing has occurred on Kumquat Street north of 237th Avenue and east of University Avenue. Together these developments provided approximately 75 additional lots for single family homes. The amenities present in all developments have led, for the most part, to higher value housing.

Multi-Family Residential

The multi family residential expressed on the Proposed Land Use map is reflective of property having a net density of 8 - 12 units per acre. The Land Use plan guides limited properties as multi-family residential near the Downtown and along major roadways. This type of development could also take the form of senior housing. The City currently has few housing options for seniors.

COMMERCIAL

Commercial development in Bethel currently consists of the Main Street downtown and areas of highway retail/service development along University Avenue. The two block downtown holds significant potential for continuing development and redevelopment opportunities. In addition, properties located along University Avenue hold potential for highway business due to their location and lot sizes.

The physical elements of the downtown offer both obstacles and opportunities. The City of Bethel is located one (1) mile west of Highway 65, which is the nearest principal arterial. Highway 65 offers commercial opportunities that are convenient for those traveling to destinations north and south. Bethel's geographically isolated obstacle offers opportunity for distinctive commercial enterprises. Commercial businesses in Bethel must offer residents, visitors and customers a unique experience not found along the Highway 65 corridor.

Downtown Commercial

The downtown area has traditionally been the commercial center of the community with the retail and service entities contained within a two block area. There is a strong desire in Bethel to continue a high level of investment in the downtown to these businesses to retain the community's independent function. The purpose of the Downtown Commercial designation is to provide for commercial uses in the City's traditional Downtown business district. New construction in this area should be consistent with the traditional Downtown style. Mixed uses are encouraged when not in conflict with the commercial nature of the area by primarily allowing residential uses on the second levels of commercial buildings.

Highway Commercial

The City's traditional pattern of highway commercial development has been the frontage along University Avenue. The Proposed Land Use map designates both large and small lots along this corridor. To enhance the highway commercial areas in Bethel and provide a more consumer friendly environment, the City should promote the elimination of code violations and non-conforming uses through redevelopment efforts. The City should consider investment programs when projects are in the public's best interest.

The City should also encourage high standards for quality by addressing appearance and function. Commercial sites must be designed with adequate area to accommodate building construction, off street parking, internal circulation, pedestrian access and green space. New development and redevelopment should promote an image compatible with standards expected of high quality development in Bethel. Commercial parking and loading should be screened from public rights-of-way and residential zones.

INDUSTRIAL

The Proposed Land Use map guides 41.3 acres for industrial land uses. Industrial land offers employment opportunities and tax base, which provides for a strong local economy. Due to the limited area available to this type of use, the uses included should clearly meet community goals. Industrial uses that do not provide employment opportunities, are largely intended for storage, or provide services that do not directly benefit the community should be avoided.

Much of the existing industrial land is located west of University Avenue with several isolated industrial parcels located north of 237th Avenue NW and west of University Avenue. The intent of this land use category is to offer light industrial uses that will not disrupt the surrounding downtown commercial or residential districts.

The focus of the City's efforts is to retain industrial uses, while trying to resolve maintenance issues. To accomplish the above mentioned items, the City will implement the following strategies:

- Open communication with business owners to encourage positive relations.
- Implement Industrial Design Guidelines as a means of promoting improved site design, quality architecture and addressing land use compatibility issues related to aesthetics, outdoor storage, noise and traffic.
- Subject new development and/or redevelopment to Bethel zoning standards.
- Code enforcement, backed up with rehabilitation assistance, proper screening through landscaping and fencing are methods of ensuring these as viable and compatible business areas of the City.

Due to the proximity of industrial areas to lesser intensity uses, industrial development in Bethel should be lighter in nature and not have significant outdoor storage or other potentially impactful characteristics. This may be relaxed slightly for rail-based industrial users provided ample steps are taken to mitigate the impacts to the surrounding areas.

INSTITUTIONAL

The intent of the Proposed Land Use plan is to retain the institutional uses such as governmental, religious and educational land uses. The only change to this designation is the potential expansion of the City's firehouse to the North of the downtown. The building's expansion will incorporate the vacant parcel directly to the west of the existing building.

OPEN SPACE AND PARKS AND RECREATION

Open space and park land offer passive and active recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. As stated earlier, over 18 percent of the City's total land area is owned by the MnDNR and is tax-exempt. While not generating revenue, these properties do provide a holding ground for complex wetland networks and lakeshore. Two (2) properties located in the northwestern portion of the City are part of a larger Bethel Wildlife Management Area while another property is located on the southern edge of Sandshore Lake.

LAND USE GOALS

Residential Land Use

Goal 1: Maintain and enhance the quality of housing and preserve residential land values.

Policies:

1. Enforce the zoning and building codes to ensure safe, well-maintained and attractive homes and neighborhoods.
2. Promote private reinvestment in the City's single family housing stock.
3. Provide community education and information to local property owners on home maintenance, repair and assistance opportunities.
4. Through the use of design guidelines, ensure multi-family housing is compatible with the surrounding area.
5. Provide housing options for all ages, including seniors.

Commercial Land Use

Goal 2: Maintain and improve Bethel's commercial areas as vital retail and service locations.

Policies:

1. Work with local business people to gain an understanding of the changing needs of the business environment.
2. Promote a full and broad range of office, service, retailing and entertainment uses within the commercial areas of Bethel.
3. Attract new businesses to Bethel that are complementary to existing businesses and will contribute to the customer attraction and business interchange of the local commercial areas.
4. Promote the redevelopment and expansion of existing businesses within the City to obtain a higher level of sales and business attraction.
5. Maintain Downtown as a key community asset and take active steps to improve its economic health.

Goal 3: Redevelop commercial sites that display building deterioration, obsolete site design and land use compatibility issues.

Policies:

1. Encourage redevelopment efforts with adjoining commercial properties to create site designs that promote attractive shopping environments, easy accessibility and a high level of business interchange between businesses.
2. Blend commercial redevelopment which is of a similar size and scale with existing businesses and which is supportable by available markets.
3. Through redevelopment efforts, pursue retail and service providers that would complement the existing commercial land uses and/or contribute to the accumulative attraction of Bethel's commercial area.

Goal 4: Create a cohesive and unified identity for Bethel's commercial areas.

Policies:

1. Create a uniform streetscape treatment that will enhance the retail shopping experience of Bethel's commercial areas.

2. Maintain community pride through maintenance of public streetscape via public/private cooperation efforts.
3. Follow Downtown improvement strategies that will improve the character and business environment of the Downtown.

Industrial Land Use

Goal 5: Retain Bethel's industrial land uses to insure a diverse tax base and local employment opportunities.

Policies:

1. Promote the high quality industrial construction / redevelopment to ensure building durability and an aesthetically attractive appearance.
2. Continue to maintain open lines of communication with local industries to stay abreast of their changing needs.
3. Avoid industrial uses with negative impacts on surrounding uses and/or which do not provide employment opportunities.

Institutional Land Use

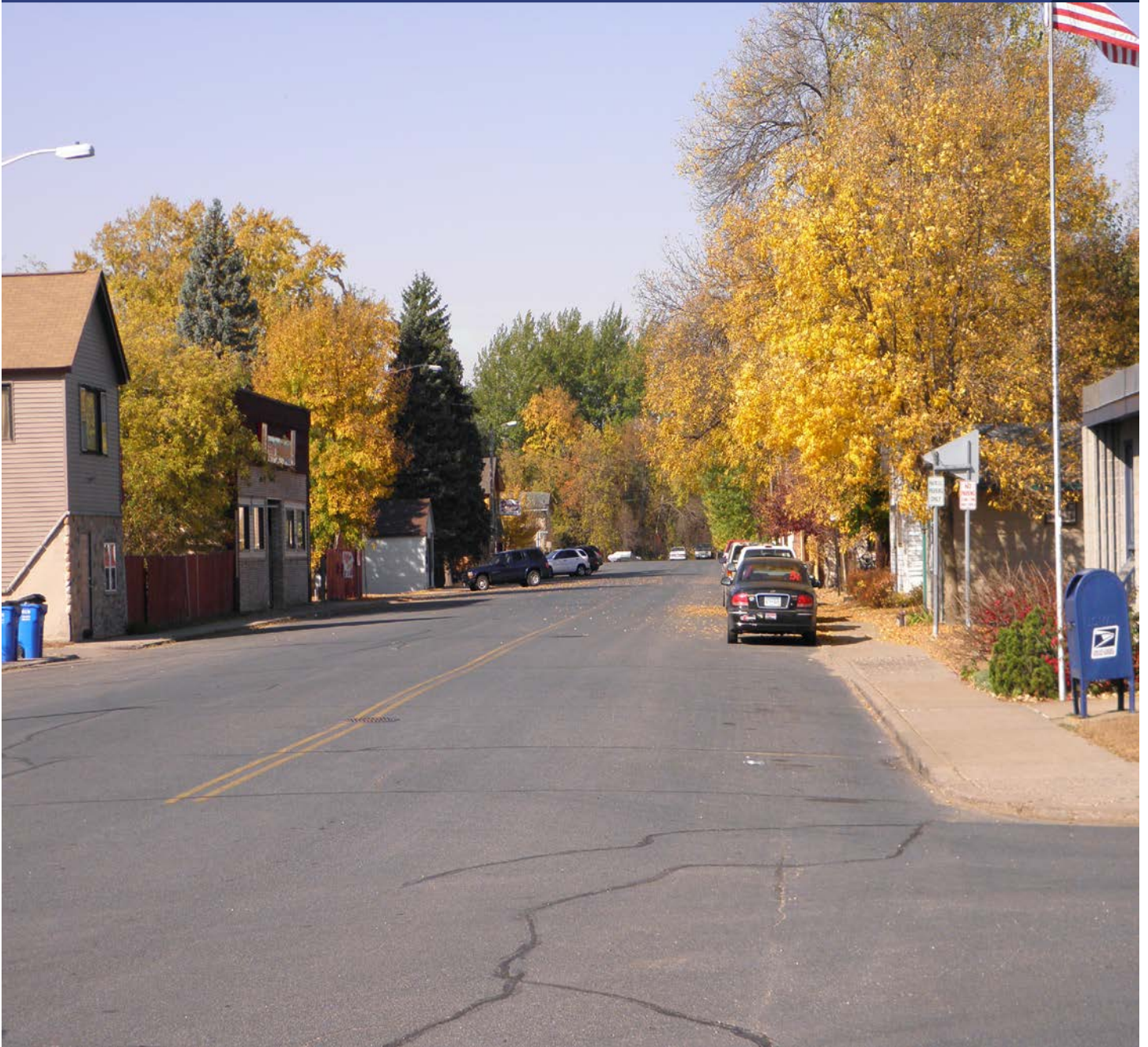
Goal 6: Cooperate with existing and expanding institutional facilities to ensure compatibility and a high level of design.

Policies:

1. All institutional development/redevelopment proposals must be analyzed to determine the most appropriate land uses within the community as a whole.
2. Adequately screen, landscape and buffer institutional facilities to minimize the impact on surrounding uses and enhance the community.
3. Consider land use impacts when conducting facility planning.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Evaluation of zoning controls to ensure compatibility with this plan.
- Rezone properties identified for land use changes.
- Monitor development to measure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Develop design guidelines for commercial, industrial, and multi-family housing development types.
- Actively seek senior housing options.
- Evaluate streetscape design for commercial areas.
- Create options for homeowners to improve their houses.



Chapter 3:

Downtown

DOWNTOWN

From the City’s land use plan, a goal to preserve and enhance the City’s Downtown was identified. To preserve the downtown as a commercial center, there are strategies that can be undertaken to enhance the appearance and the functioning of the district. Two elements influence the successful operation and function of a downtown. The first element is the physical downtown, its usage and land use relationship. The second element relates to the operation of businesses including business hours, promoting customer relations, marketing and relationship to the regional market conditions, including the downtown’s available market draw and competitive commercial locations.

A weakness of the downtown commercial core is that there are several properties which are undeveloped or contain non-conforming buildings. Bethel’s downtown today is also struggling due to poor transportation connections. The Downtown is not on a high traffic thoroughfare. It’s location was set due to proximity to the former rail depot rather than a location based on proximity to vehicle traffic. This creates a need for businesses to generate their own traffic.

The Downtown area is a mix of existing commercial buildings, single family residential homes, and some currently vacant lots. By refocusing this area on commercial buildings, and adopting measures to strengthen the streetscape itself, Bethel can take steps to begin reinvigorating its Main Street.

REDEVELOPMENT

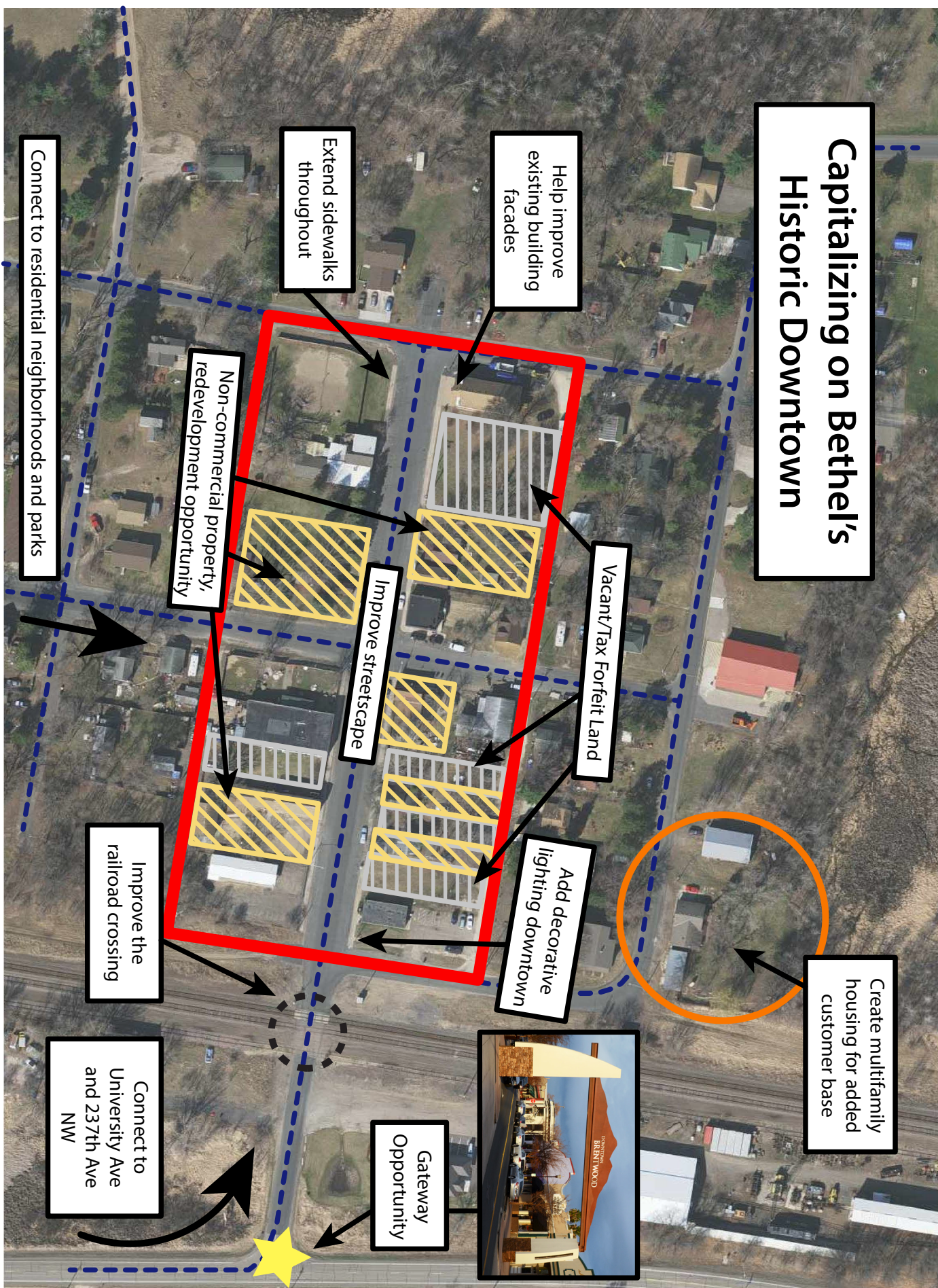
Infill development of the downtown will be the most crucial component of the area’s revitalization. As seen in the following graphic, almost half of Main Street is either residential property or vacant. Filling in lots will help to create more of a sense of commercial activity and vibrancy, to the benefit of the existing businesses downtown. While having a residential population within walking distance of downtown is important to ensure a consumer base, housing units along main street should only be located on the second story or higher of buildings. This preserves the ground floor for commercial uses. When pursuing new development and infill development, the city should have building design standards in place so that buildings fit the desired character of the Downtown.

In addition to private redevelopment, the city will also need to explore improvements to the public right-of-way. In its current state, a great amount of the right-of-way is devoted to the street, leaving limited space for public improvements meant to serve pedestrians. The street also has issues with stormwater, which requires structural improvement. The City may evaluate the overall street surface width along Main Street, and consider using space to widen sidewalk to allow for street furniture such as benches, street lamps, planters, and other such improvements.

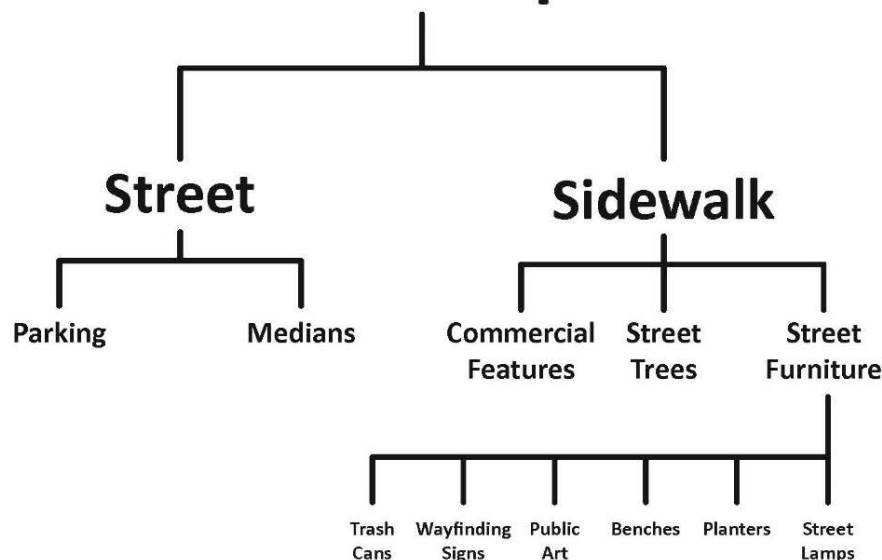
DOWNTOWN STREETScape COMPONENTS

A city has a number of tools in creating a vibrant and inviting downtown. At the ordinance level, a city can determine what types of businesses locate downtown through zoning controls. And improvement of buildings themselves can be achieved through small business loan programs. A more direct tool however is in how the city designs the streetscape. This is the space in between building facades that includes the streets, sidewalks, and any furniture or improvements therein. This section will go over some components of the downtown streetscape, and in what ways they can improve or harm a downtown district.

Capitalizing on Bethel's Historic Downtown



Streetscape



Streets

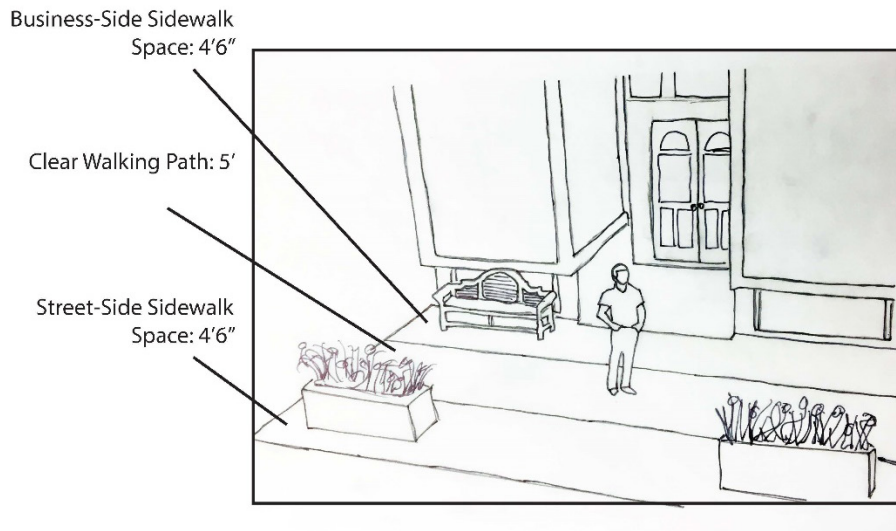
The street itself plays a major role in how people get to a downtown area, and then in how they interact with the downtown. Balancing considerations such as parking, accommodations for drivers, business use, and beautification can lead to a better overall streetscape.

With a downtown street, the city is trying to find the right balance between it being large and connected to enough arterial streets that people can easily get to the downtown itself, but also not so large that it begins to impact the quality of the pedestrian experience. For example, a wider street can help with traffic flow, but can also cause motorists to unintentionally drive faster and create a less safe pedestrian environment. In addition, it's valuable to think about how the more space the street takes up, the less space is available for sidewalk and other pedestrian amenities.

Sidewalks

The second major component of any downtown streetscape, sidewalks perform a number of crucial roles. Firstly, they are the primary mobility tool once a person has arrived downtown, providing safe pedestrian connections between parking, shops, restaurants and other amenities. Secondly, sidewalks allow for space to place street furniture, trees, plantings, or outdoor commercial features. Between these two functions a balance needs to be struck so that the sidewalk has interesting amenities, but without becoming so cluttered as to inhibit mobility.

A clear walking path is a federally mandated requirement for sidewalks as part of the Americans with Disabilities Act. The ADA minimum calls for a five-foot clear walking path with no more than a 2% slope. So, if a sidewalk was 12 feet wide, no more than seven feet of objects like signs, trees, or benches could be located in a single section of sidewalk. Once you have this maximum width of street furniture, you can then start to think about the distribution of street furniture.



With sidewalk elements it can be valuable to think of those elements on the street side of the sidewalk and those that are on the building side, with the clear path in between them. The street side will have primarily public elements like lamp posts and street trees, while the building side may have more private elements, such as outdoor seating for restaurants or promotional signage. The city needs to consider how to divide their sidewalks among these types of uses to create the best mix of downtown amenities.

Parking

In order to get visitors to stop and patronize a downtown, it's necessary to provide adequate parking. In Bethel there is currently parallel parking on one side of the street and angle parking on the other. There are pros and cons for both types of parking.

Angled: Angled Parking allows for more overall parking spaces than parallel, but the depth needed for an angled stall takes up more than double the amount taken up by a parallel space. This is because the stall has to both accommodate the length of a car but also allow space for that car to start reversing out without being in the drive lane.

Parallel: Parallel parking can fit fewer parked vehicles along a block but preserves more Right of Way for sidewalk and other improvements. Parking lost in the conversion to parallel can be made up for with the development of off-street parking located within or on the perimeter of the downtown.

Providing municipal parking lots is an option to resolve any parking issues. Ideally parking lots would be located without direct frontage to Main Street to avoid creating permanent gaps in activity.

Medians

Medians can be an effective downtown element, serving both as an aesthetic improvement to the street, while also acting as a traffic calming measure. Traffic calming is the practice of using physical design tools, like medians or curb extensions which are meant to slow down drivers to create a safer driving environment. Depending on the design of the median, they can be decorative in purpose as well. Medians can incorporate planters, street trees, bollards, or other elements to this end.

A major drawback to medians, especially in areas that receive snow such as Minnesota, is the difficulties they create in terms of snow removal and storage during the winter. These become

another obstacle in the roadway that plow drivers will need to avoid, and snow that accumulates in the medians themselves can create issues. These issues would need to be mitigated.

Street Trees

Street Trees can have a noticeable impact on a downtown, especially when allowed to grow into their adulthood through patience and good forestry practices. Trees do not take up an inordinate amount of space aboveground, however, most street trees require adequate space underground to allow their root systems to spread and establish themselves. Without sufficient space underground trees will fail to grow, and instead become a costly item to remove some years down the line.

Use of trees in a Downtown streetscape should be done with a coordinated, careful plan. This ensures that the proper trees are selected for use. Poor tree selection creates conflicts with pedestrians and conflicts with business entrances and signage.

Public Amenities

Signs: Gateway and wayfinding signs play a major role in directing and reminding traffic of the business district location. Such signage may direct traffic on University Avenue and County State Aid Highway 24 towards the Downtown. The City has already established such a sign on University Avenue near the railroad crossing. Directing people both into downtown and to parking, restaurants and other amenities will be crucial in bringing in these new consumers. Additional wayfinding signage may be used by the City to direct traffic towards parking areas and other community elements within or near the Downtown. Businesses can use street signs to advertise sales and events to pedestrians if given space to do so on the sidewalk.

Lampposts and Lighting: The best downtowns maintain activity into the evening; through bars, restaurants, and entertainment centers. And in order for people to feel safe and welcome in a downtown after dark, lighting is needed along streets and in between the downtown and off-street parking. Lamp posts can also serve a decorative purpose: displaying banners, flags or hanging planters.

Benches/Seating: Seating options can help encourage people to spend more time downtown giving them a chance to rest and enjoy the downtown area itself. And for older visitors, or people who may suffer from limited mobility, a seating option can make the difference between them stopping in the city or choosing not to visit at all.

Planters: These are typically less intensive options than street trees to introduce greenery into a downtown. Planters can be used as a buffer between the roadway and the sidewalk to create an added sense of pedestrian safety. Such planters can incorporate furniture such as benches to create an inviting small space.

Private Amenities

Wider sidewalks create a major opportunity for downtown businesses to expand their service or sales outdoor. Signs have also been mentioned, but given enough space, outdoor dining and seating options can also be provided by businesses during warmer months. Another option, and something that is usually handled through administrative permits, would be to allow for temporary outdoor sales in front of a retail store.

Allowing private uses of the sidewalk may reduce the amount of available space for public street furniture. While planning for improvements the City will need to identify the amount of space for each zone of use to avoid conflicts.

Financing Streetscape Improvements

One of the main deterrents that most cities face when considering a facelift of their downtown streetscape is the sheer cost of it. Expanding sidewalks usually means tearing up existing Right of Way. Converting parking means adding surfacing. Adding trees, lights, and benches all have a monetary cost for both the product and the installation.

While there are few good ways to cut costs for these types of improvements, there are ways to make spending more efficient or to bring in new money from outside sources.

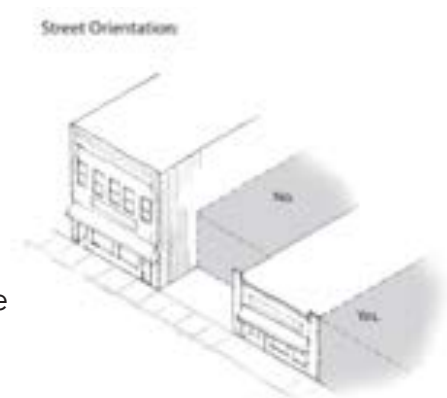
- Coordinate renovation with other planned improvements that require major street reconstruction, such as the addition of storm sewers or underground utilities. This distributes the cost between two projects so that the city won't be faced with spending the same money twice.
- Plan out far enough that fundraising can occur locally. Also begin applying for available grant moneys from both state and non-profit agencies.

BUILDING DESIGN

A good streetscape is only part of what makes a downtown aesthetically pleasing to visitors and residents. Of just as much importance is the appearance of the buildings along the street itself. A downtown with buildings that are too uniform feels inauthentic to the historic character, while having no common architectural features creates a sense of haphazardness. In order to avoid either of these extremes, a city can create a set of downtown design guidelines. Design guidelines set criteria for various aspects of building appearance and function as relating to outward building facades, which private property owners downtown must then follow to avoid conflict with city regulations. These criteria are not completely set in stone however and should be designed to provide enough flexibility so that property owners can still make their building facades their own. Instead, these criteria are meant to promote overall compatibility between buildings and avoid buildings that are extremely out of character without creating a sense of sameness.

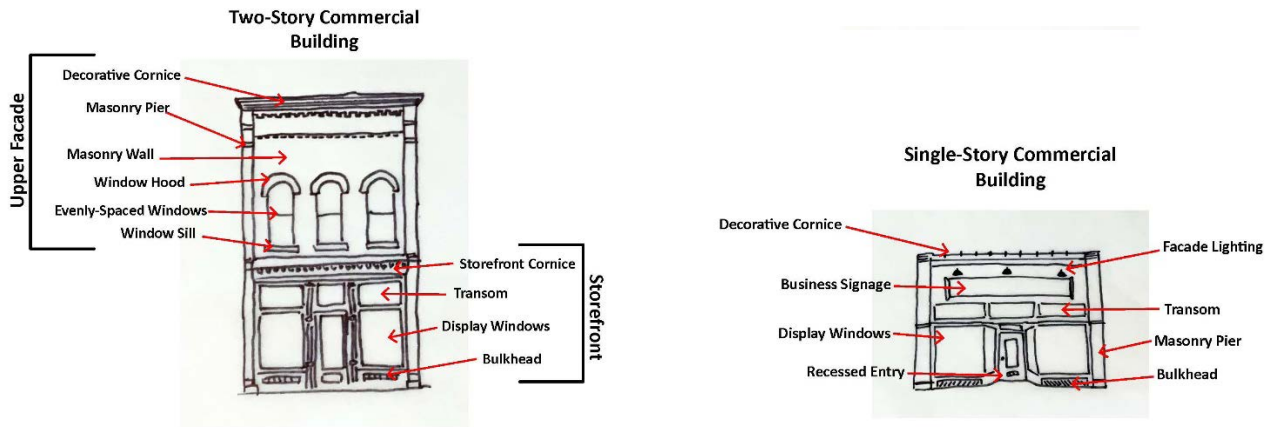
Setbacks and Street Orientation

For most traditional downtowns, all buildings should lie directly on or close to the front lot line and flush with the sidewalk itself. This is what creates the effect of their being a single solid wall of buildings along either side of the main street, rather than having buildings at various lengths. There are a few exceptions when the zero-lot-line rule need not be applied, for example most surface parking fully eschew a building of any type and creates a gap in the overall street façade. This can be mitigated however with the use of decorative screening such as trees or fence rail.

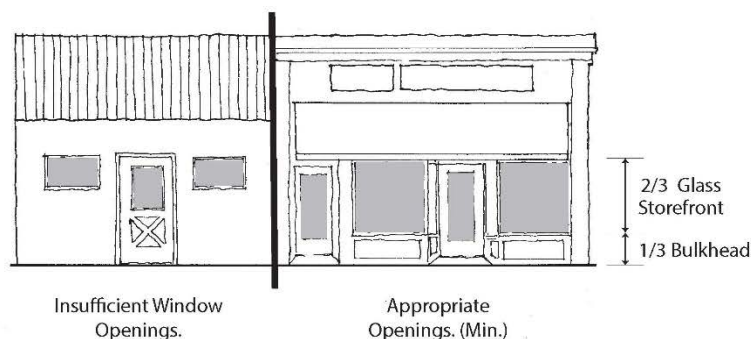


Façade Components

Building a one-story commercial building and making its façade visually interesting require two very different skill sets. Filling in the gaps along Main Street is an important goal, but the buildings put in place need to also add to the street's character. The following diagrams show examples of one- and two-story commercial buildings that fit the traditional downtown style that would fit in Bethel. Some key elements to note include:

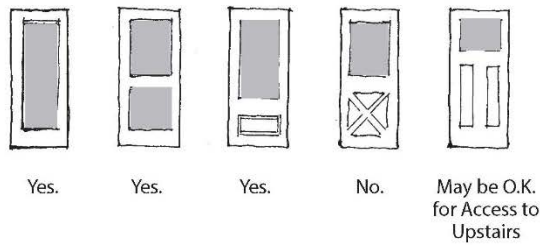


Fenestration: Fenestration refers to the placement and use of doors and windows in the design of the building. With a commercial building, a high degree of transparency on ground floors is preferred so that pedestrians can easily see indoors and locate entrances. Note in both diagrams how much of the façade itself at ground level is made up by large, broad display windows. These allow pedestrians to clearly see merchandise and store interiors, and also help to bring in a lot of natural light to the interiors themselves. Windows on secondary levels can be smaller, to increase the sense of privacy for office or residential uses, but should still have care paid to them through elements such as window sills, even placement, and the use of window hoods. The final window type identified in the diagrams are transom windows. These were used pre-electricity to help bring more natural light into buildings, but now serve more ornamental purposes.



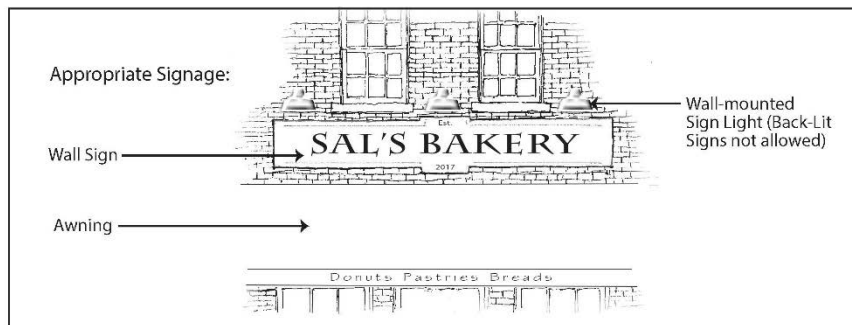
Entrances should be clearly delineated from the rest of the façade to avoid creating confusion, but like the rest of the building face, doors should have a high degree of transparency to create a sense of openness. Solid wood doors, such as those used on residential buildings should be avoided where able. Doorways can be recessed from the street to create a covered transition area, but windows should be utilized to maintain natural lighting and sightlines. Depending on the business' size or use, double doorways can be considered.

Door Elevations:



Materials and Detailing: Traditional commercial buildings are commonly brick, stone, or sometimes wood depending on era of construction. In order to build off of existing structures, these types of traditional materials should continue to be used when conducting infill or new development. When creating design guidelines, it is of particular importance to identify these types of primary materials, and to contrast their uses with accent materials such as tile and metal. An added benefit to the use of brick or stone is its ability to be used to add detail to a building façade. For example, sills and hoods were previously mentioned for their ability to liven up otherwise mundane windows. In addition to this, brickwork, cornice lines, and masonry piers help to break up the flat appearance of the underlying masonry wall and should be encouraged as simple measures to add detail to the building façade.

Signage: Businesses need to be able to advertise themselves in order to attract customers, and signs are the most common method of doing so. Signs are absolutely crucial to the function of a downtown, but when implemented poorly, can have major negative impacts on an area. Signs which fall flush with the façade need to be proportioned correctly to the building itself, and in terms of the pedestrian who will need to be able to read it. The benefit of wall signs is that they do not intrude out into the public right of way and are generally less obtrusive than projecting signs.



While projecting signs should have more design restrictions, they can be helpful to break up sameness along a stretch of buildings. Projecting signs should not protrude so much however that they block sightlines or hang so low that they present a potential safety hazard. Often, businesses will utilize windows as areas to display additional or temporary signage. This can add to the visual interest of the building but should not take up so much window space that it begins to block views to business interiors.

Lighting: Adequate exterior lighting goes without question for businesses like restaurants or theaters which operate later into evenings, but even businesses that are active only in the daytime can consider using some exterior lighting to illuminate their signs or window displays. Lighting helps an area feel safer and more welcoming at night, and special attention should be paid to illuminating off street parking or primary and secondary entrances. Lighting on facades should not completely replace larger and brighter public light fixtures, but instead complement these light sources at a lower-pedestrian scale.

DOWNTOWN GOALS

Goal 1: Downtown is a key community asset and improvements to its appearance and economic health are important to the City.

Policies:

1. Work with the established commercial core businesses to help satisfy their operational and growth needs. This effort reinforces the City's confidence in the established business community and helps solidify the existing downtown anchor businesses.
2. Promote private rehabilitation of buildings in manner that follows the historical character of the downtown.
3. Adopt downtown architectural design guidelines for new development and redevelopment.
4. Encourage private business expansion, redevelopment and new businesses in the downtown that complement and not necessarily directly compete with the large retail centers in other communities. The City can concentrate and encourage the types of businesses that take advantage of the local shoppers and residents who live in close proximity to the downtown, especially the elderly who are steady clients for goods and services.
5. Continue investment by the City to improve the infrastructure and enhance the appearance of the downtown. The City will need to participate with the business community in upgrading the appearance of the streets to include benches and landscaping. Continued investment and maintenance is necessary, as well as new programs to provide directional signage and improved signs for the downtown.
6. Provide for supplemental downtown parking areas.
7. Actively seek appropriate businesses such as additional entertainment type uses for the Downtown.
8. Create connections through the trail and sidewalk system to the Downtown.
9. Improve safe traffic to the Downtown over the rail crossing.
10. Create a unified and attractive streetscape for Main Street.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Establish design guidelines that incorporate the principles of this plan.
- Evaluate zoning regulations to ensure compatibility with this plan.
- Establish economic development programs to assist in building facade improvements and to attract appropriate businesses to the Downtown.
- Establish a final streetscape design for Main Street.
- Provide for more gateway signage to direct traffic to the Downtown.
- Work with the railroad on crossing improvements.



Chapter 4:

Transportation

TRANSPORTATION

The City of Bethel does not currently have an adopted Comprehensive Transportation Plan. However, the transportation components of this plan are intended to fulfill the streets and highways requirements of the 2040 Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

At the present time, there are no metropolitan highways (functionally classified as principal arterials or freeways) in the City of Bethel. The primary traffic carrying capacity within the City is provided at Anoka County’s network of designated County roads which traverse the community.

Bethel is outside of the Metropolitan Transit Taxing District and therefore, there is no regular route transit service existing or planned in the City. However, there is potential for commuter rail service to and through the community with a possible station located adjacent to Main Street NW along the existing BNSF Railroad. Bethel contains no airport or aviation facilities.

As a developing Rural Residential community, serviced only by Anoka County highways and local roadways, most future residential growth will be greenfield development. It is planned that development will occur within the existing service areas and will be well served by the existing transportation network. As noted, The City currently has no regular Metro Transit service but individuals do have access to Metro Mobility services.

ROADWAY SYSTEM FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

The map on the following page identifies roadways in the City of Bethel, including their jurisdiction and “functional classification.” These roadways are under the jurisdiction of the County and City. Limited access roadways that carry larger volumes of traffic at higher speeds tend to be under the jurisdiction of the State of Minnesota (e.g., Interstates, U.S. Highways and State Trunk Highways), including State Highway 65, which is 1.5 miles east of City. Roads that carry mostly local traffic are under the jurisdiction and are the responsibility of the City. Anoka County has jurisdiction of roads that carry intermediate levels of traffic and which provide connections among communities in the County. County roadways include those that receive direct aid from the State of Minnesota, which are called County State Aid Highways. Roadways are described by their functional classifications in the sections that follow.

Principal Arterials (State Highway 65)

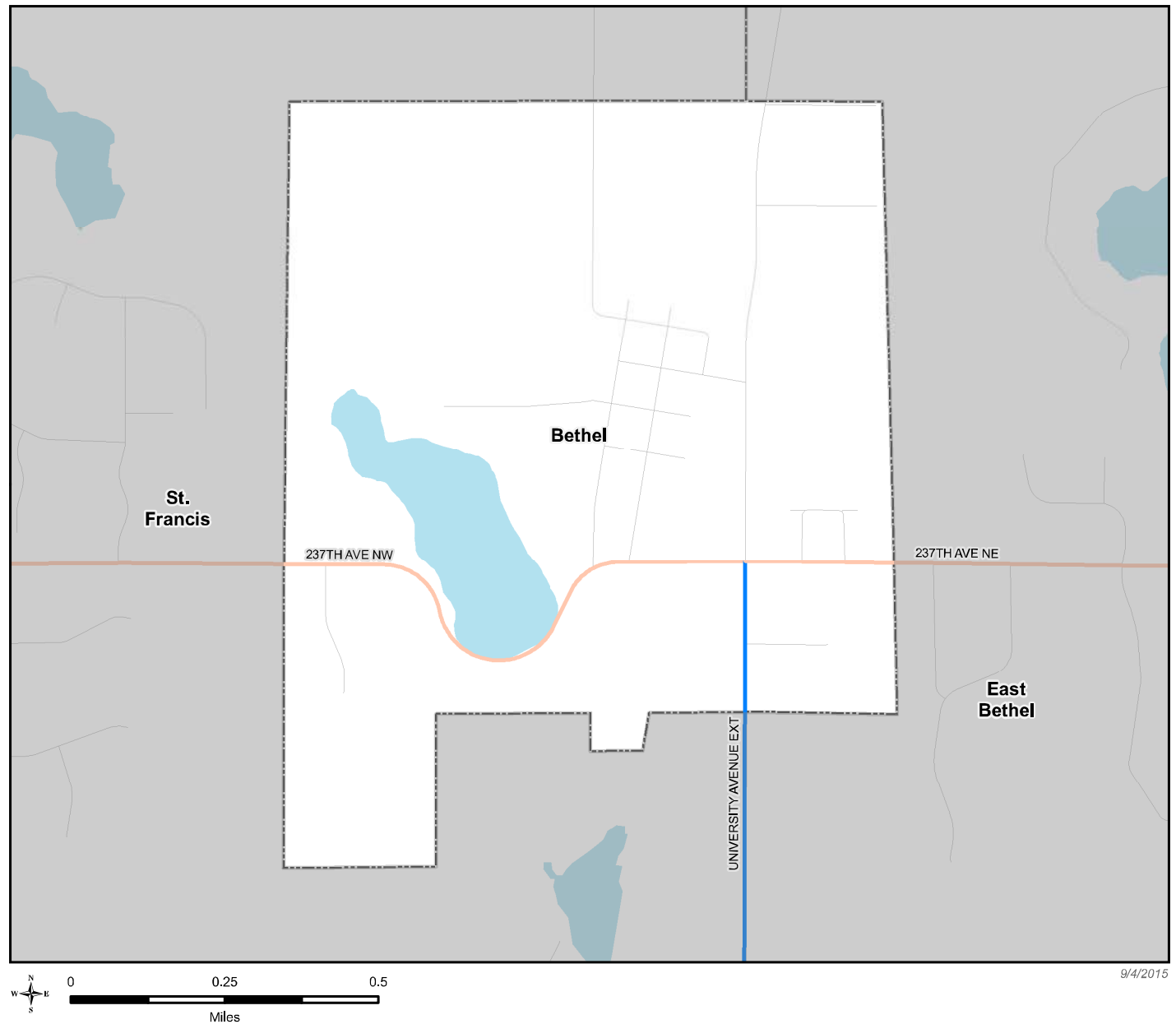
The metropolitan highway system is made up of roads called “principal arterials”. They include all interstate freeways and other major roadways that provide long distance connections into and out of the metropolitan area. Connections with other roadways are limited to other principal arterials and to a minimal number of other roads. State Highway 65 is the nearest principal arterial that serves the City of Bethel. State Highway 65 provides important connections to the bulk of the metropolitan area to the south of Bethel. This roadway is under the jurisdiction of the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MNDOT) but no planned improvement to this principal arterial is located within the City of Bethel.

Minor Connector

“Minor Connectors” are roadways that generally provide mobility for shorter distances than principal arterials, providing interconnection between other arterial roadways and between regional business concentrations. They often supplement principal arterials. These roadways are eligible to compete for federal funding in State applications.

Regional Transportation System - Functional Class Roads

Bethel



Existing Functional Class Roads

- Principal Arterial
- A Minor Augmentor
- A Minor Reliever
- A Minor Expander
- A Minor Connector
- Other Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector

Planned Functional Class Roads

- Principal Arterial
- A Minor Augmentor
- A Minor Reliever
- A Minor Expander
- A Minor Connector
- Other Arterial
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector

- County Boundaries
- City and Township Boundaries
- Lakes and Rivers

The Minor Connector in Bethel is University Avenue NW/CSAH 13. This Minor Connector is currently a 2-lane highway and there are no current plans for any lane additions within Bethel's City limits.

Minor Expander

"Minor Expander" are roadways that are designed to serve shorter trips. Their function is to collect and distribute automobile traffic from neighborhoods and commercial/ industrial areas onto the reliever roadway system. These roads are designed to provide access as much as mobility. There are no Minor Expanders in or near Bethel.

Major Collectors

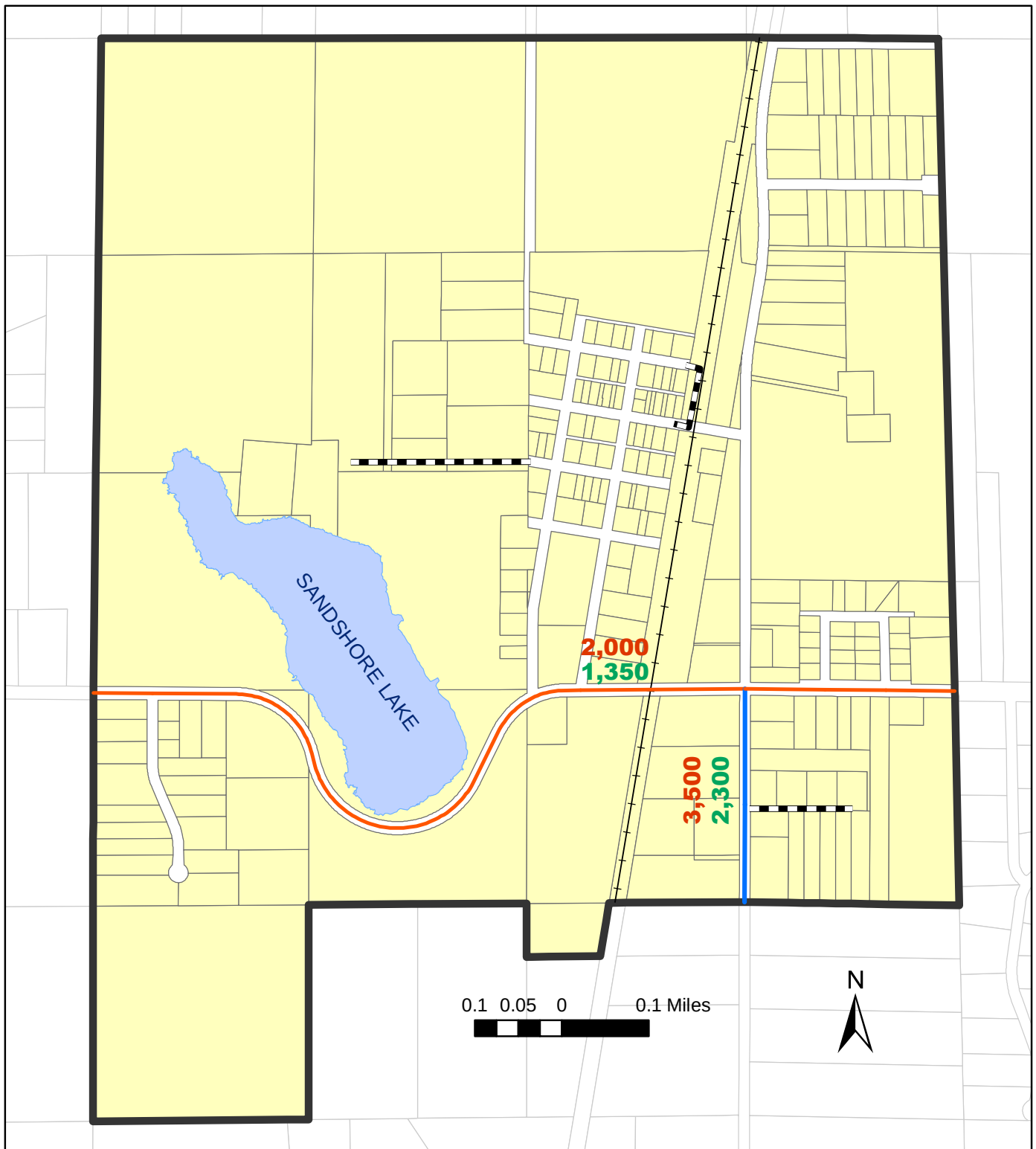
"Major Collector" streets place an equal emphasis on both mobility and land access. The collector street system has been further classified as major and minor collectors, per the Metropolitan Council system. The major and minor collectors provide accessibility and connection to neighboring cities and townships and/or direct accessibility to arterials, connectors and expanders. In Bethel 237th Avenue NW/CSAH 24 is a Major Collector.

Local Streets

The primary function of local streets is to provide direct access to the abutting properties with minimal emphasis on mobility. In fact, the local street system is reflective of the city's environmental constraints and design standards to encourage lower speeds and to discourage the intrusion of through traffic into the neighborhoods. The neighborhoods have and are being designed to have local streets channel the neighborhood traffic to the city collector street system which, in turn, links to the surrounding collector street system, which funnels the traffic to the arterial streets when necessary.

TRAFFIC VOLUMES AND FORECASTS

Anoka County, as part of their 2040 Transportation Plan update, has published both current and forecasted Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) numbers for their major county and state roadways. Two roads in Bethel were large enough to have traffic measured, 237th Ave NW and University Ave. University, being an A-minor arterial had a higher AADT than 237th NW at 2,300 vs. 1,350 in 2014. And while both are anticipated to grow between now and 2040, that gap will widen to a difference of 1,500 AADT. The map on the next stage shows these roadways.



Bethel, MN - Existing and Forecasted Traffic Volumes

Source: Anoka County, SEH Inc. & Northwest Associated Consultants

Legend

Functional Road Class

- A-Minor Connector
- Major Collector
- - - - Unplatted Roads

Traffic Volumes

- #### Existing
- #### Forecasted



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

4150 Olson Memorial Highway, Ste. 320, Golden Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nacplanning.com

TRANSPORTATION ANALYSIS ZONES

Bethel falls within a number of different Transportation Analysis Zones (TAZs), which are used for the purposes of projecting and understanding traffic volumes along roadways in a region. Forecasts for population, households, and employment are developed for the purposes of long-term transportation planning. The TAZs which incorporate a portion of Bethel are detailed below, and the TAZ boundaries are shown on the map.

TAZ	Population 2014	Households 2014	Employment 2014	Population 2014	Households 2040	Employment 2040
8	357	137	68	418	175	84
9	116	45	40	132	55	96
TOTALS	473	182	108	550	230	180

Table 1: TAZ Forecast from Anoka County

Freight Nodes and Infrastructure

Bethel does generate some semitrailer based freight movement. The biggest generators are along University Avenue and the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad. There are no regular or repeated issues with facilitating good movement of heavy commercial freight on the City’s roadways.

According to the most current Minnesota Department of Transportation Heavy Commercial Daily Traffic (HCDDT) Map there is no measured freight traffic through Bethel. Any projected increase in heavy commercial traffic on this State HWY 65 would not have a measurable impact on the City of Bethel.

The BNSF owns and operates a single track freight railway that runs north/south on the east side of the City.

FUTURE TRANSIT PLANNING

Transit Market Areas

The entirety of Bethel is designated as Market Area V on Metropolitan Freight System maps. Transit Market Area V has very low population and employment densities and tends to be primarily Rural communities and Agricultural uses. General public dial-a-ride service may be appropriate here, but due to the low intensity land uses these areas are not well-suited for fixed-route transit service.

Transitways & Transit Support Facilities

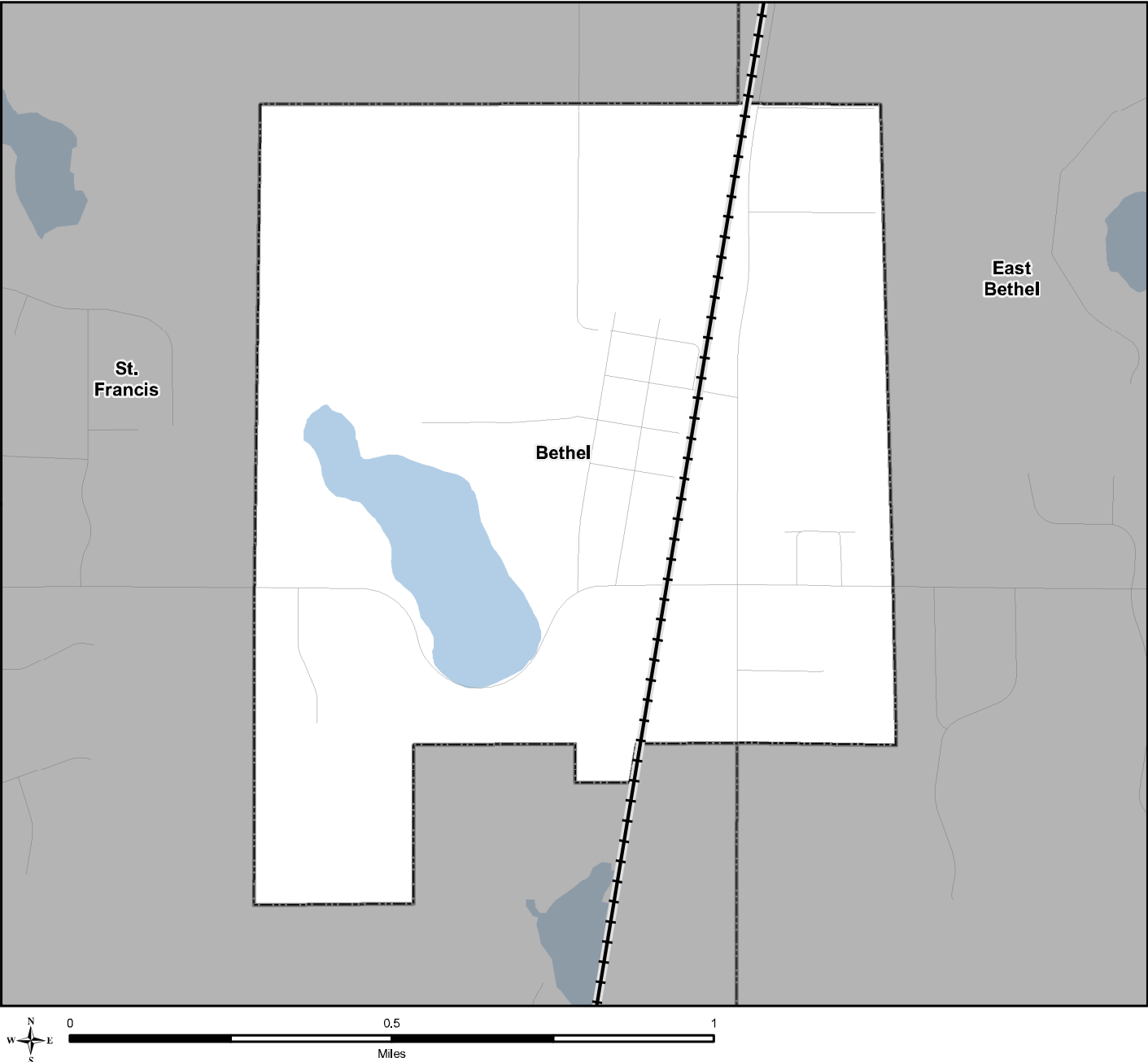
The Metropolitan Council’s Transit Investment Plan does not show any transitway investments or transit support facilities located or planned for Bethel in the Current Revenue Scenario.

Transit Capital Levy District

Bethel is not within the Transit Capital Levy District. Regardless of the Transit Market Area or transitway corridor planning, the only transit services provided in this type of community are Transit Link dial-a-ride service and various ridesharing services. Anoka County Transit Link Service provides dial-a-ride services to Bethel residents.

Metropolitan Feight System

City of Bethel, Anoka County



- Freight Terminals

 - Air / Truck
 - Barge / Truck
 - Rail / Truck
- Railroads (Functional & Abandoned)

 - EXISTING
 - ABANDONED
- Principal Arterial Highways

 - Interstate
 - US Highway
 - State Highway
 - County Road
 - Street Centerlines (NCompass)
 - Lakes and Major Rivers

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Streets And Highways

The City of Bethel is not yet experiencing serious capacity issues on the streets and highways within and along its corporate limits. As the community continues to grow and develop and as the communities beyond Bethel continue to push outward from the Minneapolis-St. Paul core, additional traffic carrying capacity will be needed to and through the City. Although no capacity and safety improvements are needed in Bethel in the next few years, it is imperative that the City work and plan with Mn/DOT, Anoka County, and its neighboring communities to identify the future roadway needs. This means reaching consensus on the needed existing and proposed arterial-collector street corridors and identifying their appropriate functional classification. Based on that functional classification, the necessary rights-of-way can be reserved and the proper intersection spacing can be implemented as development and redevelopment occurs.

Road Design Standards

The functional classification of streets and highways also involves the establishment of minimum road design standards including:

- Design Speed
- Pavement Thickness Design
- Right-of-Way Width
- Street Width
- Ditch Slopes

The City of Bethel has set standards for its local streets. The standard design speed is 30 MPH for local streets. The standard pavement thickness is one and half inches of base course combined with one and a half inches of wear course. The standard right of way width is 60 feet wide and the standard street width is 32 feet from back of curb to back of curb. The standard for ditch slopes is 1 V : 4 H.

Bicycle And Pedestrian Facilities

Historically suburban developments did not provide sidewalks or trails. New developments however, are required by the City of Bethel to provide sidewalks and/or trails.

The existing sidewalks in the City of Bethel run along Main Street NW and Dewey Street NW due to higher pedestrian volumes. Main Street NW has higher pedestrian volumes due to the businesses in the area. Dewey Street NW has higher pedestrian volumes due because it is adjacent to the City Park. The Trails and Sidewalks map shows the existing and proposed sidewalks and trails in the City of Bethel.

Transit Routes And Facilities

The BNSF Railroad runs north-south through the eastern portion of Bethel from Duluth/Superior

into and through the Minneapolis-St. Paul Metropolitan Area. The Northern Lights Express (NLX) is a proposed higher speed passenger rail project that would provide rail service along this BNSF line. If NLX becomes a reality and Bethel becomes a designated station stop, a park and ride lot, commercial support services, and high density housing may become part of a mixed use development/redevelopment area.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal 1: Provide guidance for a safe, efficient, coordinated, and convenient multi-modal transportation system that is integrated with anticipated land use and development plans, and that protects and enhances natural resources.

Policies:

- 1. Provide an understanding of the transportation issues facing Bethel as it grows.
- 2. Recognize the important relationship between land use and transportation and develop appropriate policies that promote a sustainable transportation system.
- 3. Recognize the importance and value of the environmental resources in the region and minimize negative impacts to such areas.
- 4. Develop a network and functional hierarchy of streets that balance the needs of access with safety and mobility.
- 5. Encourage planning and development of a safe, interconnected pedestrian and bicycle system.
- 6. Coordinate the local transportation system with the regional needs and support other agencies in developing infrastructure decisions in the area.
- 7. Investigate reasonable funding strategies and develop an implementation plan that recognizes funding limitations and realities.
- 8. Protect previous investments and ensure efficient use of the road system by giving high priority to operational maintenance, safety improvements, and capacity improvements that are cost-effective projects (such as signalization upgrades, adding turn lanes, and signage) and increased level of service.

Goal 2: Develop a comprehensive street system that effectively moves automobile traffic through the City.

Policies:

- 1. Plan transportation facilities to function in a manner compatible with adjacent land use.
- 2. Develop a network and functional hierarchy of streets that balance the needs of site access with mobility.
- 3. Implement the Anoka County access spacing guidelines in the City’s land use planning to control access to the collector and arterial street system.
- 4. Plan for and acquire sufficient street right-of-way for the City’s street system in conjunction with future subdivision.
- 5. Require lots abutting collector and connector streets to have additional lot depth to provide at

least a 20-foot yard buffer.

6. Work with Anoka County to identify and plan for the long-range transportation infrastructure through Bethel.

Goal 3: Establish a local street system that connects isolated neighborhoods and promotes the safe and convenient interchange of traffic.

Policies:

1. Require proper visibility, design and control of all intersections to promote safety.
2. Design local or residential streets to prevent penetration by through traffic and properly direct traffic to collector or arterial streets.
3. Provide complete street systems to eliminate isolated neighborhoods and dead-end streets and allow for inter-connections between neighborhoods.

Goal 4: Create a safe and efficient trail system throughout Bethel.

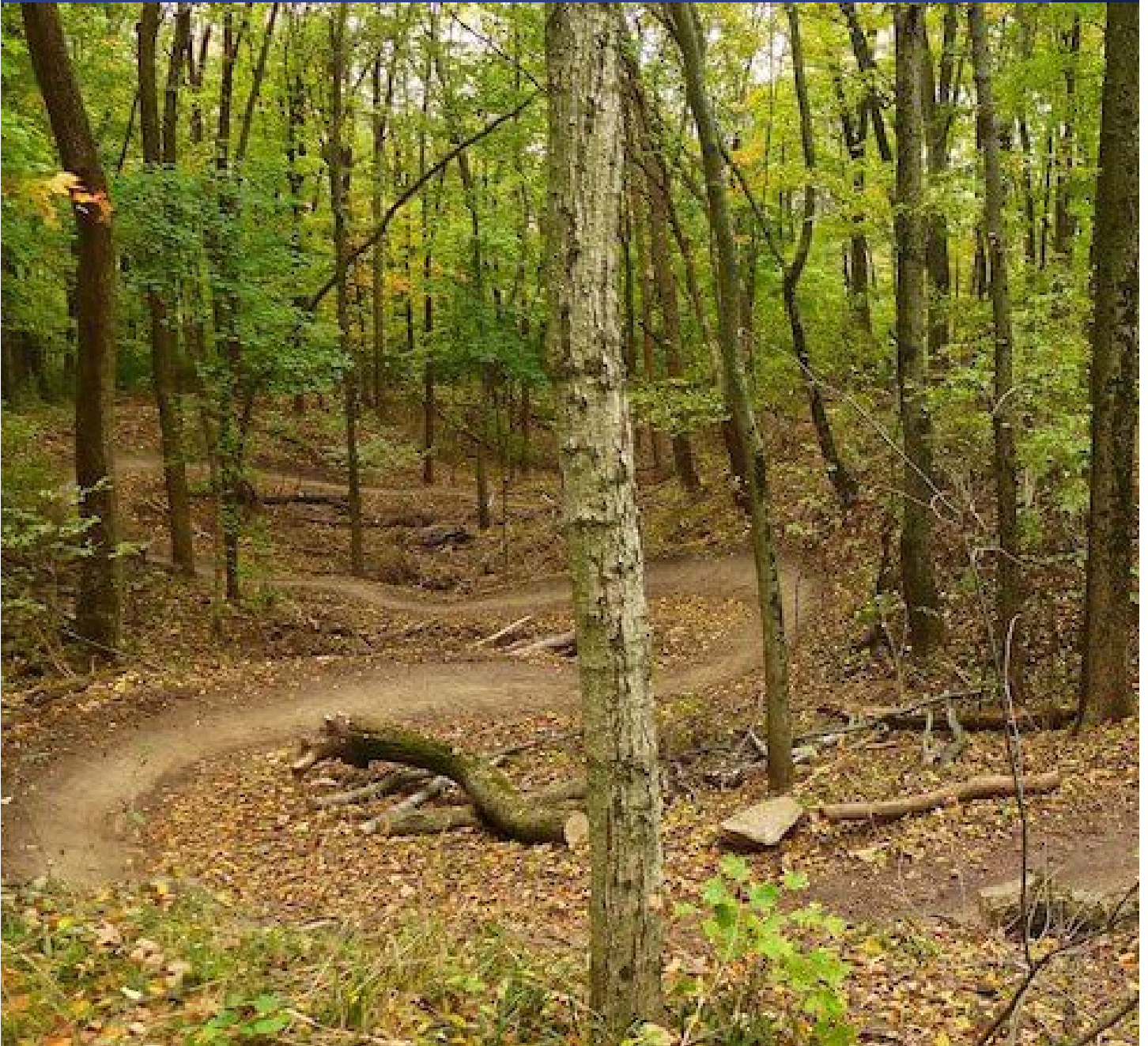
Policies:

1. Develop a Park, Open Space and Trail Plan.
2. Ensure that pedestrian street crossings on heavily traveled streets are clearly marked and lighted.
3. Work with State and County agencies to develop trails or sidewalks along County highways that will link Bethel with neighboring cities or regional destinations.
4. Pursue available grants that may assist Bethel in financing its community trail system.

Goal 5: Maintain safe and functional railroad service through Bethel.

Policies:

1. Work with and encourage BNSF Railroad to maintain the railroad in top performance.
2. Officially support continued main line railroad service to the City of Bethel.
3. Cooperatively ensure that the on-grade railroad crossings are maintained to prevent hazardous situations in regards to street conditions, signing, and visibility.
4. Promote the Bethel Corridor as a commuter rail line.



Chapter 5:

Natural Resources

NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Bethel is a rural center and contains a number of significant natural features including: Sandshore Lake, wetlands, and groundwater dependent natural resources, such as farmland. Bethel’s natural features are important not only for the natural beauty they provide, but also for providing natural habitat, important ecosystem and economic services, and a sense of place and identity for the community.

TOPOGRAPHY

Bethel does not have any identified steep slope areas. Building on slopes over 12% increases the risk of soil erosion. When necessary, Bethel will confirm slope steepness for development and ensure proper erosion control measures are taken.

SOILS

The City of Bethel is comprised of seven soil types: loamy wetland, lino loamy fine sand, markey muck, marsh, rifle mucky peat, Webster loam, and Zimmerman fine sand. The Natural Resource Conservation Service, a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, has published an Official Soils Series Descriptions (OSD). The OSD is a national collection of more than 20,000 detailed soil series descriptions, covering the United States and other areas served by USDA-NRCS. The descriptions, in a text format, serve as a national standard.

Loamy wet land is nearly level, poorly drained land in depressions and at the edges of large areas of organic soil. It varies in texture, thickness, and sequence of horizons. Permeability is moderately slow, and available water capacity is high. Its natural fertility is moderate. The water table is at the surface or within a depth of two feet unless the land has been drained. It is poorly suited to crops and most other uses.

Lino loamy fine sand is low lying drainageways and small depressions and on low broad flats. The chief limitations for both farm and urban use are the moderately high-water table and the resulting hazard of wetness. During dry periods soil blowing is a hazard to immature crops.

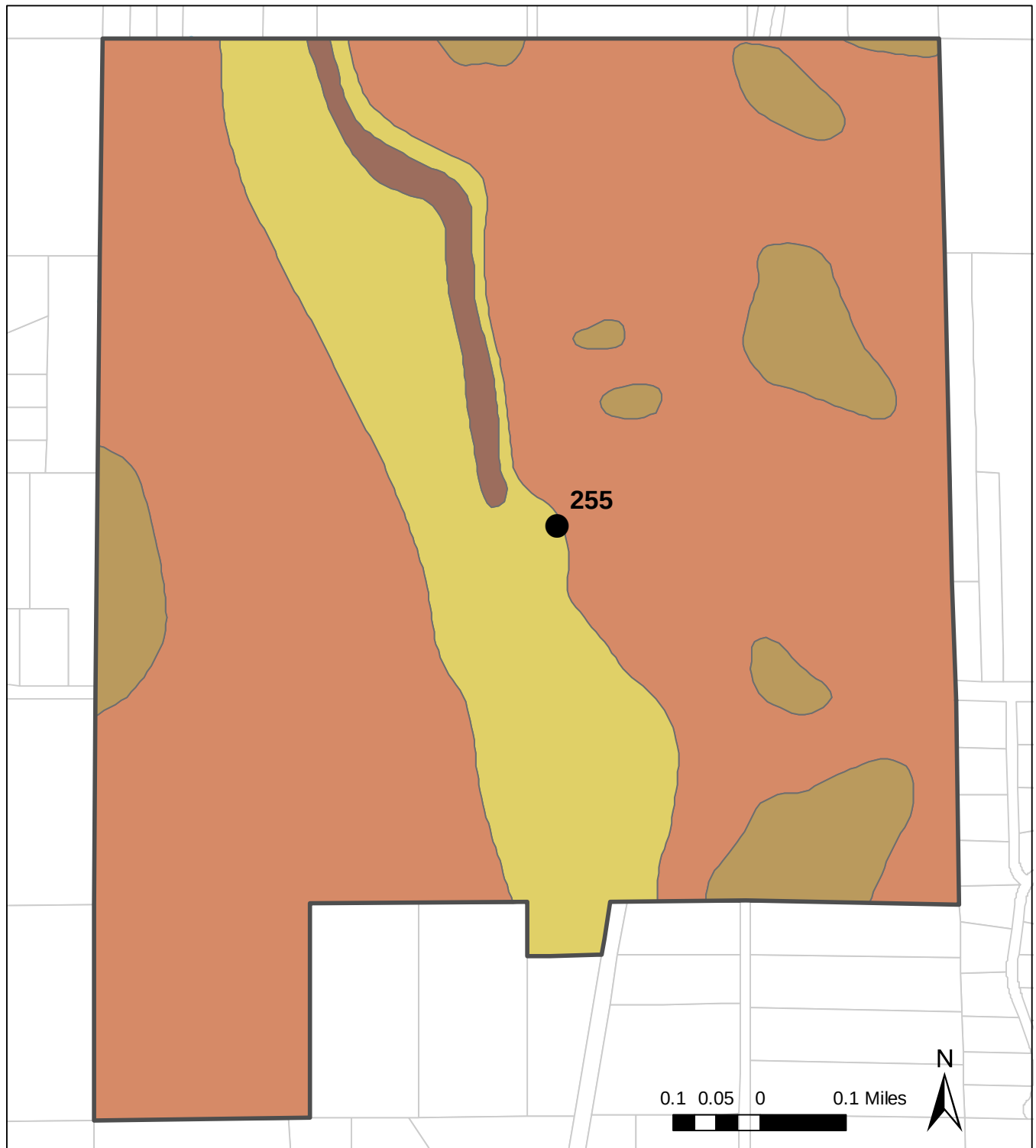
Markey muck occurs as small bogs or as part of a larger bog. The high-water table and the resulting hazard of wetness are limitations to the use and management of this soil. Most areas are in native vegetation. It is poorly suited to most crops and is very poorly suited to urban uses.

Marshes are shallow lakes or ponds where water is one to three feet deep most of the year. They support aquatic vegetation. Marsh areas commonly are impractical to drain and provide excellent habitat.

Rifle mucky peat is in large shallow depressions, mainly in the sand plain but also in glacial moraines. This organic soil has poor natural drainage outlets. The chief limitations to the use and management of this soil are soil blowing, unseasonable frost, and wetness.

Webster loam has a seasonal high-water table, which results in hazards of wetness and limitations for both farms and urban use. Most areas of this soil are used for crops. If drained, this soil is well suited to corn and soybeans. It is poorly suited to most urban uses.

The Zimmerman series consists of nearly level to steep excessively drained soils. Permeability is



Legend

● Depth to Bedrock

Bedrock Formation

- Eau Claire Formation
- St. Lawrence Formation
- Tunnel City Group
- Wonewoc Sandstone

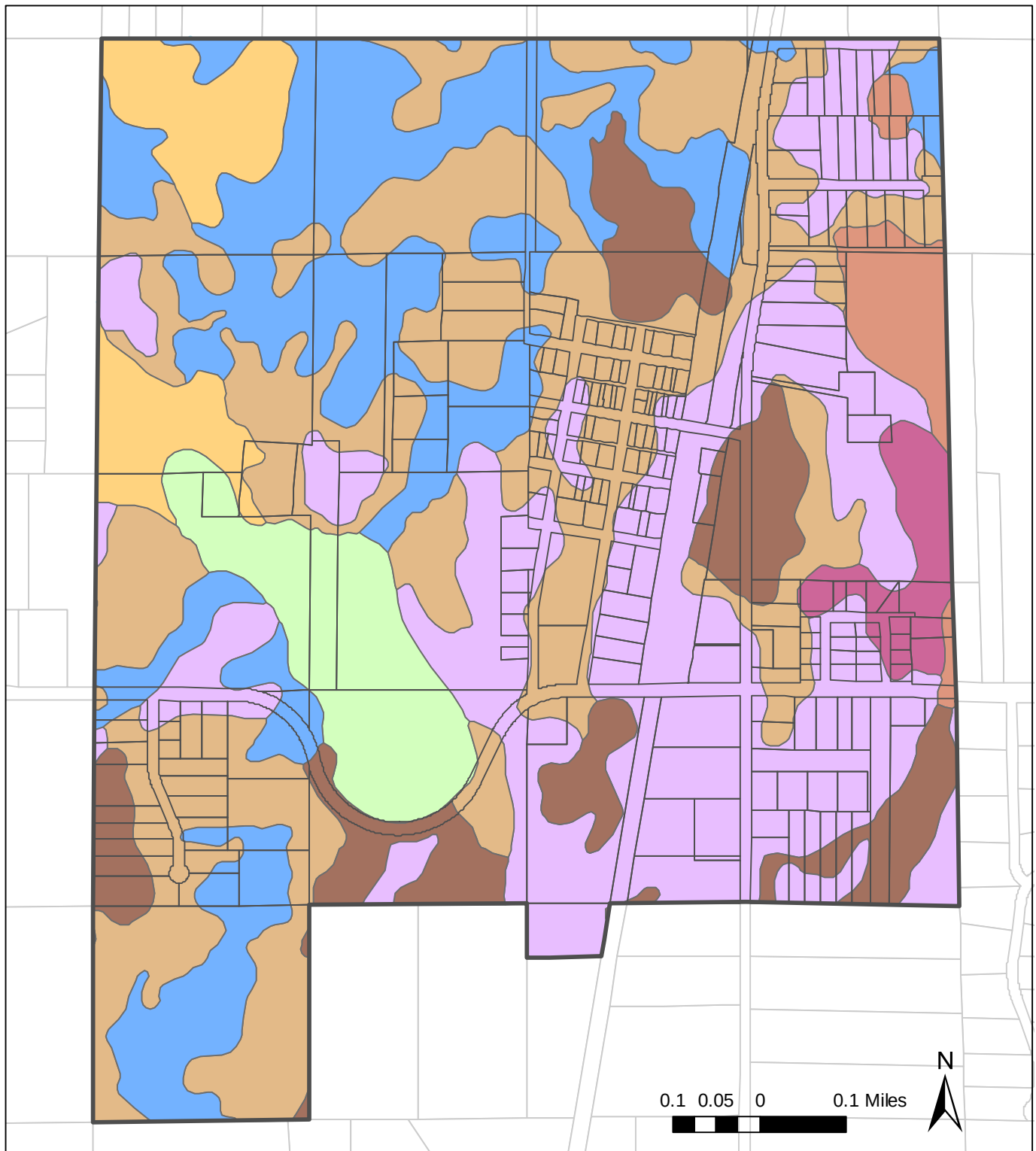
Bethel, MN - Bedrock

Source: Anoka County, MnDNR &
Northwest Associated Consultants



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

4151 Grand Marais Highway, Ste. 220, Lolder, Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nacplanning.com



Legend

Soil Type

 Loamy wet land	 Rifle mucky peat
 Lino loamy fine sand, 0-4% slope	 Webster loam
 Markey muck	 Zimmerman fine sand, 2-6% slope
 Marsh	 Zimmerman fine sand, 6-12% slope

Bethel, MN - Soil Survey

Source: Anoka County, MnDNR & Northwest Associated Consultants



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

4151 Dean Mennings Highway, Ste. 200, Lander Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nacplanning.com

rapid, and the available water capacity is low, as well as the organic-matter content. Most areas of Zimmerman soils are used for crops, woodland, or urban development. Its major limitations are low available water capacity, and the resulting hazards of soil blowing and drought.

SOIL ASSESSMENT AND SUITABILITY

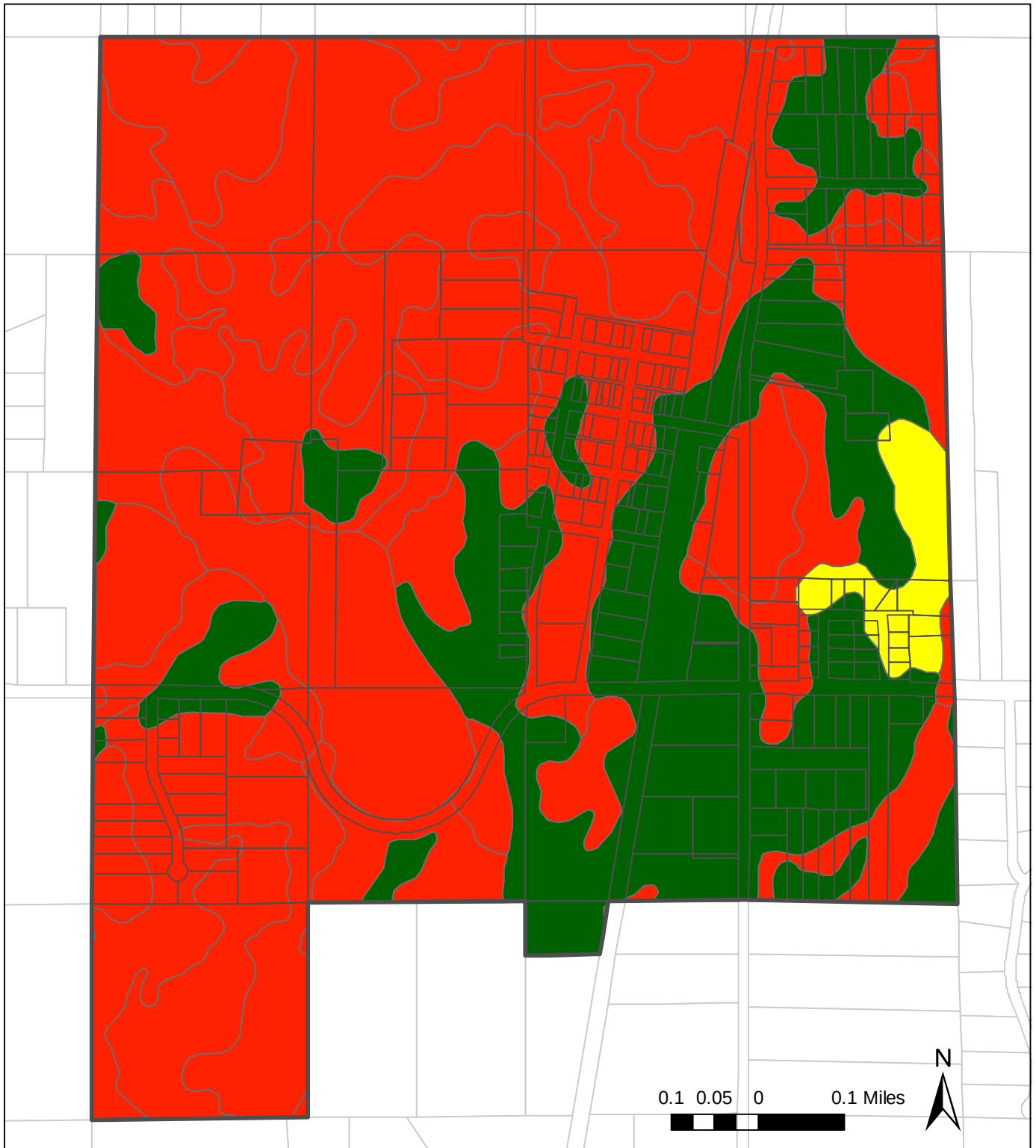
A variety of soil restrictions would preclude dense development in the City without provision for sewer and water facilities. Permeability is the ability of water to seep through soil. Permeable soils contain pores or have openings that allow water to pass through. Excessively coarse soils, soils with bedrock close to the surface, or soils with a high-water table are severely limited for many types of development. These soils are subject to pollution problems when used for on-site sewage disposal systems. The bedrock cutting performed in Bethel shows a depth of 255 to bedrock. More cuttings should be performed to give a better idea of depth across the City.

Coarse soils percolate too rapidly and compact soils percolate too slowly. Development can increase flooding on soils with low permeability. These soils are also susceptible to excessive shrink-swell alterations with changes in moisture content. This can cause building foundations to crack and roadbeds to heave.

Soil limitations were determined from analysis conducted by the USDA Soil Conservation Service. A rating system, defined as follows, and shown on the Soil Limitations map, indicated the development potential of certain sites for dwellings with basements. The limitations are slight if soil properties or site features are generally favorable for the indicated use and limitations are minor and easily overcome. Moderate limitations result if the soil properties of a site are not favorable for the proposed use and special planning, design or maintenance is needed to overcome the limitations. Severe limitations defined by unfavorable soil properties or site features are so difficult to overcome that special planning, design and maintenance are required which results in increased construction costs and on-going maintenance. Oftentimes special feasibility studies are necessary to determine if development is possible of soils classified as "severe".

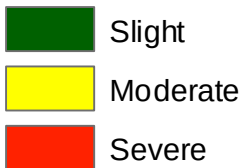
Soil Name	Dwellings with Basements	Local Roads and Streets	Septic Tank Absorption Fields	Sewage Lagoon Areas
Loamy wet land	Severe	Severe	Severe	Severe
Lino loamy fine sand, 0-4% slope	Severe	Moderate	Severe	Severe
Markey muck	Severe	Severe	Severe	Severe
Marsh	Severe	Severe	Severe	Severe
Rifle mucky peat	Severe	Severe	Severe	Severe
Webster loam	Severe	Severe	Severe	Severe
Zimmerman fine sand, 2-6% slope	Slight	Slight	Slight	Severe
Zimmerman fine sand, 6-12% slope	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Severe

Table 1: Soil Limitations by Soil and Development Type



Legend

Dwellings with Basements



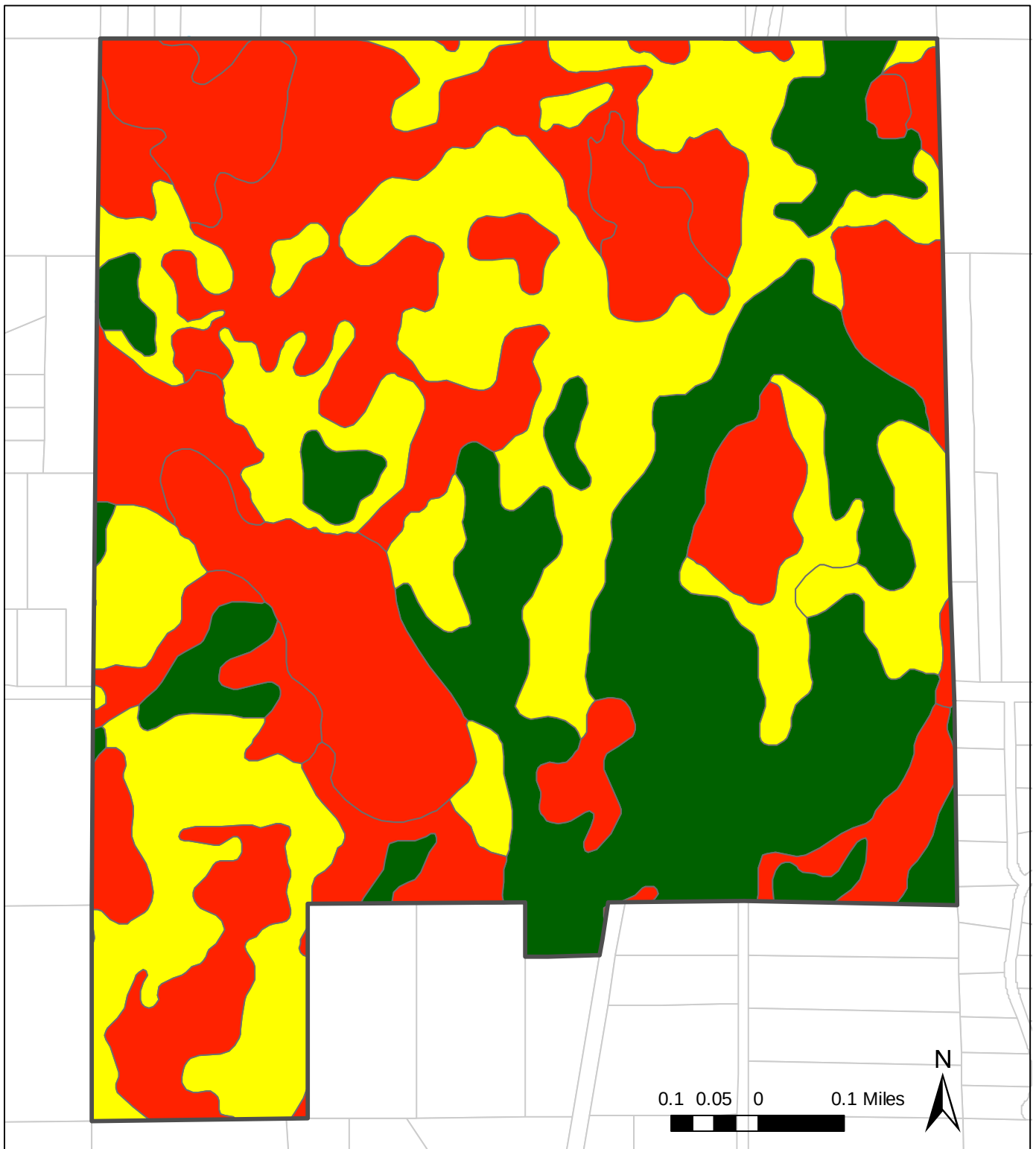
Bethel, MN - Soil Suitability

Source: Anoka County, MnDNR & Northwest Associated Consultants



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

4156 Olson Memorial Highway, Ste. 200, Ladder, Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nac-planning.com



Legend

Local Roads and Streets

- Slight
- Moderate
- Severe

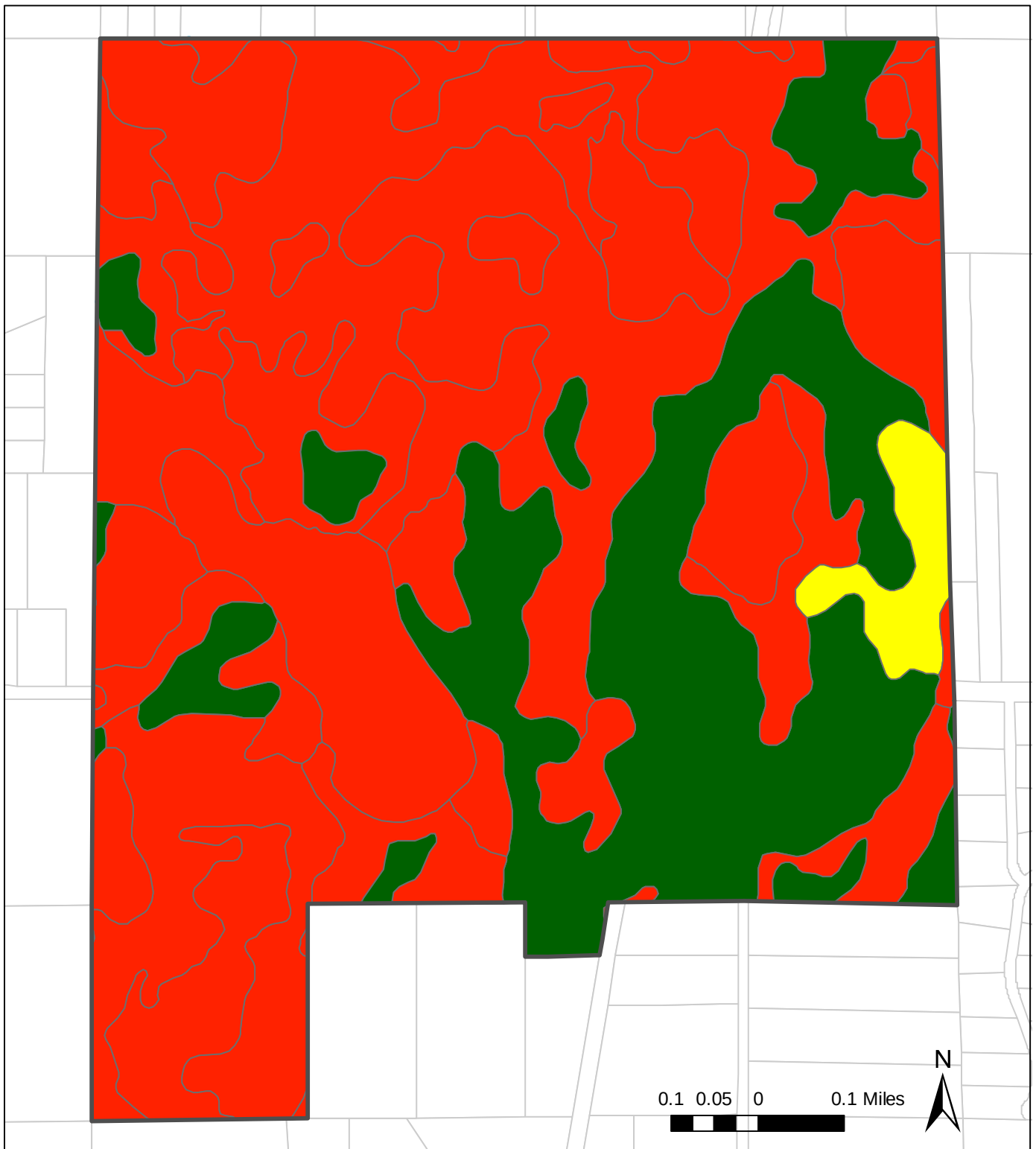
Bethel, MN - Soil Suitability

Source: Anoka County, MnDNR & Northwest Associated Consultants



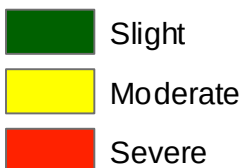
NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

4151 Olson Memorial Highway, Ste. 200, Lander Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nac-planning.com



Legend

Septic Tank Absorption Fields



Bethel, MN - Soil Suitability

Source: Anoka County, MnDNR & Northwest Associated Consultants



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.
 4154 Olson Memorial Highway, Ste. 200, Lander Valley, MN 55422
 Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nac-planning.com

WATERSHEDS

A “watershed” refers to a particular area of land over which precipitation drains. These large areas cross the boundaries of local jurisdictions. State legislation established organizations (watershed management organizations and watershed districts) to research, plan, and manage water resources within each respective watershed drainage area. Bethel lies within the Upper Rum River Watershed Management Organization. It is in the process of updating its comprehensive water management plan, which will shape the City’s water policies and Surface Water Management Plan.

FLOODPLAINS AND WETLANDS

Certain areas of the City are located within a floodplain due to the City’s topography. Floodplains are areas next to streams, rivers, wetlands and landlocked basins that are subject to seasonal flooding. On-site septic systems are not allowed within a floodplain, and development within the floodplains needs to be reviewed for its effect on, or the possibility of being affected by the water resource. All lots in a designated floodplain are subject to Anoka County Floodplain Ordinance as well as regulations provided by Bethel’s Code.

The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has identified 11 wetlands in Bethel as Protected Waters under their regulation. Additional wetlands have been identified through the National Wetland Inventory (NWI). These wetlands, plus others not yet identified, are protected by Federal, State, and local regulations.

Bethel highly values its wetlands and recognizes their critical role in the present and future health, safety, and general welfare of the land, wildlife, and people within the City. The City will continue to work to conserve existing and enhance wetland resources in the face of future development pressure, and to encourage opportunities for restoration of lost wetlands. The City will do so by adopting and following the Stormwater Surface Management Plan and through the City’s Code. The City has adopted a Wetlands Protection District, which provides standards for limiting land uses and preserving the general environment of an area. This district and its regulations may be applied to any property located in any other zoning district in accordance with the districts provisions.

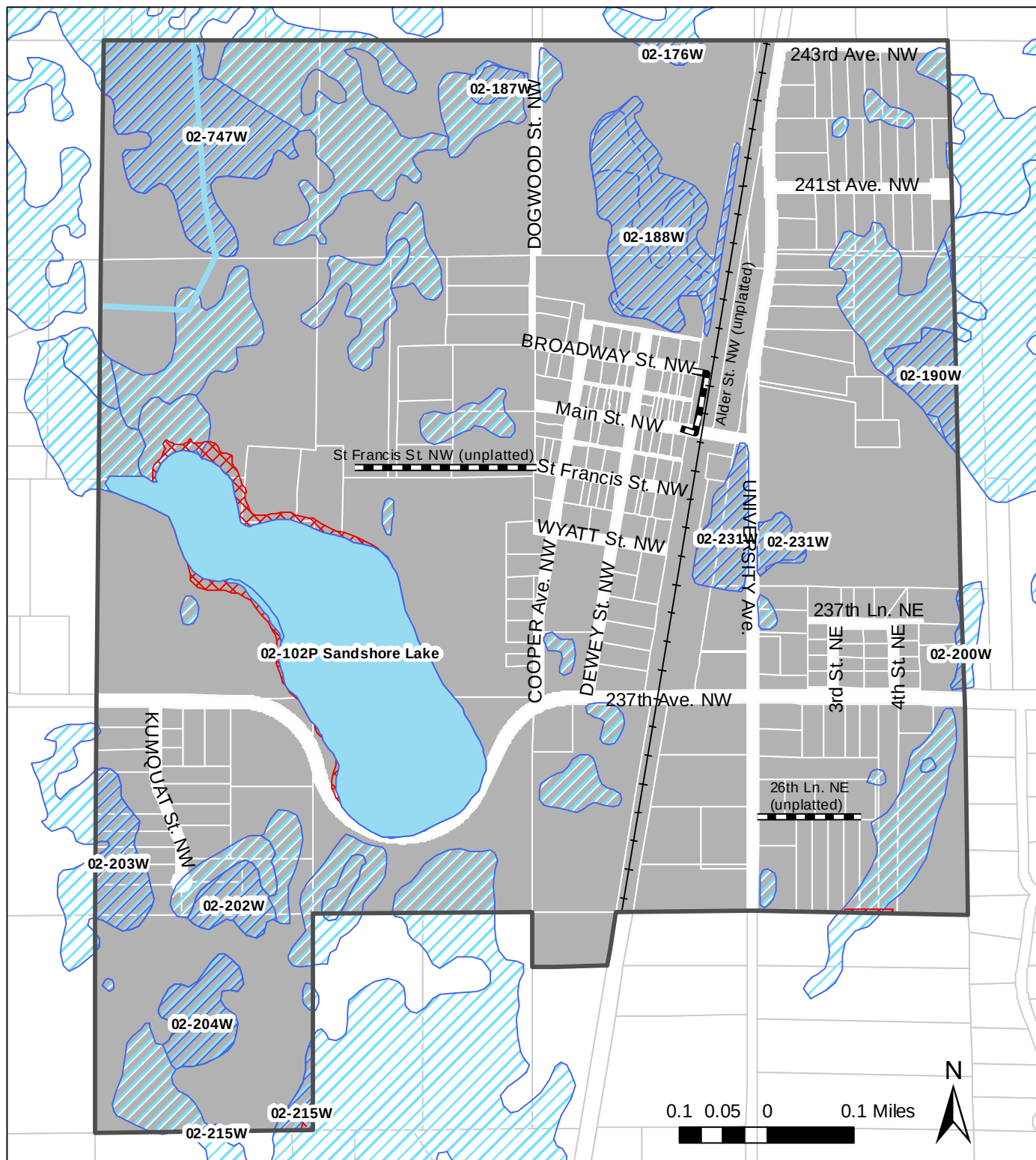
LAKES AND STREAMS

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) performs a Public Waters Inventory. Public waters are lakes, wetlands, and watercourses over which Minnesota DNR has regulatory jurisdiction. Water bodies identified as public are assigned a shoreland management classification to attribute appropriate development standards to its many different types of lakes. Lakes are divided into the following classifications based on a combination of factors:

Natural Environment Lakes usually have less than 150 total acres, less than 60 acres per mile of shoreline, and less than three dwellings per mile of shoreline. They Bethel have some winter kill of fish; Bethel have shallow, swamp shoreline; and are less than 15 feet deep.

Recreational Development Lakes usually have between 60 and 225 acres of water per mile of shoreline, between three and 25 dwellings per mile of shoreline; and are more than 15 feet deep.

General Development Lakes usually have more than 225 acres of water per mile of shoreline and 25 dwellings per mile of shoreline and are more than 15 feet deep.



Legend

- Lakes and Rivers
- 100 Year Flood Zone
- NWI Wetlands

*Lakes and wetlands labeled denote DNR Public Water, and are labeled with their Public Water identifier

Bethel, MN - Water Resources

Source: Anoka County, MnDNR & Northwest Associated Consultants



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

4136 Olson Memorial Highway, Ste. 200, Golden Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nacplanning.com

The DNR has classified one lake, Sandshore, within the City of Bethel. Sandshore Lake is classified as a Natural Environment lake.

To protect lakes and streams from the impacts of development, the City has adopted Anoka County’s lake development ordinances, and the City has adopted a Lake Protection District, which governs the area within 200 feet of Sandshore Lake.

The City of Bethel does not have any impaired lakes or wetlands. The City will continue to work with its watershed management organization, and to enforce its ordinances to protect its water resources.

EXISTING VEGETATION

Roughly 67% of Bethel is covered by vegetation as identified by the Minnesota Landcover Classification System. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources performed a land classification cover study in 2008. From the data collected they identified regionally significant terrestrial and wetland ecological areas. The areas are determined by examining important attributes relating to the ecological patches including: size, shape, cover type diversity, and the adjacent land use. The identified patches are to be used to help inform regional planning. The MnDNR identified roughly 331 acres as ecologically significant, roughly half of Bethel’s total land area. These areas include: aspen forests, hardwood forests, wet meadows, white pine, marshes, swamps, etc.

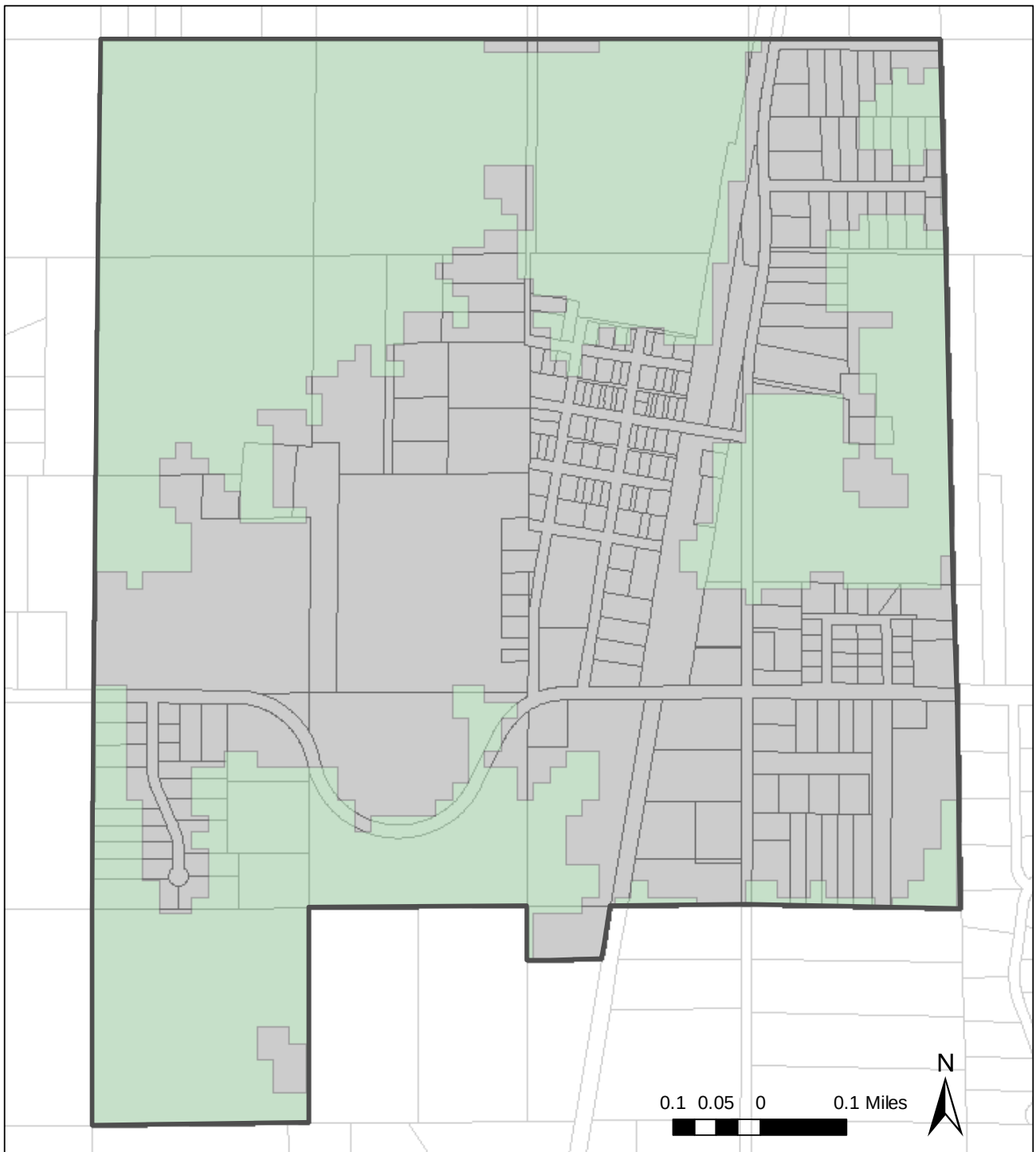
SOLAR RESOURCES

The Metropolitan Land Planning Act requires comprehensive plans for Metropolitan Area communities to contain an element related to the protection and development of access to direct sunlight for solar energy systems. As a result, the Metropolitan Council requires that the following solar resource-related information must be included in Bethel’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan update:

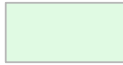
- 1. A map which illustrates the City’s gross solar potential.
- 2. A calculation of the City’s solar resources.
- 3. A policy (or policies) which relate to the development of access to direct sunlight for solar energy systems.
- 4. Strategies to be applied to implement established solar resource policies.

Solar Potential

The following map, required by the Metropolitan Council to be included in this document, shows the gross solar potential for Bethel. The map, developed by the University of Minnesota, illustrates annual sun energy dispersed throughout the city with high end potential areas shown in yellow, and areas having low end potential in black. This information is useful in predicting the productivity of solar installations. According to the Metropolitan Council, the primary issue in the consideration of solar energy installations is intermittent shading due to nearby structures and trees. Areas identified as having high end potential in the City are those with very little tree cover.



Legend

 Regionally
Significant
Ecological Areas

Bethel, MN - Vegetation

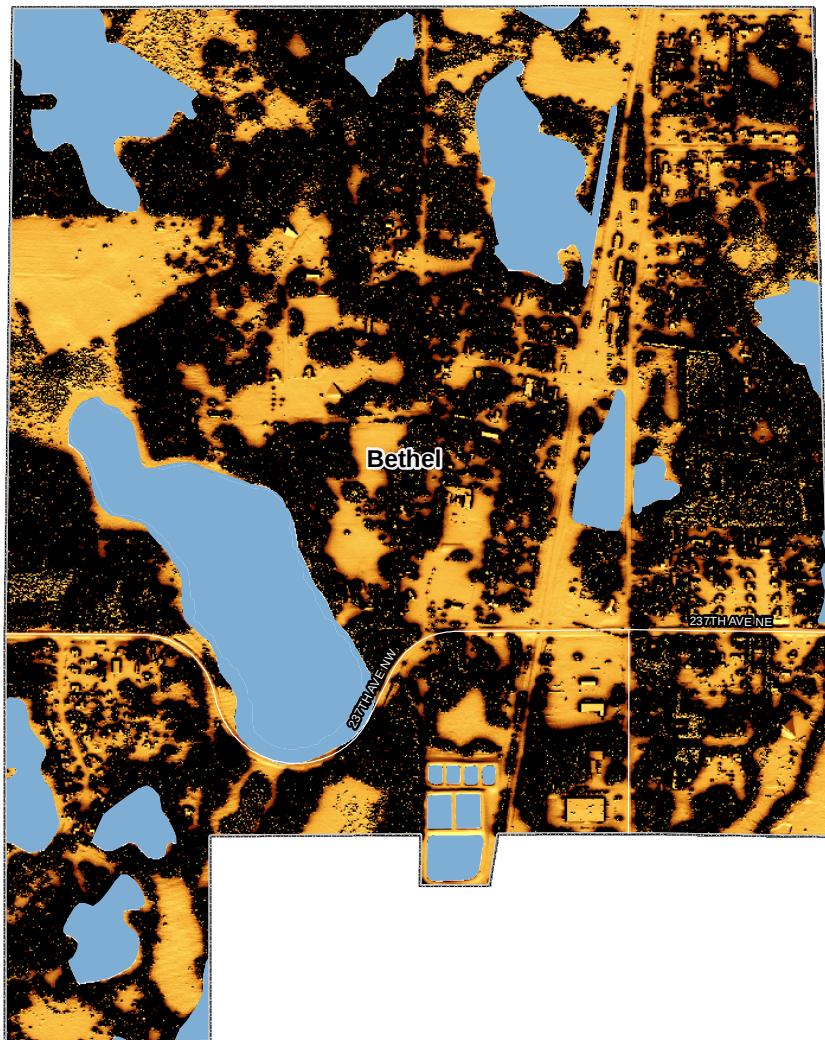
Source: Anoka County, MnDNR &
Northwest Associated Consultants



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

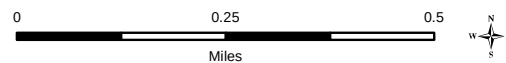
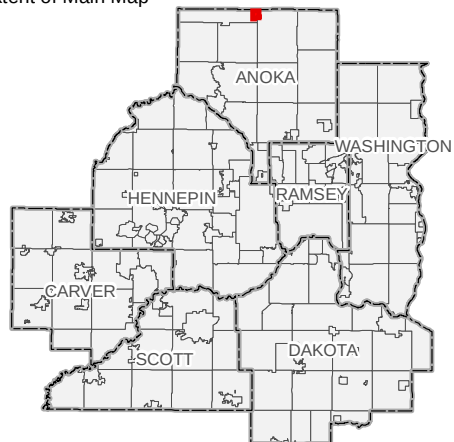
4151 Olson Memorial Highway, Ste. 200, Ladder Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nacplanning.com

Gross Solar Potential City of Bethel, Anoka County

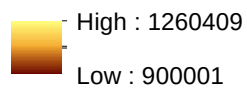


12/1/2016

Extent of Main Map



Gross Solar Potential (Watt-hours per Year)



- Solar Potential under 900,000 watt-hours per year
- County Boundaries
- City and Township Boundaries
- Open Water Features

Source: University of Minnesota U-Spatial Statewide Solar Raster.

Solar Resource Calculations

The table below displays Bethel’s gross potential and rooftop potential for solar. The gross solar potential and gross solar rooftop potential estimates are based on the Gross Solar Potential map above. These calculations estimate the total potential resource before removing areas that are unsuitable for solar development. Gross generation potential and gross solar rooftop generation potential estimates how much electricity could be generated using existing solar technology.

Bethel Gross Solar Potential (Megawatt Hours per Year)			
Gross Potential (Mwh/yr)	Rooftop Potential (Mwh/yr)	Gross Generation Potential (Mwh/yr) ²	Rooftop Generation Potential (Mwh/yr) ²
996,964	27,749	99,696	2,774

- Metropolitan Council Notes:
- In general, a conservative assumption for panel generation is to use 10% efficiency for conversion of total insolation into electric generation.
 - The rooftop generation potential does not consider ownership, financial barriers or building-specific structural limitations.

Table 2:Gross Solar potential

Solar Access Protection

Ensuring that all properties have adequate access to sunlight is a priority not only for potential solar energy systems, but for the protection of property and aesthetic values as well. Solar access protection is provided for by the uniform implementation of lot and building performance standards of the Bethel zoning ordinances. Requirements such as maximum building height and yard setback standards are implemented for the purpose of creating separation between structures and allowing equal sunlight access such that a property is not in the shadow of an adjacent building.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

The City recognizes the importance of safeguarding the heritage of the City and promoting the continued use of historic sites and structures for the education and general welfare of Bethel residents. Due to the limited number of historic structures and sites, the City does not anticipate the need for preservation ordinance or establishment of a commission to oversee historic structures. However, the community does value the historic, traditional character of the Downtown and wishes to preserve this asset.

AGGREGATE RESOURCES

The City of Bethel contains no known aggregate resources.

COMMUNITY DESIGNATION

Bethel is classified as a “rural center” by the Metropolitan Council. The Metropolitan Council identifies the following natural resource protection policies for rural centers:

- Include goals, priorities, and natural resource conservation strategies in the local comprehensive plan to protect and enhance natural resources identified in regional and local natural resource inventories.

- Conserve, protect, and interconnect open space to enhance livability, recreational opportunities and habitats.
- Adopt and implement ordinances for the conservation and restoration of natural resources within the community.
- Work with regional partners and regional park implementing agencies to identify, plan for, and acquire natural areas and resources prime for preservation and protection.
- Plan for aggregate resource extraction where viable deposits remain accessible, as required by the *Metropolitan Land Planning Act*.

NATURAL RESOURCES GOALS & POLICIES

Goal 1: Ensure all future development respects the natural aesthetics and natural environment of Bethel.

Policies:

1. Accommodate future growth while ensuring the protection of significant ecological areas and water resources.
2. Septic systems and wells should be monitored to ensure proper functioning.
3. Manage diseased trees and noxious weeds on both public and private property.
4. Work with neighboring communities to identify shared high quality natural resources for their preservation, conservation, and enhancement.
5. Bethel will continue to work to conserve and enhance existing wetland resources in the face of future development pressure, and to encourage opportunities for restoration of lost wetlands.
6. Promote the proper management and overall health of the City's tree canopy.
7. Ensure that all properties have adequate access to sunlight.

Goal 2: Protect and enhance ecologically significant areas in the City of Bethel.

Policies:

1. Promote the use of native plants in future developments and the removal of invasive species across the City.
2. Restoration and enhancement of significant ecological areas will focus on: enhancement of wetlands, water quality, wildlife habitat, increase in healthy tree canopy, and removal of invasive species.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- The City will examine updating its Code to include a cluster development subdivision ordinance.
- The City will examine performing an inventory of its urban tree canopy and tree species composition to inform a future tree preservation ordinance.

- Bethel will reate septic tank educational materials for the public, which will include: certified pumpers, tips and tricks to maintenance, threats to water quality, and sources for financial assistance.
- Bethel will utilize the NWI when reviewing development plans. Basins projected to be impacted by development will be more closely examined to determine if they indeed are wetlands, and if so, a dilneation shall be required.
- The City will adopts the updated Stormwater Management Plan to protect its waterbodies.
- Bethel will examine requiring any native plant communities removed be replaced with vegetation of equivalent function, and for all other vegetation removed they must be restored with natural vegetation to the greatest extent practicable.
- Examine creating a list of approved plantings to be required in landscape plans for potential subdivision development.
- Ensure that information on the location of natural vegetation restoration priorities is readily available to property owners to understand how relevant ordinance requirements apply to their property for project planning and permitting.
- The City will continue to have zoning standards to provide for adequate access to sunlight.



Chapter 6:

Water Resources

WATER RESOURCES

SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT

The defining characteristic of the City of Bethel is the predominance of wetland areas, an environment that is sensitive to the effects of development. Managing surface water resources and protecting groundwater as development occurs is crucial in maintaining the long-term quality of the environment. The City of Bethel, through implementation of a Surface Water Management Plan, works toward preserving the scenic and natural resources of the community, maintaining and/or improving the quality of lakes and wetlands, and ensuring that drinking water from individual wells remains safe.

A “watershed” is a large drainage system (a large area of land over which precipitation drains). These areas are named for the rivers and streams into which this precipitation drains, and generally cross the boundaries of local jurisdictions. State legislation established Watershed Management Organizations (WMOs) to research, plan for, and manage water resources within each watershed district. Both WMOs and local governments, including the City of Bethel, are required to prepare plans to address water quality issues within each watershed (see Minnesota Statutes Section 103B.235). Oak Grove is located within the Rum River Watershed and is a part of the Upper Rum River Watershed Management Organization (URRWMO). The URRWMO’s mission and activities are planned and regulated by the Watershed Management Plan. This plan is updated every ten years and the URRWMO is currently in the process of updating this plan. For more information visit: <http://www.urrwmo.org>.

In 1995, amendments to the Metropolitan Land Planning Act required that local comprehensive plans must include a water management plan that addresses watershed plan elements for all land within their jurisdiction. The City of Bethel completed a draft local Water Management Plan in May 2008. The plan incorporates the elements required by the State of Minnesota and the policies and programs from the URRWMO Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan. This section will present the goals and policies for surface water management and guide the City on how to manage surface water resources and protect groundwater as development occurs. The City will continue to work with the URRWMO to protect groundwater supplies.

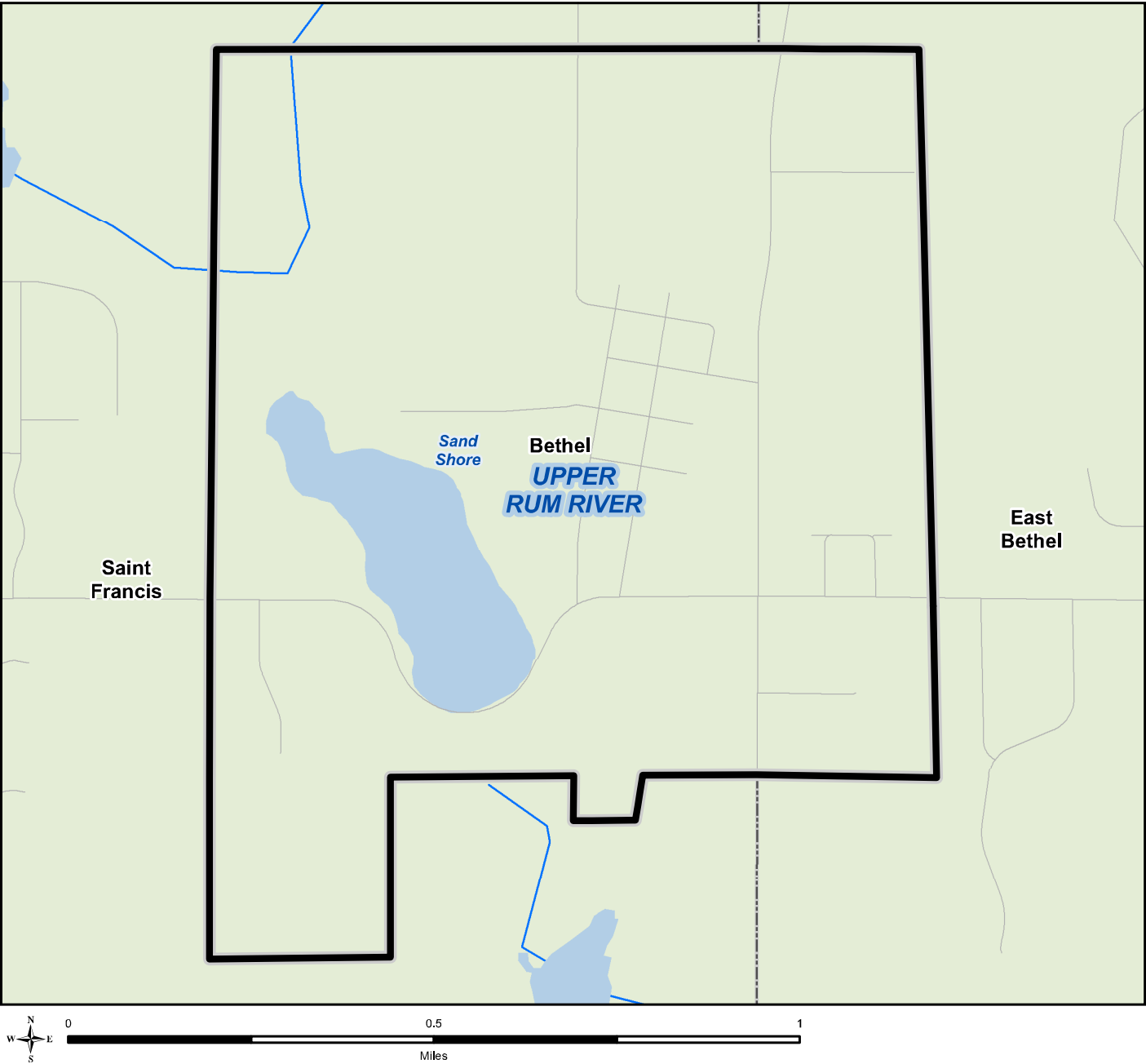
Surface Water Management Plan

The City of Bethel has the authority to create policies and regulations that ensure the health, safety, and welfare of the public. The following sections describe how the City can preserve the quality of groundwater, manage the runoff of stormwater, and protect the quality of shoreland, floodplain, and wetlands.

The principal source of pollution to water bodies, wetlands, and streams comes from precipitation that accumulates contaminants before it enters water bodies. Developed land generally increases the volume of stormwater runoff, as well as the concentration of pollutants in the runoff. The City of Bethel has developed standards that prevent or mitigate the increased runoff resulting from development and incorporates the Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan of the Upper Rum River Watershed Management Organization (URRWMO).

Surface Water Resources

Bethel, Anoka County



-  Watershed Management Organization Boundaries
- Watershed Management Organization Type**
-  County
-  Watershed District
-  Watershed Management Organization

-  Impaired Lakes (2014 Draft MPCA 303(d) List)
-  Impaired Rivers & Streams (2014 Draft MPCA 303(d) List)
-  2014 Priority Lakes
-  County Boundaries
-  City and Township Boundaries
-  Other Lakes and Major Rivers
-  Other Streams
-  NCompass Street Centerlines

Stormwater Management

The City will require an approved stormwater management plan before issuing a number of City permits. These include building permits, zoning permits, excavation permits, filling permits, mining permits, sign permits, wetland activities permits, plat approval, minor subdivision approval, permits for construction of utilities systems, or permits for any other land disturbing activity. The stormwater management plan must include an existing site map, site construction plan, and plan of final site conditions. The City Engineer shall approve hydrological models and design methodologies used for the determination of runoff and analysis of stormwater management structures.

Elements of individual stormwater management plans include but are not limited to the following:

- Existing and proposed land contours
- Delineation and description of all on-site and adjacent streams, rivers, waters, and wetlands
- Location and description of existing stormwater drainage systems and natural drainage patterns
- Description of soils
- Description of vegetation
- Landscape plan
- Drainage plan
- Size, alignment, and proposed use of any structures
- Delineation and tabulation of all impervious surfaces

Approval of a stormwater management plan is contingent upon a number of factors. Among others, these include factors related to the management of water and materials during construction, control of erosion, the design of permanent facilities, the design of stormwater detention facilities, the use and care of wetlands for any stormwater runoff, and compliance with existing watershed management plans. The following sections describe these factors in detail.

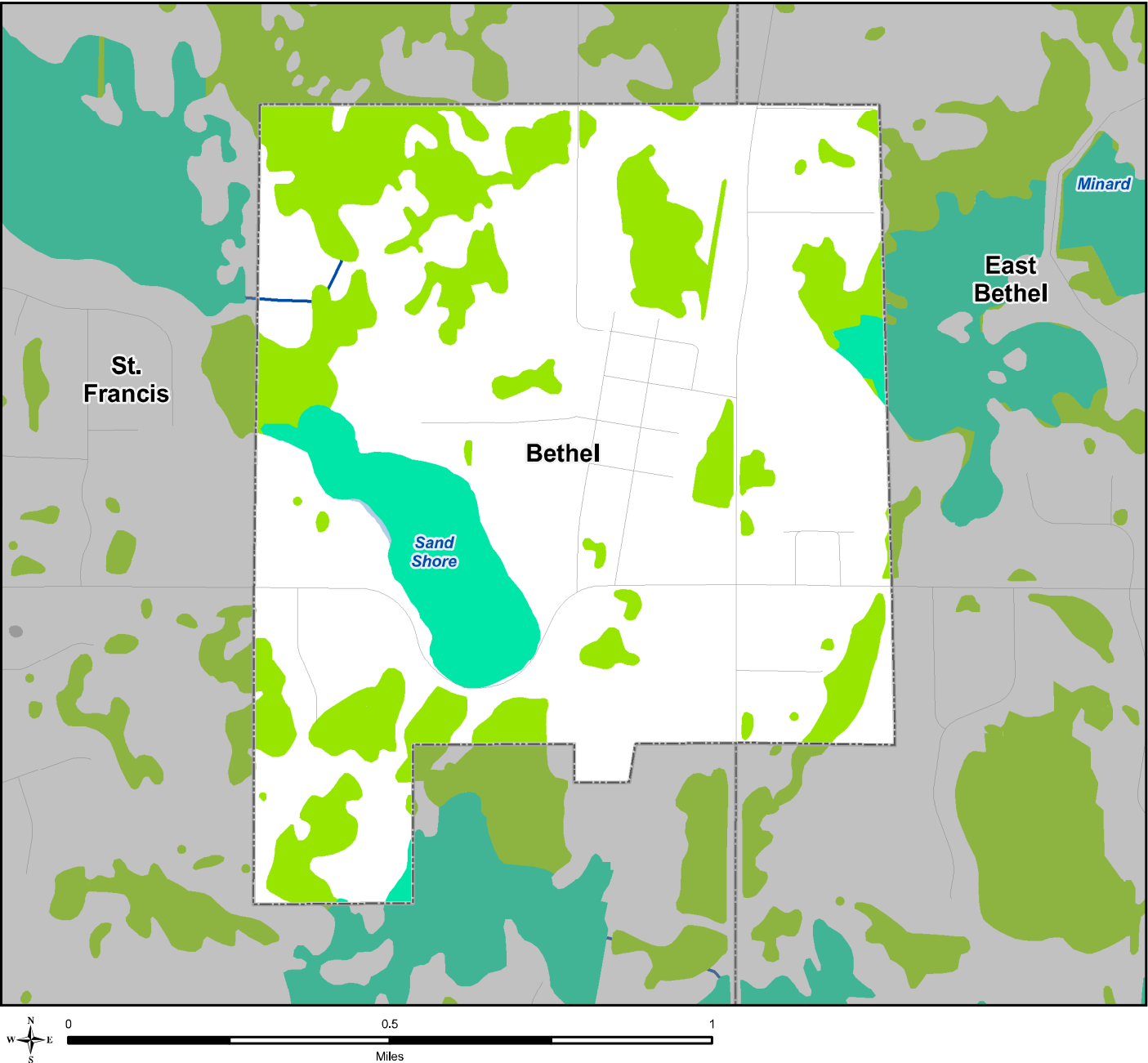
Stormwater practices that permit applicants should investigate are (in order of preference): natural infiltration of precipitation, flow attenuation by use of open vegetated swales and natural depressions, stormwater retention facilities, and stormwater detention facilities. These provisions prevent runoff from being discharged directly into wetlands without pre-settlement of the runoff. The construction of stormwater detention facilities should incorporate the requirements of the National Urban Runoff Program (NURP), the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Stormwater Permit for Construction Activity and the URRWMO Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

Within the City, there may seem to be a considerable amount of land that is undeveloped; however, much of the land may not be developable due to the extensive natural features and the restraints that accompany this land. The City has developed policies directed at preserving natural resources in areas undergoing development, as well as those areas not experiencing development. The City recognizes the importance of the preservation and protection of significant natural areas for the well-being of both current and future populations and the quality of life such areas foster. The City will employ a wide variety of means in order to achieve these goals.

Regulations related to wetlands are included in the City’s ordinances and identify the City’s responsibility for enforcement of the Minnesota Wetland Conservation Act, as amended and as required by the Board of Water and Soil Resources Wetland Conservation Act Rules. Burning, filling,

Surface Water and Groundwater Interaction

City of Bethel, Anoka County



Karst Features (DNR)

- ▲ Spring
- Sinkhole
- Calcareous Fens

Surface water type (regional screening by Met Council)

- Disconnected from the regional groundwater system
- Recharges aquifers
- Receives and discharges groundwater
- Supported by upwelling groundwater
- Trout Streams (DNR)

- County Boundaries
- City and Township Boundaries
- NCompass Street Centerlines
- Other Open Water Features

draining, excavation, or development in a Wetlands Zone is prohibited, unless permitted by the Wetland Conservation Act.

Various levels of government are involved in regulation of surface water, wetlands, and floodplain. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has inventoried and classified water bodies and wetlands in the State of Minnesota. The “protected waters and wetlands” program identifies water bodies and wetlands that require DNR permits for activities like draining, filling, dredging, and diverting of water. These include many water bodies and wetlands in the City of Bethel.

The DNR’s Shoreland Management Program has also established a classification system for lakes greater than ten acres in size and rivers with a drainage area two square miles or greater. These classifications establish minimum development standards for protection by local units of government and are related to their use. The standards apply to those areas within 300 feet of a classified river and 1,000 feet from a classified lake. It is the policy of the City of Bethel to enforce the standards described above. Note City regulations may be stricter. “Impact Zone” refers to areas immediately adjacent to lakes, rivers, and bluffs that are necessary to preserve in order to maintain good water and visual qualities of these resources.

The City’s Shoreland and Floodplain ordinances govern floodplain and shoreland areas. These ordinances regulate activities adjacent to water bodies classified by the Minnesota DNR. Sandshore Lake classification is Natural Environment Lake. This is the most restrictive classification.

All development activities in the City are subject to conditions and permitting requirements contained in these ordinances or those contained within other City codes, whichever are stricter. Current City development regulations meet current minimum DNR regulations for this classification system.

Surface water quality can be compromised. Land uses and development practices can increase the amount of surface water flow. In addition, surface water quality can be compromised when the increased runoff causes erosion and sedimentation. Careful planning and regulation related to conservation of soils, water, and natural vegetation can reduce erosion, runoff, and sedimentation. Stormwater plans shall meet the requirements of the National Urban Runoff Program (NURP), the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Stormwater Permit for Construction Activity and the URRWMO Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

SURFACE WATER MANAGEMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

The following goals and policies form the basis of the Surface Water Management Plan

- Goal 1: Protect environmental systems from unnecessary impacts of future growth and development activities.**
- Goal 2: Maintain and enhance the natural amenities of the City for future generations to enjoy.**
- Goal 3: Protect the surface waters and wetland areas of the City to promote aesthetic qualities, natural habitat areas, and groundwater recharge.**
- Goal 4: Resolve localized flooding issues at the south end of the Bethel Community Park and along Main Street.**

Policies:

- 1. Enforce all local and state regulations for activities occurring in naturally or environmentally sensitive areas.
- 2. Develop ordinances and incentives that encourage conservation development concepts in areas where the protection of natural resources is vital to the community.
- 3. Restrict and/or guide development on shoreland and floodplain areas, wetlands, and other natural features where protection of natural resources is considered vital to the community.
- 4. Establish development standards consistent with soil suitability, steep slopes, groundwater tables, and aquifer sensitivity.
- 5. Establish development standards consistent with the Wetland Conservation Act.
- 6. Establish minimum lot sizes, development densities and standards that are consistent with environmentally sensitive areas.
- 7. Require stormwater plans to meet the requirements of the National Urban Runoff Program (NURP), the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Stormwater Permit for Construction Activity and the URRWMO Comprehensive Watershed Management Plan.

WATER SUPPLY INFRASTRUCTURE AND MANAGEMENT

All of the City of Bethel property owners are served by private wells. The City Code requires that private wells are located, constructed, maintained and sealed in accordance with or in a more thorough manner than the Water Well Construction Code of the Minnesota Department of Health. A public water supply system is not anticipated between now and 2040.

The City will continue to enforce other applicable sections of the City and State Codes that regulate water wells. The City requires all private wells to be located, constructed, maintained, and sealed in accordance with the water well construction code of the Minnesota Department of Health. City Code establishes the right of entry onto private property for the purpose of testing wells, water sources, and outlets of water used for drinking purposes, human consumption, or domestic purposes after giving reasonable notice to the property owner.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT

The City of Bethel is served by a combination of gravity sewer and forcemain systems that consists of 8-10" PVC gravity pipe sewers and small diameter low pressure sewer, 4" PVC forcemain, manholes, and 3 lift stations. The original sewer system was constructed in 1992, with a major expansion project occurring in 2003. A lift station located in the community park pumps the sewage to the wastewater treatment facility.

The wastewater treatment facility was originally constructed in 1992, with a major renovation project occurring in 2003. The current configuration of the wastewater treatment plant consists of two aeration ponds, four rapid infiltration basins, and a polishing pond, which also acts as a storage pond for cold weather operation, a lift station, and various piping, valves and other appurtenances necessary for its operation. The design flow rate for this facility is 37,500 gpd. The wastewater treatment plant is designated a Class D facility.

Wastewater collected by the sanitary sewer system flows to the lift station and is pumped to the aeration ponds. The wastewater is held in the aeration ponds for an extended period while air is mixed in to promote biological treatment. The two aerated ponds are operated in series. The wastewater flows from one cell to the next allowing more efficient treatment of the wastewater.

The treated wastewater is then discharged into the polishing pond where it is held until discharge into one of the four rapid infiltration basins where it infiltrates into the ground and replenishes the groundwater.

Flows And Loads

The permitted design average, wet-weather flow capacity of the wastewater treatment plant is 37,500 gpd. The permitted design average, dry-weather flow capacity is 31,000 gpd. The hydraulic loadings to the wastewater treatment facility are currently from residential/commercial sources. Monthly wastewater flows for the period 2011 to 2016 were relatively constant with an average daily flow of 0.032 mgd. Monthly average flows vary from 0.026 mgd to 0.060 mgd. The per capita wastewater generation is approximately 68 gpcd.

The organic loadings to the wastewater treatment facility are measured in terms of 5-day Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD). The influent BOD is characterized by collecting a grab sample from the influent waste stream four times a year. The average influent BOD concentration from 2011 through 2017 was approximately 240 mg/L. The average BOD loading for the same time was 64 lbs/d. The per capita BOD loadings are 0.14 lbs BOD per person per day.

The solids loadings to the wastewater treatment facility are measured in terms of Total Suspended Solids (TSS). The influent TSS is characterized by collecting a grab sample from the influent waste stream four times a year. The average influent TSS concentration to the WWTF from 2011 through 2017 was approximately 229 mg/L. The average TSS loading for the same time were approximately 61 lbs/d. The per capita TSS loadings are 0.13 lbs TSS per person per day.

Estimated Wastewater Flows And Loads

Based on the historically flat population growth for Bethel over the past 5 years and projections that show slow or no growth in the future, the City will need to continue to monitor the facility for increases in influent flow and changes in effluent quality. At this time, there is not a good argument to be made for a major capacity upgrade at the wastewater treatment facility until City population growth or plant performance changes.

Lift Station

The existing lift station contains two pumps; each designed to pump wastewater at a rate of 125 gpm to the treatment facility. The wastewater flows under pressure through a 4-inch forcemain from the wet well to the first aeration pond. The current lift station has the capacity to pump 180,000 gpd. The City should plan for replacement of the lift station pumps during the next major wastewater treatment facility upgrade.

Aerated Ponds

Wastewater flows from the lift station to the aerated ponds. There are two ponds on site, each capable of holding approximately 1,740,000 gallons of wastewater. The design detention time of the system is 90 days, which is currently being met given current flow rates. This detention time allows microbes to grow, begin to settle out of the wastewater, and accumulate in the bottom of the aeration ponds. After the designed detention time has been met, the cleaned effluent is

piped to the polishing pond. The aerated ponds are currently performing well and there is no recommendation at this time to move away from the aerated pond system.

Diffused Air System

The aerated ponds store wastewater at a total depth of 11.5 feet. Oxygen is introduced to the ponds to promote aerobic biological growth for enhanced treatment and to prevent anaerobic conditions from developing. The diffused air system consists of fine bubble diffusers placed at the bottom of the ponds to increase the amount of contact time. Positive displacement blowers are housed in a building on site and provide air to the fine bubble diffusers through piping. This system was designed to provide a loading rate of 75 cubic feet per minute of air to the ponds to maintain treatment of an average BOD5 loading rate of 87 pounds per day. The fine bubble diffusers are mounted approximately 2 feet off the bottom of the aeration ponds to allow for storage of the settled sludge. The fine bubble diffusers provide greater surface area for the air being pumped into the wastewater to promote higher efficiency of oxygen consumption for the microbes.

The diffusers were replaced in Aeration Pond No. 1 during the pond liner replacement project in 2012. However, the original diffusers remain in Aeration Pond No. 2 and should be replaced during the next major wastewater treatment facility upgrade.

The pond liner for Aeration Pond 2 has been in service since the plant was constructed in 1992 and should be scheduled for replacement. The liner for Aeration Pond 1 was found have become brittle and was failing in or around 2009, and was replaced in 2012. Aeration Pond 2 was constructed identically to Aeration Pond 1, therefore it can be assumed that the liner needs to be replaced within the planning period. Aeration Pond 2 should undergo a rehabilitation project similar to that done to Aeration Pond 1 in 2012 with the addition of new diffusers.

Control Structure No. 1

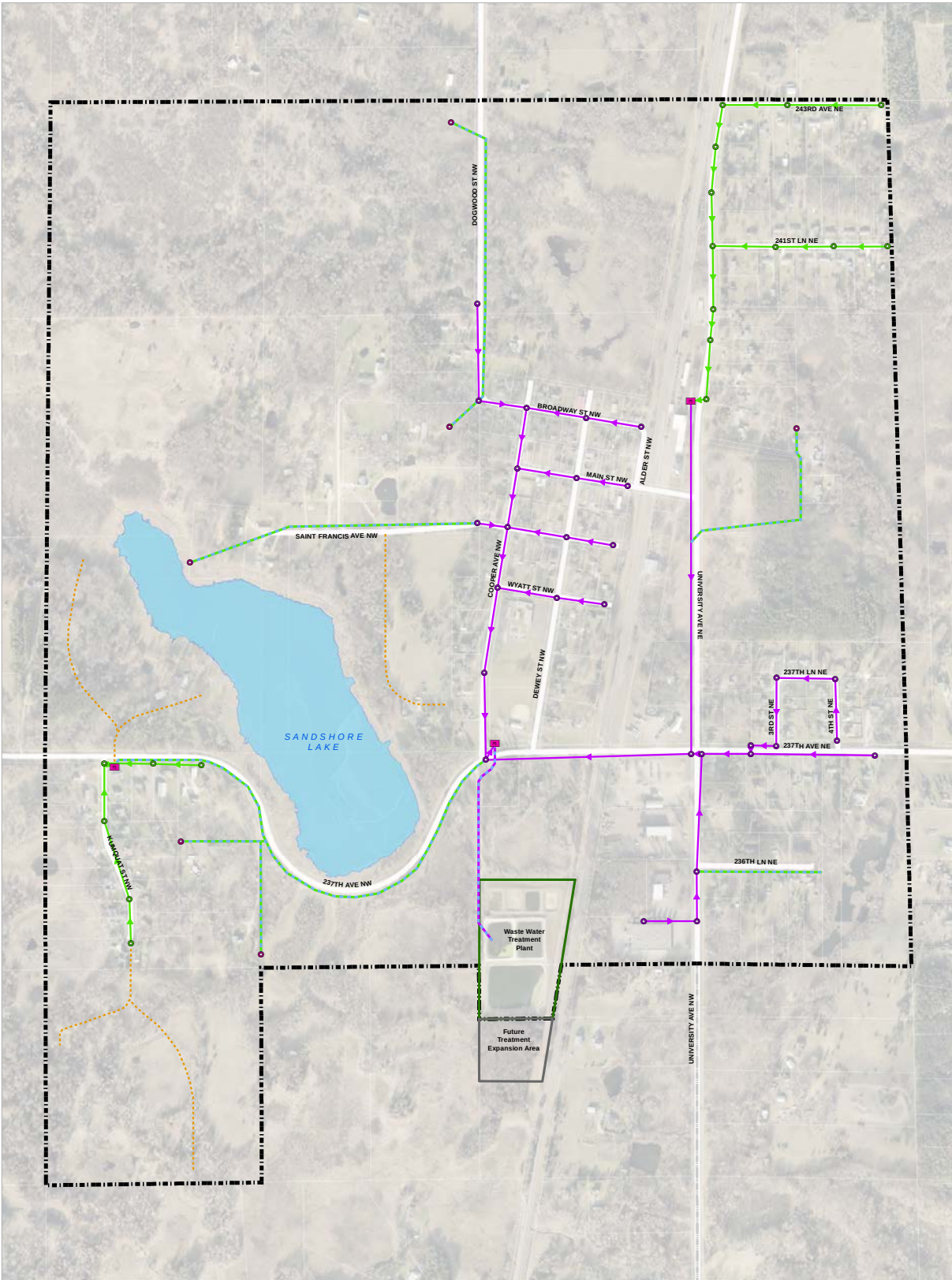
Control Structure No. 1 is located between the two aerated ponds cells and uses gate valves to regulate the flow of wastewater between cells. The control structure is housed within a 48-inch diameter manhole. Control Structure No. 1 does not have any performance issues.

Effluent Control Structure No. 2

Effluent Control Structure No. 2 is located between the aerated ponds and the polishing pond, and it uses weir plates to regulate flow between the cells so that one cell can be drained while the other remains in service. Effluent Control Structure No. 2 receives wastewater from each aerated ponds and discharges it to the polishing pond for final treatment and disposal. The control structure is a 4-foot diameter manhole. The Control Structure No. 2 does not have any performance issues.

Polishing/Storage Pond

After the wastewater receives its primary treatment in the aeration ponds, it is discharged into a polishing pond for final treatment. The polishing pond is designed with a 150 days of detention time to allow for die-off of pathogens and final settling of total suspended solids. The clear water is then pumped from the polishing pond to the rapid infiltration basins for disposal. The polishing pond also allows the operator to store treated wastewater during the winter months until warmer



SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

Data Sources:
Anoka County GIS
ESRI

- Lift Station Manhole
- Lift Station
- Manhole 1980
- Manhole 2003
- 1980 Existing Force Main
- 2003 Existing Force Main
- Future
- 1980 Gravity Main
- 2003 Gravity Main
- Existing WWTP
- Future WWTP Expansion
- Bethel
- Community Boundary
- Lakes

City of Bethel
Anoka County, MN

0 500 1,000 Feet



weather allows for loading of the RIBs. The polishing pond was constructed in the 2003 upgrade. The expected life span of the PVC liner for the pond is 20-30 years, although some have been known to last longer. The City should plan for the replacement of the liner during the latter part of the 20-year planning period.

Rapid Infiltration Basins

Wastewater that has been treated and polished is finally discharged into one of four rapid infiltration basins for final treatment and disposal. Each basin is approximately 0.2 acres in size with a maximum liquid depth of 2 feet. Each basin is loaded individually over a period of 3 days and allowed to dry while the other basins are being loaded. This gives each basin 12 days for the effluent to either infiltrate into the soil or evaporate.

Rapid Infiltration Basins infiltration rates have been decreasing. The City is concerned that they will not be able to keep up with future flows unless the infiltration rates improve. In response, the City recently hired a local contractor to attempt to rehabilitate the RIBs. Through a process of trial and error, it was found that deep tilling the RIBs led to a significant increase in their infiltration capacity. From this finding, it is clear that this method of maintenance can be effective in regenerating lost RIB infiltration capacity and is now considered as a regular maintenance item.

Groundwater Monitoring Wells

Six groundwater monitoring wells are located at the wastewater treatment plant. Groundwater parameters monitored include total chloride, water surface elevation, total ammonia nitrogen, total Kjeldahl nitrogen, total nitrate nitrogen, pH, specific conductance and groundwater temperature.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal: To provide affordable and effective wastewater treatment for the community.

Policies:

1. To maintain sanitary sewer service to the existing homes and businesses.
2. To increase capacity of the wastewater treatment system as needed for future development.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLAN

In 2017, the City looked at a variety of potential alternatives to meeting its long term and short term needs for their wastewater treatment needs. These alternatives looked at minor facility upgrades, major facility upgrades and expansion, and regionalization. The most limiting factor in plant capacity was the performance of the Rapid Infiltration Basins. With regular maintenance that issue appears to be addressed. The next priority is relining the aeration basins. The City will need to re-evaluate options 2-6 as population and flow growth force additional treatment facility upgrades.

Estimated Improvement Costs

Alternative	Capital Cost	OM & R Cost	Present Worth Cost
1. Aeration Basin No. 2 Liner Replacement	\$350,000	\$0	\$350,000
2. Expansion of existing WWTF	\$2,110,000	\$31,200	\$2,570,000
3. Regionalization to Metropolitan Council	\$3,150,000	\$100,000	\$3,980,000
4. Regionalization to St. Francis	\$4,780,000	\$228,000	\$7,180,000
5. Separation, Dual System	\$1,600,000	\$56,700	\$2,050,000
6. Mechanical plant	\$2,580,000	\$67,200	\$3,440,000

Table 1: Projected Wastewater Improvement Table



Chapter 7:

Housing

HOUSING

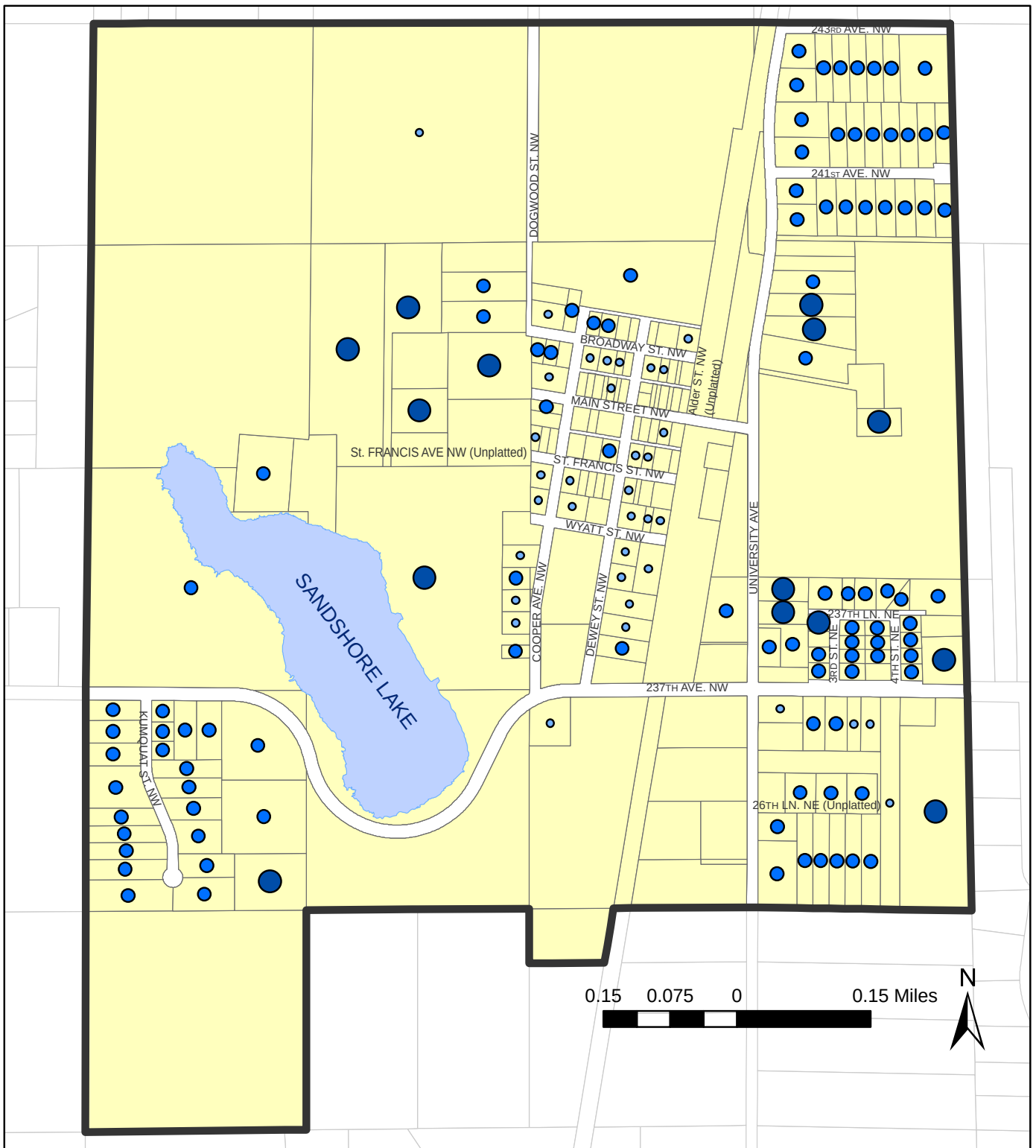
The City of Bethel functions as a rural center for Northern Anoka County, providing commercial activity, employment opportunities, and housing for 174 households. Between now and 2040, the City is anticipated to add 56 new households, and is not anticipating to annex any land to meet this new housing demand. Bethel still has a number of large lot properties in its municipal jurisdiction, and the subdivision and redevelopment of these lots will be crucial to meeting the demand for more housing, and especially for more affordable workforce housing.

As mentioned above and shown in Table 1, Bethel had 174 households in 2016, and 192 housing units total. Of these 192, around 84% are ownership units, while the remaining 16% are rental units. This disparity between owner/rental units may be impacting the availability of affordable housing, especially at the lower end towards 30% of area median income affordability. However, this distribution is also not uncommon in rural areas, and may have little impact.

Tables 3 and 4 relate to the affordability of housing in Bethel and how much households are spending on housing related costs in relation to their total income. Affordability in the Twin Cities Metro is calculated using a region-wide median income, and then creating income brackets at or below 30% of that AMI, 31-50% of AMI, and 51-80% AMI. Taken as a whole, there are not many “luxury” price point homes in Bethel. 190 of 192 units would be affordable to a person making 80% of the area median income, and 87, or 45%, would be affordable to a person making half the area median income. Where there is a gap is at the bottom of this distribution, with only 11 homes being affordable to a household making 30% of AMI. Add that 19 households in this income bracket are experiencing housing cost burden, and we can see that there is a need for housing which meets the need of lower-income households in Northern Anoka. Overall, 79 households below 80% AMI are experiencing housing cost burden in Bethel.

Housing Affordability in 2016		
Affordable Units to household income at or below 30% AMI	Affordable Units to household income at 31-50% AMI	Affordable Units to household income at 51-80% AMI
11	76	103
Housing Cost-Burdened Households in 2016		
Cost Burdened Households with Income at or below 30% AMI	Cost Burdened Households with Income at 31-50% AMI	Cost Burdened Households with Income at 51-80% AMI
19	29	31

Tables 1 & 2: Housing Affordability Measures



Bethel, MN - Owner-Occupied Housing by Market Value

ESTIMATED MARKET VALUE

- \$130,700 or less
- \$130,701 - \$208,400
- \$208,401 - \$433,700



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

4159 Olson Memorial Highway, Ste. 320, Golden Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nacplanning.com

The large majority of housing units in Bethel are Single-Family units, around 94% of all units. The 11 existing multifamily units are duplex style buildings. These multifamily units are currently all located in and around the city’s downtown area. New multifamily units are planned, as well as some smaller lot single family homes in order to bring the levels of density in the city closer to those required by their community designation.

Housing Units by Type			
Single-Family Units	Multifamily Units	Manufactured Homes	Other Housing Units
181	11	0	0
Publicly Subsidized Housing Units			
All Publicly Subsidized Units	Publicly Subsidized Senior Units	Publicly Subsidized Units for those with Disabilities	All other Subsidized Units
0	0	0	0

Tables 3 & 4: Types of Housing Units and Subsidized Units

HOUSING NEEDS AND PLANNING FOR 2040

From examining the city’s existing housing inventory, we can get a better context for the city’s housing needs and priorities moving forward. The city has done a good job at providing housing for middle income residents, with a majority of homes being available to households that make between 31-80% of area median income. At the same time, 60 households in those income brackets are currently cost-burdened by housing costs, and only 6% of homes are affordable to a household earning at or below 30% of area median income. One way to address these areas of concern is to increase the diversity of housing being provided.

Housing diversity includes different tenures (rental and ownership), types (single family, townhome and apartment), price points, sizes and styles. Cities with diverse housing stock can accommodate the needs of a wide variety of households at different life stages, incomes and family types. Furthermore, it provides more options as resident housing needs vary over time due to changes in age, income, housing preference, family structure, or physical abilities. As a result, people who move into a community can remain in it and stay close to their established social support networks. For example, a long-term resident who no longer wishes to care for a large yard will choose to move to another housing type within their community with less maintenance needs, if that option is available, before looking at other communities. A diverse supply also provides options for young adults, who grew up in a community, to move out of their parent’s home into an apartment or townhome nearby.

In addition to this, the city also needs to examine the economic benefits of having affordable housing, and specifically workforce housing. Both the city’s median household income and its median earnings for workers are below the county’s numbers. And the disparity between income and local earnings has a large impact on local housing. In the 2012-2016 American Community Survey, Bethel was estimated to have a median income around \$68,750 but the median earning by workers in the city was just \$38,889. Many jobs in the city and the county are low skill and do not pay enough to afford the housing that currently exists in the area. However, in terms of housing, this low earnings number helps to explain why the city has so many cost burdened households.

For the business sector to grow and expand, a reliable labor force is needed to fuel it. Available

affordable housing helps to attract a talented workforce to fill these job opportunities, so they can live near their place of work. Workers often look for jobs that are located near attractive housing options. This also helps to retain current workers who wish to be at a company for the long term thereby avoiding unnecessary and costly employee turn-overs.

Besides understanding the need for new and affordable development, the city must also ensure that existing housing units are maintained and renovated in a fashion which improves the quality of the city’s residential neighborhoods and streetscape. This is especially true for some of the city’s older homes in and around the downtown. The majority of these homes were built prior to 1964 and will require more extensive maintenance than more recently constructed homes between now and 2040. The map below breaks down the year that residential structures in the city were built. Note more recent housing tends to be located in the peripheral areas of the city: the Northeast and Southwest specifically.

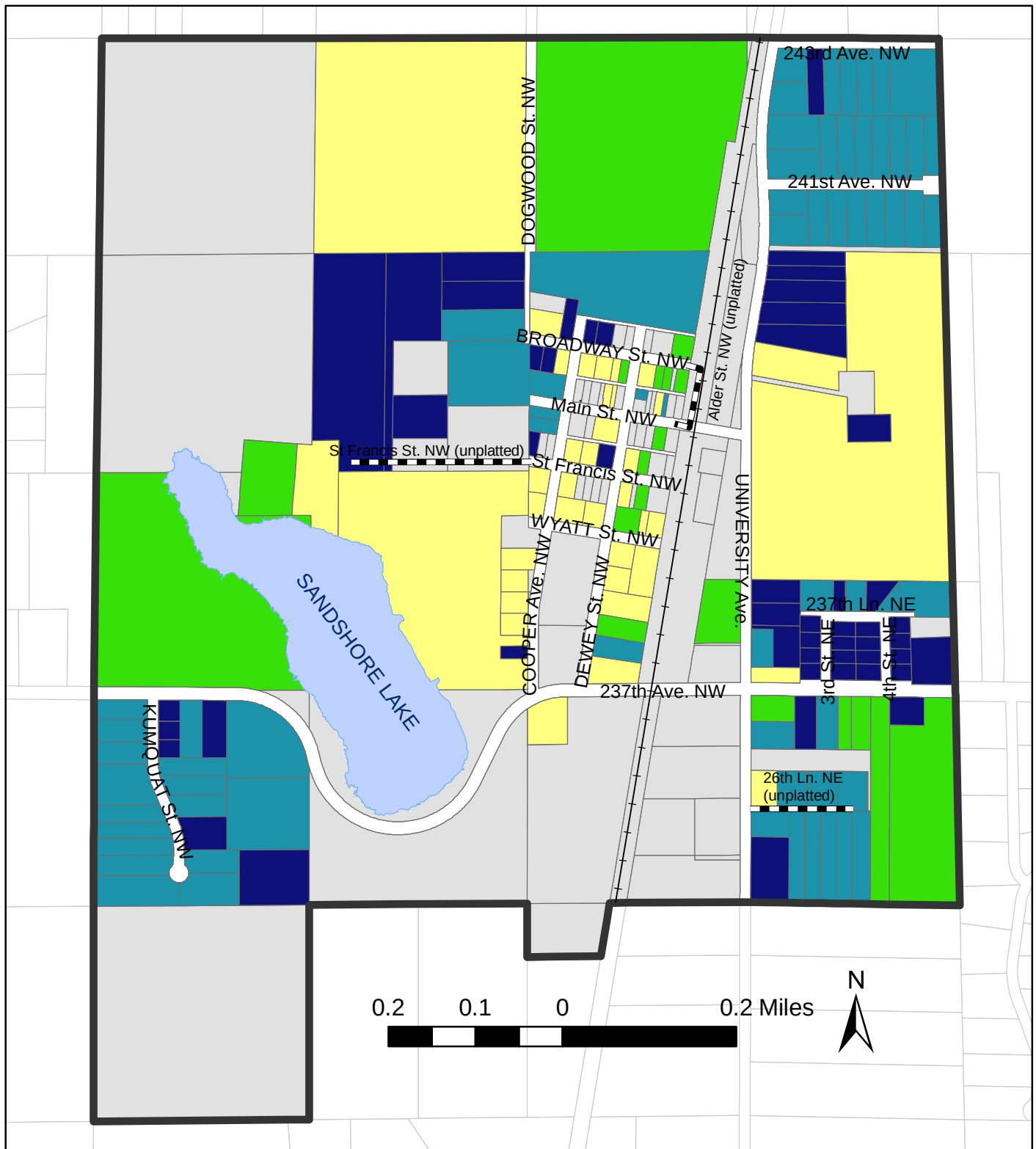
The first step towards this goal is to handle the most egregious cases through effective inspection and code enforcement. This will be the strategy for properties in poor enough condition that they are no longer compliant with city ordinance. For smaller improvements, the city may have less direct power. It cannot force a homeowner to put new shingles on their roof, but they aren’t completely powerless. In this case the city will need to incentivize homeowners to make the improvements on their own accord. The city could start a small forgivable loan program that could finance basic repairs and improvements to residential properties.

PROJECTED HOUSING NEEDS

Between 2016 and 2040, Bethel is anticipated to add 56 households, a need which cannot be fully met by current unoccupied housing stock. In addition, the city is not anticipating the annexation of any additional land, meaning that housing demand will be met through the subdivision and development of larger rural lots and in the infill development of denser multifamily housing in and around the downtown of the City. Bethel is designated as a *Rural Center* by the Metropolitan Council, which usually has a density requirement set at 3-5 units per acre. However, the city has a number of limitations to reaching this level of density, including the scalability of wastewater systems, and the level of market demand.

Bethel plans to meet the housing demand through a mix of multifamily infill development and through subdivision of some of the cities larger rural lots. In order to support the city’s downtown commercial core, mixed use and multifamily development are being explored as ways to increase the nearby customer base. 1.8 acres of formerly single-family parcels, is slated to be redeveloped at a density of 8 units per acre, creating around 14 units of housing, with at least a portion of which being affordable. The remaining 42 units will be reached through the subdivision and development of the city’s rural large lots. Bethel has a number of parcels which are currently 20-30 acres of developable land each, leaving the city a number of options to develop at 2 units per acre.

Bethel also needs to meet its allocation of affordable housing for the region. The Metropolitan Council forecasts the amount of affordable housing necessary regionally, and then divides this amount amongst communities in order to equitably allocate affordable housing options. This ensures that housing options for low to moderate income individuals does not become so geographically focused that it creates areas of concentrated poverty. The allocation of affordable housing for Bethel is listed in the table below, again broken down by the income brackets of below 30% AMI, 31-50% AMI, and 51-80% AMI.



Legend

Residential Structure Year Built

- 1921 and Earlier
- 1922 - 1964
- 1965 - 1994
- 1995 and Later

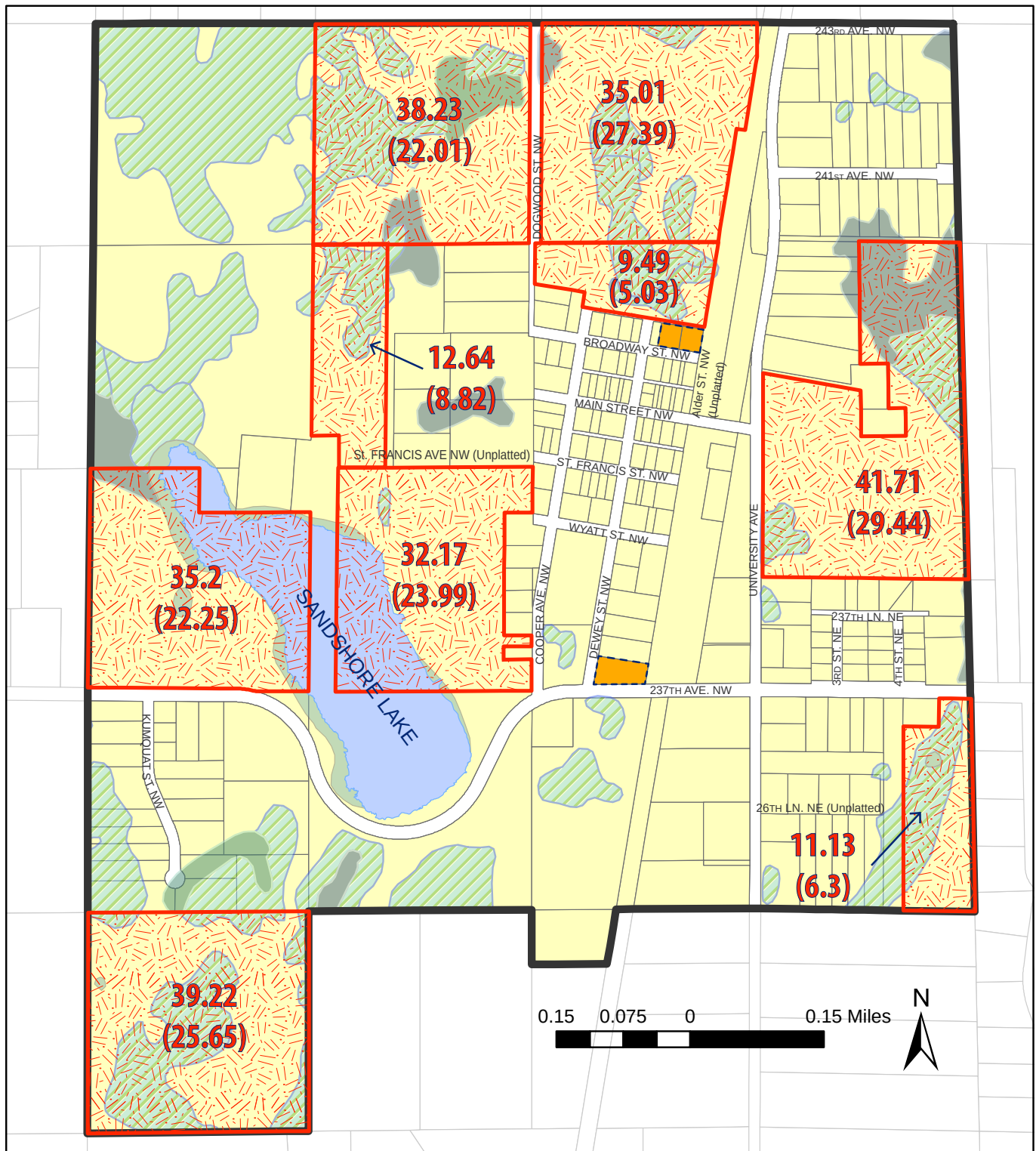
Bethel, MN - Housing Year Built

Source: Anoka County, MnDNR &
Northwest Associated Consultants



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

4150 Olson Memorial Highway, Ste. 320, Golden Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nacplanning.com



Legend

- Developable Parcels
- Medium Density Infill
- Lakes

Wetland Classification

- Unconsolidated Bottom
- Forest Wetland
- Emerging Wetland
- Scrub Wetland

Bethel, MN - Future Developable Parcels



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

4150 Olson Memorial Highway, Ste. 320, Golden Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nacplanning.com

254.8 - Total Acres
170.88 - Net Developable Acres

Allocation of Affordable Housing Units			
Affordable at or below 30% AMI	Affordable at 31-50% AMI	Affordable at 51-80% AMI	Total Affordable Units
3	0	3	6

Table 5: Allocation of Affordable Housing set by Metropolitan Council

Bethel plans to meet its allocation through the aforementioned multifamily development around downtown and next to the city's only park. The parcels will be developed at 8 units per acre, and around 14 units are anticipated to be added, which will more than meet the city's allocation of affordable housing. These infill projects will be located within walking distance of the downtown commercial district and the city park, and will play a significant role in providing rental housing for young people leaving their parents homes, or the elderly who want to downsize from their single family home.

HOUSING GOALS, POLICIES & IMPLEMENTATION

The Metropolitan Council requires that communities in the metro region outline an implementation plan for their housing goals for 2040. This implementation plan should cover the public programs, fiscal devices, and other specific actions that could be used to meet the existing and projected housing needs. Based on the analysis of existing housing stock and the forecasted need for future quality housing, the City of Bethel has identified the following implementation items which will help bring these plans into reality.

Housing Need/ Priority	Tool	Description/Use
Encouraging production of housing options for a variety of different household types	Tax Abatement and Tax Increment Financing	Local Jurisdiction can provide gap financing options to encourage the development they want to see. Very effective for redevelopment of brownfields/blighted areas.
	Met Council LCDA	Funding provided by Met Council for innovative projects that promote Livable Communities. Possible uses could include TOD, life-cycle housing, mixed-use/walkable neighborhoods, workforce housing. Funds used for public infrastructure and site assembly.
	Met Council LHIA	Funds specifically used for the preservation or development of affordable housing in the Metro Region. Project must provide housing for below 80%AMI, but 30%AMI receives higher priority. Can be rental or owner-occupied
	CDBG and HOME programs	Pair of HUD programs with goals of increasing the supply of quality affordable housing that creates opportunity for low to moderate income households. Requirements set by HUD but can be used to meet a wide range of development/preservation/ownership assistance needs.
	LIHTC	Tax credit provided by the federal government to incentivize private developers to create or rehabilitate affordable housing nationwide. Must provide rental housing to households at or below 60%AMI.

Maintain and improve existing housing stock	<i>Inspection & Code Enforcement</i>	City-led programs to ensure existing homes meeting performance standards for housing.
	<i>Homeowner Improvement Loan Program</i>	For housing sites that exhibit a significant degree of deterioration, the City may consider undertaking rehabilitation and redevelopment efforts which allow the City to improve or remove blighted properties before they negatively impact the surrounding neighborhoods. This could be in the form of a small loan program which could help to fund exterior improvements to houses needing minor aesthetic repairs: paint, new shingles, other improvements. Could be forgivable or not.
	<i>4d Tax Classification</i>	A lower tax bracket for multifamily homes that are shown to be for low income rentals. Reduced tax rate frees up more capital to improve/maintain the property.
	<i>Point of Sale Compliance Inspections</i>	In effort to maintain the condition and value of the overall housing stock, a code compliance program can encourage reinvestment in the housing within Bethel. Through enforcement of this program, the City can contribute to increasing the housing values.
	<i>Rental Housing Registration</i>	To offset maintenance and upkeep issues of rental properties (including single family, duplexes, townhomes, apartments etc.) the City may wish to initiate a rental inspection program. All rental properties would be required to annually obtain a rental registration permit. Additionally, on a two-year cycle prior to permit renewal, the City could inspect all the rental units and common spaces for code compliance.
	<i>Development Regulations</i>	By examining and modifying the City's development regulations, local property owners are provided greater flexibility in the use and development of their properties. Topics addressed usually include building setbacks, accessory buildings and home occupations. These efforts are intended to allow property owners the opportunity to expand, alter or modernize their homes in a manner that keep the housing stock contemporary and sellable.
Promote new homeownership and ownership for moderate income households	<i>Community Land Trusts</i>	A land trust can reduce purchase prices for new homebuyers. Homebuyer would only purchase the structure on a property, while the land trust would own the land underneath.
	<i>First Time Homebuyer and Down Payment Assistance</i>	MN Housing has startup loan and down payment assistance loan programs in place. Can help diffuse the large upfront cost of buying a home, household income must be under \$99,500.



Chapter 8:

Parks & Trails

PARKS & TRAILS

Bethel has one city owned park, which is 2.15 acres total. This park is centrally located in the city, a few blocks south of the downtown. The park has a rentable pavilion, play equipment, open space, and ball fields. The City of Bethel does not have any officially designated bikeways or trails within the City. However, a network of sidewalks and paths are available for pedestrian traffic. Very often, the roadway and shoulder areas are also used as bike paths. The city plans to expand its sidewalk network and explore the possibility of natural trails in the future.

Also within city limits are natural lands owned by the state. In the northwest there is a portion of the Bethel Wildlife Management Area. The Bethel WMA is a large game preserve located in both Anoka and Isanti counties, and is 756 acres in size. Residents with the necessary licenses can use the WMA for the hunting of fowl, small game, and large game. South of Sandshore Lake is the Sandshore Lake Open Space. The city of Bethel is considering the development of natural trails to better allow for the use of this natural area by residents.

Bethel also has a number of regional park resources nearby.

Sandhill Crane Natural Area: The Sandhill Crane Natural Area is located Southeast of Bethel and comprises 533 acres of open space. The park is home to a number of flora and fauna that are native to the Twin Cities Region and is a fantastic example of natural prairie. To preserve the integrity of the Sandhill Crane Natural Area, the only recreation facilities are trails and some observation areas.

Lake George Regional Park: A 270 acre park in Oak Grove Minnesota. The park offers numerous recreation activities such as swimming, biking, hiking, volleyball and more. In addition, pavilions are available for rental for private parties.

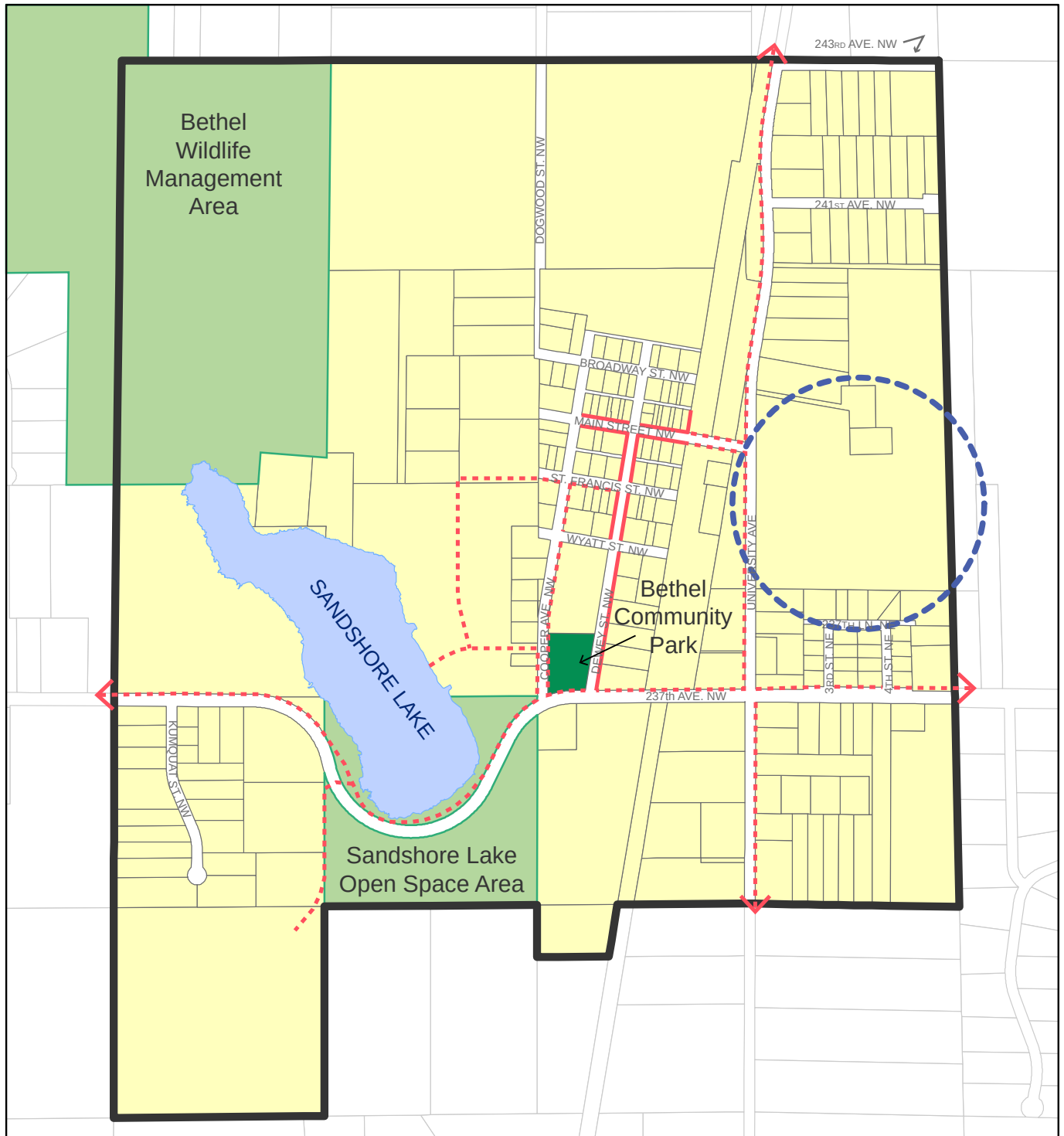
Rum River North County Park: This 80 acre park makes full use of its connection to the Rum River, providing opportunities to canoe, camp, and fish in the scenic river. Also provides recreation space for biking, hiking, playgrounds, and event/meeting spaces. Besides recreation activities, the park also has fantastic natural features, such as a restored native prairie with observation areas.

PLANNED PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Despite an abundance of regional assets in regard to parks and recreation, the City of Bethel itself only has a single city park and no trails other than sidewalks. Below is a map showing both existing facilities but also planned trail connections and a new city park search area in the Eastern part of the city.

Future trail and side walk connections are planned through most of the downtown and would connect the existing city park to surrounding neighborhoods. The Sandshore open space area would also see trail improvements, both giving southwestern residents a pedestrian connection to downtown, but also allowing for better enjoyment of the natural space itself. The city will need to decide between whether it will use sidewalks or trails to improve pedestrian connections, and both have pros and cons. Sidewalks are typically a simpler option, and the maintenance is typically passed along to the adjoining property owner, however they generally are only usable for pedestrian travel, and may have stricter ADA requirements.

Trails can allow for more creativity in their design: allowing for bikes and other modes of transport, being better suited for natural and recreation areas, and having a variety of surfacing materials available to choose from. However, trail maintenance is often handled by the City itself as opposed to private residents, and again steps must be taken to make sure they are ADA compliant in order to



Bethel, MN - Existing and Proposed Park Facilities and Trails

Source: Anoka County, MnDNR & Northwest Associated Consultants, Inc.

Legend

-  Existing trail or sidewalk
-  Proposed trail or sidewalk

-  State-owned Open Space
-  Parks

-  Park Search Area

0.15 0.075 0 0.15 Miles



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.
4150 Olson Memorial Highway, Ste. 320, Golden Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nacplanning.com



meet the accessibility needs of Bethel’s residents. Requirements for ADA compliance in the state of Minnesota are published by the Minnesota Department of Transportation.

In addition to internal connections, the City has longer term plans to create regional bike and trail connections to surrounding communities and park amenities. This will likely require cooperation and assistance from both the county and surrounding communities. However, the regional benefits are clear to be seen, a regional bikeway or trail system will promote regional identity, public health, and a commitment to investment in natural and recreation resources. In particular, the City of Bethel is interested in developing a trail connection to a city-owned property in East Bethel, located South along University Ave. The City should collaborate with east Bethel and Anoka county to work towards the development of this trail, to a site which may eventually be used for trails and natural recreation.

Also identified on the park and recreation map is a search area for a supplemental city park to be developed sometime between now and 2040. This park is located in an area across both the railroad and University Avenue from the existing park and would allow for easier access to recreational space for residents, without having to cross major transportation carriers. The area around the new park has been developed significantly in the past 20-30 years and is expected to grow further as large lots are subdivided to allow for new development. By adding recreation amenities and open space to this portion of the city, Bethel can expect to serve a large population of its residents. Adequate open space is crucial for a community’s health and can also have a positive impact on surrounding residential property values.

PARKS AND TRAILS GOALS AND POLICIES

Goals

Bethel’s goals for Park and Recreation for 2040:

- **Maintain and improve existing parks and recreation services, facilities and infrastructure to meet the needs and interests of the community.**
- **Maintain and enhance the natural amenities of the City for future generations to enjoy.**
- **Create a safe and efficient trail system throughout Bethel.**

Policies

To meet these goals, Bethel will set the following strategies and policies:

1. Develop a Park, Open Space and Trail Plan.
2. Continue to implement a Capital Improvement Plan that addresses the repair and improvement of community facilities including streets, utilities, stormwater management, community buildings and parks.
3. Protect environmental systems from unnecessary impacts of future growth and development activities.
4. Work with State and County agencies to develop trails or sidewalks along County highways that will link Bethel with neighboring cities or regional destinations.
5. Ensure that pedestrian street and rail crossings on heavily traveled streets are clearly marked and lighted.



Chapter 9:

Economic Development

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The City of Bethel is classified by the Metropolitan Council as a *Rural Center*, a designation that comes with a number of roles in regards to local economic competitiveness. As a Rural Center, Bethel is expected to:

- Consider best practices for providing housing opportunities to support local employment and community needs.
- Consider identifying key intersections that accommodate connections between rail and highway infrastructure that could serve an intermodal purpose.
- Consider how land uses adjacent to key intersections could provide access for trucking, freight, barge, shipping, or warehousing purposes that may strengthen or bolster the local economy.
- Consider how local efforts to focus economic development strategies along existing commercial centers (historic downtowns or commercial corridors) can contribute to the region’s overall economic competitiveness through enhanced integration of local and regional planning efforts.
- Identify important multimodal intersections, alternative freight routes, key intersections, and other existing opportunities that may contribute to local and regional economic competitiveness.

To the general end of improving local economic competitiveness, Bethel has both challenges and opportunities. Through an analysis of demographic factors and recent trends, the following key points have been found to impact Bethel’s economic development.

- Bethel workers face some of the longest commute times in the State of Minnesota.
- Bethel residents primarily work in other cities and communities.
- Residents income per capita is significantly lower than the average wage.

The challenges Bethel faces are primarily the result of slower-paced residential growth, poor overall transportation connections regionally, and a downtown commercial area in need of organization. This chapter will examine demographic analysis in greater detail, before offering some goals and policies for increasing the area’s neconomic competitiveness, both in its ability to provide employment opportunities to residents, as well as expanded goods and services to consumers in the region.

DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Employment Location

When examining the working population of Bethel in terms of in which cities they work and commute too, it is surprising to see that the city of Bethel itself does not even make the top ten. The most common location for Bethel residents to commute to was the City of Minneapolis, followed by St. Francis, Fridley and Coon Rapids. St. Francis is relatively close by, however some of the other common commuting destination would require a significant length trip down Highway 65. When looking at where workers in Bethel live, we can see that St. Francis is the most common place of residence for workers. The table below shows a full breakdown of employment location, with data courtesy of the U.S. Census Bureau’s *Location Origin-Destination Employment Statistics – Commute Patterns*.

Employment by Location - Bethel, MN

Where Bethel Residents Work
Where Bethel Workers Live

Place of Employment	Number of Workers	Place of Residence	Number of Workers
Minneapolis	29	St. Francis	8
St. Francis	18	Minneapolis	3
Fridley	14	East Bethel	3
Coon Rapids	14	Oak Grove	3
Blaine	12	Andover	2
Anoka	10	Coon Rapids	2
St. Paul	10	Plymouth	1
Ramsey	8	Bethel	1
Brooklyn Park	7	Wayzata	1
Ham Lake	6		
Maple Grove	6		
Other	69		

Table 1: Employment By Location

Commute Patterns

Given that the majority of residents work outside of the city, it is important to understand commute patterns when considering traffic volumes, and the need for more local employment opportunities. The graph below shows travel time to work, based on the 2012-2016 American Community Survey.

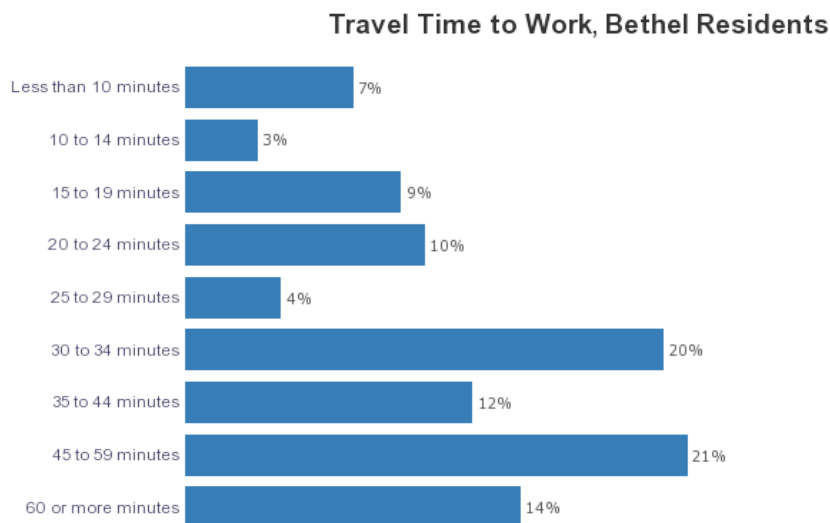


Figure 1: Commute Time to Work

Many Bethel residents are currently burdened with long commute times. 67% of working age residents have a commute of over 30 minutes. 35% have a commute longer than 45 minutes.

To give these commute times some context, The Metropolitan Council can use its travel demand model to illustrate what travel times would be like from Bethel to select locations, in this case the downtown central business districts of Minneapolis and Saint Paul and the Mall of America in Bloomington. In 2010, the morning commute to Minneapolis, the most common workplace for residents, was over an hour-and-a-half.

Estimated Peak-Hour Travel Time to Selected Destinations from Central Bethel (in Minutes)

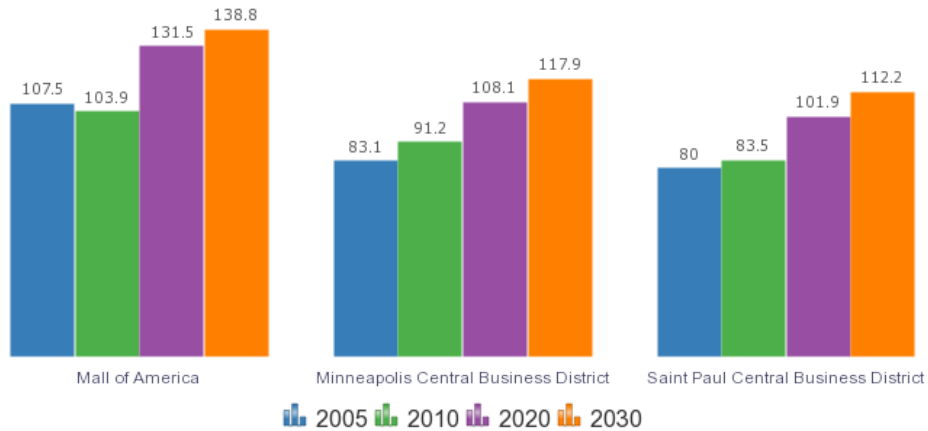


Figure 2: Peak-Hour Travel Time

This commute time is already problematic, it means that Bethel residents are spending 3 hours commuting to work in some cases, however the larger issue is that this commute time is anticipated to grow between now and 2030. By the Met Council's estimates, Bethel residents commuting to Minneapolis in 2030 will travel almost 2 hours to work. Four hours of commuting each day will impact all aspects of residents' lives, from the time they have to be with their families, to prepare healthy meals, or spend in leisure in the city's natural and recreational spaces. Given the growing concern over travel-to-work patterns, Bethel should be proactive in providing local employment opportunities.

Wage and Income

Wage and income are two separate measures of how much a person is earning through work. Income refers to the amount earned by residents of Bethel, even at jobs outside the city, while wage refers to how much a person in Bethel is anticipated to make. This gives us a useful comparison in the case of Bethel, given that we know that most residents work outside the city. How does per capita income compare to average wage in the city? And how do both of these statistics measure up when compared to Anoka County or the larger region?

Annual Average Wages in Bethel

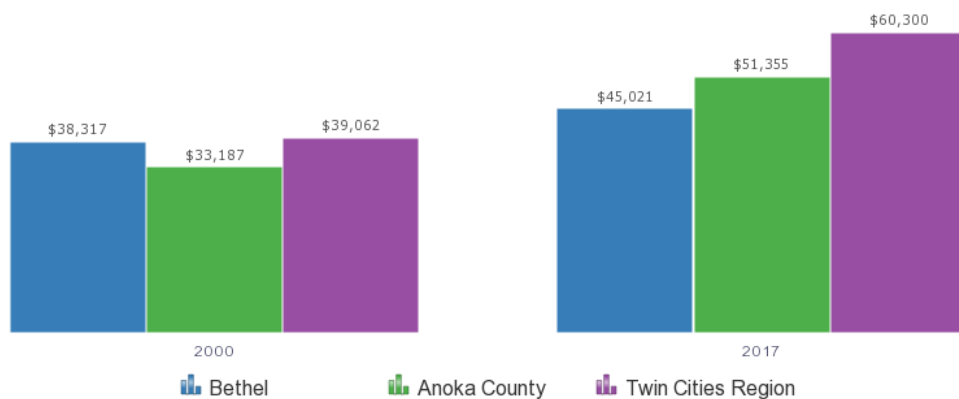


Figure 3: Average Wage for Bethel Workers

Annual Wage has grown modestly between the turn of the century and today in Bethel, however it is still lower than in the County itself overall. In 2000, the average wage in Bethel was actually higher than in Anoka County, but is now about \$6,000 lower than the county figure, and around \$15,000 less than the average for the 7-county region.

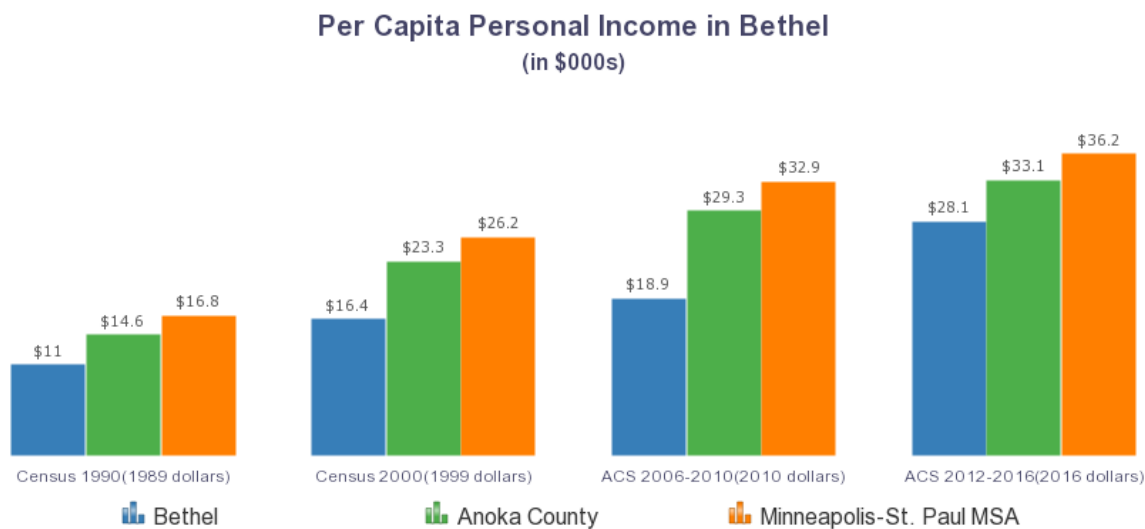


Figure 4: Per Capita Personal Income

Meanwhile, the per capita income for a resident of Bethel falls well below the average annual wage. In 2017, the per capita income was estimated to be \$28,100, or around \$17,000 less than the average wage. Income in Bethel is also lower on average than within the rest of Anoka County and the Metropolitan Statistical Area for the Twin Cities. Given that jobs in Bethel pay more than the per capita income, this further reinforces the need to emphasize local employment for residents. Not only would it eliminate many residents long commute times, but may also increase their overall economic vitality.

Employment by Industry

Bethel residents work across nearly every industry sector. Most commonly, 26.5% are estimated to work in manufacturing, compared to 16.8% in the county, and 13.5% in the state as a whole. Other common employment industries for working Bethel residents include: health care and social assistance, construction, retail trade, and accomodations and food services to name a few. The full breakdown of Bethel residents’ employment by industry compared to the county and state on the following page.

Employment by Industry, 2012-2016 ACS	Bethel			Anoka County			Minnesota		
	Estimate	Margin of Error	Percent	Estimate	Margin of Error	Percent	Estimate	Margin of Error	Percent
<i>Civilian employed population 16 years and over</i>	298	+/-53	100.0%	184,997	+/-1,224	100.0%	2,864,441	+/-5,407	100.0%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining:	2	+/-4	0.7%	1,103	+/-258	0.6%	65,291	+/-1,375	2.3%
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting	2	+/-4	0.7%	982	+/-249	0.5%	58,839	+/-1,283	2.1%
Mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction	0	+/-9	0.0%	121	+/-60	0.1%	6,452	+/-407	0.2%
Construction	30	+/-17	10.1%	12,695	+/-701	6.9%	162,856	+/-2,432	5.7%
Manufacturing	79	+/-22	26.5%	31,082	+/-1,013	16.8%	388,089	+/-3,994	13.5%
Wholesale trade	9	+/-6	3.0%	5,087	+/-437	2.7%	81,877	+/-1,703	2.9%
Retail trade	23	+/-11	7.7%	20,501	+/-868	11.1%	321,793	+/-3,102	11.2%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities:	21	+/-15	7.0%	9,884	+/-568	5.3%	130,654	+/-2,074	4.6%
Transportation and warehousing	17	+/-14	5.7%	8,452	+/-516	4.6%	110,544	+/-1,887	3.9%
Utilities	4	+/-5	1.3%	1,432	+/-246	0.8%	20,110	+/-842	0.7%
Information	1	+/-3	0.3%	2,983	+/-341	1.6%	52,585	+/-1,608	1.8%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing:	11	+/-7	3.7%	14,435	+/-684	7.8%	205,939	+/-2,892	7.2%
Finance and insurance	10	+/-7	3.4%	11,704	+/-610	6.3%	163,795	+/-2,304	5.7%
Real estate and rental and leasing	1	+/-3	0.3%	2,731	+/-324	1.5%	42,144	+/-1,324	1.5%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services:	21	+/-13	7.0%	17,879	+/-796	9.7%	280,500	+/-3,115	9.8%
Professional, scientific, and technical services	8	+/-9	2.7%	10,538	+/-574	5.7%	178,277	+/-2,550	6.2%
Management of companies and enterprises	0	+/-9	0.0%	480	+/-134	0.3%	3,987	+/-402	0.1%
Administrative and support and waste management services	13	+/-11	4.4%	6,861	+/-526	3.7%	98,236	+/-1,971	3.4%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance:	52	+/-25	17.4%	40,426	+/-1,056	21.9%	710,843	+/-4,609	24.8%
Educational services	11	+/-8	3.7%	13,432	+/-672	7.3%	256,947	+/-2,488	9.0%
Health care and social assistance	41	+/-23	13.8%	26,994	+/-979	14.6%	453,896	+/-3,696	15.8%
Arts, entertainment, and accommodation and food services:	22	+/-18	7.4%	13,822	+/-734	7.5%	239,928	+/-3,218	8.4%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	3	+/-6	1.0%	3,048	+/-353	1.6%	60,844	+/-1,381	2.1%
Accommodation and food services	19	+/-15	6.4%	10,774	+/-645	5.8%	179,084	+/-2,806	6.3%
Other services, except public administration	18	+/-12	6.0%	8,629	+/-491	4.7%	128,147	+/-2,367	4.5%
Public administration	9	+/-7	3.0%	6,471	+/-471	3.5%	95,939	+/-1,954	3.3%

Table 2: Resident Employment by Industry

NEW EMPLOYMENT FORECAST

In the City's 2015 System Statement, the Metropolitan Council estimated that the City of Bethel had 95 employed workers, and that by the year 2040, this total employment number would grow to 180 jobs. That represents a growth of 85 jobs over 26 years. In order to meet this demand for new employment, land will be needed for infill development and new construction. This basic step of understanding what land is available to support new employment will help in providing more local employment opportunities long term.

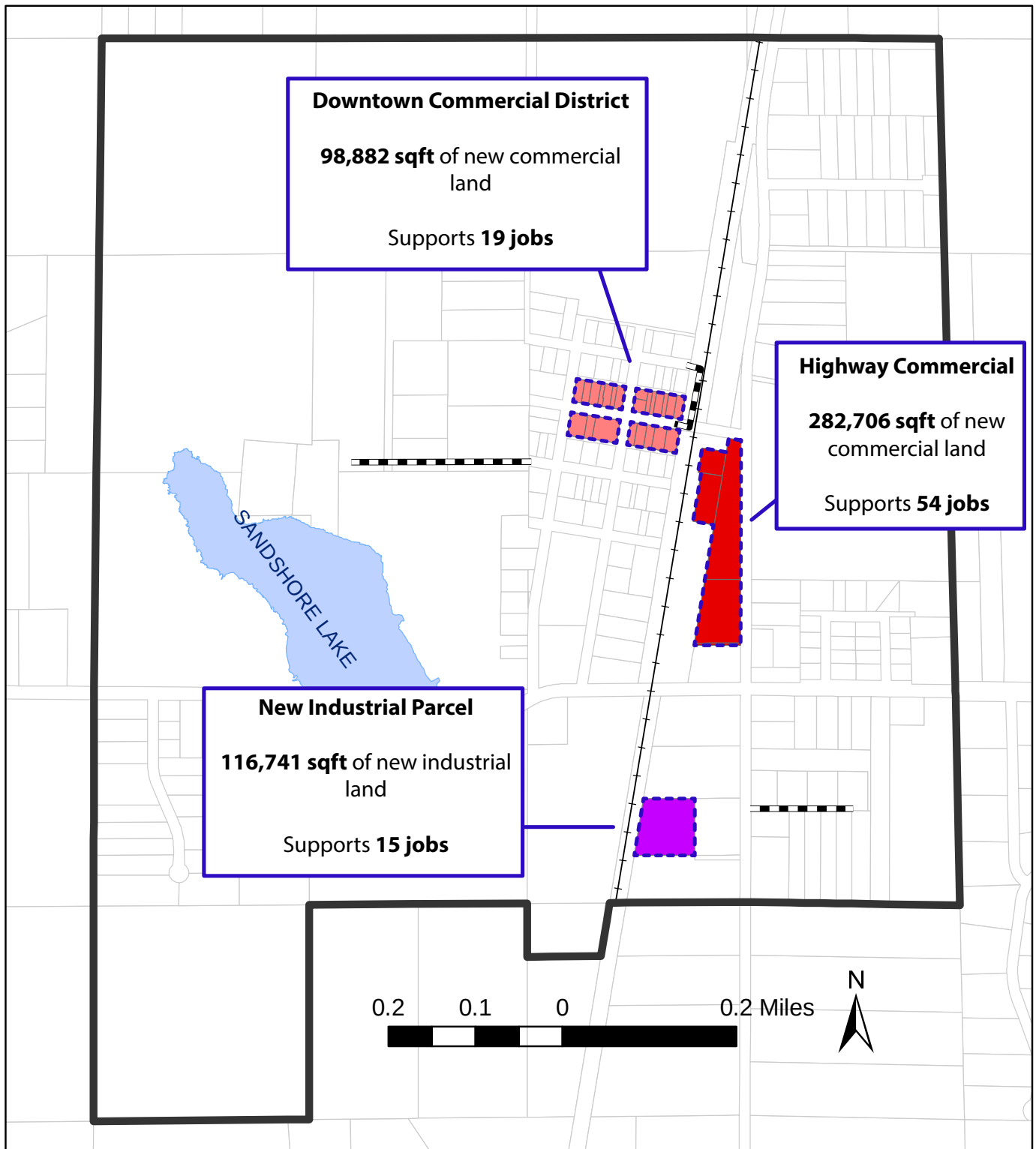
Staff took the City's Future Land Use Plan, covered in greater depth in this document's land use chapter, and isolated parcels which were changing to commercial and industrial uses between now and 2040. These land uses provide employment, and by finding the amount of new land available, staff could estimate the additional jobs which could be supported. Total new square footage was found for the downtown commercial, highway commercial, and industrial land uses. Only a portion of the new industrial land use parcels were used in this geospatial analysis, as a major portion of them were already occupied by an existing wastewater treatment plant. The plant's land use designation had been simplified to general industrial, causing it to be counted as new industrial land, but is not expected to add any new employment between now and 2040.

With the total new square footage for each land use, staff then used an anticipated floor area ratio to find the amount of usable or buildable space for each parcel. Floor area ratio is what determines to what degree of density a parcel can be developed, e.g. a building on a 1,000 sqft parcel that is developed at a .5 FAR would have 500 sqft of floor space. This step is crucial to the forecast's accuracy, given that a parcel will need to include things such as parking, sidewalks, or landscaping which cannot be included in calculations for employment. FAR's used were based upon the 20th percentile figures from the Metropolitan Council's *Measuring Employment* handout from the *Local Planning Handbook*. For the two commercial districts, a .17 FAR was used, while a .19 was used for industrial land use parcels.

Once developable area was found, the next step was to determine anticipated employment numbers based upon what the Metropolitan Council refers to as *Space Utilization Per Job Rates*. This refers to the median square footage which is required to support a single worker in a particular business type. These figures are provided for use by the U.S. Energy Information Agency in their *Commercial Buildings Energy Consumption Survey*. For example, a warehouse or similar light industrial land use requires a median square footage of around 1,500 per worker, while an office only requires 600 square feet. This is due to different requirements for use of the commercial/industrial type.

With the two commercial districts, no single utilization rate could be used, given that they would house a number of different commercial business types, all with different land requirements. In this case staff used an average figure taken from four categories: food service, mercantile, general office, and service. This gave a median square footage of 891.75 sqft per worker.

Based on this geospatial analysis and forecasting, the City of Bethel is projected to add around 88 new jobs between now and 2040, which is largely consistent with the Metropolitan Council's own forecast numbers. The following map shows the distribution of these jobs throughout the City.



Legend

- Downtown Commercial
- Highway Commercial
- Industrial
- Unplatted Roads

Bethel, MN - Potential Employment Growth Areas

Source: Anoka County, Metropolitan Council & Northwest Associated Consultants



NORTHWEST ASSOCIATED CONSULTANTS, INC.

4150 Olson Memorial Highway, Ste. 320, Golden Valley, MN 55422
Telephone: 763.231.2555 Website: www.nacplanning.com

GOALS AND POLICIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1: cluster new commercial and industrial development in order to create and strengthen consumer and employment districts.

Policies:

1. Update zoning map to reflect distribution of new land use categories
2. Utilize grants and financial tools to encourage new development and infill
3. Develop a plan for the downtown area.

Goal 2: expand high-paying employment opportunities within the City.

Policies:

1. Utilize state and non-profit programs to create jobs within the city.
2. Work with existing businesses to see where the city can assist with expanding their operations
3. Utilize multifamily housing around the downtown to create local consumer/employment base.

Goal 3: Ease residents commuting burden through a variety of different methods.

Policies:

1. Work with MnDOT to improve major traffic carrying roadways.
2. Communicate local employment opportunities to residents.
3. Ensure a fully connected bike/pedestrian network.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

- Create a downtown plan or set of design guidelines to direct the type of commercial uses which locate in the downtown area.
- Work with DEED to create job opportunities in the city through programs like: the Minnesota Investment Fund, Minnesota Job Skills Partnership, Minnesota Pathways Program, Contamination Cleanup and Investigation Grant Program, and others.
- When necessary to attract private investment, explore the use of Tax-Increment Financing.
- Communicate with businesses about the Twin Cities Community Capital Fund and how it can be used to expand/improve their existing operations.
- Utilize LCDA grants from the Metropolitan Council in order to help finance high-quality mixed use development projects in the city.



Chapter 10:

Implementation

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

A final, continuing and ongoing phase of the current comprehensive planning process is the programming of the implementation measures intended to bring about improvements to the City as defined by the Comprehensive Plan. These measures involve “soft” projects or studies as well as capital “hard” projects and equipment. The organization of these efforts is presented in the Implementation chapter.

Implementation consists of both planning and budgeting. Programs and projects are initially identified and defined. This is followed by prioritizing the various efforts and then in the year the project will be implemented, determining work responsibility, costs and possible funding sources of projects.

The Implementation chapter lists possible improvement projects identified during the Bethel comprehensive planning program. It is again emphasized that implementation of the plan is an ongoing, annual effort which Bethel should incorporate as part of its management and budgeting process. This Implementation Plan, once established, should be reviewed and updated by the City each year at the beginning of its yearly financial planning. Through such constant attention, the City will be able to progressively address and resolve problems and bring about desired community improvements to the extent that fiscal resources are available.

The following project descriptions serve as a reference for continual review, consideration and prioritization of projects to be implemented in the future. New projects should be added to the plan, just as projects which are completed should be removed. If this procedure is adhered to consistently, achievement of the community improvements and expenses should occur continually as monetary resources are available.

ZONING AND SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

As a result of the current Comprehensive Plan process, the zoning and subdivision portion of the City Code should be updated to reflect the directions and plans for the community. A review of the zoning yields the following comments on how the regulations should be updated to reflect current planning and issues related to zoning. A more extensive review of the regulations would be necessary before commencing an update of the zoning and subdivision code. The comments are arranged by the three primary sections of a zoning code: administration, performance standards and zoning districts.

Administrative

1. There currently is no formalized application schedule for zoning requests. An application schedule with dates for application submittal, consultant review, Planning and Zoning and City Council approval would ensure that the applicants and the City receive the best review of the submitted materials.
2. All resolutions adopted since the last formalized codification of the Zoning and Subdivision Ordinance should be included.
3. The definitions sections should be revised and updated.
4. The parking requirements should be revised and updated to new regulations adopted in 2005.
5. A sign regulation ordinance should be drafted as recommended by the League of Cities to be content neutral and constitutionally sound.

Performance Standards

1. Provisions to regulate antennas and cellular towers should be reviewed and incorporated into the zoning code as necessary for cross reference.
2. Site design and design guideline standards should be updated and cross reference within the zoning code.

Zoning Districts

1. The zoning districts should reflect the current resolutions that have been adopted since original zoning map was issued in the 1980s. Upon formal adoption of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan, the City must review and amend the current official zoning map accordingly.
2. The zoning districts should provide a better system of uses. The districts could be rewritten so as not to carry uses from one district to the other.
3. Create innovative/sustainable zoning techniques low impact development (LID).

SITE & BUILDING PLAN REVIEW PROCESS

The process for application and review of development projects in Bethel is administered primarily by the City Clerk which serves to provide uniform application of regulations and equitably treatment of landowners. All new construction projects and requests involving variance, conditional use permits or ordinances/map amendments require approval by the City Council. Major property additions and land alterations also require formal application, but generally only need final approval from City staff.

All aspects of building construction and site design should be considered in relation to established performance standards to ensure the highest quality development. Compliance with minimum lot size, setbacks, impervious surface limitations, lighting and signage requirements ensures proper sit functioning with the least impact to neighboring landowners. The integration of built elements with preservation of natural amenities provides the general review criteria for screening, structure orientation, grading, drainage and erosion control. Architectural integrity is based on: design/style, minimum floor area, height, colors and materials. These standards are intended to require commonality throughout the City but are flexible enough to respond to individual design situations.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Citizen notification and participation is the single most important element of an ongoing planning and development process. Bethel has, and will continue to structure public hearings that involve residents in the decision making process. Direct notification by letter, community open houses, neighborhood meetings, small group/task force discussions and any number of other methods will be used to retain the existing community awareness of planning efforts, particularly the impacts of other municipalities, government agencies and private development upon the City. A spring and fall newsletter is also sent to landowners in the City which keeps them apprised of recent occurrences and community issues.

STRATEGIES FOR PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Budgeting and Finance

1. Maintain a five year Capital Improvement Plan that identifies desired public improvement projects, assigns costs and schedules implementation based on project priority and funding availability.

2. Continue to require new development pay for its own infrastructure (i.e. streets, utility extension etc.)
3. Pursue available regional, State and Federal grants and aids as appropriate to facilitate community improvements and programs.
4. Consider using tax increment financing, where appropriate, as a means of assisting community development and redevelopment efforts.
5. Encourage the establishment of community foundations capable of accepting donations and contributions for local projects, improvements or events.
6. Promote volunteerism as a means of implementing the development and maintenance of public facilities and project to reduce the expense to the City.

Public Participation

1. Pursue citizen advisory committees to assist the City Council in ongoing operations of the City.
2. Promote volunteerism through the use of citizen groups to assist in the development and maintenance of public facilities (i.e. volunteer fire department, park development etc.)